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The Sukon Nikah Guide

Marriage in Islam — from choosing a spouse to the Walima

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1. Why marriage matters in Islam

Marriage (Nikah) is a covenant between a man and a woman made before Allah. It brings peace, love and mercy into two lives, protects modesty, and builds the family — the first school of faith for every child.

> *"And among His signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves so that you may find tranquillity in them, and He placed between you affection and mercy."* — Quran, Surah Ar-Rum 30:21

> *"Marriage is part of my Sunnah. Whoever does not act on my Sunnah is not of me."* — Sunan Ibn Majah 1846

The Quran calls marriage a "firm covenant" (mithaqan ghaliza, Surah An-Nisa 4:21). It is an act of worship when it is entered with the right intention and lived with kindness.

2. Choosing a spouse

> *"A woman is married for four things: her wealth, her lineage, her beauty and her religion. Choose the one with religion and you will prosper."* — Sahih al-Bukhari 5090

Faith and good character come first. Families should also think about shared values, education, health, the ability to provide, and how the couple will live with both families.

- Meet in a proper setting with family present, and ask honest questions.
- Talk about prayer, deen, career, where you will live, finances and children.
- Pray Salat al-Istikharah and ask people who know the other person well.
- Do not hide serious illness, debts or past marriages — honesty protects the marriage.

3. Consent is required

A Nikah is not valid without the free consent of the bride and the groom. No one may force a man or a woman into marriage.

> *"A previously married woman should not be married until she is consulted, and a virgin should not be married until her permission is sought."* — Sahih al-Bukhari 5136

Both bride and groom must also be of the legal age of marriage under Indian law: 21 for men and 18 for women at the time of writing. Check the current law in your state before fixing a date.

4. The pillars of the Nikah

Element	What it means	Notes on the schools
Ijab and qabul	The offer and acceptance, said clearly in one sitting	All schools
Two witnesses	Adult, sane Muslim witnesses who hear the offer and acceptance	All schools; details of who may witness differ
Wali (guardian)	The bride's guardian, usually her father	Required by the Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali schools; the Hanafi school allows an adult woman to contract her own marriage, though involving the wali is strongly preferred
Mahr	The gift the groom gives the bride	Obligatory; it belongs to the bride alone

> *"There is no marriage except with a wali."* — Sunan Abu Dawud 2085; Jami at-Tirmidhi 1101

Your Imam or Qazi will follow the school your families follow. If the families follow different schools, agree on this before the day.

5. Mahr — the bride's right

> *"And give the women their mahr as a free gift."* — Quran, Surah An-Nisa 4:4

- Mahr belongs to the bride. Her father, brothers or husband have no right to it unless she freely gives it.
- It may be paid at the Nikah (muajjal, prompt) or later (muwajjal, deferred), or part of each. Write this clearly in the Nikahnama.
- There is no fixed maximum. The Sunnah encourages an amount that is meaningful but easy for the groom.
- Deferred mahr is a real debt. It must be paid, and it is paid from the husband's estate before inheritance if he dies.

6. The day of the Nikah

1. The Imam or Qazi checks the documents, the names, the mahr and the witnesses.
2. The bride's consent is confirmed, usually by the wali and two witnesses who go to her.
3. The Khutbah of the Nikah is recited — praise of Allah and verses on taqwa (Surah An-Nisa 4:1, Surah Al-Imran 3:102, Surah Al-Ahzab 33:70–71).
4. Offer and acceptance are said clearly, and the witnesses hear them.
5. The Nikahnama is signed by the groom, the bride (or her representative as your school allows), the wali and the witnesses.
6. Dua is made for the couple.

Dua for the newly married couple

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لَكَ وَبَارَكَ عَلَيْكَ وَجَمَعَ بَيْنَكُمَا فِي خَيْرٍ

Barakallahu laka wa baraka alaika wa jama'a bainakuma fi khair

May Allah bless you, shower His blessings upon you, and join you together in goodness.

Sunan Abu Dawud 2130; Jami at-Tirmidhi 1091

7. The Nikahnama and registration in India

The Nikahnama is the written marriage contract. Read it before the day, not at the moment of signing. Check the spelling of every name, the mahr, how it is paid, and any lawful conditions the bride wants added.

Many states in India require marriages to be registered, and a government marriage certificate is often needed for passports, visas, bank accounts and name changes. Keep the original Nikahnama safe and register soon after the Nikah.

- Nikahnama signed at the Nikah
- Age and identity proof of the bride and groom
- Address proof in the district where you register
- Identity proof of the witnesses

- Photographs of the couple

Sukon can help with every step: see Nikah registration and marriage certificate help on sukonapp.in.

8. The Walima

> *"Give a Walima, even if only with one sheep."* — Sahih al-Bukhari 5167

The Walima is the wedding meal given by the groom. It is a Sunnah of joy and gratitude. Keep it within your means, invite the poor as well as the rich, avoid waste, and avoid anything that displeases Allah.

9. Living together with kindness

> *"And live with them in kindness."* — Quran, Surah An-Nisa 4:19

> *"The best of you are those who are best to their wives, and I am the best of you to my wives."* — Jami at-Tirmidhi 3895

- The husband provides food, clothing and a home according to his means, and treats his wife with respect and gentleness.
- The wife and husband keep each other's secrets, protect each other's honour and wealth, and support each other in deen.
- Decisions are made by consultation (shura). Speak gently, listen fully, and never insult or strike in anger.
- Pray together when you can. A home with Quran and Salah is a home of peace.
- When problems come, talk early. Families may help, and a counsellor or scholar can help too.

10. A checklist before your Nikah

- Both families agree, and the bride and groom have both given free consent.
- Both are of legal age.
- Wali, two witnesses and the Imam or Qazi are confirmed.
- Mahr amount and payment terms are agreed in writing.
- Nikahnama read and checked in advance.
- Documents ready for registration.
- Walima planned within your means.
- Pre-marriage counselling done, if you wish — available on Sukon.

A note on this book

This guide is general guidance written to be accepted by the major schools, with differences noted where they matter. For a question about your own situation, ask a verified scholar on Sukon — always free.

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