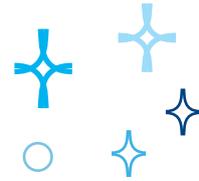


# Ramadan

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar; it lasts for 29 or 30 days and it spans from one sighting of the crescent moon to the next. Ramadan is a very holy month for **Muslims**.



## Why Does Ramadan Begin on a Different Date Each Year?

To understand why Ramadan begins on a different date in the UK each year, we must first look at the calendar that is used. Many countries (including the UK) track dates using the Gregorian calendar. This is a **solar calendar** and each year in the Gregorian calendar has 365 or 366 days. Unlike the Gregorian calendar, the Islamic calendar is a **lunar calendar**. This means that each year has 354 or 355 days. Therefore, Ramadan begins on a slightly different Gregorian date each year.



## Fasting

Ramadan is the time of the year when many Muslims choose to fast. This means that they must go without any kind of food or drink from sunrise to sunset each day, no matter where in the world they live or what the weather is like in their country.

Many Muslims wake up before the sun has risen to eat a meal called Suhur. Then, they do not eat or drink at all throughout the day until Iftar, which is an evening meal that is eaten after the sun has set. In summer, this can often mean that some Muslims experience scorching temperatures and 16 hours of daylight without being able to drink even a single sip of water.

Fasting is believed to strengthen a Muslim's faith. This is because they turn to God for support throughout their daily struggles. It also gives Muslims a greater understanding of what life is like for those people around the world who have no choice but to be hungry and thirsty every day.



## Reading the Qur'an

As Ramadan is such a holy time for Muslims, many choose to read the whole of the **Qur'an** during the month. Many Muslims do this as part of their extra evening prayers.



## Charity

Many Muslims do extra acts of charity during Ramadan. Some people choose to help their local community while others donate money from their monthly income to charities around the world.

## Eid al-Fitr

The end of the month of Ramadan is marked by a special holiday called Eid al-Fitr. On Eid al-Fitr, many Muslims gather at their local mosque with family and friends. It is a joyous celebration; people often give and receive gifts and enjoy a large feast together to mark the end of a month of fasting.

### Glossary:

**lunar calendar:** A dating system that uses the monthly cycle of the Moon's phases to track the progression of time.

**Muslims:** Followers of the religion of Islam.

**Qur'an:** The holy book of the religion of Islam.

**solar calendar:** A dating system that uses the movement of the Earth (and its position in the Solar System as it orbits the Sun) to track the progression of time.

# Questions

1. What is fasting believed to do? Tick **two**.

- make it easier for Muslims to tolerate hot weather
- strengthen a Muslim's faith
- support Muslims in the local community
- give Muslims greater empathy for others

2. What happens at the end of Ramadan? Tick one.

- the Qur'an
- Eid al-Fitr
- fasting
- charity

3. Look at the section of the text called **Fasting**.

Find and copy one word that means 'very hot'.

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4. Fill in the missing words.

Unlike the \_\_\_\_\_ calendar, the Islamic calendar is a \_\_\_\_\_ calendar.

5. What meal is eaten by many Muslims before sunrise during Ramadan?

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6. Summarise what you have learnt about Ramadan from this text using 30 words or fewer.

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7. Discuss why fasting can be difficult for Muslims during the summer.

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8. Explain why Ramadan could be seen as a good time to do extra acts of charity.

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# Answers

1. What is fasting believed to do? Tick **two**.

- make it easier for Muslims to tolerate hot weather
- strengthen a Muslim's faith**
- support Muslims in the local community
- give Muslims greater empathy for others**

2. What happens at the end of Ramadan? Tick one.

- the Qur'an
- Eid al-Fitr**
- fasting
- charity

3. Look at the section of the text called **Fasting**.

Find and copy one word that means 'very hot'.

**scorching**

4. Fill in the missing words.

Unlike the **Gregorian** calendar, the Islamic calendar is a **lunar** calendar.

