

HAJJ JOURNEY

Essential Safety Instructions and
Travel Guidelines



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Author's Note

I am not a scholar. As I prepare for my Hajj journey in 2026, I am creating these notes so that others like me may also benefit from them.

For any matters related to religious rulings or guidance, I strongly encourage you to consult your local Aalim or qualified scholar. This is not a fiqh book, nor is it written by a scholar. There may be mistakes, and I welcome your corrections so that we can improve this together for the benefit of the Ummah.

I humbly request you to remember me in your precious duas. May Allah accept our Hajj, make it easy for us, and grant us a Hajj Maqbool.

Aameen.

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Introduction

The Hajj pilgrimage is one of life's most significant journeys, yet it often comes with countless questions that fill the minds of pilgrims. Where will we stay in Medina? How will we find our hotel? How will we manage to pray 40 prayers in congregation as the Imam instructed? These questions, and many more, create a whirlwind of confusion for intending pilgrims.

Many people spend hours searching YouTube videos, scrolling through Google results, joining multiple WhatsApp groups, and sitting with different advisors. Each person shares different advice, each video shows a different method, and soon you find yourself drowning in information but still unclear about what to actually do. Some advice contradicts other advice. Some methods seem easier but you're not sure if they're correct. The confusion only multiplies.

This is where our guidance comes in. Our goal is simple and clear: to eliminate your confusion permanently and provide crystal-clear understanding of every aspect of your journey. Everything shared in this guide is based on real, lived experience from the field—not theory, not hearsay, but practical knowledge gained through multiple Hajj seasons from 1444 to 1447 Hijri (2023-2026). We've witnessed what works, what doesn't, and most importantly, what keeps you safe.

Think of this guide as a trusted friend walking alongside you, pointing out the pitfalls before you stumble into them. Every instruction, every warning, every piece of advice comes from a place of genuine concern for your safety and the success of your sacred journey.

I. The Absolute Rule: Never Pick Up Items

Let me start with perhaps the most critical rule of your entire journey—one that many pilgrims don't realize the gravity of until it's too late.

The Incident That Changed Everything

In 2023, in Building Number 36 of the Aziziyah district, a devastating incident occurred that serves as a stark warning to all pilgrims. A fellow pilgrim was performing Tawaf around the Holy Kaaba when a bag fell at his feet. It seemed like an innocent moment—perhaps he thought he was being helpful, or maybe he acted on pure instinct. Whatever the reason, he picked up the bag.

But the story didn't end there. Perhaps in a moment of confusion, or maybe influenced by Satan's whispers as we believe, he walked outside the Mataf area with this bag. Then, compounding the situation, he took another bag and placed the first bag inside it. At that very moment, security personnel arrested him.

What happened next was swift and severe. A Qadi (Islamic judge) was brought in, along with a translator from Pakistan. The pilgrim explained his side of the story. The judge listened to everything. And then came the verdict: three years of imprisonment.

This wasn't a negotiable sentence. This wasn't a fine he could pay. Three full years. The impact was immediate and heartbreakingly. On the Day of Arafah—the most sacred day of Hajj—this pilgrim was brought to the plains of Arafat in his Ihram state, seated in a police van. He spent just one hour there, fulfilling only the bare minimum requirement. Then he was taken directly back to jail. No stoning ritual at Mina. No night under the stars at Muzdalifah. Nothing except that single obligatory hour at Arafat. He will remain in prison until 2026, when his three-year sentence completes.

CRITICAL WARNING: PICKING UP ITEMS

DO NOT pick up any item lying on the ground anywhere in Saudi Arabia—in Makkah, Madinah, or during your entire journey. This applies to everyone, everywhere, at all times.

Penalty: Up to 3 years imprisonment with no bail option

No exceptions: Even if you think you're being helpful. Even if it looks valuable. Even if it's in your way.

Understanding Why This Rule Exists

You might wonder: isn't it good to help? Isn't picking up someone's lost property a kind act? In most contexts, yes—but Saudi Arabia operates under a different security paradigm, especially in the holy cities where millions of pilgrims gather.

