

Welcoming a new Muslim: a pack for masajid

How a masjid can welcome someone on the day they take their shahādah and in the weeks after: a checklist for the imam and volunteers, what to put in the printed pack, and the safeguarding basics.

Fill in before you copy this pack

Masjid name

Institutional email

Class name, day, time and place

Welcome lead names

Imam name

Institutional phone

Women’s entrance

The short version

1. Ask the new Muslim how they would like the moment to go, and keep it calm and uncrowded.
2. Introduce two or three people, not the whole congregation; women are welcomed by women.
3. No photos, video or posts without their clear consent.
4. Follow up within 48 hours, and give a written invitation to a class.
5. Offer a mentor of the same gender, and keep the safeguarding basics below.

Before anyone comes: get ready once

A good welcome is prepared in advance, so it does not depend on who happens to be in the building. Before you put “new Muslims welcome” on a poster, make sure you can actually provide what it promises.

- ☐ **Name a welcome lead and a woman welcome lead.** At least one brother and one sister who have agreed to be called when someone comes, with a backup for each.
- ☐ **Name a safeguarding lead.** One person the board has chosen to receive concerns, and a second person to go to if the concern is about the first.
- ☐ **Use institutional contacts.** A masjid email address and phone number for new-Muslim contact, not volunteers’ personal mobiles.
- ☐ **Find a quiet space.** A room or corner where someone can sit, ask questions and collect themselves, away from the main hall. Know where the women’s space is and who can open it.
- ☐ **Print the pack.** Keep a few copies of the printed pack (listed below) ready, with your class times and contacts filled in.
- ☐ **Agree a class.** Know which class or study circle you will invite them to, when it meets, and who runs it.

On the day: a checklist for the imam or volunteer

Keep the moment about them. A shahādah does not need a crowd, a stage or a phone held up in the air.

- ☐ **Ask how they would like it to go.** Privately with the imam and one or two others, or in front of more people: let them choose. Many people prefer quiet.
- ☐ **Don’t crowd them.** If people gather, gently ask them to give space. Hugs, gifts and advice from twenty strangers at once can overwhelm anyone.
- ☐ **No filming or photos without consent.** Ask before any photo or video, explain where it would go, and accept “no” without question. Never post their name, face or story without clear permission, and take it down if they later ask.
- ☐ **Women are welcomed by women.** If a woman comes, bring in your woman welcome lead to sit with her, show her the women’s space and be her first contact.
- ☐ **Introduce two or three people.** The imam, the welcome lead of their gender, and the person who runs the class. That is enough for one day.
- ☐ **Offer the quiet space.** Give them somewhere to sit afterwards, a drink of water, and time.
- ☐ **Don’t ask about their past.** No questions about why, their old life, their relationships or their family’s reaction unless they bring it up. Do not ask them to tell their story.
- ☐ **Give the printed pack.** Hand it over and point out the one or two things in it that matter today: the class invitation and who to contact.

- ☐ **Ask how to stay in touch, with consent.** Ask for a first name and one way to contact them, and ask when it is safe to contact them. Some people cannot receive messages at home yet. Write down only that.
- ☐ **If prayer time is near.** Invite them, without pressure, to pray beside the welcome lead of their gender and simply follow. Nobody expects them to know the words yet.

After the day: the first weeks

Most new Muslims who drift away do not leave in anger. They simply never hear from anyone again. A short, kind follow-up changes that.

- ☐ **Follow up within 48 hours.** The welcome lead of their gender sends a short message or makes a short call: “We were so glad to meet you. How are you doing? The class is on [day] at [time]; I’ll be there.” Use only the contact method and times they agreed to.
- ☐ **Give a written invitation to a class.** In writing, with the day, time, place, entrance, and the name of the person who will meet them at the door. A written invitation is easier to accept than a vague “come any time”.
- ☐ **Offer a mentor of the same gender.** If they would like one, pair them with a trained mentor (see the mentor kit). Explain that they can say no, or ask for a different mentor at any time, without giving a reason.
- ☐ **Keep it light.** A check-in every week or two is plenty. One message unanswered is not a crisis; two or three unanswered means try a gentle “We’re here whenever you’re ready” and then stop.
- ☐ **Respect “no thanks”.** Some people want to learn elsewhere, or at another masjid. That is their right. Part warmly, and tell them the door is open.