5. What meal is eaten by many Muslims before sunrise during Ramadan?

**Many Muslims wake up before the sun has risen to eat a meal called Suhur.**

6. Summarise what you have learnt about Ramadan from this text using 30 words or fewer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and it lasts for 29 or 30 days. It is a time for Muslims to fast and do charitable things.**

7. Discuss why fasting can be difficult for Muslims during the summer.

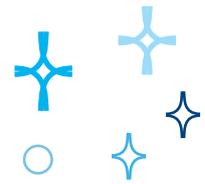
**Pupils' own responses, such as: Fasting can be difficult for Muslims during the summer because there can be scorching temperatures and 16 hours of daylight without them being able to drink even a single sip of water. That must be hard to do.**

8. Explain why Ramadan could be seen as a good time to do extra acts of charity.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Ramadan could be seen as a good time to do extra acts of charity because fasting Muslims become very aware of the experiences of those around the world who are hungry. It is likely to be on their mind that they would like to help them and they could be more likely to remember to do so.**

# Ramadan

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. It is an especially holy month for **Muslims** and many Muslims complete unique actions during Ramadan to strengthen their faith. Ramadan lasts for 29 or 30 days and it spans from one sighting of the crescent moon to the next.



## Understanding the Date of Ramadan

To understand why Ramadan begins on a different date in the UK each year, we must first look at the calendar that is used. Many countries (including the UK) track dates using the Gregorian calendar, which is a **solar calendar** with each year having 365 or 366 days. The Islamic calendar, unlike the Gregorian calendar, is a **lunar calendar**. This means that each year has 354 or 355 days. Therefore, Ramadan begins on a slightly different Gregorian date each year.

## Sawm

Ramadan is the time of the year when many Muslims fast; this means that they must go without any kind of food or drink from sunrise to sunset each day. Many Muslims wake up before the sun has risen to eat a meal called Suhur. Then, they do not eat or drink at all throughout the day until Iftar, which is an evening meal that is eaten after the sun has set. In summer, this can often mean that some Muslims experience scorching temperatures and 16 hours of daylight without a single sip of water.

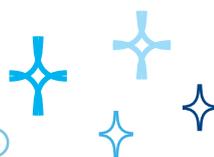
Fasting is believed to strengthen a Muslim's faith as they turn to God for

## The Five Pillars of Islam

There are five basic acts that all Muslims should do as part of their faith; these are known as the Five Pillars. They are given this name because they are the parts of life that keep a Muslim's faith strong, just as the sturdy pillars of a building keep the building upright. The Five Pillars are:

- ✦ shahada. This is the declaration that 'there is no god but God' and that 'Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) is the messenger of God';
- ✦ salat. This is daily prayer;
- ✦ zakat. This means almsgiving, which usually involves giving money to charity;
- ✦ sawm. Especially observed during Ramadan, this means fasting;
- ✦ hajj. This is a religious journey to the city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

support throughout their daily struggles. It also gives Muslims greater empathy for those who have no choice but to experience hunger and thirst every day.



## Reading the Qur'an

As Ramadan is such a special and holy month for Muslims, many take the opportunity to read the whole of the **Qur'an** during the month. Many Muslims choose to do this as part of their extra evening prayers.



## Zakat

Many Muslims choose to do extra acts of charity during Ramadan and they may do this on a local, national or international level. Some people choose to help their local community while others donate money from their monthly income to charities around the world.

### Glossary:

**lunar calendar:** A dating system that uses the monthly cycle of the Moon's phases to track the progression of time.

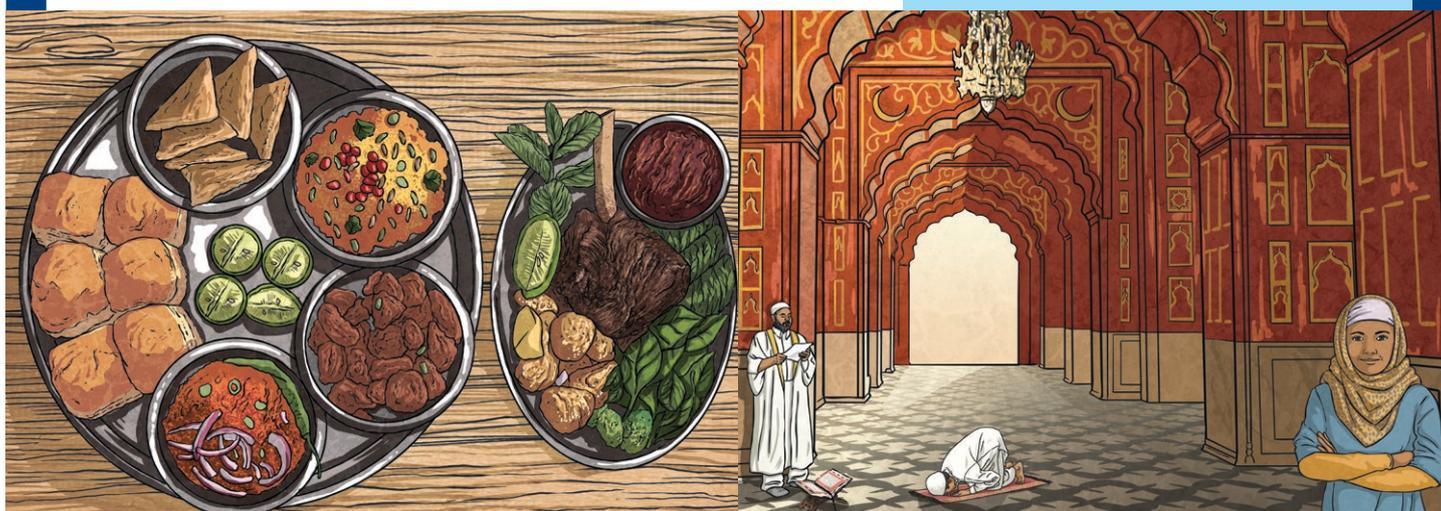
**Muslims:** Followers of the religion of Islam.

