

How to make up for Fard (Obligatory Salah) Of lifetime?

The issue of making up (qaḍā') for missed farḍ ṣalāh over a lifetime is something the scholars have discussed in detail. There is agreement on the seriousness, but differences on the method. I'll give you the authentic, balanced view from the Qur'an, Sunnah, and major scholars, so one can act with clarity.

1. First Principle: Missing Salah is Very Serious

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Between a man and shirk and kufr is abandoning the prayer.” ^[SEP]—

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)

And Allah says:

“So woe to those who pray, but are heedless of their prayer.” (Surah Al-Ma'un 107:4–5)

So the starting point is: sincere tawbah (repentance) is absolutely necessary.

2. If Salah Was Missed Due to Sleep or Forgetfulness

There is clear Sunnah:

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Whoever forgets a prayer or sleeps through it, let him pray it when

he remembers. (Bukhari, Muslim)



Ruling:

- Pray it immediately when remembered
 - No sin in this case
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3. If Salah Was Missed Deliberately (Main Question)

Here the scholars differ:



Opinion 1 (Majority – 4 Madhhabs)

(Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik, Imam Shafi'i, Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal)



View:

- All missed prayers must be made up (qadā')
- Even if they are many years



Reasoning:

- Prayer is a debt owed to Allah
- The Prophet ﷺ said:

"The debt owed to Allah has more right to be fulfilled." (Bukhari)



How to do it:

- Make tawbah first
 - Then start gradual qadā' plan
 - Pray extra prayers daily (e.g., 2–5 days' worth)
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Opinion 2 (Strong minority view)

(Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn al-Qayyim)



View:

- Deliberately missed prayers cannot be made up

- Instead:

- Make sincere Tawbah (Repentance)

- Increase nafl prayers, istighfar, good deeds



Reasoning:

- Prayer has fixed times (Qur'an 4:103)

- Missing intentionally = sin not fixable by qada', only repentance

4. What Is the Safer & Widely Practiced Approach?

Most scholars say:



Do BOTH:

1. Sincere Tawbah

2. Start making up missed prayers

This is the safest path and removes doubt.

5. Practical Sunnah-Based Plan for Lifetime Missed Salah

Here is a realistic method used by scholars:

Step 1: Make Tawbah

- Regret sincerely

- Firm intention never to miss again

- Ask Allah for forgiveness

Step 2: Estimate Missed Prayers

- Rough estimate (e.g., 5 years, 10 years)

- No need for exact count

Step 3: Daily Qada' System

Example:

- After each farḍ → pray 1 extra qaḍā'
- Or:
- Fajr + 1 qaḍā'
- Dhuhḥr + 2 qaḍā'
- etc.



Even 5 extra daily = 1 full day recovered per day

Step 4: Prioritize Consistency

- Small, daily effort is better than burnout
 - Could finish years of prayers gradually
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Step 5: Add Supporting Acts

- Tahajjud
 - Istighfar
 - Sunnah prayers
 - Charity
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6. Important Clarifications

- No specific dua from Sunnah for “qaḍā' salah” — just pray normally
 - No need to repeat adhān
 - Intention (niyyah) in heart is sufficient
 - Pray in correct order if possible, but not mandatory when many
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7. A Balanced Conclusion



The strongest and safest position:

- Repent sincerely
- Never miss salah again
- Gradually make up past prayers

Even scholars who differed agree on one thing:



Turn back to Allah sincerely and increase worship

There is Hadith that on the Day of Judgment if our Fard Salah

— are missing, Allah (SWT) With His Infinite Mercy will compensate with Nafl Salah, Lets evaluate this Hadith.



The Hadith About Nafl Compensating Deficiencies

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“The first thing a person will be brought to account for on the Day of Resurrection is his prayer. If it is sound, he will succeed... If it is lacking, Allah will say: ‘Look, does My servant have any voluntary (nafl) prayers?’ Then the obligatory prayers will be completed from the voluntary ones.” — (Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud – authentic)



How Scholars Understood This Hadith



Majority of Scholars (4 Madhhabs)

(Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik, Imam Shafi'i, Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal)



They say:

- This hadith refers to deficiencies within performed prayers
- lack of khushū' (concentration)
- minor mistakes
- نقص (shortcomings)



Not for completely missed farḍ prayers



Therefore:

- Missed prayers still require qadā'
 - Nafl helps perfect, not replace
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Minority Opinion

(Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn al-Qayyim)



They allow the understanding that:

- After sincere tawbah
- And firm commitment to prayer



Increasing nafl, istighfar, and good deeds may compensate, by Allah's mercy

But even they emphasize:

- This is not a casual shortcut
 - It requires deep repentance and major increase in worship
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Important Reality Check

Relying only on nafl to replace years of missed farḍ is:

-  Not the majority view
 -  Considered risky by most scholars
 -  Not explicitly practiced in the Sunnah for missed obligations
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Strongest & Safest Approach (Recommended)

A balanced approach many scholars advise:



1. Sincere Tawbah

- Deep regret
- Firm intention never to miss again



2. Make Qaḍā' (even gradually)

- Even 1–2 extra per day



3. Increase Nafl

- Sunnah prayers
- Tahajjud
- Du'ā' and Istighfar



In this way:

- Qaḍā' fulfills the obligation
- Nafl brings Allah's mercy and acceptance



Simple Analogy Scholars Use

- Farḍ = debt
- Nafl = extra charity



Charity does not cancel a debt —but it can beautify and strengthen your standing.



Final Takeaway

- The hadith about nafl is true and powerful
- But according to most scholars  It completes deficiencies, not replace missed obligations



If someone only relies on nafl:

- There is some scholarly basis
- But it is not the safer or dominant position

Bottom line: For any action to perform the rule is to

look first in Quran, if not there follow Sunnah, if not authenticated then look at the practice of Sahaba. If still no practice available follow ulema (Scholars) Ijtehad (consensus), if that's not available then we should do our own Ijtehad, what is the best way to follow different scholarly options. In this case of compensating missed obligatory salah, there is nothing in Quran, or sunnah or Sahaba practice.

Because it was unimaginable at the time of Prophet and companions life to miss a single fard salah, even the hypocrites were praying so that they are not classified as non Muslims. Secondly from above discussion there is no consensus (IJTIMA) among scholars as to how to compensate the missed fard salah. So reader should do his/her own ijtehad and follow whatever school of thought or scholarly option they ought to follow. The author is not giving any opinion in this regard, follow your method at your own risk, this article is for informational purpose only and does not endorse any of the method described above.