

# Major and minor sins in Islam:

## Sin and consequences of sin:

**“Righteousness is good morality and sin is that which causes discomfort (or pinches) within your soul and which you dislike people to become informed of.” [Hadith, Sahih Muslim]**

- Sin is the aspect in a Muslim’s life which he or she makes efforts to abstain from all costs.
- Allah (swt) warns mankind that the ones whose bad deeds (sins) are heavy will be in Hell.
- Striving to live the life of a believer (mu’min) and separate from the likeness of the sinner (fasiq)
- Allah (swt), in His Mercy , has made the number of things that are sin very small, and has made this life easy for someone to avoid sins or to seek repentance for them.

## Major sins and Minor Sins

There are two types of sins in Islam

----- Major Sins (Kaba’ir or “enormities”): Any sin entailing either a treat of punishment in the hereafter explicitly mentioned by the Quran or Hadith, a prescribed legal penalty (Hadd), or being accursed by Allah or His Messenger.

----- Minor Sins (sayi’at) smaller sins and daily activities where we have to be aware of our behavior and conduct. (EXP. Losing temper, saying bad words, making fun of people, bad behavior, bad treatment of people etc)

# Discussion of Major Sins

Below is the list of major sins described by Islamic scholars, it is by no means complete list, but address common sins which most people engage and especially committed in this modern era.

1. Associating partner with ALLAH, The Most High (Shirk)
2. Killing A Human Being (Murder)
3. Sorcery (Practicing Magic)
4. Not Performing the Prayer
5. Not Paying Zakat
6. Breaking One's Fast During Ramadan without an Excuse
7. Not Performing the Hajj When Able to
8. Showing Disrespect to One's Parents
9. Severing the Ties of One's Relatives
10. Adultery (Fornication)
11. Sodomy (Homosexuality)
12. Accepting Usurious Gain (Interest - Riba)
13. Wrong Consuming an Orphan's Property
14. Lying About Allah and His Prophet
15. Fleeing From the Battlefield
16. The Leader Who Misleads His Followers, the Tyrant and the Oppressor
17. Arrogance, Pride, Conceit, Vanity and Haughtiness
18. Bearing False Witness
19. Drinking Alcohol
20. Gambling (Qimar)
21. Accusing a Woman of Adultery
22. Misappropriating Spoils of War, Muslim Funds or Zakat
23. Theft (Amount of theft when exceeded and HAAD is implemented)
24. Highwaymen Who Menace the Road
25. The Engulfing Oath

- 26. Taking People's Property through Falsehood**
- 27. Extortion**
- 28. The Consumption of Haram**
- 29. Suicide**
- 30. Telling Lies habitually**
- 31. The Dishonest Judge**
- 32. Bribery to gain undue advantage**
- 33. Women Imitating Men and Vice Versa**
- 34. The Pimp and the One Who Permits His Wife to Fornicate**
- 35. Marrying Solely to Return to the Previous Husband**
- 36. Not Freeing Oneself of All Traces of Urine**
- 37. Showing off in Good Work**
- 38. Learning Sacred Knowledge for the Sake of this World or Concealing It**
- 39. Breach of Faith**
- 40. Reminding Recipients of One's Charity to Them**
- 41. Disbelieving in Destiny**
- 42. Listening to the People's Private Conversations/spying**
- 43. The Talebearer Who Stirs Up Enmity between People**
- 44. Cursing others habitually**
- 45. Breaking One's Promise or Pledge**
- 46. Believing Fortunetellers and Astrologers**
- 47. A Wife's Rebellion against Her Husband**
- 48. Excess against others to the point it becomes zulm**
- 49. Overburdening and Arrogance against Others**
- 50. Hurting One's Neighbor**
- 51. Hurting or Reviling Muslims**
- 53. Dragging the Hem of One's Garment Out of Conceit**
- 54. Men Wearing Silk or Gold**
- 55. Slaughtering in Other Than Allah's Name**
- 56. Falsely claiming someone is One's Father**
- 57. Stinting When Weighing or Measuring Out Goods and Similar Merchandise**

