

A COMPLETE COMPANION

دُعَاءُ الْإِسْتِخَارَةِ

ISTIKHARA DUA

The prayer for seeking Allah's guidance — with the full Arabic text, transliteration, English meaning, the step-by-step method, and its benefits.



ARABIC • TRANSLITERATION • MEANING • METHOD • BENEFITS

STEP ONE

Istikhara Dua in Arabic

This is the exact wording taught by the Prophet ﷺ to his companions, recorded in Sahih al-Bukhari (6382, 1166).

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ، وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ،
فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ
أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ (وتسمي حاجتك) خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي، فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي
وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي، ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي
وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي، فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ، وَاقْدُرْ لِي الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ،
ثُمَّ أَرْضِنِي بِهِ.

English Transliteration

Allahumma inni astakhiruka bi'ilmika, wa astaqdiruka bi qudratika, wa as'aluka min fadlika al-'azim.

Fa innaka taqdiru wa la aqdiru, wa ta'lamu wa la a'lamu, wa anta 'allamu al-ghuyub.

Allahumma in kunta ta'lamu anna hadha al-amra (mention your need here) khayrun li fi dini wa ma'ashi wa 'aqibati amri, faqdurhu li wa yassirhu li, thumma barik li fihi.

Wa in kunta ta'lamu anna hadha al-amra sharrun li fi dini wa ma'ashi wa 'aqibati amri, fasrifhu 'anni, wasrifni 'anhu, waqdur li al-khayra haythu kana, thumma ardin bihi.

English Meaning

"O Allah, I seek Your guidance by virtue of Your knowledge, and I seek ability by virtue of Your power, and I ask You of Your great bounty. You have power, and I have none. And You know, and I do not know. You are the Knower of the unseen. O Allah, if in Your knowledge this matter (mention your need) is good for me in my religion, my livelihood, and the outcome of my affairs, then ordain it for me, make it easy for me, and bless me in it. And if in Your knowledge this matter is bad for me, for my religion, my livelihood, and the outcome of my affairs, then turn it away from me, and turn me away from it, and ordain for me the good wherever it may be, and make me content with it."

Where the dua says "this matter," silently or verbally name your specific decision — a job offer, a marriage proposal, a move, or any other choice you're facing.

STEP TWO

How to Pray Istikhara

No special preparation is needed beyond what you would do for any other voluntary prayer.

- 1 Make your intention (niyyah)** in your heart to pray istikhara for a specific matter you are deciding on.
- 2 Perform wudu** as you would before any prayer.
- 3 Pray two rak'ahs** of voluntary (nafl) prayer, reciting Surah al-Fatihah followed by any portion of the Qur'an you know. The hadith does not require a specific surah, though some scholars recommend Al-Kafirun and Al-Ikhlās.
- 4 Complete the prayer** with tashahhud and salam, just as in any other prayer.
- 5 Recite the istikhara dua** shown on the previous page, mentioning your specific matter where indicated.
- 6 Proceed with confidence.** Continue using sound judgment and consultation, then move forward with a settled heart — trusting Allah with the outcome.

When Should You Pray It?

Istikhara can be prayed at almost any time of day or night, except during the times when voluntary prayer is generally disliked:

- Immediately after Fajr, until the sun has fully risen
- At the exact moment of sunrise
- At exact midday, just before the sun begins to decline
- After Asr, until sunset
- At the exact moment of sunset

Before or After Salam?

The most common practice is to recite the dua after completing the two rak'ahs and saying salam. Some scholars also permit reciting it before salam.

What If I Can't Memorize It?

Reading the dua from your phone or a card is completely valid — there is no requirement to recite it from memory.

A dream is not required and not promised. The real outcome of istikhara is whether Allah makes the matter easy or difficult over time — continue with sound judgment either way.

STEP THREE

The Benefits of Istikhara

Beyond the specific decision at hand, istikhara shapes the way a believer approaches every choice in life.

1 Trust in Allah (Tawakkul)

Istikhara builds the habit of placing your trust in Allah's knowledge and wisdom rather than relying purely on your own certainty — recognizing that He knows what you don't.

2 Peace of Mind

Many people describe a genuine sense of calm that comes simply from having asked Allah for guidance — regardless of how the matter eventually unfolds.

3 Freedom from Regret

Having sincerely sought Allah's involvement in a decision makes it easier to accept the outcome, without endlessly second-guessing the choice afterward.

4 A Habit for Every Decision

The companions made istikhara for matters big and small. Practicing it regularly turns "asking Allah first" into a natural first step, not a last resort.

5 Blessing (Barakah) in the Outcome

The dua itself asks Allah to bless whichever path is decreed for you — inviting barakah into the outcome, whichever direction it takes.

Sources

Sahih al-Bukhari 6382 (Book of Invocations) and 1166 (Book of Tahajjud), narrated by Jabir ibn Abdullah (RA). For the full guide with additional rulings, common myths, and detailed scholarly references, see the complete Istikhara Dua article on whatishalal.org.