The government's position is straightforward and logical: "Who are you to pick it up? If someone lost their bag, won't they come back looking for it in the same place?" The security infrastructure is designed around this principle. They want every item to remain exactly where its owner left it or where it fell, so the owner can retrieve it.

Here's what you need to understand about your responsibility. If you see your own bag lying somewhere, you should absolutely pick it up—it's your property and your responsibility. But if it's someone else's bag, briefcase, phone, wallet, or any other item, your duty is crystal clear: leave it exactly where it is.

Now, you might be in a situation where you genuinely feel concerned. Perhaps you see an expensive item that might get damaged if left on the ground, or you worry someone might step on it. In such cases, there's only one acceptable course of action: look for security personnel. Throughout the

holy sites, you'll see police officers in their distinctive uniforms and security staff wearing identification jackets. Approach them immediately and point out the item. Let them handle it. This is not just acceptable—it's the right thing to do.

The Surveillance Reality

Many pilgrims have a misconception about the security cameras in Saudi Arabia. When you watch videos of Hajj on YouTube, you see cameras pointed at the Kaaba, showing the Tawaf, the minarets, and the general crowd. Those visible cameras represent approximately 1% of the actual surveillance system. The remaining 99% of cameras operate invisibly, creating a security net so comprehensive that, as we say, they could count the hairs in your nose if they wanted to.

This isn't meant to frighten you—it's meant to make you aware. The system is designed to keep millions of pilgrims safe. But it also means that every action is tracked. When you pick something up, it's recorded. When you put it in your pocket or bag, it's recorded. When you walk toward the exit, it's recorded. And by the time you reach your bus or hotel, security already knows exactly what happened.

The consequences are non-negotiable. If you hand the item to security, there's no punishment—you're helping the system work as designed. If you keep it, even with the best intentions, you face immediate arrest. And here's the crucial part that many don't realize: Saudi Arabia has no bail system for such offenses. You cannot call someone, you cannot arrange surety, you cannot use connections to get released. The legal system follows its course, and that course typically involves years of imprisonment.

Your Action	Outcome
Pick up your own item	Perfectly fine—it's your property
Pick up someone else's item and hand to security	No punishment—you're being helpful
Pick up someone else's item and keep it (even briefly)	Immediate arrest, 3 years imprisonment
Try to return it to your hotel "to be safe"	Same as above—considered theft

2. Transportation Safety: Taxis and Travel Protocols

Transportation in Saudi Arabia during Hajj involves navigating between your accommodation, the holy sites, and various locations for rituals and visits. Understanding the correct protocols isn't just about convenience—it's about safety, particularly for women travelers.

The Boarding and Exiting Sequence

When you're traveling with women in your family—whether your wife, mother, sister, or daughter—there's a specific sequence you must follow when using private taxis. This isn't arbitrary; it's rooted in protection and dignity.

When you hail a taxi and it stops for you, the man should enter the vehicle first. Only after he's seated should the women board. This might seem counterintuitive if you're used to letting women enter first as a sign of respect, but the reasoning is about security. With the man already inside, women are entering a space where their protector is already present.

The reverse happens when you reach your destination. Before the man exits, the women should get out first. Then the man exits last. This ensures that women are never alone in or around the vehicle without their male family member present. It's a simple protocol, but one that provides an extra layer of security in unfamiliar situations.

Payment: The Rule That Saves You Money

Here's a mistake that has cost many pilgrims dearly, and it stems from bringing habits from home to a different context. In India, we're accustomed to a particular sequence: we exit the auto or taxi first, then we pay the driver, and then we receive our change. This works fine at home because it's a shared cultural understanding.

In Saudi Arabia, you must reverse this sequence completely. Let's say your taxi fare is 70 or 80 Riyals, but you only have a 500 Riyal note. You hand it to the driver. Now—and this is critical—you remain seated in the vehicle until the driver counts out your change and places it in

your hand. Only after you've verified the amount and secured your money should you open the door to exit.

The reason is simple: approximately 99% of taxi drivers will give you correct change without any issue. They're honest, professional, and follow their job properly. But there's that 1% chance—that one driver in a hundred—who will take your 500 Riyals and the moment you step out of the car, he'll hit the accelerator and drive away. You'll be left standing on the street, hand outstretched, watching your money disappear into traffic.