58. Despairing of the Mercy of Allah and Losing of Hope
59. Constantly Missing the Friday and Congregational Prayer without a Valid Excuse
60. Misappropriating inheritance money of the heirs.
61. Deception and Evil Schemes
62. Spying on the Muslims and Revealing Their Weaknesses
63. Disparaging the Companions of the Prophet.
64. Consistently engage in back biting and slandering of people
65. Watching pornographic movies and scenes, especially become a habit.
67. Abortion without genuine medical reason, or especially if it is for the fear of poverty.
68. To have no fear of Allah: to think that Allah will not punish him for his sins.
69. To swear falsely in the name of Allah.
70. Rejection or denial of what Allah has revealed to Prophet.
71. Eat pork, dead animal, blood and animal not slaughtered in the name of Allah.
72. Hoarding in order to increase prices.
73. To help oppressors (Zalim)
74. To adulterate merchandise, to make it impure or poorer in quality by adding something of lesser value; to pass on imitation as genuine items.
75. Swearing in the name of Allah falsely.
76. Not following Allah's commandments in inheritance will.
77. Persistent on minor sins can lead to major sins.

## **Discussion of Minor sins**

There is not any list of minor sins, because there could be countless minor sins, basically anything you do which is forbidden is a sin and there are sins we commit out of ignorance

or unintentionally as well. Some examples of minor sins are listed, but it cannot be a complete list as mentioned above.

1. Not lowering your gaze to look at forbidden things.
2. Flirting
3. Cursing
4. Bulling
5. Imitating non believers in their dress, behavior, style etc
6. Wasting time on watching or reading useless material
7. Listening to music/songs
8. Talking excessively about things which do not concern us
9. Making bad jokes
10. Having bad thoughts and much suspicions about others
11. Keeping an eye on other faults
12. Thinking high of oneself in piety or knowledge, expecting others to honor you and listen to you when you speak
13. Being rude to elder and harsh on children and shouting at others
14. Casting a deaf year to religious advice
15. Entering somebody's house without permission
16. Get mad when host refused to meet you if you went without appointment
17. Starring inside somebody's home or standing in front of the house and asking for permission to enter
18. Acting on information /spreading without proper investigation
19. Not intervening to reconcile /make settlement between two Muslims involved in quarrel.
20. Ridicule people
21. Insulting each other and calling each other by offensive nicknames
22. Assuming negative assumptions about others

23. Too much curiosity about other people's affairs
24. Envious about other people
25. Not patient over what befalls you
26. Not enjoin what is right and forbidding what is wrong  
(could be classified as a major sin too)
27. Not wearing hijab.
28. Wearing revealing dresses by men or women (Could be classified as major sin too, Allah knows the best)
29. Women wearing cologne in mix gathering.
30. Not replying to salam of your Muslim brother/sister.
31. Not writing any agreement on paper with witnesses as mentioned in Surah Baqara.

**Remember continuous minor sins become major sins if not stopped. Also remember that there is not exact classification (except few) of which is major or minor sin, the goal is to avoid all. The above list of major and minor sins is not exact science, a major sin could be minor or vice versa in the eyes of Allah, depending on your intension, circumstances and level of knowledge. So please do not take this list as literal list of major and minor sins and depend on it. There is lot of gray areas between which sin is major or minor. This list is just a general**

**guide. Even Islamic scholars differ on some of the sins being classified as major or minor.**

**With Allah's Mercy minor sins can be forgiven if we avoid major sins**

- If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins and admit you to a noble entrance [into paradise] Quran 4/31
- Those who avoid the greater sins and immoralities, only [committing] lesser offences, verily, your Lord is ample in forgiveness. Quran 53/32
- The five prescribed prayers, and from one Friday to another and from Ramadan to other entails forgiveness for what is in between them as long as you do not commit the major sins. ( Hadith by Muslim, Tirmizi,)

**We must try to avoid every kind (major or minor) of sin, because it has not only consequences of severe punishment from Allah, but it deprives you of so many blessings of Allah in this world too. For example:**

1. Being deprived of knowledge, for knowledge is light that Allah causes to reach the heart, and sin extinguishes that light.
2. Being deprived of provision as recorded in a Hadith.
3. A sense of alienation comes between a person and his Lord and between him and other people.

