

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Sunnah i'tikaf is observed from the start of the 21st night of Ramadan (i.e. Maghrib of the 20th fast) until the moon is sighted for Eid. It is Sunnah for both men and women to sit in i'tikaf.

Nafl i'tikaf may be observed at any time for any duration of time.

Where may she sit for her i'tikaf?

She should sit i'tikaf in her appointed place of salaah at home. If there isn't an area appointed for salaah, then where she normally reads her *salaah* will suffice. If she doesn't read salaah in one place, then she must appoint an area for salaah prior to i'tikaf. Once appointed, she may not change her mind during her i'tikaf.

Her appointed area will have the same rules as that of a masjid. Leaving this area without an acceptable reason will break her i'tikaf and she will have to do qadha.

When can she leave her place of i'tikaf?

The rules that apply to men in a masjid also apply to a woman sitting i'tikaf at home.

She may leave her place of i'tikaf for the following reasons: to use the toilet, for an obligatory ghusl, for wudhu and to bring food and drink to her place of i'tikaf only when there is no one else who can bring it for her.

Menstruation in I'tikaf

If a woman has her period then her i'tikaf will break. After her period, she must make qadha.

It would be appropriate for a woman to plan ahead and identify the dates that she will not be able to sit in i'tikaf. If these coincide with the last ten days of Ramadan then she shouldn't sit in sunnah i'tikaf. She may sit in nafl i'tikaf until she gets her period.

Marital relations in I'tikaf

A woman must not sit in i'tikaf without the consent of her husband. If a husband has given permission to his wife, he may not retract this later.

Sexual activity is impermissible during i'tikaf. Sexual intercourse will break her i'tikaf and both husband and wife must repent and seek forgiveness from Allah. She will also have to do qadha.

Qadha (Making up) i'tikaf

When sunnah i'tikaf is broken, the i'tikaf for the previous days will be complete. However, qadha of the day that i'tikaf was broken must be made.

If it is possible to keep this qadha in Ramadan while fasting it will be sufficient. If Ramadan passes, it will be necessary to keep a fast while observing this qada i'tikaf. This may be a woman's qadha fast or a nafl fast.

The qadha of one day will run from Maghrib to the next day's Maghrib.

Please note that fasting is a condition for sunnah itikaf. If one breaks their fast then their sunnah i'tikaf will also break.