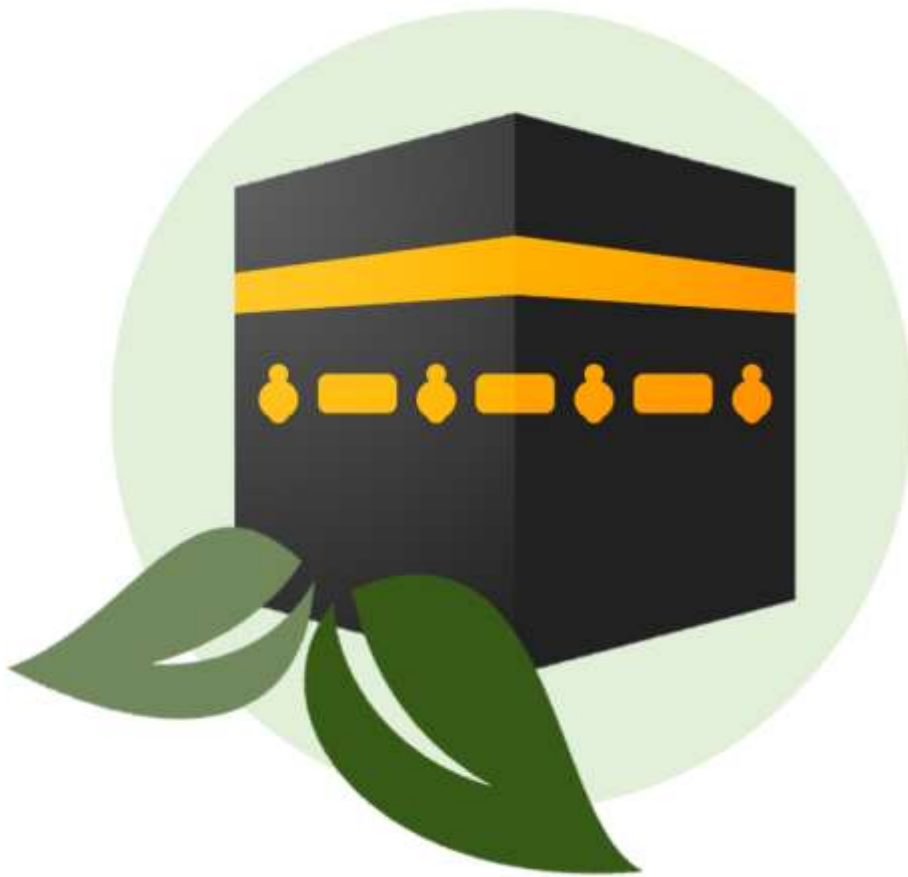


EcoHajj Guide for Individual Pilgrims



EcoHajj | A Greener Pilgrimage

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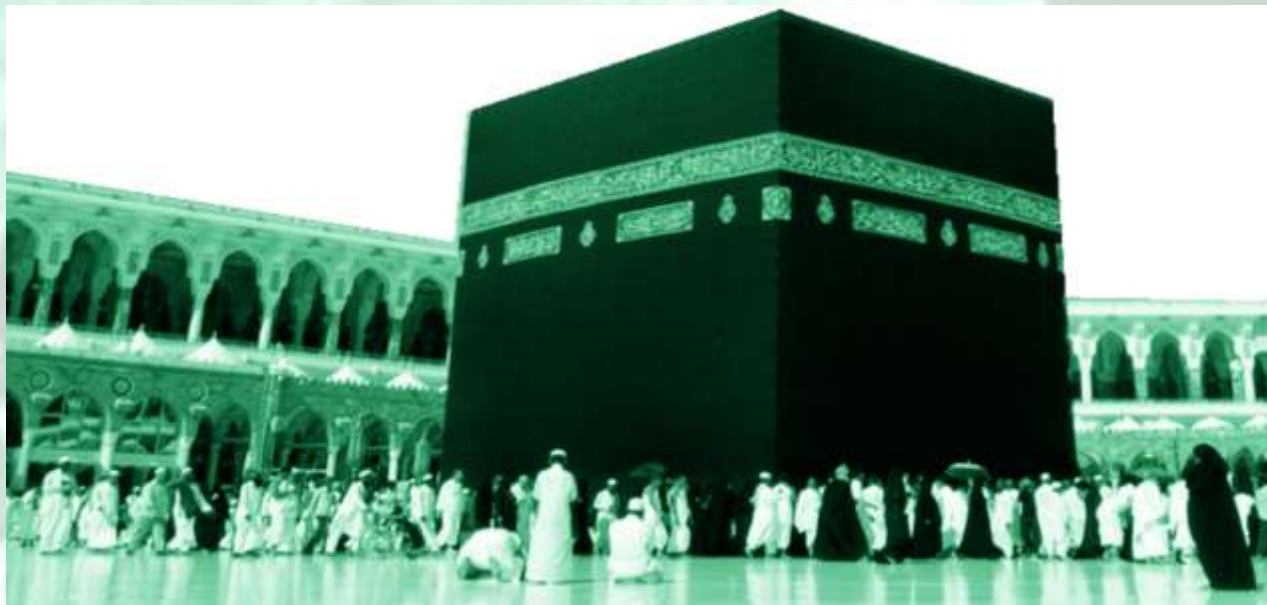
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Introduction