What goes in the printed pack

Each item below is a printable on this site, in Letter and A4. Fill in your masjid’s details before you print.

- ☐ **Welcome letter.** A short, warm letter from your masjid, signed by the imam, with the masjid’s institutional contact details.
- ☐ **“Your first days” card.** A small card: you don’t have to learn everything this week; find someone to learn with; where to go next; safety lines.
- ☐ **Written class invitation.** The class name, day, time, place, entrance, and who will meet them.
- ☐ **Your masjid’s first-visit facts.** Address, entrances (including the women’s entrance), where shoes go, where the washing area is, prayer and class times, and who to ask for.
- ☐ **Mentor promises.** The one-page list of what a mentor promises, so the new Muslim knows what to expect and what is not acceptable.
- ☐ **Safety lines.** Emergency numbers and free helplines, labelled by purpose and hours.
- ☐ **Optional: a commemorative certificate.** Only if they want one. It is a keepsake, not a legal or official document, and it does not imply acceptance by any authority.

Safeguarding basics

Reviewed by Hamza Abdul-Tawwaab (Imam). A specialist safeguarding review is in progress; follow your masjid’s own safeguarding policy and local law.

New Muslims can be vulnerable: newly isolated, eager to please, and unsure what is normal. A few firm rules protect them, your volunteers and your masjid.

- ☐ **No matchmaking.** Nobody in a welcoming or mentoring role suggests, arranges or brokers a marriage for a new Muslim, and nobody pursues one romantically. If they ask for help with marriage later, refer them to the imam.

- ☐ **No isolation.** Nobody becomes the gatekeeper of a new Muslim's faith. Encourage their family ties and their wider community. Watch for anyone who tries to keep them to themselves.
- ☐ **Adults meet in open places.** Mentors and volunteers meet adults at the masjid or another public place, not at home or in a car, and not late at night.
- ☐ **Two adults with anyone under 18.** No adult is ever alone, one to one, with a child or teenager: not in a room, a car or a private message thread. Two vetted adults, in view of others. Follow your masjid's child safeguarding policy and the law where you are.
- ☐ **Report concerns.** Any worry about a new Muslim's safety, or about how someone is treating them, goes to your safeguarding lead the same day. If anyone is in danger, call 911. If a child may be being abused, use your state's child abuse reporting line (Childhelp lists them by state); Childhelp itself is for talking to a counsellor and is not a reporting line.
- ☐ **Collect as little as possible.** Keep only a first name and one contact method, given with consent, and the times it is safe to use. No addresses, documents, photos, conversion stories or notes on their family. Delete it when it is no longer needed.
- ☐ **Consent for chats and publicity.** Never add someone to a group chat, mailing list or social post without asking first, and make leaving easy.
- ☐ **Their right to choose.** Make it plain that they can change mentor, teacher or masjid at any time, and that this will not be held against them.

Safety. This is a starting point, not a full safeguarding policy. Your masjid should have its own written policy, a trained safeguarding lead, and background checks for anyone who works with children, in line with the law where you are. This site is not an emergency service.

Sources

1. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 69 (Kitāb al-ʿIlm) · sunnah.com/bukhari:69
2. Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline · www.childhelphotline.org/

The mentor kit

The short version

1. Meet in a public place, and ask what they want help with before you offer anything.
2. Check in lightly: once in the first week, then every week or two.
3. Keep to the boundaries: same gender, open places, no romance, no money.
4. Send religious rulings to the imam and crises to professionals.
5. Print the mentor promises and give the new Muslim a copy.

