



THE MECCA CENTER CONVERT ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

New Muslim Handbook

A Directory of Local Resources for New Muslims



WELCOME TO MECCA COMMUNITY



Assalamu Alaikum!

On behalf of the Mecca Center and Mecca's Convert Engagement Committee, please accept our sincere congratulations on accepting Islam. Welcome!

Becoming Muslim will unimaginably change and enrich your life spiritually, emotionally, and physically. One of the most immediate blessings you will experience is joining the Mecca Center Community, extending beyond the mosque's walls.

To be of the utmost assistance to you, we ask that you please scan the QR code below and fill out the New Muslim Introduction Form; upon receiving it, we will provide the Certificate of Shahadah via email; you will also receive a welcome letter containing valuable resources and information about services and connection opportunities at the Mecca Center and beyond.

**Sincerely,
The Mecca Center Convert Engagement Committee**



New Muslim Resource Guide

This handbook is intended to be a beginning point of discussion, reference, and research for Muslims who seek resources to improve their Islamic knowledge and lifestyle. Resources in this guide are not an exhaustive list and this guide is a living document.

Convert Programming at The Mecca Center

WHO ARE WE?

The Mecca Center Convert Engagement Committee is dedicated to providing holistic support to newcomers & longtime converts to Islam through engaging community programs, events, educational projects, and group activities.

GET INVOLVED

We organize a wide range of programs throughout the year with lots of opportunities for engagement and learning for Muslims from all walks of life. We welcome you to our programs!

OUR PROGRAMS

- **Cookies & Coffee with Converts**
 - A bi-weekly support group that takes place every other Saturday in the Old Youth Lounge from 11am - 12:30pm. Open to Converts only; no registration is required - walk-ins welcome!

- **ConverTsations Monthly Forum**

An open-to-all monthly program. It is a discussion and creative public forum that explores convert experiences to generate personal and communal reflections and discussions about our life in Islam. It is an exceptional

source of knowledge, support, and personal growth for Muslims from all walks of life.

- **WhatsApp Convert Support**

- A private WhatsApp chat group that provides converts with peer-based spiritual support throughout the week. To be a part of the WhatsApp community, new members must fill out the form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeVUkrucZGf_bjtoGdlhLfgD5w37XGe4kOT5JfBtFjluCDj2_A/viewform

- **Mecca Center Mentorship Program**

- An ongoing, comprehensive support program matching experienced convert mentors with new convert mentees. The program is complete with training, tracking, and a handbook: <https://meccacenter.org/converts-mentorship/>

- **Companionship Circle with Dr Ahmed Arafat, Resident Scholar**

- A part of the Suhbah Program: a monthly program for Brothers and Sisters of Mecca's convert community dedicated to fostering spiritual growth and expanding Islamic knowledge. Sheikh Ahmed Arafat follows the prophetic style of teaching through companionship. The session consists of a lecture on a given topic followed by a discussion and Q&A. The program is for both men and women and is exclusive to The Mecca Center's convert community. The program takes place every first Wednesday of the month, after Maghreb prayer in the Youth Lounge (Old Wing).

- **Quran Seekers**

- In collaboration with the Mecca Quran Institute: an Arabic and Quran Program is specifically designed for converts learning to read the Quran in Arabic. All students attend

free of charge. There are three levels available: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. These in-person classes take place every Saturday at 10 am at The Mecca Center. The enrollment is open and ongoing: converts can register for the program here anytime: <http://bit.ly/MOIQS24>

- **New Muslims Resource Center at TMC Library**
 - Located at the Mecca Center Library on the second floor, the Converts' Corner offers an array of books, periodicals, and other helpful resources tailored specifically for converts. Items may be checked out.

- **Certificate of Shahadah**
 - A legal certificate declaring the convert's religion of Islam; signed by the resident Sheikh (the documentation is helpful to converts during travel, especially for Hajj and Umrah, and other life matters).