**Qur'an:** The holy book of the religion of Islam.

**solar calendar:** A dating system that uses the movement of the Earth (and its position in the Solar System as it orbits the Sun) to track the progression of time.

## Ending Ramadan

The end of the month of Ramadan is marked by a special holiday called Eid al-Fitr. On Eid al-Fitr, many Muslims gather at their local mosque with family and friends. It is a joyous celebration, where people often give and receive gifts and enjoy a large feast together to mark the end of a month of fasting.



# Questions

1. How long does Ramadan last for? Tick one.

- 29 or 30 days  
 30 or 31 days  
 354 or 355 days  
 365 or 366 days

2. Draw **four** lines and match each word to the correct synonym or definition.

sawm

zakat

Suhr

Qur'an

almsgiving

a meal eaten before sunrise

fasting

the Islamic holy book

3. **It is a joyous celebration...**

How else could the author have written this phrase?

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4. Look at the section called **Reading the Qur'an**.

Find and copy one word that means the same as 'additional'.

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5. Which calendar has 354 or 355 days in each year?

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6. Summarise what you have learnt about Ramadan using 20 words or fewer.

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7. Explain how a Muslim's experience of sawm can change depending on when Ramadan falls.

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8. Compare a local act of charity that a Muslim could complete during Ramadan with an international act of charity. Which would be easier to complete and why?

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9. 'I think that Muslims must look forward to Eid al-Fitr during Ramadan.'

Give **two** reasons that this statement could be true and explain your answers.

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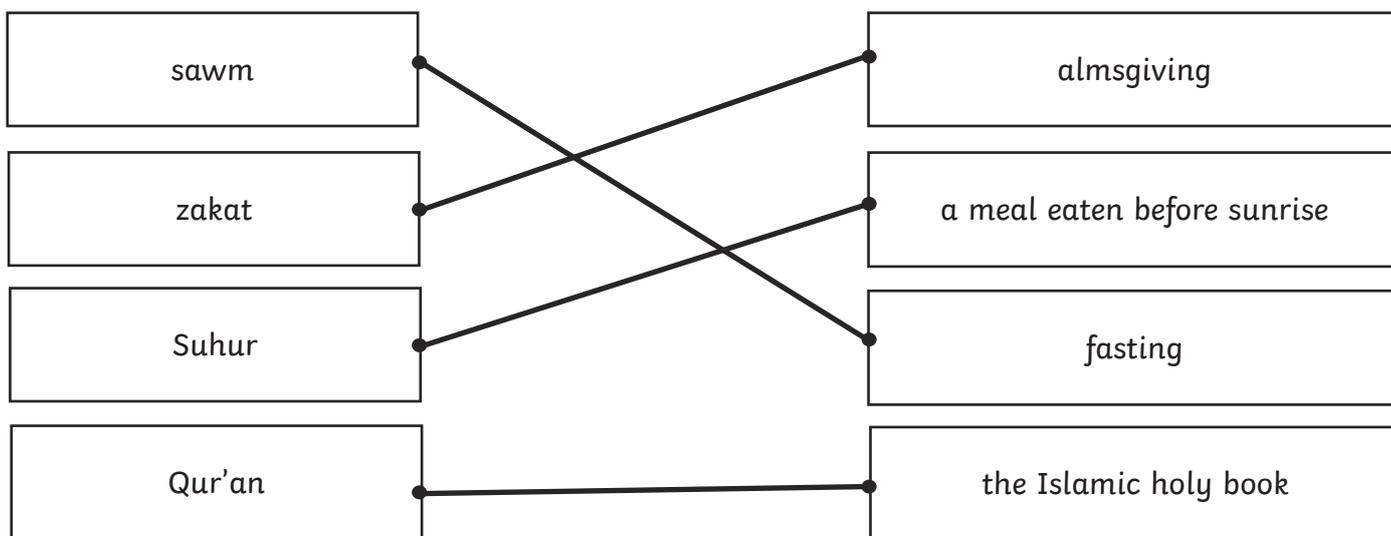
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# Answers