This has happened. We've received phone calls from distraught pilgrims describing exactly this scenario. The feeling of helplessness is overwhelming—you don't speak Arabic fluently, you're not sure how to report it, and you're out 400+ Riyals that were supposed to last you for days.

The solution is preventive. Keep smaller denominations ready—10, 20, and 50 Riyal notes. If the fare is 80 Riyals, hand over 100 and you'll easily get 20 back. If you must use a larger note, follow the rule religiously: money in hand before feet on ground.

The Luggage Trap

Another common scenario catches pilgrims off guard, especially when they've been shopping. You've bought dates, gifts, souvenirs—perhaps 20 kilograms worth of items—and the driver has kindly placed everything in the trunk. You reach your destination. The driver stops. You pay him. You exit the vehicle. And then you walk to the back to get your luggage from the trunk.

But the driver is still in his seat. His hand is on the gear shift. And sometimes—not often, but sometimes—he simply drives away with all your purchases still locked in his trunk.

The correct approach is this: if your belongings are in the trunk, you have two options. Either remain in the vehicle until the driver physically gets out and opens the trunk for you, or explicitly ask him in English: "Please open the trunk." Wait for him to walk around, open it, and only then exit yourself. Better yet, stand near the trunk as he opens it, so you're right there as your belongings become accessible.

Never assume the sequence will work itself out. Never exit first and expect the driver to automatically open the trunk. That 1% chance of losing everything isn't worth the risk.

Women Traveling Without Mahram: Critical Guidelines

For women traveling without a male guardian (Mahram)—particularly those in the 45-65 age group who are permitted to perform Hajj without accompaniment—there are additional safety protocols you must follow.

The government buses that run regularly between Azizia and Haram Sharif are completely safe. Every bus has multiple security cameras recording constantly. These are official transport with trained drivers and full security systems. Women can ride these buses alone without any concern whatsoever.

However, private taxis are a different matter entirely. If you need to go somewhere by private taxi—perhaps for a Ziyarat (visit to historical sites) or for an Umrah from Masjid Aisha—never, ever sit in a taxi alone. This rule is absolute and non-negotiable.

Instead, coordinate with other women in your building before you travel. Have a conversation: "I'm planning to go tomorrow morning—who wants to come with me?" Form a group of at least three to four women. Alternatively, if you're at a taxi stand and you see a taxi that already has two or three other Hajj pilgrims inside, you can join that taxi. But boarding a private taxi completely alone is not acceptable.

Let me address something you'll inevitably hear. Every single year since 2023, the same rumor circulates through Aziziyah: "A woman got into a taxi alone and the driver kidnapped her." This story spreads like wildfire through WhatsApp groups, and well-meaning people forward it thinking they're doing Islamic duty by warning others.

The truth? This has never actually happened. Saudi Arabia's security infrastructure is far too sophisticated for such crimes to occur. Every taxi is registered, tracked, and monitored. Drivers undergo background checks. The surveillance system makes kidnapping essentially impossible.

What does happen occasionally is theft—a driver might steal money or goods. But actual kidnapping? No.

However—and this is important—the fact that kidnapping doesn't happen doesn't mean you should abandon caution. The precautions exist for good reason. They protect dignity, prevent uncomfortable situations, and eliminate even the small risks that do exist. So follow the group travel rule not because kidnapping is likely, but because it's the right and safe approach.

Taxi Safety Summary

Boarding Sequence: Man first, then women

Exit Sequence: Women first, then man

Payment Rule: Get change in hand BEFORE exiting

Luggage Rule: Driver must open trunk before you exit

Women Alone: Never in private taxis—always travel in groups of 3-4

3. Dress Code: Why Some Traditional Items Must Be Left Behind

The clothes and adornments we wear during Hajj might seem like a minor detail, but they can have serious consequences—both for your own safety and for the validity of others' worship. Let me explain two specific items that you should definitely avoid.

Glass Bangles: A Hidden Danger

Many women love wearing glass bangles. They're beautiful, they make a pleasant sound, and they're part of traditional dress in many cultures. But during Hajj, glass bangles create a genuine hazard that you need to understand.