- **Socials and Field Trips**
 - The Mecca Center Muslim Convert Committee Social Program organizes social events, gatherings, and opportunities for converts. We aim to create an environment where we can build meaningful relationships, feel a sense of community, and feel supported.

- **Assorted Educational Workshops & Classes**
 - We offer one-time educational workshops and classes throughout the year.

- **Convert Programs Calendar:**
 - Add our calendar for quick access and an overview of our events:
<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/2?cid=Y19lOTlkY2JlYjZjZjcZjAwYzBiMTFlNjIjOWU3MjA1MGQ4NTEzY2Q2MTYyZmFhMzA2MmI5YzdiNmExNzI2YTRmQGdyb3VwLmNhbGVuZGFyLmdvb2dsZS5jb20>

Our Annual Programs

- **Mecca Center Annual Converts' Conference**
 - Upcoming- April 25-27, 2025. Mark your calendars and register here:
<https://meccacenter.org/events/the-4th-annual-converts-conference/>
 - Our annual converts' conference is a unique space of opportunity to connect, learn, reflect, and, most importantly, empathize. The conference is open to all – converts, heritage Muslims, and those who are interested in Islam.
 - The conference features presentations and workshops by prominent scholars, activists, and community leaders dedicated to sharing their knowledge and expertise engagingly and practically.
- **Shahada Celebrations for New Muslims**
- **Ramadan Iftars & Eid Celebrations**
- **Multilingual Educational Resources (PDF Formats; ready to download):** <https://shorturl.at/MIKSH>

Individual Counseling offered by The Mecca Center Imams:

- Make your appointment via the following links:
 - <https://tr.ee/tR2BQEPXSf>
 - <https://tr.ee/O7sUbaTT6G>

Contact Us

630-241-2000

convertsupport@meccacenter.org

www.meccacenter.org

Apps for Phones

- iPray
- Learn Prayer by Salat Pro (step-by-step salah with voice recordings of surahs and parts of prayer)
- Muslim Pro (prayer times, virtual tasbeeh beads, fasting & prayer tracker, Quran, documentaries, etc.)
- QuranHive (offers a range of reciters, word-by-word Quran translation, and Tafsir)
- Muslim Pal (Quran memorization and recitation)
- Qalam (live lectures from Qalam institute)
- Quranic (learn basic Islamic Arabic vocabulary)
- Qariah (all-female Quran recitations)
- Aratools (an Arabic-English dictionary)
- Yaqeen (offers assorted papers and research articles regarding Islam as well as YouTube videos)

Arabic Language Resources

- Moraine Valley Community College
- International Open University, online, iou.edu.gm
- Bayyinah Institute
Online, Arabic Language and Quran, on-demand
- Arabic 101 Youtube
- Bidaya Book...Arabic curriculum developed at Mecca, The Mecca Center, Willowbrook <https://meccacenter.org/>
- <http://corpus.quran.com/wordbyword.jsp>
- Al Darajat. <https://aldarajat.org/>
- Arabic Pod 101 ("Arabic Alphabet Made Easy" playlist)

Books: Recommended Reading

- *Atlas of the Quran, Places, Nations, Landmarks* Compiled by DR. Shauqi Abu Khalil
- *Being Muslim: A Practical Guide* by Asad Tarsin
- *Developing Khushu' in Prayer* by Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid
- *Duas for Success: 100+ Duas from Quran and Sunnah for Success and Happiness* by IqraSense

