NOOR UMRAH TRAVELS

Ihram Rules for Umrah and Hajj – Complete Guide for Men and Women

Complete ihram rules for men and women. What is forbidden, how to wear ihram, clothing guide, penalties and common mistakes. UK pilgrim guide 2026.

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Starting your Umrah or Hajj begins with one sacred step: entering the state of ihram. But here's the thing—many UK pilgrims feel anxious about getting the ihram rules right. If you're worried about what to wear, what's actually forbidden, or how to avoid a mistake, you're not alone. We've seen hundreds of first-time pilgrims from London, Manchester, and Birmingham ask the same questions every year. That's why our team at Noor Umrah Travels has created this complete, 2026-ready guide to every rule you need to know—backed by Quran and Hadith, and packed with real-world UK tips.

ihram rules for umrah men and women complete guide 2026

What Is Ihram and Why Every Pilgrim Must Understand the Rules

Ihram is more than just a dress code—it’s a sacred state you must enter before performing Umrah or Hajj. For men, it means wearing two white, unstitched sheets. For women, it’s modest, loose clothing with the face and hands uncovered. But the real meaning of ihram goes deeper. It’s about leaving behind pride and showing equality before Allah (SWT). No matter your background, you stand as a servant, humble and pure. The Quran says: "Hajj is in the well-known months... So whoever undertakes the duty of Hajj, let there be no indecent speech, misbehaviour, or quarrelling during Hajj." (Quran 2:197)

This guide covers every ihram rule for men and women—what’s forbidden, how to wear it, and what to do if you slip up. We’ll show you step-by-step, with real UK travel tips and clear evidence from Quran and Hadith. Let’s get started.

Preparing for Ihram Before Leaving the UK

You don’t have to wait until you reach Saudi Arabia to start preparing for ihram. In fact, the best preparation starts at home—especially for UK pilgrims flying from Heathrow, Manchester, or Birmingham.

Grooming and Ghusl - What to Do Before Ihram

Before putting on your ihram clothes, do a few basic grooming steps. Trim your nails. Remove underarm and pubic hair. Men should trim their moustache. This is Sunnah (the way of the Prophet), not compulsory. Then, perform **ghusl** (a full ritual bath) if you can, using unscented soap. If not possible, **wudu** (ablution) is enough. Many UK pilgrims do this at home before heading to the airport. Why? It’s easier and less stressful, especially if you have a long journey ahead.

Where UK Pilgrims Can Buy Ihram Clothing

You can find ihram sets in most UK cities. In London, check Islamic shops in Whitechapel or Green Street. Manchester and Birmingham have great options too. Or order online from trusted UK retailers. Look for a soft, breathable fabric—cheap sets often cause discomfort. If you’re unsure, our team at Noor Umrah Travels can recommend places to buy quality ihram and help you prepare your kit. Remember, you’ll need your own set for your journey from the UK.

Ihram Rules for Men - What to Wear and What to Avoid

For men, ihram rules are very specific. The clothing itself is simple, but there are clear restrictions that catch out many first-timers—especially from the UK where stitched clothing is the norm.

What Men Wear for Ihram - The Izar and Rida

Men must wear two pieces: the **izar** (a lower sheet wrapped around the waist) and the **rida** (an upper sheet draped over the shoulders). Both should be plain white, unstitched, and clean. No patterns. Sandals are allowed, but they must expose the ankle and top of the foot. No shoes, trainers, or socks are permitted while in ihram.

Ihram Rules That Apply Only to Men

Men face extra restrictions:

- No stitched or tailored clothing at all. That means no underwear, vests, or t-shirts under the sheets.
- No socks, hats, or any head covering—even a cap or a towel over your head isn’t allowed.
- No closed shoes—only open sandals.
- Money belts or pouches are fine, as they aren’t clothing.

Why these rules? They strip away status, pride, and show humility before Allah. Everyone looks the same—no outward sign of wealth or class.

ihram rules for men how to wear izar and rida correctly

Ihram Rules for Women - Clothing, Hijab and What to Avoid

Women’s ihram rules are different. You don’t have to wear the two white sheets. But there are still important rules to follow.

What Women Wear for Ihram

Women wear normal, loose, modest Islamic clothing. An abaya (long dress) in any colour is fine. Your clothes must cover your whole body except your face and hands. You must wear a hijab (headscarf). The key point: no need for special white clothing. Just make sure your outfit is loose, clean, and not see-through.