Picture the scene during Tawaf. Thousands upon thousands of people are performing the circumambulation simultaneously. Bodies are pressed together. Movement is constant. In these conditions, glass bangles break—not might break, but will break. You won't even feel it happening most of the time. The pressure of the crowd, someone accidentally bumping your arm, the natural jostling of so many people in tight quarters—any of these can shatter glass bangles instantly.

When they break, the pieces fall into the Mataf, the area where everyone is walking barefoot or in thin sandals. Sharp glass shards scatter across the marble floor. Now imagine a pilgrim, deeply absorbed in their worship, steps on one of these pieces. The glass cuts their foot. Blood begins to flow.

Here's where it gets serious from a religious perspective. If blood flows from a wound and touches the skin, that person's Wudu (ritual ablution) is broken. But they're in the middle of Tawaf. They're concentrating on their prayers and supplications. They don't realize they're bleeding. They don't know their Wudu has become invalid. So they complete their entire Tawaf in a state without proper ablution.

What happens then? According to Islamic jurisprudence, their Tawaf is invalid. They will incur a penalty known as Dam—they'll have to sacrifice an animal as atonement. And who bears responsibility for this? The person whose glass bangles broke and caused the injury bears part of that responsibility in the sight of Allah.

You might think, "But I'll be careful. I won't let them break." The reality is that in those crowds, you have no control. The crush of people isn't something you can manage through carefulness. It's not about being clumsy—it's about physics and pressure and the sheer number of bodies in limited space.

The solution is beautifully simple: wear any other type of bangles you like. Metal bangles, plastic bangles, wooden bangles—anything except glass. You can still honor your traditions and your sense of beauty while eliminating this particular risk.

Anklets with Bells: The Sound That Carries

The second item to avoid is anklets with bells—the kind that make a jingling "chham chham" sound with every step, like the ones we put on small children. These might seem harmless, but they violate an important principle of Islamic conduct during Hajj.

When you're in your hotel or accommodation building, remember that you're sharing space with many people. Your room might house your husband or father or brother—your Mahram—but the room next door, the room across the hall, the room upstairs, these have men who are non-Mahram to you. They're not your blood relatives, not your husband. In Islamic terms, they are "Ghair Mahram."

Now imagine you're sleeping in your room at night. You turn over in bed. Your anklets jingle. That sound travels through the walls. A man in the next room, who should be focused on rest and worship, instead becomes aware of your movement. He didn't want this awareness. He wasn't seeking it. But the sound created it anyway.

This is what Islamic scholars call an unnecessary cause of temptation or distraction. The jingling of anklets indicates presence, indicates movement, and draws attention to the wearer in a way that's not appropriate in the context of Hajj where everyone should be focused on their relationship with Allah. Similarly, the clicking and clinking of glass bangles serves as an auditory signal of a woman's presence and movement.

The scholars who have studied these matters have concluded that during Hajj, in this sacred context where we're trying to minimize all distractions and maintain maximum focus on worship, these sound-making adornments should be avoided. You can wear silent anklets if you wish, or no anklets at all. But the ones with bells should stay home.

4. Elevator Safety: The Lesson Written in Blood

In 2024, a tragedy occurred that every single pilgrim needs to know about. It's a story I wish I didn't have to tell, but it's too important to omit. What I'm about to describe actually happened, and it cost lives.

What Happened

A pilgrim returned to their accommodation building. Tired from a long day, perhaps thinking about the prayers they'd just completed or the meals they were looking forward to, they approached the elevator. They pressed the call button. They heard the mechanical sounds indicating movement. The doors opened.

And then, out of pure habit—the habit we've all developed from using elevators countless times in our lives—they stepped forward. But the elevator hadn't actually arrived. The doors had malfunctioned and opened anyway. There was just empty shaft in front of them. They fell. In this particular incident, two or three people had already stepped forward before anyone realized what was happening.

Out of those who fell, two people died. It's difficult to write those words, but it's the truth. Two pilgrims who had traveled thousands of miles to worship Allah, who had saved and prepared and dreamed of this journey, died in an instant due to an elevator malfunction and habitual movement.