This EcoHajj booklet highlights ways in which individual pilgrims can perform a greener and eco-friendlier Hajj and Umrah.

A pilgrim who is performing Hajj or Umrah has an individual responsibility to look after the environment. Every person will answer for their own actions and the choices they made.

For pilgrims, the responsibility is even more serious as they perform their Hajj and Umrah with the hope that Allah swt will accept their pilgrimage.

This guide will discuss Islam and the Environment, give advice and suggestions for individual pilgrims and tips on what to pack.



The Environment

"Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of that which men's hands have done." (30:41)

Caring for the environment is an important teaching of Islam. As guardians of the earth, the responsibility to care for the earth lies with every person.

The reality of harming the environment requires us to rethink our lifestyles and actions and we must reflect on the impact of our actions.

The Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam and is an annual pilgrimage to Makkah. It is a mandatory religious duty for Muslims which must be carried out at least once in a lifetime by every adult Muslim who is physically and financially capable of undertaking the journey.

Nearly three million Muslims from many Muslim countries perform Hajj each year, which means that the Hajj has an enormous environmental footprint.

During Hajj, huge quantities of waste are generated, including plastic bottles, packaging and food.

Other impacts are of water use and water wastage, and transporting vehicles causing air pollution.

The direct result of all this pollution damages the health of the pilgrims and causes litter which chokes public infrastructures and are an eyesore.

The Hajj can be sustainable if the government and the pilgrims behave in an environmental friendly manner and avoid different types of pollution.



The Qur'an

The Qur'an is the ultimate green-guide. Environment protection is such an important aspect of Islam, that there are many verses in the Qur'an that deal with the environment and green issues.

Being stewards of the Earth, it is the responsibility of every individual, not just Muslims, to care for the environment. "And it is He (God) who has made you successors (*khala'ifa*) upon the earth" (6:165). The word *Khalifa* can mean deputy, guardian and 'friend of the Earth.'

In terms of wasting resources, the Qur'an states, "O children of Adam! ... waste not by excess, for Allah loves not those who waste." (7:31)



The Green Prophet (pbuh)

Today, with the increasing awareness of the dangers facing our planet and the interest in going green, a reflection on the guidance of the Prophet (pbuh) in this area proves helpful and relevant.

In many *hadith*, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) dealt with environmental issues, such as reducing waste, conservation, sustainability and recycling.

The Prophet of Islam (pbuh) used to repair his own shoes, sew his clothes and carry out all such household chores done without complaint or want for more. Reusing, repairing and recycling things instead of always buying new is a sign of prophetic character.



Water

Water is the most valuable resource in the the world. God creates and sustains life through water.

In the Qur'an, God uses the analogy of life and death for Muslims to recognise the value of water. *“Allah has sent down rain from the sky and given life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness. Indeed, in that is a sign for a people who listen.”* 16:65

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) advised a companion against wasting water for *wudhu*, "...even if you were on the banks of a flowing river.”

When performing Hajj or Umrah, wasting water becomes even more unacceptable.



Plastic

To save our world for future generations, try to avoid all plastic use.

The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Cleanliness is half of faith." He also said, "Removing harmful things from the road is an act of charity."

By staying far away from disposable commodities (like plastic bottles, food wrapping, cups and straws), keeping the environment clean and avoiding litter, we are fulfilling a religious obligation.

Allah swt has placed human beings on the earth as His representatives to look after the earth, not to destroy it.



Conservation

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) encouraged the planting of trees and the cultivation of agriculture, saying, “There is none amongst the Muslims who plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it, but is regarded as charity for him.”

Islam is against the cutting or destruction of plants and trees unnecessarily, the Prophet (pbuh) said: “He who cuts a lote-tree [without justification], Allah will send him to Hellfire.”