What a mentor is, and is not

A mentor is a companion for the first months: someone to ask the “silly” questions, to sit with at the masjid, and to point the way to the right people.

A mentor is not a mufti, so rulings go to the imam. A mentor is not a therapist, so crises go to professionals. A mentor is not a matchmaker, a landlord, a lender or a boss. And a mentor is never the only door to Islam: your job is to widen their circle, not to become it.

The first meeting

Meet at the masjid or another public place, at a time that suits them, for about 30 to 45 minutes. Keep it relaxed; a cup of tea is better than a lesson.

You might open like this: “I’m really glad to meet you. I’m not here to test you or teach you everything. I’m here so you have someone to ask, and someone who will check in. What would be most useful to you right now?”

Tell them, early and plainly, what you will keep private: “I’ll keep what you share private, except where someone may be at risk of serious harm, or where the law requires me to report. If that happens, I will tell you first where I safely can.”

Before you start, learn your masjid’s safeguarding policy and your state’s mandatory-reporting rules, so you know what you would have to pass on and to whom.

- ☐ **Ask what they want help with.** “What would make the next few weeks easier?” Let them choose. Note one or two things, not ten.
- ☐ **Ask how and when to contact them.** “What’s the best way to reach you, and are there times or ways it isn’t safe or comfortable to contact you?” Some people cannot receive messages at home yet.
- ☐ **Ask who else is around them.** “Who else do you have to talk to: family, friends, anyone at the masjid?” This helps you see whether they are isolated.
- ☐ **Ask about practical needs.** “Is there anything practical getting in the way, like transport, food, work hours or childcare?” Then point them to the people who can help.
- ☐ **Ask what they don’t want.** “Is there anything you’d rather not talk about, or anything people have done that you didn’t like?” Then respect it.
- ☐ **Agree the next step.** One small thing, chosen by them, and when you will next check in.

What to listen for

Listen more than you talk. Underneath the questions, notice:

Overwhelm: “everyone is telling me different things”, “I can’t keep up”. Answer by slowing down and choosing one thing.

Family strain: tension at home, fear of telling someone, a relationship under pressure. Encourage kindness and patience, never a break with family, and never promise it will all work out.

Loneliness: no one to sit with, no one to eat with. Help them find a class, a circle or a second friendly face.

Pressure from others: someone rushing them to marry, to move, to give money, or to keep secrets. Take this seriously; see “When to refer” below.

Safety: fear at home, threats, or talk of not wanting to live. Do not try to handle this alone.

And do not ask about their past, their old relationships or why they converted. If they choose to tell you, listen and keep it to yourself.

The first month: a light rhythm

Steady and small is better than intense and short. The Prophet ﷺ said that “the most beloved deeds to Allah are those done regularly, even if they are few” (Bukhārī 6464)[1]. That is a good shape for mentoring too.

- ☐ **In the first week.** A short message or call: “How are you doing? Anything you’d like to ask?” Use only the contact method and times they agreed to.
- ☐ **Then every week or two.** Meet or call briefly. Each time: how are they, one practical thing (finding the class, the washing area, a question for the imam), and one step they choose.
- ☐ **Go to the class with them, once.** Offer to meet them at the door of the class you invited them to, and introduce them to the teacher.
- ☐ **If they miss a meeting.** Send one gentle message: “No problem at all. Shall we try another time?” No guilt, no chasing. If two or three messages go unanswered, send “I’m here whenever you’re ready” and let your coordinator know.
- ☐ **At the end of the first month.** Ask how it is going, and whether they would like to continue, change the rhythm, change mentor, or stop. Any answer is fine.

Boundaries

Reviewed by Hamza Abdul-Tawwaab (Imam). A specialist safeguarding review is in progress; follow your masjid’s own safeguarding policy and local law.

Boundaries protect the new Muslim, protect you, and protect your masjid. Same gender is a good practice, not a safety guarantee; these rules apply to everyone.