1. How long does Ramadan last for? Tick one.

- 29 or 30 days**  
 30 or 31 days  
 354 or 355 days  
 365 or 366 days

2. Draw **four** lines and match each word to the correct synonym or definition.



3. **It is a joyous celebration...**

How else could the author have written this phrase?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: It is a happy time.**

4. Look at the section called **Reading the Qur'an**.

Find and copy one word that means the same as 'additional'.

**extra**

5. Which calendar has 354 or 355 days in each year?

**Accept either 'the Islamic calendar' or 'the lunar calendar'.**

6. Summarise what you have learnt about Ramadan using 20 words or fewer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. During this time, Muslims fast and do charitable things.**

7. Explain how a Muslim's experience of sawm can change depending on when Ramadan falls.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Ramadan can sometimes begin in summer when the weather is very hot. However, when fasting, Muslims cannot drink even a sip of water during the day. This must be even more difficult in summer than it is in the winter.**

8. Compare a local act of charity that a Muslim could complete during Ramadan with an international act of charity. Which would be easier to complete and why?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: A local act of charity could be giving food to a local food bank. An international act of charity could be donating money to help those in need who live in other countries. It would probably be easier to donate the money internationally because that can be done without leaving the house.**

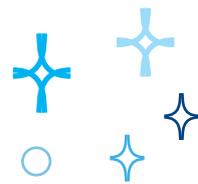
9. 'I think that Muslims must look forward to Eid al-Fitr during Ramadan.'

Give **two** reasons that this statement could be true and explain your answers.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: This statement could be true because the text says that Eid al-Fitr is a joyous celebration so it must be something that people like to take part in. It could also be true because Eid al-Fitr marks the end of a month of fasting, which some people may find to be a relief.**

# Ramadan

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. It is an especially holy month for Muslims (followers of Islam) and many Muslims observe unique practices during Ramadan to strengthen their faith. Ramadan lasts for 29 or 30 days and spans from one sighting of the crescent moon to the next.



## Understanding the Date of Ramadan

To understand why Ramadan occurs on a different date in the UK each year, we must first look at the calendar that is used. Many countries, including the UK, track dates using the Gregorian calendar. The Gregorian calendar is a solar calendar that uses the movement of the Earth (and its position in the Solar System as it orbits the Sun) to track the progression of time. When using a solar calendar, each year consists of 365 or 366 days. The Islamic calendar, unlike the Gregorian calendar, is a lunar calendar. This means that it uses the monthly cycle of the Moon's phases to track the progression of time. Due to this, each year of the lunar calendar consists of 354 or 355 days.

Due to this distinct difference, each year of the Islamic calendar is slightly shorter than each year of the typical calendar used in the UK. This means that Ramadan begins on a slightly different Gregorian date each year. This is the reason why Ramadan can sometimes begin during the winter (when the number of daylight hours per day can be as few as eight) or during summer (when there can be over 16 hours of daylight per day) and this remarkable difference can significantly affect Muslims and their religious practices during Ramadan.



## The Five Pillars of Islam

There are five basic acts that are considered to be mandatory in Islam: these are known as the Five Pillars. They are given this name because they are the aspects of life which, when strong, create a steady foundation for a Muslim's faith; this is just like how the sturdy pillars of a building keep the building upright. The Five Pillars are:

- ✦ shahada - the profession of faith and the declaration that 'there is no god but God' and that 'Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) is the messenger of God';
- ✦ salat - prayer;
- ✦ zakat - charity;
- ✦ sawm - fasting;
- ✦ hajj - pilgrimage.