Why This Happens

You need to understand how deeply ingrained our elevator habits are. We approach elevators dozens of times in our lives. We press the button. We wait. The door opens. We step forward. This sequence has happened so many times that it becomes automatic—our feet start moving before our brain consciously processes what we're seeing.

Maybe you're on your phone. Maybe you're having a conversation with a family member behind you. Maybe you're reciting the Quran in your head. Whatever the case, your attention is divided, and your body runs on autopilot.

In modern buildings, elevators almost never malfunction this way. Safety systems usually prevent doors from opening when the cabin isn't present. But "almost never" isn't the same as "never." And in a country hosting millions of pilgrims using thousands of buildings built across different time periods with varying maintenance standards, that rare malfunction can and does occur.

The Lifesaving Habit

Here's what you need to make into an unbreakable habit, starting right now, for every elevator you use for the rest of your life:

When you press the elevator call button, say "Bismillah" (In the name of Allah). This isn't superstition—it's remembrance of Allah before beginning an action, as the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught us.

When the doors begin to open, say "Bismillah" again, along with the short traveler's supplication. Why treat elevator rides as travel? Because you're moving between levels—it's a journey, however brief.

Most importantly: as those doors open, pause. Look with your eyes. Verify that you can actually see the floor of the elevator cabin. Confirm that there's a solid surface for your foot to land on. Only then—only after visual confirmation—take your step forward.

This takes maybe two seconds. Two seconds that could save your life.

A Matter of Responsibility

Some people, upon hearing this advice, might think: "Well, that's just being paranoid. Modern elevators are safe." And they're mostly right—modern elevators are incredibly safe. But your life isn't a statistic. You're not a probability. You're a person with family waiting at home, with obligations unfulfilled, with years of life ahead of you.

The Quran teaches us that life is a trust from Allah. Protecting that trust isn't paranoia—it's responsibility. Just as performing Hajj is an obligation, just as praying five times daily is an

obligation, protecting the life Allah gave you is also an obligation. Taking two seconds to verify your safety isn't excessive caution. It's fulfilling your duty to Allah and to your loved ones.

Make this habit universal. Don't just do it during Hajj. Do it in hotels, shopping malls, office buildings, anywhere you encounter elevators. Teach your children. Teach your parents. Make "Bismillah and look before stepping" as automatic as "look both ways before crossing the street."

5. The Wudu Challenge: Prayer While Traveling

One of the questions that troubles many pilgrims is practical: how do I maintain Wudu (ablution) and pray during the long flight to Saudi Arabia? This is a legitimate concern. Flights from India to Jeddah typically cross multiple prayer times—you might miss Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib, and even Isha depending on your departure time and route.

Understanding Tayammum: The Dry Ablution

Islamic law recognizes that there are situations where performing the full ritual ablution with water becomes genuinely difficult or impossible. For these situations, Allah in His mercy has provided an alternative: Tayammum, or dry ablution using clean earth or a substitute for it.

Tayammum is permitted in specific circumstances. First, when there is no water available at all. Second, when water exists but in insufficient quantity—imagine you're stranded with only one bottle of water and no access to more. You need that water for drinking, not for washing. Third, when water exists but you cannot access it—like a well full of water but you have no rope or bucket to draw it. Fourth, during travel where you cannot practically access water to perform proper ablution.

The airplane situation fits this fourth category. Yes, there is water in the airplane bathroom. But that water is limited—it's calculated for basic handwashing and minimal use by hundreds of passengers. It's not intended or sufficient for 400-500 people to perform complete Wudu with its requirements of washing face, arms, head wiping, and feet washing. Moreover, the confined space, the queue of people waiting, and the limited water pressure make proper Wudu practically very difficult.

The Spray Bottle Controversy

In 2024, a Mufti (Islamic scholar) released a video demonstrating how to perform Wudu using a small spray bottle. The video went viral. By some estimates, approximately 200,000 spray bottles were sold in Saudi Arabia that Hajj season specifically for this purpose. The idea seemed perfect: fill

a spray bottle, use it to wet your body parts, perform Wudu on the airplane without needing much water.