4. Things becomes difficult for him, so that he does not turn his attention towards any matter but he finds the way blocked or he finds it difficult. By the same token, for the one who fears Allah and avoid sins, things are made easy for him.
5. The sinner will find darkness in his heart, which he will feel just he feels the darkness of night. The stronger the darkness grows, the greater becomes his confusion, until he falls into innovation, misguidance and other things that lead to doom, without even realizing.
6. Deprivation of worship and obedience to Allah.
7. Sin breeds sin until it dominates a person and he cannot escape from it.
8. Sin weakens a person's willpower. It gradually strengthens his will to commit sin and weakens his will to repent until there is no will in his heart to repent at all.
9. He becomes desensitized and will no longer find sin abhorrent. So it will become his habit, and he will not be bothered if people see him committing the sin or talk about him. In fact he will proud of his sins and boast with people about his bad acts.
10. When there are many sins they leave a mark on the heart of the person who commits them, so he becomes one of the negligent. Quran says in Surah 83/4 "Nay ! but on their hearts is the Raan (covering of sins and evil deeds) which they use to earn [meaning sin after sin]". After Raan, Allah seals his heart completely for anything good in future.



## What is the remedy for people who committed both major and minor sins?

Allah is so merciful that He gives every chance to His servants to do sincere repentance so He can forgive them. Allah can even forgive the biggest crime “Shirk” (Associating partners with Him), if someone do sincere repentance before his death.

### Repentance (Tawbah) in Islam:

Tawbah (Repentance) is an obligation on every Muslim (No human being except Prophets are free of sins).

Allah (swt) forgives sins whether serious/grave or numerous with sincere repentance.

Only with Allah’s mercy will anyone enter paradise (Even our beloved Prophet (saw)).

Forgiveness is not automatic, must be sought sincerely and with consciousness.

The following verses and Hadith will give some perspective about repentance (Tawbah)

- “Say: O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Do not despair from the mercy of Allah. Verily, Allah forgives all sins. Truly, he is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” **Quran (Surah Az-Zumar, Verse 53)**
- Prophet (Peace be upon him) said that “Door of Tawbah (repentance) closes at the time of either death, or death –rattle has reached some one’s throat or when sun rises from the west.

- “Verily, Allah loves those who repent and those who purify themselves”. [Baqara 2:222]
- “O You who believe! Turn to Allah in sincere Repentance!” [At-Tahreem 66:8]
- “And O believers, all of you, repent to Allah in order that you may be successful.” [An-Noor 24:31]
- “Will they not repent to Allah and seek His forgiveness? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” [Al- Maidah 5:74]
- “But indeed, I am the Perpetual Forgiver of whoever repents and believes and does righteousness and then continues in guidance.” [Taha 20:82]
- “And whoever does evil or wrongs himself but afterwards seeks Allah’s forgiveness, he will find Allah Forgiving and Merciful.” [An-Nisa4:110]
- “And He it is who accepts repentance from his slaves, and forgives sins, and He knows what you do.’ [Al-Shoora 42:25]
- “Do they not know that Allah accepts repentance from His slaves and takes the Sadaqat (alms, charity), and that Allah is the One Who forgives and accepts repentance, Most Merciful?” [at-Tawbah 9:104]

### **Two famous Hadith of our beloved Prophet (SAW)**

- 1) Every son of Adam sins and the best of those who sin are those who repent. [Al Tirmidhi]

