

HIJAB

الحجاب

JURISPRUDENCE

LEVEL 2

MAḤRAM AND NON-MAḤRAM

In Islam, people are divided into two categories:

- Maḥram
- Non-maḥram

MAḤRAM

If two people of the opposite gender are maḥram to one another, it means they do not need to observe Ḥijab in front of one another, and they are like brother and sister in that they can touch, hug etc...



PEOPLE WHO ARE MAḤRAM FOR MEN	PEOPLE WHO ARE MAḤRAM FOR WOMEN
All men	All women
Mother	Father
Daughters	Sons
Wife	Husband
Aunts	Uncles
Nieces	Nephews
Step-daughters	Step-sons
Grandmothers, great-grandmothers etc...	Grandfathers, great-grandfathers etc...
Grand-daughters, great grand-daughters etc....	Grandsons, great grand-sons etc...
Wife's mother	Husband's father

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Know the categories of Maḥram and Non-Maḥram and the levels in the Maḥram category
- Know the wājib and mustaḥab dress for men
- Know the wajib and mustaḥab dress for women
- Know that lustful looks are Ḥarām for both men and women
- Limits of Interaction between Male & Female
- Limits of Online Interaction
- Things not allowed between Male & Female e..g Shaking Hands, Joking etc

Rules of Ḥijāb

In previous lessons, we learnt about the concept of hijab and its importance in the individual's life as well as in the society we live in.

In this lesson we will look at what kind of clothes both men and women must wear and those that are recommended to wear, in order to protect each other's respect and dignity. This is because men and women often mix at work, at school or in society in general, and observing Hijab leads to less temptation and corruption.

NON-MAḤRAM

If a person does not fall into any of the above categories, they are maḥram and it means that Ḥijāb must be observed with that person. This means that a man cannot touch or be in a private place with a woman if she is not in the above categories. Similarly, a woman must wear Ḥijāb in front of any man who is not in one of the above categories. You may have noticed that cousins are not one of the categories, meaning that once we reach the age of puberty, we must observe the rules of Ḥijāb with our cousins of the opposite gender.

We must also remember that although the above people are maḥram, one is not permitted to expose their private parts to them. We must also try to dress decently at all times even in front of our maḥram.

DRESS FOR MEN

In Islam, men and women must dress and act in a certain way. In the Qur'an, Allah (SWT) says with regard to men:

Memorisation Activity

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَعْضُوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ
أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

“And say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their private parts: that will make for greater purity for them: And Allah is well acquainted with all that they do” (24:30)

- » The general rule here is that it is wājib for men to cover their private parts from everyone except in emergency situations. This applies to both maḥram and non-maḥram people except one's lawful wife.
- » It is mustaḥab for men to cover the chest, the thighs and other parts that men usually cover from non-maḥram women who are in their presence. As for covering the other parts such as the head, face, and hands, it is not necessary.
- » Men should also not wear tight fitting clothes that will possibly cause the members of the opposite gender to look at them with lust.

DRESS FOR WOMEN

Memorisation Activity

وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ
وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ
عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ

“And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their private parts; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty...” (24:30)

- » The general rule is that it is wājib the entire body of a woman, with the exception of the face and hands up to the wrist, is covered from non-maḥram men. The clothes used must cover the shape and contours of the body as well. It is not enough to only cover the skin.
- » It is mustaḥab for women to wear clothing that will not attract the opposite gender...For example, wearing bright and attractive colours which will attract the opposite gender should be avoided.

In general, we should remember that both men and women should not wear clothing with the intention of tempting others or getting attention from the opposite gender.

RULES OF LOOKING

In Islam, it is forbidden to look at the opposite gender with a lustful intention. This applies to both men and women, but especially to men.

The Holy Qur'an specifically covers this issue for both men and women. The āyāt are referred to in the above section. Please ensure that you memorize them.

It is narrated from Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (as):

“An evil glance is one of the poisonous arrows of Satan. Many of such glances becomes a cause of prolonged jealousy.”

It is also narrated that:

“Those who look at a non-maḥram woman with an evil intention and fill their eyes with this sight (that is they look for a long time) Allah will, on the day of Qiyāmah fill (pierce) their eyes with burning rods. They will continue in this way till Allah completes the hearing of the cases of all the people. Only after that will He order them to be thrown into Hell.”

This rule applies to women also. The Prophet (saw) said:

“The wrath of Allah is very severe upon the married woman who apart from her husband sees another non-maḥram man with a prolonged glance. When this woman does this, Allah the mighty invalidates all her good deeds and does not give her any rewards.”

It is important to remember that looking at a person of the opposite gender without any lustful intention is not ḥarām. However, a look with a lustful intention is a sin and can lead to many harmful effects to a person.

Therefore, when we are in an environment where there are members of the opposite gender, we should be careful about our looks and make sure that we are not 'looking with a bad intention.

