

Dress & Clothings

Introduction

Wearing clothes made of natural leather is a real problem for Muslims living in non-Muslim countries. Muslims are used to buying leather products in their own countries without any problem at all because they know that they are made from leather that comes from animals that are slaughtered according to Islamic laws. So they wear them, pray in them, and touch them with their wet hands without any problem or hesitation. But in non-Muslim countries, the reality is completely different.

General Rules

203. **Leather products** are impure (*najis*) and *salat* in them is not permissible, if we know that they have been made from the hide of an animal not slaughtered according to Islamic laws. Such products are considered pure and *salat* in them is permissible, if there is a probability that they were made from skin of an animal that is essentially *halal* and was slaughtered according to Islamic laws.

Salat is not permissible in leather products made from **skin of predatory animals** like lion, leopard, tiger, fox, and jackal. Similarly, based on obligatory precaution, *salat* is not permissible in leather products made from non-predatory animals whose meat is forbidden to us like monkeys and elephants even though their hide could be considered *tahir* if they certainly were (or there is a probability that they were) killed according to Islamic laws.

In all these cases of probability, wearing a **belt** and things like that made from leather is allowed [in *salat*], provided that they are not big enough as to conceal the private parts. If there exists no probability that it was slaughtered according to Islamic laws, and, on the contrary, we are sure that it comes from skin of an animal that was not slaughtered according to Islamic laws, then it is *najis* and *salat* in it is not permissible. [With no such probability,] even the use of belt and other things (that cannot conceal the sexual organs in *salat*) is not permissible on the basis of obligatory precaution. It would be the same law if the probability was very low that sensible people ignore it (for example, 2%).

The permissibility of the leather of these animals can be achieved by two methods: The first method is that they be slaughtered just as a sheep is slaughtered with all conditions observed. The second method is that they are hunted by using a gun. In the latter case, the hunter must be a Muslim; he must invoke Allah's name while pulling the trigger; he must shoot with the purpose of hunting, and get to the place where the animal fell after it has died or when there was not enough time to slaughter it.

204. Leather products made in non-Muslim countries from **hides of snakes and crocodiles** and displayed in non-Muslims markets are considered pure (*tahir*); and it is permissible to buy, sell, and use them in things that require purity.

205. Leather products made in Muslim countries and displayed in non-Muslim markets are considered pure (*tahir*) and it is permissible to use them in *salat*.

206. Leather products made in non-Muslim countries whose nature and ritual purity cannot be determined, uncertain whether they are from natural or are permissible to use in *salat*.

207. **Shoes** made from leather of an animal not slaughtered according to Islamic laws do not make the feet *najis* except through wetness that transfers the impurity. So, if the foot sweats and the socks become soaked with the sweat, yet the latter does not reach the impure leather, it will not make the feet or the socks impure.

208. It is permissible to say *salat* with a leather cap or a leather belt manufactured in non-Muslim countries and bought in non-Muslim markets if there is a probability that these leather products were made from hide of animals that are essentially *halal* and were slaughtered according to Islamic laws. This has been mentioned in the third rule of this section. (See the question-answer section below.)

209. Men are not allowed to wear **gold** regardless of whether it is a [normal] ring, a wedding ring, a wristwatch, or other things in *salat* as well as outside it. It is permissible for them to wear gold-plated items, provided that gold is only considered as a coating and nothing more.

210. It is permissible for men to wear what is known as white gold.

211. Women are allowed to wear gold at all times, even in *salat*.

212. Men are not allowed to wear pure and natural **silk**, neither in *salat* nor outside *salat*, except in special circumstances that have been explained in the books of Islamic jurisprudence.

213. Women are allowed to wear silk at all times even in *salat*.

214. Men are allowed to wear 'doubtful' silk fabrics and clothes whose origin doubtful, i.e. whether they are made from natural silk or synthetic one. In this case, even *salat* in them is permissible. (See the question-answer section below.)

Similarly, it is permissible for them to wear natural silk that has been blended with other material like cotton, wool, nylon, etc. to the extent that the blended fabric is no longer considered pure silk. This law also applies, if there is uncertainty about the extent of blending [of pure silk and other material]. In such cases, it is also permissible to say *salat* in it.

215. Based on obligatory precaution, men are not allowed to dress up in women's clothes.

216. Based on obligatory precaution, Muslims are not allowed to dress up in clothes that are specifically known as the dress of non-Muslims.

Questions and Answers

217. **Question:** We Muslims in Europe buy shoes, belts and other clothing items made of leather which may come from animals killed in non-Islamic way. At times such items are imported from Muslim countries or obtained from Muslim abattoirs here (since there are a few Muslim abattoirs in the U.K. for example).

Can we consider such leather to be pure (*tahir*) in the probability that it might have been imported from Muslim countries or obtained from abattoirs adopting Islamic way of slaughtering, even if such a probability is very weak?

Answer: If the probability is so weak that the opposite is more likely (for example, 2%), it should not even be considered. Otherwise [if the probability is high], there is no problem in considering it to be pure (*tahir*). Allah knows the best.

218. **Question:** Jurists have decreed that it is forbidden [for men] to wear pure and natural silk. Is it permissible for a man to wear silk that is mixed with other material if that clothing item is a **necktie** [or the normal tie]? And is it forbidden for man to wear the necktie, if it is made of natural and pure silk?

Answer: It is not forbidden to wear a **tie**, even if it is from pure silk because it is not [big enough material] to cover the private parts that must be covered [in prayer]. As for the item that is mixed with other material to the extent that it cannot be described as "pure silk," it is permissible to wear, even if it [is big enough so that it] can cover the private parts that must be covered [in prayer].

219. **Question:** Even though some manufacturers write on their products that they have been made of natural silk, we doubt such a claim because of the goods very low price. Is it permissible for us to wear such an item and say *salat* in it?

Answer: With doubt [whether the silk is pure], it is permissible to wear and say *salat* in it.

220. **Question:** Is it permissible to wear clothes that have pictures of intoxicating drinks as a promotion for drinking them? Is it permissible to sell such items?

Answer: It is forbidden to wear and sell them.

221. **Question:** Is it permissible for a man to wear a watch that contains parts made from gold or a watch whose strap is made of gold? Is it permissible to say *salat* with it?

Answer: It is permissible to wear the first item and pray in it but not the second.

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