Ihram Restrictions That Apply Only to Women

- No **niqab** (face veil that touches the face).
- No gloves—your hands must stay uncovered.
- Your face must be uncovered, but you can drape a cloth loosely over it if you're around non-mahram men, as long as it doesn't touch your skin.
- No perfume, no heavy makeup, and avoid scented cosmetics.
- Choose a breathable abaya and a practical hijab—sports hijabs are great for comfort during Tawaf.

ihram rules for women modest clothing hijab face uncovered

How to Enter Ihram - The Step-by-Step Process

Ready to start your Umrah or Hajj? Here’s how to enter the state of ihram, step by step. This part matters—you can’t cross the Miqat (the boundary) without being in ihram.

The Six Steps to Enter Ihram Correctly

1. **Complete grooming**—trim nails and hair as needed.
2. **Perform ghusl** (full bath) or, if that’s not possible, wudu (ablution).
3. **Put on your ihram clothing**—for men, wrap the izar and rida; for women, dress in modest clothes.
4. **Pray two optional rakah** (units of prayer), reading Surah Al-Kafirun and Surah Al-Ikhlas.
5. **Make your niyyah** (intention) at the Miqat—say: "Labbayka Allahumma Umrah." (Bukhari 1549)
6. **Start reciting the Talbiyah**. Men say it loudly, women softly. (Muslim 1184)

Once you’ve made your niyyah and said the Talbiyah, you’re now in ihram. From this point, all ihram rules apply.

Understanding the Miqat - When UK Pilgrims Must Enter Ihram

The **Miqat** is the boundary you cannot cross without being in ihram. UK pilgrims flying direct to Jeddah will hear a Miqat announcement on the plane—usually 30-40 minutes before landing. Most put on ihram at Heathrow, Manchester, or Birmingham airports. The Miqat for UK flights is called Al-Juhfah. Don’t wait until you’re in the air if you’re worried about time—many of our clients dress at the airport, with their niyyah delayed until the pilot’s announcement. For full Talbiyah and other duas, see our Umrah packing checklist and Umrah guide.

Everything That Is Forbidden During Ihram

Here’s the heart of the matter: what’s **forbidden** in ihram? These rules apply to both Hajj and Umrah. Break them, and you may need to pay a penalty (fidyah). Let’s make this simple.

Ihram Rules That Apply to Everyone - Universal Prohibitions

1. No perfume, scented soap, cologne, or any fragrance on your body or clothes.

2. No cutting or trimming hair anywhere on your body.
3. No cutting or trimming nails.
4. No sexual relations, kissing, or intimate contact.
5. No marriage proposals, contracts, or wedding arrangements.
6. No hunting, killing, or helping to hunt land animals.
7. No uprooting or damaging plants within the Haram boundary.
8. No arguing, fighting, or using foul language. (Quran 2:197)