But the video sparked a scholarly debate. Some scholars supported the method, saying it was practical and fulfilled the requirements. Others opposed it, arguing that it cut corners on the Sunnah (Prophetic method) and could lead to incomplete ablution. The debate revealed an important principle: just because something is technically possible doesn't mean it should be promoted widely.

Here's why promoting spray bottle Wudu to everyone is problematic. First, you cannot carry liquid in your hand baggage through airport security. If you say it's for drinking, they'll respond that airlines provide water on board. If you insist, they'll likely confiscate it. Second, even if you bring an empty bottle and fill it on the plane, not everyone is skilled enough to use it properly. Your elderly mother, your grandmother, perhaps even you—are you confident you can spray accurately enough that water reaches everywhere it needs to reach? Can you ensure it doesn't spill all over your clothes and belongings?

The bigger problem is that when something is promoted as a general solution, people start to rely on it in situations where better alternatives exist. A weak or sick person might need glucose through an IV drip—that's medical necessity. But you wouldn't use a glucose drip every day when you're perfectly healthy and can eat normal food. Similarly, Tayammum exists for genuine necessity, not for routine convenience.

The Proper Approach: Preparing Tayammum Cloth

The better, more reliable method involves preparation before you travel. Here's what you do:

Purchase Multani Mitti (Fuller's Earth)—a natural clay product available in most markets. Take a clean handkerchief or small cotton cloth. Mix the Multani Mitti with water in a container until it forms a paste. Soak your cloth completely in this mixture, ensuring it absorbs thoroughly. Then place it in a well-ventilated area—under a fan or in sunlight—until it dries completely.

What you now have is a cloth impregnated with clean earth, dried and portable. When you need to perform Tayammum, simply place this cloth on your knee or lap and perform the ritual according to the proper method: strike your hands lightly on the cloth, blow on them, wipe your face, then strike again and wipe your arms up to the elbows.

This method has several advantages. The cloth passes through airport security without any issues—unlike a lump of clay which might be seen as a potential weapon, this is clearly just a piece of fabric. It's clean, neat, and compact. It doesn't leak or spill. And it can be used by multiple people if needed.

When and How to Use It

During your flight, monitor prayer times using your phone or by asking the cabin crew for the current time. When a prayer time arrives and you're still in the air, here's the best approach:

Go to the airplane bathroom. Perform Kulli (rinsing the mouth) and clean your nose with water—these Sunnah actions you can still do even if full Wudu isn't practical. Then return to your seat, take out your prepared Tayammum cloth, and perform the dry ablution. Then pray your Salah right there in your seat, facing as close to the Qibla direction as you can determine.

We did exactly this during our 2023 Hajj journey. Our flight departed at a time when Zuhr and Asr prayers would both need to be performed in the air. We prepared our clothes beforehand, performed Tayammum when the time came, and prayed comfortably. Several other passengers saw what we were doing, asked about it, and we taught them the method. They too prayed with proper ablution during the flight.

The Emergency-Only Principle

Now, if you happen to be very skilled and experienced, and you manage to bring an empty spray bottle and fill it aboard the flight, using it for Wudu is not prohibited. But—and this is crucial—such methods should remain for personal use in genuine emergencies, not promoted as general solutions.

Here's an example of genuine emergency use: You arrive for Friday Jummah prayer in Makkah. You reach the prayer area at 7 AM because that's what's needed to find space. The prayer starts at 12 PM. During those five hours, you're packed so tightly into the crowd that police won't let anyone move. You've been sitting in one position for hours. Then your Wudu breaks—maybe you pass gas, maybe you sleep briefly, whatever the cause.

Now you face a crisis. You cannot reach a bathroom—the crowd is too dense and security won't permit movement. Your Wudu is broken and prayer time is approaching. In this specific, genuine emergency, having a spray bottle with water, using it discreetly under a large shawl or sheet for privacy, and performing ablution right there—this makes sense. It's a true emergency requiring an unusual solution.