## Sawm

Ramadan is the time of the year when many Muslims pay particular attention to observing the fourth pillar (fasting); this means that they must go without any kind of food or drink from sunrise to sunset each day. Many Muslims wake up exceptionally early in the morning (before the sun has risen) to eat a pre-dawn meal called Suhur; then, they do not eat or drink at all throughout the day until Iftar - an evening meal after the sun has set, which is often shared with family and friends. In the height of summer, this can often mean that Muslims experience scorching temperatures and 16 hours of daylight without a single sip of water. Doing this is believed to strengthen a Muslim's faith as they turn to God for support throughout their daily struggles. It also gives Muslims greater empathy for those who have no choice but to experience hunger and thirst every day.

## Reading the Qur'an

With Ramadan being such a special and holy month for Muslims, many take the opportunity to read the whole of the Qur'an (Islamic holy book) during the month. Many Muslims choose to do this as part of their Tarawih, which are additional evening prayers that are often undertaken at mosques or in homes during Ramadan.



## Zakat

Many Muslims choose to undertake extra acts of compassion and charity during Ramadan; they may do this on a local, national or international level. Some people choose to help their local community while others donate money from their monthly income to charities around the world.

## Ending Ramadan

The end of the month of Ramadan is marked by a special holiday called Eid al-Fitr; the term 'al-fitr' translates into English to mean 'the breaking of the fast'. On Eid al-Fitr, many Muslims gather at their local mosque with family and friends. It is a joyous celebration, where people often exchange gifts and enjoy a large feast together to mark the end of a month of fasting.

# Questions

1. What is sawm? Tick all that apply.

- one of the pillars of Islam
- another word for 'prayer'
- fasting
- something that happens during Ramadan

2. What does the term 'al-Fitr' mean when translated into English? Tick one.

- the fasting in Ramadan
- the breaking of the fast
- the ending of Ramadan
- the breaking of the almsgiving

3. Which word from the first paragraph of the text means the same as 'unlike anything else'?

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4. Why hasn't the author included the date that Ramadan begins on every year within the text?

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5. Which calendar is shorter: the Gregorian calendar or the Islamic calendar?

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6. 'It is easier to take part in sawm when Ramadan falls in winter.'

Do you think this statement is true? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

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7. Discuss why some may argue that Ramadan is the perfect time to increase zakat.

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8. Discuss which of the Five Pillars of Islam you believe would be the most challenging to observe and give a reason why.

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9. Explain why you think that the author explains about the Five Pillars of Islam before discussing what happens during Ramadan.

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10. Comment on how the celebration of Eid al-Fitr as discussed in the text would be impacted by social distancing.

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# Answers

1. What is sawm? Tick all that apply.

- one of the pillars of Islam**
- another word for 'prayer'
- fasting**
- something that happens during Ramadan**

2. What does the term 'al-Fitr' mean when translated into English? Tick one.

- the fasting in Ramadan
- the breaking of the fast**
- the ending of Ramadan
- the breaking of the almsgiving

3. Which word from the first paragraph of the text means the same as 'unlike anything else'?

**The word that means 'unlike anything else' in the first paragraph is 'unique'.**

4. Why hasn't the author included the date that Ramadan begins on every year within the text?

**The author hasn't included the date that Ramadan begins every year because the date is different every year due to the different calendar used.**

5. Which calendar is shorter: the Gregorian calendar or the Islamic calendar?

**The Islamic calendar is shorter than the Gregorian calendar.**

6. 'It is easier to take part in sawm when Ramadan falls in winter.'

Do you think this statement is true? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that this might be true because the text gives facts that show that daylight hours can double in summer compared to in winter and it must be harder to fast for double the length of time during summer months.**

7. Discuss why some may argue that Ramadan is the perfect time to increase zakat.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: Some may argue that Ramadan is the perfect time to increase zakat because Muslims who are fasting may become aware of how much they are struggling to go without food and this may make them want to donate money to help those who have no end to their hunger in sight.**

8. Discuss which of the Five Pillars of Islam you believe would be the most challenging to observe and give a reason why.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think the most difficult of the Five Pillars to observe would be sawm (fasting) because it must be really hard to go all day during Ramadan without eating and drinking.**

9. Explain why you think that the author explains about the Five Pillars of Islam before discussing what happens during Ramadan.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the author explains the Five Pillars of Islam before talking about Ramadan so that the reader understands why Muslims might fast during Ramadan when many other religions do not have this as part of their faith. Explaining the Five Pillars first makes it clear that this is a key part of Islam.**

10. Comment on how the celebration of Eid al-Fitr as discussed in the text would be impacted by social distancing.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: The text says that many Muslims gather to enjoy a large feast together to celebrate Eid al-Fitr but they would not be able to do this because of social distancing. I think that there may be many smaller feasts within bubbles instead.**