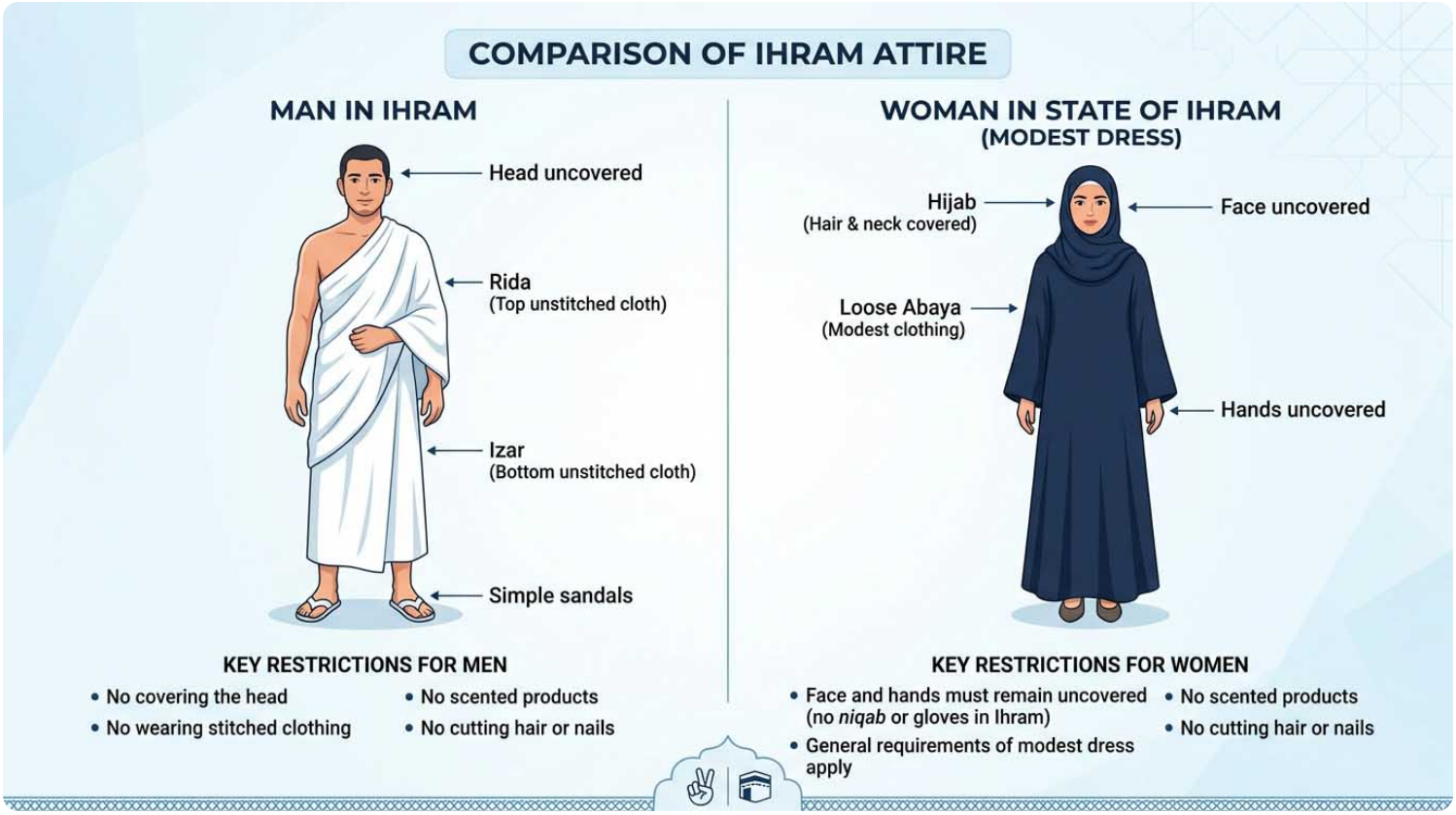
Additional Ihram Rules for Men and Women Separately

- **Men:** No stitched clothing, underwear, socks, or head covering. No closed shoes.
- **Women:** No niqab, no gloves, face and hands must be uncovered.

Table 1: Ihram Rules - Complete Prohibitions for Men and Women

Prohibition	Applies to Men	Applies to Women
Perfume or scented products	Yes	Yes
Cutting/trimming hair	Yes	Yes
Cutting/trimming nails	Yes	Yes
Sexual relations	Yes	Yes
Marriage proposals or contracts	Yes	Yes
Hunting/killing land animals	Yes	Yes
Damaging Haram plants	Yes	Yes
Arguing/fighting	Yes	Yes
Stitched/tailored clothing	Yes	No
Head covering	Yes	No
Closed shoes/socks	Yes	No
Underwear	Yes	No

Prohibition	Applies to Men	Applies to Women
Niqab (face veil)	No	Yes
Gloves	No	Yes



what is forbidden in ihram complete list of prohibited actions

What Happens If You Break an Ihram Rule - Fidyah Explained

So, what if you slip up and break one of the ihram rules? Don’t panic. Islam offers a way to make up for most mistakes: it’s called **fidyah** (compensation).

Ihram Rules and Penalties - The Three Fidyah Options

If you break an ihram rule (except for sexual relations, which has a separate ruling), you must do **one** of the following:

- **Fast for three days**
- **Feed six poor people** (about 1.5kg staple food per person)

- **Sacrifice a sheep or goat**

This is from the Quran: "...or an expiation: either fasting, or charity, or sacrifice..." (Quran 2:196). Hadith: The Prophet (SAW) told Ka’b ibn Ujrah to perform fidyah after violating an ihram rule (Bukhari 1840).

Accidental Mistakes vs Deliberate Violations

If you make a mistake by accident, there’s no sin—**but** fidyah is still required according to most scholars. If you break a rule on purpose, it’s a sin and fidyah is definitely due. Some real examples from our UK clients:

- Used scented soap by mistake? Wash it off, pay fidyah.
- Hair fell out while gently combing? If not deliberate, no fidyah.
- Accidentally sprayed perfumed deodorant? Wash area, pay fidyah.

Always check with your group imam if you’re unsure—every situation is different. And remember, it’s better to ask than to panic. Noor Umrah Travels guides are always here to help.