- 2) By the One in Whose hand is my soul, if you did not commit sin Allah would do away with you and bring people who would commit sin then pray for forgiveness [Muslim]

## **Condition for Repentance (Tawbah)**

There are four conditions for Tawbah:

- 1) Recognizing ones mistakes and sins. (Not justifying it)
- 2) Feeling ashamed of violating Allah's trust of complete submission to his commandments.
- 3) Making a promise never to repeat such behavior
- 4) If the sin has to do with the rights of another person, that right must be restored. For example, if violating rights involves money or property, etc, it must be returned to him/her; if it had to do with slandering etc then forgiveness must be asked and so on.

If one of these conditions is missing, then according to many scholars repentance is not sincere.

## **Some practical steps to take when we commit sin.**

- 1) Meet the 4 conditions mentioned above.
- 2) Don't worry about Waswasa (whisper from shaytaan) that our repentance is not accepted by Allah.
- 3) Follow up repentance with good deeds. Like giving charity, helping someone, focus on reading Quran-anything good to please Allah.

- 4) Pray the repentance prayer. If following up a bad deed with a good one can change our sins into good deeds, what deed is better than prayer? According to Messenger of Allah “There is no servant who commits a sin and then purifies himself (Wadoo) and then prays two rakaahs and then seeks forgiveness of Allah except that Allah forgives him.

It is important that we never despair of Allah’s Mercy- no sin is too great to repent for... or too little for that matter.

## Dua (Supplication) for Repentance

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ خَلَقْتَنِي  
وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ وَأَنَا عَلَى عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ  
مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا صَنَعْتُ  
أَبُوءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ عَلَيَّ وَأَبُوءُ بِذَنْبِي  
فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

Translation: “O Allah! You are my Lord. There is no God except You. You created me and I am your slave. To the best of my ability, I will abide by my covenant and pledge to you. I seek

**Your protection from the evil of my own creation. I acknowledge Your favors to me and I admit my sins. So please forgive me for no one can forgive sins except you.**

This supplication is called as Master of Repentance (Syyaid ul Istighfar). (Reference Hadith saheh Al Bukhari # 6306)

Frequently pray this Dua for forgiveness.

**NOTE:** It is highly recommended that reader should also read my research papers “Shirk and repentance”, “Parents rights in Islam”, and “Giving for the sake of Allah” from my same website as these topics directly relate to major sins.

May Allah give us ability to avoid all sins (major or minor) and ask for true forgiveness with sincere repentance.

**Disclaimer:** The list of major and minor sins in this article is only for informational and guidance purposes. Reader should not take this as religious edict (Religious ruling or fatwa). One should consult an Islamic scholar in case of a sin one committed and what is the remedy, like proper counseling and paying kaffara etc.

To conclude, I would like to quote from a great Muslim scholar named Hasan Basari. Once he was asked what is the secret of his “Taqwa” or righteousness /piety. He replied once I understood the following four things, my Taqwa increased.

1. Once I realized that no one can take away or increase my sustenance as prescribed by Allah for me, and then my heart became content.
2. When I realized that nobody can pray or do good deeds on my behalf, then I started doing it myself.

3. When I realized that Allah is present everywhere and I cannot hide my sins with Him, then I felt ashamed in doing sins.
4. When I realized that death is waiting for me, then I started preparing myself to meet my creator Allah (SWT).

What a beautiful things he said, if we ponder on these items then we realize that the number one reason people commit sins is because of money and if we realize that our sustenance is predetermined by Allah, then there is no need to acquire money by illegitimate means and commit sins, secondly if we know that Allah is always there to watch everything we do, then how come we will not be ashamed to commit sins openly or secretly. And lastly if we realize our death can come any moment without a warning and we have to meet our creator and give accountability of our every single deed, then how we will commit any sin? Just pondering over these things will stop us committing major or minor sins Inshah' Allah.

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