But this scenario is rare. It shouldn't be your go-to method. It shouldn't be taught as "the way to do Wudu on Hajj." It should remain what it actually is: an emergency backup for situations where normal methods are truly impossible.

The Danger of Normalizing Exceptions

Islamic law is beautiful in its flexibility—it provides alternatives for hardship. But when we normalize these alternatives and start using them routinely, we gradually abandon the original, superior methods. Today you use a spray bottle instead of full Wudu because it's convenient. Tomorrow you might skip something else because you've gotten used to shortcuts. Satan works through this gradual erosion of practice.

Keep emergency measures for emergencies. Use Tayammum when needed. But don't convince yourself that these alternatives are equivalent to proper ablution when proper ablution is actually available. And definitely don't promote methods to masses of people who might misunderstand or misuse them.

6. Support and Resources Throughout Your Journey

Hajj is overwhelming. Even with all the preparation in the world, you will face moments of confusion, stress, or uncertainty. That's completely normal and expected. What's important is that you don't face these moments alone.

Before You Depart

We will provide you with comprehensive video materials covering every aspect of your journey. These videos will be delivered directly to your mobile device—you don't need to hunt for them on YouTube or wonder if you're watching the right information. Everything will be organized, sequential, and specific to your departure group.

The training will be thorough. We will walk through scenarios step by step: how to recognize your hotel, how to find your room, how to navigate between prayer areas, how to keep track of your group during rituals. By the time you board your flight, these procedures should feel familiar, not foreign.

During Your Journey

Things will go wrong sometimes. Despite all training, despite all precautions, there are variables we cannot control. Perhaps you get separated from your group in the massive crowds at Arafat. Perhaps your suitcase doesn't arrive with you in Madinah. Perhaps you miss your bus back to the hotel after Taraweeh prayer. These situations happen to someone every single year.

When they happen to you—and they might—remember that help is available. You have our contact information. We've walked these paths multiple times. We know the systems, we know the locations, we speak enough Arabic to communicate with officials, and most importantly, we care about getting you back on track.

If you're lost, call us and describe what you can see around you. We'll guide you to landmarks you can reach. If your luggage is missing, we'll walk you through the proper procedure for filing a claim and tracking it down—and yes, it will be found, though it might take a few hours or even a day. If

you're confused about any ritual or timing, ask before you act. Better to take five minutes to clarify than to perform something incorrectly and have to compensate for it later.

The Community Approach

You're not just traveling as an individual. You're part of a community of pilgrims. Look out for each other. If you see someone struggling with language barriers, help translate. If you see an elderly person having difficulty, offer assistance. If you see someone who looks lost, ask if they need help finding their group.

This community care is part of the spirit of Hajj itself. We're all guests in Allah's house. We're all brothers and sisters in faith. The strongest Hajj experiences come not from perfect execution of rituals, but from the bonds formed when pilgrims help each other through challenges.

Lost and Found Systems

The Saudi government has excellent lost and found systems. If you lose something, report it immediately to the nearest help desk or police station. If you find something, turn it in immediately—remember our earlier discussion about not keeping found items. The system works, but only if people use it properly.

For your own belongings, take preventive measures. Keep a written list of your luggage in your pocket—if bags go missing, you can describe them accurately. Put identification tags inside your bags, not just outside (external tags can fall off). Keep photocopies of important documents separate from the originals. These simple steps prevent many problems.

7. Final Wisdom and Perspective

As we close this chapter, I want to leave you with a perspective that might help frame everything we've discussed.

Hajj is an obligation from Allah, one of the five pillars of Islam. Performing it correctly, with sincerity and proper understanding, is crucial. But Hajj is not just about executing a checklist of rituals. It's about transformation, about recognizing your place before Allah, about connecting with millions of fellow believers across time and space who have made this same journey.

Every rule we've discussed—don't pick up items, follow taxi protocols, avoid glass bangles, verify elevators, maintain proper Wudu—these aren't arbitrary restrictions designed to make your life difficult. Each one protects something valuable. Some protect your physical safety. Some protect your legal standing. Some protect the validity of worship for yourself and others. Some protect the dignity and focus that the sacred environment deserves.