This hadith can be linked to the devastation caused by deforestation in many countries which causes soil erosion and kills the biodiversity of the earth.



Food

The Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) prohibit wasting food. The Qur'an states, *"....He (Allah) likes not those who waste."* 6:141

For Muslims, it is not permissible to throw the food in the bin. Doing so is considered as disregard for the blessings of Allah and a failure to comply with His orders. The Prophet Mohammad's (pbuh) said, "No man fills a container worse than his stomach. A few morsels that keep his back upright are sufficient for him...." In other words, over-eating is simply not allowed.

Muslims should show gratefulness and appreciation to Allah swt by not wasting food and sharing.



Individual Pilgrims

This section highlights ways in which individual pilgrims can perform a greener and eco-friendlier Hajj and Umrah.

A pilgrim who is performing Hajj or Umrah has an individual responsibility to look after the environment.

Every person will answer for their own actions and the choices they made. For pilgrims, the responsibility is even more serious as they perform their Hajj and Umrah with the hope that Allah swt will accept their pilgrimage.

The following sections give advice on how to reduce waste.



Water

Water is the most valuable resource in the world. Wasting water is not allowed in Islam. When performing Hajj or Umrah, it becomes even more unacceptable.

Below are ways in which water can be conserved.

1. Finish your Water



When drinking from plastic bottles, pilgrims can ensure that they drink or use all of the water in the bottle.

Many people drink only some of the water and throw the rest in the bin. This should be avoided, if possible.

2. Re-usable Bottles



Re-filling a re-usable bottle, made from metal or glass, and keeping it with you, can substantially reduce the need for plastic bottles.

Many eco-friendly bottles keep the water cool throughout the day.

3. Wudhu



Learning to perform *wudhu* from a bottle can help to reduce the amount of waste water.

The Prophet (pbuh) performed his wudhu using only around 750ml, which is the size of an average small water bottle. He performed ghusl with no more than 1.5ltrs of water!



4. Taking a Shower

When taking a shower, either in your hotel room, or in Mina during Hajj, a person should be conscious of the amount of water they are using, and the time they spend washing.

Quicker showers means less wasting of water.

5. Zam-Zam

Zam-Zam is available throughout the *Haramain*, in Makkah and Madinah.



A good habit to get into is to refill your bottle every time you visit either *masjid* to pray.

This will also reduce the use of disposable plastic bottles and the plastic disposable cups used in the *masjid*.

6. Shut your tap!

Don't leave the tap running whilst performing *wudhu*, or brushing your teeth.



Litres of water are wasted when taps are left running whilst being used, or when left unattended. Be sure to close the tap tightly when finished.

Food

The Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) prohibit wasting food. There are a number of ways in which food waste can be avoided and reduced by pilgrims during Hajj.

7. Finish your Food

When eating meals, a person can ensure that he or she finishes their portion of food.

Leaving food which is half-eaten and unlikely to be consumed by anyone else, should be avoided.



8. Sharing is Caring

Many times, especially during the days of Hajj in Mina, one portion of food can be large enough to share between 2-3 people.

If you are with friends or family, try to share the food to prevent waste.



9. Don't Overeat!

Overeating due to gluttony is strictly prohibited in Islam. The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Nothing is worse than a person who fills his stomach... it should be: one-third for food, one-third for water, and one-third for air."

In other words, no-one should stuff themselves!



Plastic

The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Cleanliness is half of faith." Therefore, by keeping your environment clean, not using plastics and avoiding litter, we are fulfilling a religious obligation.

10. Avoid Plastic Bags



Re-use plastic bags or buy alternative reusable bags made of cloth. Plastic bags are the by far the biggest source of pollution in the world, as they do not bio-degrade.

The simplest solution is to take reusable cloth bags with you when you go shopping during Hajj or Umrah.

11. Avoid Plastic Utensils



The *sunnah* is to eat with your hands! Single-use plastic forks, knives, spoons and straws should be avoided wherever possible. Pack your own utensils.

Be like Ertuğrul Gazi and bring your own spoon!

12. Avoid Littering



One of the most apparent sights during Hajj and Umrah is the vast amount of litter. From food waste to plastic bottles, from used nappies to cut hair, litter is everywhere!

As a responsible Muslim pilgrim, avoid adding to the problem of litter and make sure that you discard your rubbish properly.

General Advice

There are many other aspects to being eco-friendly, sustainable and environmentally greener. Below are some general tips.