- *Elementary Teachings of Islam* by Muhammad A. Siddiqui
- *In the Company of Scholars: A Commentary on Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadith* by Furhan Zubairi
- *Islam Between East and West* by 'Alija 'Ali Izetbegovic.
- *Muhammad, His Life Based on the Earliest Sources* by Martin Lings
- *Project Lina* by Tamara Gray and Najiyah D. Maxfield
- *Riyad-us-Saliheen- Vol 1&2 (Hadith)* Compiled by Al-Imam Abu Zakariya Yahya bin Sharaf An-Nawawi Ad- Dimashqi
- *Tajweed Qur'an with Meaning Translation & Transliteration in English* by Dar Al Maarifah
- *The Clear Quran Series Dictionary* by Dr. Mustafa Khattab
- *The Clear Quran for Kids* by Dr. Mustafa Khattab
- *The Divine Reality: God, Islam, and the Mirage of Atheism* by Hamza Andreas Tzortzis
- *The Marvels of the Heart* by Imam Al-Ghazali (translated by Walter James Skellie)
- *The Mysteries of the Prayer* by Imam Al-Ghazali (translated by M. Abdurrahman Fitzgerald)
- *The New Muslims Field Guide* by Theresa Corbin and Kaighla Um Dayo
- *The Spiritual Teachings of the Prophet - Hadith with Commentaries by Saints & Sages of Islam* by Tayeb Chourief
- *With the Heart in Mind: The Moral and Emotional Intelligence of the Prophet (S)* by Mikael Ahmed Smith

Bookstores

- Crescent Moon Children's Islamic Bookstore (Online Only)
www.crescentmoonstore.com
 - Online Islamic bookstore for children selling a range of Islamic books, toys, games, and Eid & Ramadan decorations. Can shop by age-range to find age-appropriate books and toys.

- NoorArt (Online Only)
www.noorart.com
 - Noorart is an online store dedicated to educating and inspiring our Muslim and Arab youth by producing and distributing quality educational products.
- Furqaan Bookstore in Bolingbrook, IL
www.furqaanbookstore.com
 - Islamic bookstore in Bolingbrook with an online store.
 - 401 W. Boughton Rd., Bolingbrook, IL
- Iqra Book Center in Chicago, IL www.iqra.org
 - An Islamic bookstore in Chicago selling a large selection of children's books, Qurans, school curriculums, and Islamic literature. Books can also be purchased on their website.
 - 2749 W. Devon Ave., Chicago, IL, 60659
 - (773)-274-2665

Charity Organizations

- Islamic Relief www.islamic-relief.org
- Helping Hand Relief and Development www.1.hhrd.org
- Zakat Foundation www.zakat.org
- Baitulmaal www.baitulmaal.org

Counseling & Mental Health

- Khalil Center in Lombard, IL
 - www.khalilcenter.com
 - 855-5KHALIL
- Hadia Zarzour, MA, LCPC in Hinsdale, IL
 - 630-716-3937
- Maria Mirza, LCSW
 - www.colliancewellness.com
 - 312-714-0341
 - colliancewellness@gmail.com

Convert Support Groups

- Mecca Center <https://meccacenter.org/converts/>
- Mosque Foundation <https://meccacenter.org/>
- The Prayer Center of Orland Park
<https://orlandparkprayercenter.org/>
- Rabata <https://www.rabata.org>
- Ta'leef Chicago <https://www.taleefcollective.org/>
- www.whyislam.org
- Maghrib Institute <https://www.almaghrib.org/>
- Embracereverts.org (An online support program for converts , sponsored by ICNA-Islamic Circle of North America)
- Toll Free phone numbers (24 HR. Hotline for Questions about Islam)
 - 1-877-WHY-ISLAM
 - 1-800-662-ISLAM

Domestic Violence

- Apna Ghar www.apnaghar.org
 - Aims to end gender-based violence by offering a 24 hr. crisis line, emergency housing, transitional housing, case management / social services, counseling, legal advocacy, supervised visitation and safe exchange services.
 - Helpline (24/7): 773-334-4663 or 800-717-0757
- An-Nisa Hope Center www.annisa.org
 - Houston-based organization focused on reducing domestic violence. Offers a helpline available 7-days a week.
 - Helpline: 832-324-9111
- Arab American Family Services www.aafsil.org
 - Provides domestic violence / sexual assault prevention and intervention programs.
 - Located in Worth, IL
 - 708-599-2237
- National Domestic Violence Hotline www.thehotline.org
 - A national organization that offers a 24/7 hotline for survivors of domestic violence which can be accessed via

text, online chat, or phone. The organization also provides online resources to help with safety planning, identifying abusive behavior, and locating local resources.