When you understand the "why" behind each rule, following it becomes not a burden but a form of worship itself. You're not just avoiding glass bangles to tick a box—you're protecting other pilgrims from injury and preserving the sanctity of their rituals. You're not just checking elevators to be paranoid—you're honoring the life Allah entrusted to you. You're not just following taxi protocols mechanically—you're implementing wisdom that protects families and prevents problems.

The Balance of Trust and Preparation

Some people approach Hajj with the attitude: "Allah will take care of everything, so why worry?" This is half of the truth. Yes, Allah absolutely will take care of you. His mercy and protection surround every sincere pilgrim. But Allah also gave you intelligence, experience, and guidance. He expects you to use these gifts.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught us a beautiful principle when a man asked whether he should tie his camel or trust in Allah. The Prophet responded: "Tie your camel and trust in Allah." Preparation and trust aren't opposites—they work together.

So prepare thoroughly. Learn the rules. Follow the protocols. Take precautions. And then, having done your part, trust that Allah will handle what's beyond your control. This is the balanced approach of Islamic teaching.

Remember Your Purpose

In the midst of managing luggage, catching buses, navigating crowds, and following regulations, don't lose sight of why you're there. You're not on a holiday. You're not on a cultural tour. You're fulfilling a divine obligation, standing in places where prophets stood, performing rituals that connect you directly to Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon them both).

When frustrations arise—and they will—take a breath and remember the bigger picture. When you're tired and hot and thirsty during the Day of Arafat, remember that this discomfort is temporary but the reward is eternal. When you're nervous about getting lost or making mistakes, remember that Allah judges intentions, and your intention is pure worship.

The practical guidance in this manual exists to help you fulfill that spiritual purpose more effectively. Think of it as removing obstacles from your path so you can focus on what truly matters: your relationship with Allah.

Quick Reference Checklist

Before Departure

- Prepare Tayammum cloth with Multani Mitti (dried and ready)
- Pack appropriate jewelry (no glass bangles, no noisy anklets)
- Organize money into small denominations (10, 20, 50 Riyal notes)
- If traveling without Mahram, coordinate travel groups with other women
- Put identification inside luggage, not just outside tags
- Make photocopies of all important documents

During Travel

- Say Bismillah before every action, especially elevators
- Never pick up any item from the ground—not even to help
- Follow taxi boarding sequence: men first, then women
- Get change in hand before exiting any taxi
- Verify driver opens trunk before collecting luggage
- Women: always travel in groups of 3-4 in private taxis

At Holy Sites

- Verify elevator cabin is present before stepping in
- Keep track of group leaders' phone numbers
- Stay hydrated but don't overdrink before long rituals
- Protect your Wudu status—plan bathroom breaks strategically

- If lost, find security personnel immediately—they will help

General Principles

Situation	Correct Response
Found item on ground	Leave it or give to security
Lost from your group	Call support numbers immediately
Wudu needed on flight	Use prepared Tayammum cloth
Luggage missing	Report to airline desk with bag details
Feel overwhelmed	Pause, breathe, remember your purpose
Someone needs help	Assist according to your ability

Closing Thoughts

May Allah accept your Hajj, keep you safe throughout your journey, and return you home with sins forgiven and status elevated. Every person who guided you to this knowledge, every person who shared their experiences to keep you safe, every person who prays for your success—they're all part of the beautiful interconnection that is the Muslim Ummah.

Travel with confidence, not anxiety. You're prepared, you're informed, and you're under Allah's protection. The rules and guidelines we've covered aren't meant to frighten you—they're meant to empower you to navigate your journey wisely and safely.

Remember: Hajj transforms people. You will return differently from how you left. Make that transformation as positive as possible by combining spiritual sincerity with practical wisdom. Don't just perform rituals—understand them. Don't just follow rules—appreciate them. Don't just survive the journey—embrace it.

Your Hajj is waiting. May it be the experience of a lifetime and the turning point in your path toward Allah.

This guide is based on experiences from Hajj 1444-1447 (2023-2026) and is continuously updated. Next chapter will cover: Accommodation details, daily schedules, navigating Madinah and Makkah, and performing rituals step by step.

Ameen. May your journey be blessed.

References

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