

Questions to Ask Before Nikah

A practical checklist of 102 questions

Nobody asks all of these in one meeting, and nobody should. Spread them across conversations, keep the wali or family in the loop, and remember that every question goes both ways: be ready to answer whatever you ask.

Deen and practice

Start here, because everything else in a Muslim home stands on it. You are not testing anyone. You are finding out whether two understandings of the deen can live in one house.

- ☐ 1 How would you describe your relationship with Allah right now?
- ☐ 2 What does your daily prayer routine actually look like?
- ☐ 3 What does an Islamic home mean to you, in everyday terms?
- ☐ 4 Which scholars or teachers do you take your knowledge from?
- ☐ 5 How do you hope to raise children upon the deen?
- ☐ 6 What is one area of your deen you are actively working on?
- ☐ 7 What does Ramadan look like in your home beyond the fasting itself?
- ☐ 8 What is your relationship with the Quran: recitation, memorisation, meaning?
- ☐ 9 How do you feel about music, films and entertainment at home?
- ☐ 10 What does modesty mean to you, for a husband and for a wife?
- ☐ 11 Would you support me in growing my own deen, and how?
- ☐ 12 How do you handle differences of religious opinion inside a family?
- ☐ 13 Do you follow a particular maslak, and how do you treat differences?
- ☐ 14 Which Islamic practices are non-negotiable in your future home?

Character and temperament

Character outlasts beauty, income and everything on a biodata. Listen to how these are answered, not just what is said, and check what you can with people who know them.

- ☐ 15 What would the people closest to you say is your best quality?
- ☐ 16 And what would they say is your most difficult one?
- ☐ 17 Walk me through the last time you were really angry: what did it look like?
- ☐ 18 When did you last apologise to someone, and for what?
- ☐ 19 How do you handle being wrong in front of other people?
- ☐ 20 What do you do when you are stressed or overwhelmed?

- ☐ 21 Whose advice do you actually take, and when did you last take it?
- ☐ 22 How do you treat people who can do nothing for you?
- ☐ 23 What is a promise you kept even though it cost you?
- ☐ 24 How do you spend your free evenings and weekends?
- ☐ 25 Which habit are you trying to break right now?
- ☐ 26 How do you react when plans change suddenly?
- ☐ 27 What does loyalty mean to you, in practice rather than in words?
- ☐ 28 Is there anything from your past you would want me to hear from you first?

Family and the wali

You are not only marrying a person. Ask about the family gently and honestly, because their answers describe the house you will actually live in.

- ☐ 29 How would you describe your relationship with your mother? And your father?
- ☐ 30 What role will your parents play in our decisions after marriage?
- ☐ 31 How does your family resolve disagreements: silence, raised voices, or discussion?
- ☐ 32 What are your responsibilities towards your parents, now and as they age?
- ☐ 33 Will your parents live with us, now or later, and what exactly is the expectation?
- ☐ 34 How do you expect me to relate to your family day to day?
- ☐ 35 What will you do the first time your mother and I disagree?
- ☐ 36 How involved is your extended family in your personal decisions?
- ☐ 37 What does your family expect from this marriage that has not been said out loud?
- ☐ 38 How are decisions made in your family: one voice, or consultation?
- ☐ 39 Which family customs matter so much to you that you want them to continue?
- ☐ 40 Is there any family tension I should understand before I join it?
- ☐ 41 Who in your family knows you best, and may my family speak with them?

Money and expectations

Money is one of the most common causes of hurt in a marriage, and one of the least asked about. Every question here is fair, in both directions, and better asked now than discovered later.

- ☐ 42 How do you imagine we will manage money: one pot, separate, or in between?
- ☐ 43 What do you earn, roughly, and how stable is it?
- ☐ 44 Do you have any debts, loans or obligations I should know about?
- ☐ 45 What are your views on interest-based loans and credit cards?
- ☐ 46 What does nafaqah mean to you in practice, not just in principle?

- ☐ **47** What is your thinking on the mahr, and is it truly the bride's to keep?
- ☐ **48** Who pays for what in the wedding, and are both families actually agreed?
- ☐ **49** Do you support your parents or anyone else financially, and will that continue?
- ☐ **50** What is your approach to saving, and what are you saving for?
- ☐ **51** How do you feel about a wife having her own money and spending it as she wishes?
- ☐ **52** What would we do if either of us lost our income?
- ☐ **53** What lifestyle do you expect: simple, comfortable, or more?
- ☐ **54** Do you calculate and pay zakat every year?
- ☐ **55** Is there any financial commitment you are carrying for someone else?