- ☐ **Same gender, open places.** Mentor someone of your own gender. Meet at the masjid or another public place, not at your home or theirs, not in a car, and not late at night.
- ☐ **No romance, no matchmaking.** Never pursue a romantic relationship with the person you mentor, and never suggest or arrange a marriage for them. If they ask about marriage, refer them to the imam.
- ☐ **No money.** Do not lend, borrow, or ask for money, documents or favours. If they need practical help, connect them to the masjid’s help or a local service.
- ☐ **Keep their story private.** Do not share what they tell you, post about them, or tell their conversion story, even with good intentions. The only exception is a safety concern, raised with the safeguarding lead.
- ☐ **Under 18: never alone.** If the person is under 18, never meet or message one to one. Two vetted adults, in view of others, following your masjid’s child safeguarding policy.
- ☐ **Don’t take over.** Their life is theirs. Offer, don’t direct. Their family, job, clothes and pace are theirs to decide, with their own teachers.
- ☐ **They can change mentor.** Tell them at the start that they can ask for a different mentor at any time without giving a reason, and that it will not be held against them. You can step back too; tell your coordinator.

When to refer, and to whom

Knowing when to hand over is one of the most important things a mentor does. "I don't know, but I know who to ask" is a good answer.

- ☐ **Religious rulings.** Questions about what is required, allowed or not allowed go to the imam or a qualified teacher. Do not give your own ruling, even if you are fairly sure.
- ☐ **A concern about their safety or treatment.** Tell your masjid's safeguarding lead the same day. If the concern is about the safeguarding lead, use the backup contact.
- ☐ **Danger now.** Call 911 (in the US and Canada; 999 in the UK; 000 in Australia).
- ☐ **Thoughts of suicide or emotional crisis.** In the US: call or text 988, 24/7. You can call for advice about someone else too.
- ☐ **Abuse in a relationship.** In the US: the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 1-800-799-7233 or text START to 88788, 24/7.
- ☐ **A child at risk.** Your state's child abuse reporting line, or 911 if the child is in danger. Childhelp (1-800-422-4453) is for talking to a counsellor; it is not a reporting line.
- ☐ **Health, legal, immigration or money.** A doctor, a lawyer or a qualified local service. Do not advise beyond what you know.

Safety. Outside the US, use the lines listed on the "Helping someone" page for the UK, Canada and Australia.

Support for you

You should not mentor alone. Your masjid should name a coordinator you can check in with, and a safeguarding lead for concerns. Tell your coordinator how things are going in general terms, without sharing private details.

First Sajdah does not receive case notes, names or reports about anyone you mentor. This kit is for your masjid to use; we never connect mentors with new Muslims.

Sources

1. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 6464 (Kitāb al-Riqāq) · sunnah.com/bukhari:6464
2. 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline · 988lifeline.org/get-help/
3. National Domestic Violence Hotline · www.thehotline.org/
4. Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline · www.childhelp.org/

Mentor promises

Print this page, sign it with your coordinator, and give a copy to the person you mentor, so they know what to expect and what is not acceptable.

1. **I will listen first** and help with what you ask for, at your pace.
2. **I will meet you in open places** at the masjid or another public place.
3. **I will keep what you share private** except where someone may be at risk of serious harm, or where the law requires me to report. If that happens, I will tell you first where I safely can.
4. **I will never ask you for money** documents or favours, and I will not lend or borrow.
5. **I will never pursue you romantically** or try to arrange a marriage for you.
6. **I will not post about you** or share your story, photos or details without your clear permission.
7. **I will respect your family** and never ask you to cut ties with them.
8. **I will not give religious rulings** I will help you ask the imam or a qualified teacher.
9. **I will point you to professionals** when something is bigger than me.
10. **You can change mentor at any time** without giving a reason. To do that, or to raise a concern about me, contact the masjid's coordinator or safeguarding lead (names and contacts below).

Mentor first name

Masjid name

Coordinator name and institutional contact

Safeguarding lead name and institutional contact

Backup contact

Date