- Peaceful Families Project
 - An organization committed to ending domestic violence among the Muslim community by providing workshops on domestic violence and cultural sensitivity training.

Financial Assistance Services

- Al Mustafa Mosque in Westmont
www.masjidalmustafa.weebly.com
- Hometown Mercy Mosque www.hometownmercymosque.org
- Islamic Center of Naperville www.islamiccenterofnaperville.com
- Mosque Foundation www.mosquefoundation.org
- The Prayer Center of Orland Park
www.orlandparkprayercenter.com
- The Mecca Center in Willowbrook www.meccacenter.org

Halaqas for Sisters

- EMMA Foundation (online)
- Palos Islamic Center <https://palosic.org/>
- The Mosque Foundation, Bridgeview
<https://mosquefoundation.org/>
- The Mecca Center, Willowbrook <https://meccacenter.org/>
- The Prayer Center of Orland Park
<https://orlandparkprayercenter.org/>
- Rabata (online) <https://www.rabata.org>

Halaqas for Brothers

- The Mosque Foundation, Bridgeview
<https://mosquefoundation.org/>
- The Mecca Center, Willowbrook <https://meccacenter.org/>
- Palos Islamic Center <https://palosic.org/>
- The Prayer Center of Orland Park
<https://orlandparkprayercenter.org/>

Housing / Food Resources

- Mosque Foundation Food Pantry in Bridgeview
www.mosquefoundation.org
- ICNA Relief (food bank, transitional housing services, health clinic)
 - For information on local services, go to
<https://icnarelief.org/illinois-2/>

Islamic Academies & Universities

- American Islamic College, Irving Park
- International Open University (IOU- all online programs)
iou.edu.gm
- Maghreb Institute
- Al-Maghrib Institute Faith Essentials
<https://www.almaghrib.org/faith-essentials/> (an online Islamic course library offers a one year free scholarship for online courses for converts)
- Ribaat Academic Institute (offers online courses for women)
<https://www.rabata.org>
- Qalam Institute <https://www.qalam.institute/> **Islamic Centers / Mosques in Chicago's Western Suburbs**
- Palos Islamic Center <https://palosic.org/>
- Hometown Mercy Mosque
<https://hometownmercymosque.org/>
- Mosque Foundation <https://mosquefoundation.org/>
- The Prayer Center of Orland Park
<https://orlandparkprayercenter.org/>
- Al Mustafa Mosque, Westmont
www.masjidalmustafa.weebly.com
- Worth Masjid & Islamic Center www.worthmosque.com
- AlNahda Mosque Worth <https://www.nahda.us>
- The Mecca Center, Willowbrook <https://meccacenter.org/>

Islamic Schools

- Aqsa School (K-8) www.aqsa.edu Bridgeview
- Universal (K-12) www.universalschool.org Bridgeview
- MAS Blossoms (Preschool) Bridgeview
www.maschicago.org/quran-blossoms.html
- Donya Academy (Preschool) Oak Lawn
- Kindi Academy Lisle
- Islamic Foundation Villa Park (K-12) <https://ifsvp.org>
- CPSA Lombard (K-12) <https://cpsaonline.org/home/>
- ILM Montessori Academy Lombard (PreK - 6)
<https://ilmmontessori.org>
- DarusSalam Lombard (Early Childhood Program & High School Program)
<https://masjidds.org/tanwir-intensive/islamic-integrated-high-school/>
- Burr Ridge Bilingual Montessori (Islamic Montessori in Darien) Pre-K and Elementary: <https://www.bbm.school>

Legal Resources

- Family Law
 - Kiswani Law Firm www.kiswanilawfirm.com
 - Farooqi & Husain Law www.farooqihusain.com
 - Abear Law www.abearlaw.com
- Other Legal Resources
 - Zubair M. Tajuddin of Law Office of Tajuddin & Khan
 - ztajuddin@tandkfirm.com
 - 630-624-1396
 - Mustafa Zayed Translations in Bridgeview
 - Legal translation service
 - 708-662-0182
 - ISNA, Islamic Society of North America
 - CAIR, Council on American-Islamic Relations