Where you will live, and work

Daily life is where expectations quietly collide. Ask about the first year in detail, because the first year is where most of the adjusting happens.

- ☐ **56** Where will we live for the first year: our own place, with family, and in which city?
- ☐ **57** If we start with your family, how long is that for, and what is the plan after?
- ☐ **58** Would you move cities or countries for work, and would I have a say?
- ☐ **59** What does your typical working day look like, with hours and travel?
- ☐ **60** How much of your work follows you home in the evenings?
- ☐ **61** Do you expect your wife to work, not to work, or is it her choice?
- ☐ **62** If we both work, how is the home shared between us?
- ☐ **63** What happens to my work or studies when children come, and whose decision is that?
- ☐ **64** How do you feel about my education or career plans continuing after marriage?
- ☐ **65** In your imagined week, who cooks, who cleans, and who runs the errands?
- ☐ **66** How often would we visit each side of the family?
- ☐ **67** What does a restful weekend look like to you?

Children

Assumptions about children are the quietest ones of all. Say them out loud now, gently, including the questions that feel too early to ask.

- ☐ **68** Do you want children, and roughly when would you hope to start?
- ☐ **69** How many children do you imagine, and how firmly do you hold that number?
- ☐ **70** What kind of father, or mother, do you hope to be?
- ☐ **71** How were you disciplined as a child, and what would you repeat or change?
- ☐ **72** What schooling do you imagine: Islamic school, regular school, hifz, something mixed?

- ☐ **73** Who gets up at night with a baby in the home you imagine?
- ☐ **74** What would we do if Allah did not give us children?
- ☐ **75** How would you feel about fostering or caring for a child, within Islamic guidelines?
- ☐ **76** Which values from your own upbringing do you most want our children to carry?
- ☐ **77** Would our children grow up near family, or wherever work takes us?

Health

Health questions feel awkward for exactly one meeting, and matter for a lifetime. Both sides have a right to ask, and both sides owe honest answers.

- ☐ **78** Are there any health conditions, physical or mental, that I should know about?
- ☐ **79** Does anything run in your family that is worth knowing before we have children?
- ☐ **80** Are you on any long-term medication?
- ☐ **81** How do you look after yourself: sleep, food, exercise?
- ☐ **82** Have you ever struggled with your mental health, and what helped you?
- ☐ **83** How do you feel about seeing a doctor or a counsellor when something is needed?
- ☐ **84** Do you smoke, vape or use anything else I should know about?
- ☐ **85** Is there anything about my health you would like to ask me?

The hard questions

A question that feels too heavy to ask is usually the one that matters most. If you cannot ask it face to face, ask it through the families. But ask it before the nikah, not after.

- ☐ **86** Have you been married before, and what ended it, in your own words?
- ☐ **87** Do you have children from a previous marriage, and what would my role be?
- ☐ **88** Are you speaking with anyone else about marriage right now?
- ☐ **89** Is anyone pressuring either of us into this rishta?
- ☐ **90** What could I learn about you later that would make me feel deceived if you did not say it now?
- ☐ **91** Are there habits or addictions that would hurt this marriage if they surfaced later?
- ☐ **92** How do you feel about polygamy, honestly?
- ☐ **93** Has anger ever turned physical for you, with anyone?
- ☐ **94** What are your absolute deal-breakers in a spouse?
- ☐ **95** Is there anything you are hoping to change about me after marriage?
- ☐ **96** What would you do if we could not resolve a serious disagreement between ourselves?
- ☐ **97** Would you agree to involving a scholar or counsellor if we ever needed one?
- ☐ **98** When separations happened in your wider family, how were they handled?

- ☐ **99** Would you accept written conditions in the nikah contract, and which ones?
- ☐ **100** If your family opposed something we had both agreed on, what would you do?
- ☐ **101** What would make you walk away during the engagement period?
- ☐ **102** And the last one: why me? What made you say yes to this rishta?

Ask sincerely, then pray

A few honest conversations reveal a great deal. Once your questions are answered and things feel right, pray istikhaarah and trust Allah with the outcome. Clarity first, then tawakkul.