13. Put your lights off!

Get into the habit of putting off your hotel room lights, and any other electrical devices, when you leave the room.

Saving electricity goes towards saving energy.



14. Re-use your towels

By hanging your towels and re-using them, you can help to reduce the amount of energy and water hotels use to wash and dry the towels and linen.

3 million pilgrims can end up using a lot of towels!

15. Buy eco-friendly products

Try and buy sustainable products that provide environmental benefit over their whole life cycle, from manufacture till disposal.

There are many bio-degradable and sustainable products available.





16. Recycling *Ihrams*

Male pilgrims should try and borrow *Ihram* sheets from friends and family, instead of buying brand new *Ihrams*.

This is a cost-effective way of recycling, reducing the environmental impact of manufacturing and gaining reward by donating an *Ihram*.

17. A Walking Hajj!

If you are fit and able, consider walking certain parts of the Hajj routes.



By walking between the Hajj sites, you will be reducing your carbon footprint in terms of vehicle pollution.

However, please discuss with your Tour Operator which routes are easier to walk, and avoid any extreme hardship.

18. Book with an EcoHajj Tour Operator

There are a number of Hajj and Umrah Tour Operators who are registered members of EcoHajj and have committed to providing a greener pilgrimage.



Please check our website for a list of our EcoHajj members.

What to Pack

Being a responsible pilgrim and minimizing your carbon footprint starts long before you get your Hajj or Umrah Visa! It also extends to what you pack.

Here are a few key packing suggestions for a more eco-friendly and greener pilgrimage.

1. Pack Light



The weight and amount of luggage you pack increases the weight of the plane and the fuel it will burn, which in turn impacts the amount of CO2 emitted. Packing a smaller bag lowers emissions and makes your life easier when carrying it around.

Less is more when packing for Hajj and Umrah. Many pilgrims take far too

2. Buy a Reusable Bottle



There are many benefits to bringing a reusable water bottle with you on a trip. Re-filling a bottle made from metal or glass, and keeping it with you, can substantially reduce the need for plastic bottles which is undoubtedly good for the environment.

Many eco-friendly bottles keep the water cool throughout the day, which means carrying a reusable water bottle encourages more water consumption.

Many Hajj and Umrah pilgrims suffer from dehydration and fatigue.

3. Get a Solar Charger



Charge your mobile phone and other devices with a portable solar charger. Solar power can give your gadgets an energy boost, and reduce the amount of electricity you use.

During the days of Hajj, whilst in Mina and Arafat, solar powered chargers can be really useful especially when there's relatively little access to sockets.

4. Reusable Utensils



Instead of reaching for the plastic fork or spoon, bring reusable utensils. This will seriously reduce your use of one-time plastics.

Either metal cutlery or try buying a set of Bamboo utensils, which are 100% biodegradable.

If you buy a set, with a fork, spoon and a knife, you can easily wash them before use.

5. Ethical Clothing



The factory production of clothes is one of the biggest causes of pollution in the world. Clothes manufacturing is also notorious for poor labour conditions, especially in developing nations.

Consider purchasing your *Ihram* and clothing for your Hajj and Umrah trip that is made from sustainable materials and with ethical working conditions.

6. Carrying a Day-Bag

Buying groceries, souvenirs, or clothing while at Hajj or Umrah? Take a light day-bag or backpack with you. Not only will it make your life easier by carrying all your things in one place, it reduces your use of plastic bags, one of the biggest culprits of ocean pollution.



Sadly, Middle-Eastern countries produce a huge volume of plastic bags which end up as litter on the street, in the oceans and rivers, or in landfill.

Whilst performing Hajj and Umrah, it is better for pilgrims to avoid plastic bags and in this way, maximise your chances of an accepted pilgrimage!

7. Eco-friendly Toiletries

Similar to reusable utensils, you might also want to consider eco-friendly toiletries, such as, a biodegradable toothbrush, shampoo bars, soaps, lotions and sunscreens that are organic and are 100% vegetarian. Also, reusable plastic bottles for shower gels and shampoo and bamboo cotton buds, the list goes on.



There are a huge number of eco-conscious companies providing ethical and sustainable products.

Hajj and Umrah should be a spiritual journey as well as a physical one.

What to Pack Checklist

- 1. Pack Light
- 2. Reusable Bottle
- 3. Solar Charger
- 4. Reusable Utensils
- 5. Ethical Clothing
- 6. Day-Bag
- 7. Eco-friendly Toiletries
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____
- 11. _____
- 12. _____
- 13. _____
- 14. _____