



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Center for Middle Eastern Studies

Quick Facts about Islam

Islam is the second largest religion in the world. The word “Islam” is an Arabic word meaning submission to God. A Muslim is someone who follows Islam. Islam is one of the three primary monotheistic faiths of the Abrahamic traditions (Christianity and Judaism being the other two) and all three share a common origin and set of religious traditions.

23% of the global population (1.57 billion people) is Muslim. Of those, 87-90% are Sunni and 10-13% are Shi'a, with a small minority belonging to other variants. Approximately 50 countries are Muslim-majority.

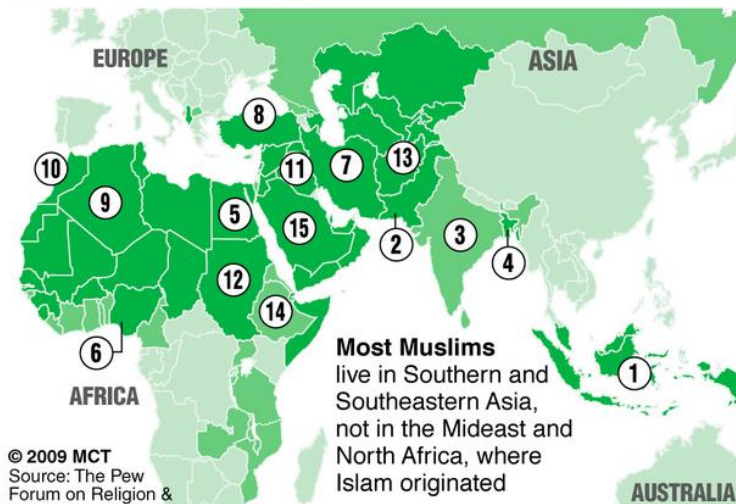
Less than 20% of Muslims live in Arab countries. About 13% of all Muslims live in Indonesia, making it the country with the largest Muslim population (appx. 203,000,000). 31% live in the Indian Subcontinent. Nearly 30% of the population of sub-Saharan Africa is Muslim.

The country with the highest percentage of Muslims is Afghanistan at 99.7%. The US has about 2.5 million Muslims (8/10's of one percent).

Where Muslims live

Nearly one in four people worldwide is Muslim, or about 1.6 billion people; percent of country's population that is Muslim:

0-9% 10-49% 50-100%



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Source: The Pew
Forum on Religion &
Public Life
Graphic: Eeli Polli

NOTE: In the U.S., there are 2.45 million Muslims, 0.8% of population

Largest Muslim populations

Rank	Muslims, in millions	Percent Muslim
1	Indonesia	203 88%
2	Pakistan	174 96%
3	India	161 13%
4	Bangladesh	145 90%
5	Egypt	79 95%
6	Nigeria	78 50%
7	Iran	74 99%
8	Turkey	74 98%
9	Algeria	34 98%
10	Morocco	32 99%
11	Iraq	30 99%
12	Sudan	30 71%
13	Afghanistan	28 99%
14	Ethiopia	28 34%
15	Saudi Arabia	25 97%

Five Pillars of Islam

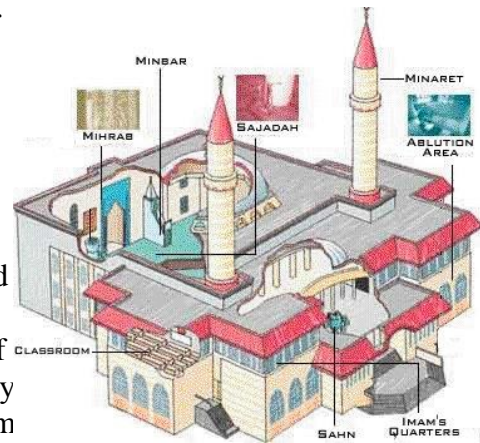
1. Shahada; Profess faith in the one God and that Muhammad the Prophet was his witness.
2. Salat: Pray five times daily.
3. Zakat: Charity. The Prophet said: “Charity is a necessity for every Muslim.”
4. Fasting: In the month of Ramadan, Muslims must fast from first light until sundown. They do not eat or drink anything during the daylight hours.
5. Hajj: The annual pilgrimage to Mecca is an obligation that Muslims do at least once in their lifetime if they are physically and financially able to do it. The sick, old, and poor are not required to do this pilgrimage.



The Qur'an (sometimes spelled Koran) is the holy book of Islam and believed to be the final revelation of God. Islam holds that the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad by the angel Gabriel over a period of approximately twenty-three years, from the year 610CE until 623CE. It is written in the Arabic language.

A **mosque** is a Muslim place of worship. The call to prayer is announced from the minaret each day.

There are different branches within Islam, including Sunni, Shi'ite and Sufi branches. Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims split early in Islamic history over differences regarding who should succeed the Prophet Muhammad as leader of the Muslim community. While these political divisions have led to some differences in matters of law and theology, Sunnis and Shi'ites share most basic Islamic beliefs. Nearly 90% of the world's Muslims are Sunni, though some Shi'ite majority countries include Iran, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, and Iraq. Sufism is a mystical tradition in which followers seek inner knowledge directly from God through meditation and rituals, and occasionally dancing. Finally, it is important to remember that many Muslims do not identify themselves as either Sunni, Shi'ite or Sufi, but simply as a Muslim—one who submits to God.



Sources:

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