Personal Hygiene and Daily Life During Ihram - What Is Actually Allowed

Many UK pilgrims ask: what is allowed in ihram? Here are the biggest questions, answered clearly.

Hygiene in Ihram - Showering, Teeth and Grooming

Can you shower in ihram? Yes, you can shower or wash. Just use unscented soap and be gentle with your hair. The Prophet (SAW) poured water over his head while in ihram (Bukhari 1840).

Can you brush your teeth in ihram? Yes. Use a miswak or plain toothpaste. Avoid anything strongly scented.

Can you cut or pluck hair? No. Trimming, shaving, or plucking are all forbidden. The same goes for nails—don’t cut them until you exit ihram.

Clothing Questions in Ihram - Socks, Underwear and Changing Clothes

Can men wear socks or underwear in ihram? No. For men, both are forbidden. Women can wear both.

Can you change your ihram clothes? Yes. If your clothes get dirty, you can change into a clean set, as long as it follows ihram rules.

Everyday Activities in Ihram - Phone, Sleep, Food and Sunscreen

Can you use your phone in ihram? Yes. There’s no rule against devices. But try to keep your focus on worship.

Can you sleep in ihram? Yes. Sleeping doesn’t affect the state of ihram.

Can you eat and drink in ihram? Yes. Eat halal food as usual. Stay hydrated—it’s hot in Makkah.

Can you use deodorant or sunscreen? Only if it’s completely unscented. Always check labels carefully before your trip.

Can women wear coloured clothing in ihram? Yes. Any modest colour is fine—white is not required.

Common Ihram Rules Mistakes UK Pilgrims Should Avoid

Here are the 10 most common errors we’ve seen UK pilgrims make—so you don’t have to!

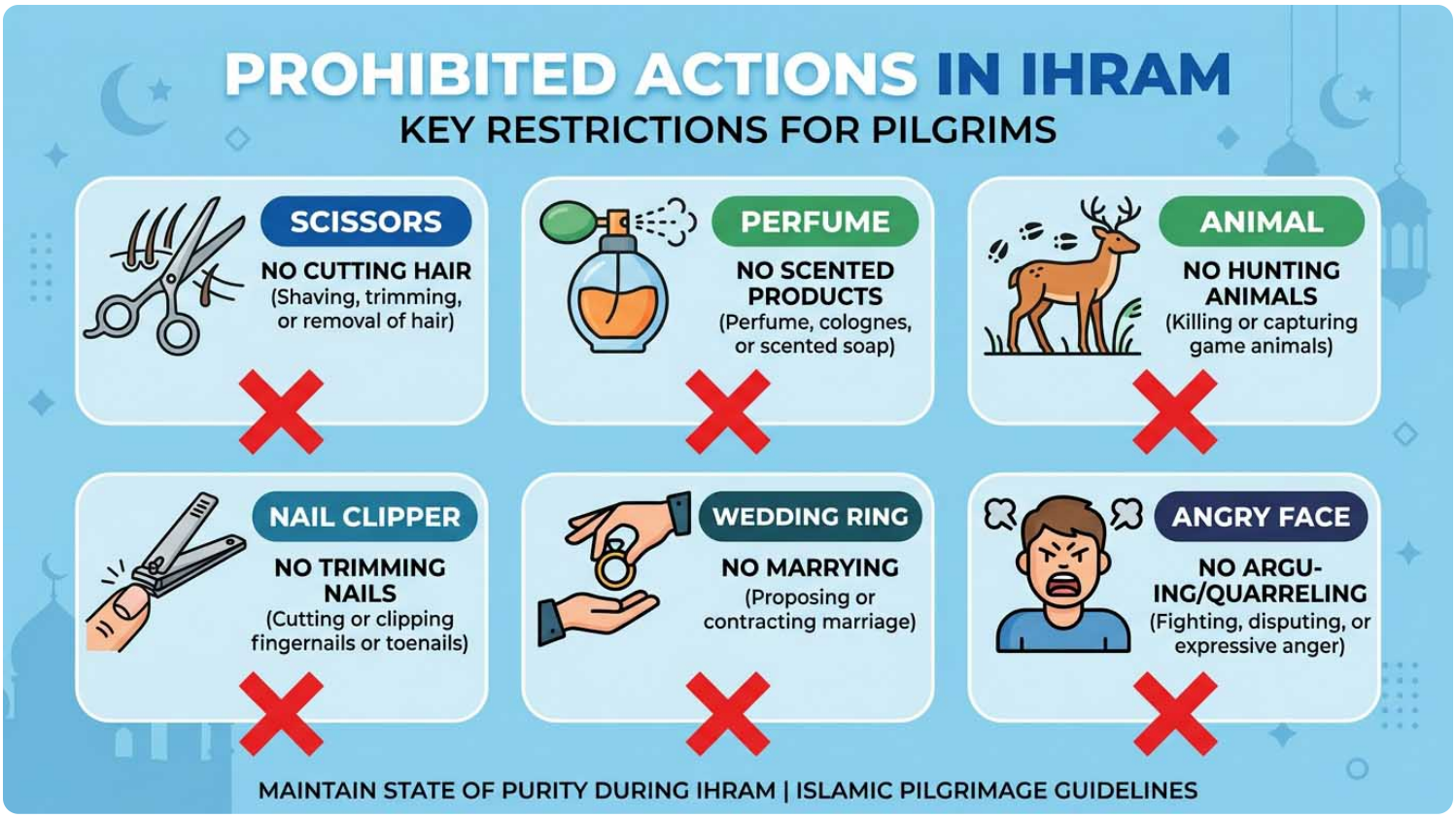
1. Crossing the Miqat boundary without entering ihram.
2. Men wearing underwear or socks under their sheets.
3. Using scented toiletries out of habit.
4. Women wearing a niqab (face veil) during ihram.
5. Not knowing the fidyah rules and panicking after a mistake.
6. Applying perfume before putting on ihram and then wearing it.
7. Men covering their head with a towel or blanket while sleeping.
8. Women thinking they must wear white only—any colour is fine.
9. Forgetting to start reciting the Talbiyah after making niyyah.
10. Delaying ihram and missing the Miqat announcement on the plane.

