

The Whats & Whys of Hijab



What is hijab?

Hijab is the common name used for the headscarf worn by some Muslim women. The word *hijab* literally translates to "veil." Hijab also more generally refers to the belief in Islam of modest behavior, for both men and women. There are many different degrees to which the concept of hijab is followed by Muslims, and many different styles in which Muslims may choose to dress and act modestly - including, but not limited to, the headscarf.

Why wear hijab?

Some reasons a woman may wear hijab are...

- *She believes that God has instructed her to wear hijab, to fulfill the commandment of modesty.*
- *She wears it as a personal and public reminder of her commitment to her faith and ethics.*
- *She uses it as a visible way to show others she is Muslim.*
- *She wears hijab as an expression of cultural identity.*

Common Misconceptions

Misconception: Muslim women are forced to wear hijab.

Truth: Choosing whether to wear hijab or not is a highly personal choice with many cultural, familial, religious, and personal factors considered.

Misconception: Hijab is a symbol of women's oppression.

Truth: Hijab is not meant to be used as a tool for infringement upon human rights. For the many Muslim women who choose to wear hijab, it is a daily reminder of their faith, commitment to God, and a reminder to act ethically and righteously.

Misconception: Muslim women wear their hijab 24/7.

Truth: Women wear hijab in public/outside the home, and in the presence of men who are not family members. Some are comfortable removing their hijab while with other women, and some do so only around family and close female friends.