

# Eid al-Fitr

## What Is Ramadan?

Ramadan is in the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. The festival begins at different times for Muslims depending on when the new moon is first sighted. It lasts from dawn until sunset for 29 or 30 days. Ramadan is a very important time for Muslims and is celebrated all over the world. During Ramadan, Muslims ask for forgiveness, pray regularly and practise self-control. It is a time of fasting for Muslims as fasting is one of the five duties (or pillars) that Muslims obey. The Islamic name for this fasting is 'sawm'.



## Why Do Muslims Fast?

Fasting is meant to teach Muslims to be focused, to be self-disciplined and to be generous. It also reminds them of the suffering of the poor, who may not get to eat well. The prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was one of the first Muslims to fast - other Muslims follow his example.

Each day during the month of Ramadan, Muslims all over the world do not eat or drink from dawn until sunset. At the end of the day (after sunset), Muslim families will often all eat together and celebrate their day of fasting.

## How Do Muslims Mark the End of Ramadan?

The end of Ramadan is a big celebration called 'Eid al-Fitr': The Festival of the Breaking of the Fast. Muslims celebrate the end of fasting and thank Allah for their strength. Eid al-Fitr officially begins when the new moon is first seen in the sky. This is thought to be one of the reasons why a crescent moon symbol is important within Islam.



## Did You Know...?

An estimated 2.1 billion Muslims across the globe will celebrate Eid al-Fitr to mark the end of the month-long fasting period of Ramadan.



### How Is Eid al-Fitr Celebrated?

On the first morning of the celebration, many Muslims meet for special prayers and have breakfast. They put on their best clothes for what will be their first meal in daylight for a month.

While there, some Muslims will exchange gifts and greetings cards. Celebrations continue for one, two or maybe even three days and usually include; gatherings to view the new moon; decorating homes inside and out; family visits; eating special foods; neighbourhood parties and wearing special, new clothes. People wish each other 'Eid Mubarak' (Blessed Eid) or 'Eid Said' (Happy Eid).



# Questions

1. Explain in your own words what Ramadan is.

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2. Who was one of the first Muslims to fast? Tick one.

- neighbours
- Muhammad (PBUH)
- sawm
- Ramadan

3. What does 'Eid al-Fitr' mean?

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4. Why do you think that the crescent moon is a symbol of the Islamic faith?

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5. List **three** activities that Muslims may take part in during their Eid al-Fitr celebrations.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is the estimated number of Muslims worldwide? Tick one.

- 1.2 billion
- 2.1 billion
- 12 billion
- 122 billion

7. Can you think why Ramadan fasting is more challenging to complete when it falls during the summer months?

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8. Describe a time in your life when you have been self-disciplined or generous.

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