Discussion Scenario

1. Sabira, fully covered but wearing tight jeans and a tight shirt with a scarf and sandals, goes to her friend's birthday party where her family has invited her cousins, both male and female. Does she meet the requirements of the wājib Ḥijāb dress for women? What should Sabira be doing?

Review Questions

Q1. Which of the following is not maḥram to a woman?

- a. Her male Cousin
- b. Her uncle
- c. Her great grandfather

Q2. As part of Hijab, a woman must cover everything except:

- a. Her feet up to the shins, her hands up to the wrists, and her face
- b. Her feet up the ankles, her hands up to the wrists, and her face
- c. Her hands up to the wrists, and her face

Lesson 2: Social Ḥijāb

Ḥijāb is not merely covering our bod. Perhaps more importantly, Ḥijāb also includes the way we act, speak and interact with the opposite gender.

The covering of the head and body is the easiest part of all, Ḥijāb has a lot more to do with modesty and the way we present ourselves.

Ḥijāb is the way we talk, the way we walk; it is a way of life. It is in the inner morality that gives meaning to the external scarf.

INTERACTION BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

Social interaction is an important aspect of our lives as we all need to communicate to get things done. Examples vary from workplace, to community centres, to schools etc... However, when it comes to interaction between men and women, Islam has specific rules. These rules are there to stop corruption and sins happening in our community and society.

MEN SPEAKING TO WOMEN

Men can talk to women provided two conditions are met:

1. There is no lustful intention
2. Speaking does not lead to either of them committing a sin.

For example, a teacher at school may share his ideas with another female teacher. If he speaks appropriately and sticks to what is necessary, then there is nothing wrong with this.

WOMEN SPEAKING TO MEN

Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an:

“Then be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire, but speak in an honourable manner” (33:32)

Women can talk to men if three conditions are met:

1. She has no lustful intention
2. The lady does not make her voice soft and attractive
3. There is no fear of falling into sin

For example: a female student may give a talk at school about a particular topic. As long as she speaks appropriately and speaks in her normal voice, there is nothing wrong with this.

In general, when it is necessary for men and women to interact, they should stick to what is necessary. They should avoid joking, entering into inappropriate conversation or becoming over familiar with one another. This also applies to young people. Once we reach the age of puberty, these rules apply to us as well.

In fact, whenever it is possible, we should avoid being around the opposite gender too much. The following story shows how careful the Ahlul Bayt (as) were about this issue.

Once a blind man asked for permission to enter Lady Fāṭimah's house but she kept a veil between them. The Messenger of Allah (saw) noticed her actions and asked: "Why did you keep a veil between you and him when he cannot see you?"

She (as) answered: "O Messenger of Allah, it is true that he cannot see me, but I can see him and he can smell my fragrance."

ATTRACTING ATTENTION

It is ḥarām for a woman to show off in such a way that it will attract a strange man's attention. Therefore, to walk in a certain way, to 'flirt' or to speak in a certain way that attracts attention, is not allowed.

Similarly, it is not permissible for a boy to act in a way that draws attention to himself from the opposite gender.

MIXED GATHERINGS

Islam discourages mixed gatherings. When families or friends gather, the best way is for the males to gather in one place or room, and for the females to gather in another place or room.

It is also important to remember the following points:

- A cousin of the opposite gender is not maḥram to us. For example, a 10 year old girl needs to wear Ḥijāb in front of her 15 year old boy cousin, and she must observe the social rules of Ḥijāb with him

- A brother-in-law or sister-in-law is not maḥram to us. This means a woman must wear Ḥijāb in front her husband's brother, and she must observe the rules of social Ḥijāb with him

RULES OF TOUCHING

Men and women who are non maḥram are not allowed to have any physical contact at all. Therefore, shaking hands or giving a 'hi-5' to someone of the opposite gender is not allowed. Playing sport with the opposite gender, if it involves physical contact, is also not allowed.

ONLINE INTERACTION

The same rules that apply to face-to-face interaction also apply to online interaction. So when we use Facebook, Twitter, email or chat rooms, we have to follow the same rules of social Ḥijāb that we discussed earlier. We have to make sure:

- To stick to what is necessary
- To avoid joking or being inappropriate in any way
- To avoid 'flirting'

Finally, it is very important to remember that there is no such thing as a 'friendship' between people of the opposite gender. Although we may think or claim we have innocent intentions and that we 'only want to be friends', these interactions often lead to sins and problems. Therefore, it is best to avoid them from the beginning. Whether it is face-to-face or online, we should limit our friends to people of the same gender, and not put ourselves in the way of temptation.

Review Questions:

Q1. In what way should a lady speak to a man when required?

- a. In a rude manner
- b. With clear voice and to the point
- c. With jokes and fun

Q2. With what intention should you use social media?

- a. Due to boredom
- b. Because everyone is doing it
- c. For the intention of seeking nearness to Allah (SWT)