Ihram Rules at a Glance - Men vs Women Comparison Table

Here’s a side-by-side look at how the rules compare for men and women:

Table 2: Ihram Rules - Men vs Women Complete Comparison

Rule	Men	Women
Clothing	Two white unstitched sheets	Normal modest clothing (any colour)
Head	Cannot cover head	Must cover with hijab
Face	Not applicable	No niqab, face uncovered
Hands	No gloves	No gloves
Footwear	Sandals, ankle and foot top exposed	Any modest footwear
Underwear	Not allowed	Allowed
Socks	Not allowed	Allowed
Talbiyah	Recite loudly	Recite softly
Perfume	Forbidden	Forbidden
Hair and nails	Cannot cut	Cannot cut
Green markers in Sa'i	Jog lightly	Walk normally
Halq/Taqsir to exit ihram	Shave or trim	Trim only



ihram rules comparison men vs women clothing and restrictions

When Does the State of Ihram End?

For Umrah, your state of ihram ends after you complete Tawaf (circumambulation of the Kaaba), Sa'i (walking between Safa and Marwah), and Halq or Taqsir (shaving or trimming hair). For Hajj, ihram continues through additional rites in Mina, Arafat, and Muzdalifah. Once you finish these, all ihram restrictions are lifted. For full details on the Umrah rituals, see our step by step Umrah guide.

Practical Ihram Tips for UK Pilgrims

- Put on your ihram at home after ghusl. Then travel to Heathrow, Manchester, or Birmingham in your ihram—it saves time and stress.
- Pack a spare ihram set in your carry-on. If one set gets dirty, you're covered.
- Practise wrapping the izar and rida at home before you fly. This avoids embarrassing moments in the airport!
- Use a money belt or ihram belt to keep your lower sheet secure. It's not considered stitched clothing.
- Buy and pack only unscented toiletries. Check everything before you leave the UK.

- Listen carefully for the Miqat announcement on your flight. Make your niyyah as soon as you hear it.
- We’ve helped thousands of British pilgrims—our biggest tip is to learn the ihram rules before you leave. Don’t wait until you’re on the plane.

If you’re a first-timer, our Umrah guide is packed with more practical tips for UK travellers.

uk pilgrim wearing ihram at airport before umrah flight

FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions About Ihram

We get these questions from UK pilgrims every Umrah and Hajj season. Here are the answers you need, fast.

Is ghusl before ihram compulsory or just Sunnah?

Ghusl before ihram is Sunnah Mu'akkadah (strongly recommended), not compulsory. If you can’t do ghusl due to illness or travel, wudu is enough. The Prophet (peace be upon him) performed ghusl before entering ihram at the Miqat. Many UK pilgrims do ghusl at home before heading to the airport.

Can a woman in her period enter the state of ihram?

Yes. A menstruating woman CAN enter ihram, make her intention, and recite the Talbiyah. She does all rites except Tawaf, which she delays until purified. This is based on the hadith where the Prophet (SAW) told Aisha (RA) to do everything except Tawaf during her menses. (Bukhari 1650)

Do children have to follow ihram rules?

Children under the age of responsibility aren't held to ihram rules like adults. But parents are encouraged to dress them in ihram and teach the basics. If a child breaks a rule, there is no fidyah required. Many UK families use Umrah as a learning opportunity for their young ones.

Can you wear a money belt or pouch under your ihram?

Yes. Money belts, pouches, or shoulder bags are permitted for men and women. They're not considered stitched clothing in the prohibited sense. Most UK pilgrims carry their passport, phone, and cash this way. We strongly recommend it for security.

Can you look in a mirror while in ihram?

Yes. Looking in a mirror is allowed. The rule is against beautification or grooming, not checking your appearance. You can use a mirror to make sure your ihram is wrapped properly or for any practical reason.

Do ihram rules apply the same for Hajj and Umrah?

Yes, the rules are identical for both. The only difference is duration: for Umrah, ihram ends after Tawaf, Sa'i, and shaving or trimming. For Hajj, ihram lasts through additional rites at Mina, Arafat, and Muzdalifah.

What should you do if you miss the Miqat without entering ihram?

If you pass the Miqat by mistake, you should return to it and enter ihram from there. If that's impossible, enter ihram immediately and pay fidyah (sacrifice a sheep) as most scholars advise. Many UK pilgrims miss the announcement—don't be shy to ask your group leader for help.

Are elderly or disabled pilgrims exempt from any ihram rules?

Ihram prohibitions apply to all, regardless of age or ability. However, if an elderly or disabled pilgrim faces genuine hardship, they can use a wheelchair, get assistance, or use necessary medical items (even if scented)—then pay fidyah if needed. Always check with your group’s scholar for your specific case.

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Conclusion

If you’ve made it this far, you now know every essential ihram rule for men and women—what to wear, what’s forbidden, how to avoid mistakes, and what to do if something goes wrong. Every rule here is backed by Quran and authentic Hadith. And our advice comes from years of guiding UK pilgrims through the Umrah and Hajj process, from London to Manchester and beyond. Remember, the heart of ihram is spiritual purity and equality before Allah. If you need help planning your journey, our specialists at Noor Umrah Travels are here for you. **Ready to book your Umrah? Get a free quote from our team**. May Allah accept your pilgrimage and make your journey easy. Ameen.

Download: Free Printable Ihram Rules Checklist - Click to Download

Written by Noor Umrah Travels Team. Last Updated: March 2026.

Helpful next steps for UK pilgrims

If you want to turn this advice into a clear plan, the pages below will help you go one step further. They cover the wider rules, package choices, checklists, and practical travel points that usually come up after you finish a guide like this one.

- Hajj Packages UK 2026 This pillar page gives you the full background, key rules, and step-by-step context around this topic. It is the best place to go if you want the bigger picture before you make any travel decisions. It is especially helpful if you are looking for hajj packages uk.
- Non-Shifting Hajj Packages This page is useful when you want real options, package details, hotel information, and practical UK departure planning. It helps you compare what is available instead of staying at the research stage. It is especially helpful if you are looking for non shifting hajj packages uk.
- How Can You Get a Saudi eVisa from the UK? Complete Application Guide This supporting guide answers a closely related question and adds more detail, examples, or travel tips. It works well as your next read if you want a narrower answer after this main article. It is especially helpful if you are looking for Learn how to get a Saudi eVisa from the UK. Step-by-step guide covering requirements, fees, processing time, and travel tips.
- How to Apply for Umrah Visa from UK Without Mistakes: Full Online Form Guide, Price Breakdown & Approval Tips This supporting guide answers a closely related question and adds more detail, examples, or travel tips. It works well as your next read if you want a narrower answer after this main article. It is especially helpful if you are looking for Discover how to apply for Umrah visa from UK step-by-step. Learn prices, online form tips, Saudi waiver rules and approval advice for 2026.
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- Shifting Hajj Packages This page is useful when you want real options, package details, hotel information, and practical UK departure planning. It helps you compare what is available instead of staying at the research stage. It is especially helpful if you are looking for shifting hajj packages uk.

Reading a few of these pages together will give you a fuller view than relying on one article alone. That matters even more when you are comparing routes, costs, rituals, and timing from the UK.