Medical Resources

- SAMS Free Specialty Clinic
 - The Syrian American Medical Society offers free specialty clinics at Anne M. Jeans Elementary School (Door 12, 16W631 91st, Willowbrook, IL, 60527). Specialty clinics include pulmonology, cardiology, obstetrics & gynecology, and endocrinology. Patients should bring a list of current medications and lab results. Walk-ins are welcome although appointments are preferred.
 - Open from 11-2pm on select Saturdays
 - Schedule an appointment at 630-474-4724.

Modest Clothing Resources

Modesty Guidelines in Islam

The parts of the body that men and women are required to cover with clothing is known as the “awrah” in Islam. The awrah differs between men and women. Men are required to cover everything from the navel to the knee while women are required to cover their entire bodies except their hands and face.

Islamic Clothing Stores

- Local Clothing Stores
 - Bridgeview
 - Alameera Fashion
 - Istanbul Hijab Fashion
 - Naqsh Handmade Kaftan
 - Qaser al Amerat
 - Glendale Heights
 - Nareman Srour - this sister sells jilbabs and hijabs from her home. Contact her via phone at 630-935-2015
 - Lombard
 - Hijab Vault
 - Oak Brook Mall

- Anthropologie (also check out their website!)
 - Free People (also check out their website!)
 - Woodfield Mall
 - Uniqlo (also check out their website!)
 - Primark
- Online Sellers
 - Aab Collection www.us.aabcollection.com
 - Modern modest maxi dresses, abayas, coats, prayer outfits, swimwear, activewear, and hijabs.
 - Annah Hariri www.annahariri.com
 - Abayas, maxi dresses, hijabs. NOTE - There have been previous issues with backorders so be mindful if wanting to make large purchases on this site.
 - Artizara www.artizara.com
 - Sells men's and women's clothing that are aligned with Islamic guidelines.
 - Asiya Abaya <https://asiyaabaya.com>
 - Women's prayer clothes.
 - Bazaar Al Haya www.bazaralhaya.com
 - Sells jilbabs, niqabs, hijabs, modest swimwear, and several modest abayas for reasonable prices. Offers nursing-friendly abaya options as well.
 - Culture Hijab www.culturehijab.com
 - Hijabs, underscarves, and various hijab accessories
 - East Essence www.eastessence.com
 - Range of affordable hijabs, jilbabs, and abayas. Sells men's clothing as well.
 - Forward Hijab www.forwardhijab.com
 - Range of hijabs in multiple fabrics
 - Haute Hijab www.hautehijab.com
 - Beautiful range of high-quality patterned chiffon hijabs. Also has several jersey hijabs, sports hijabs, and underscarves.

- Hazel Got You Covered www.hazaelgotyoucovered.com
 - Hijab-friendly, modest scrubs for doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals.
- Ivy City Co. www.ivycityco.com
 - While not made specifically for Muslims, this site sells a variety of dresses that can be modified to fit Islamic guidelines. Nursing-friendly options.
- Kap Swim - Halal Swimwear for Men www.kapswim.com
 - Modest swimwear for men that aligns with Islamic guidelines.
- Lala Hijabs www.lalahijabs.com
 - Unique jersey hijabs for adults and kids, underscarves, and nursing-friendly rayon maxi dresses.
- Louella by Ibtihaj www.louellashop.com
 - Hijabs, dresses, jumpsuits, tops, cardigans, and bottoms.
- Lululemon
 - It is hard to find modest clothing options for women at their brick-and-mortar stores but online they have great sports hijabs!
- Middle Eastern Boutique www.middleeasternboutique.com
 - Sells men's thobes, women's swimwear, abayas, hijabs, prayer clothes, and miscellaneous gift items.
- Modefa www.mymodefa.com
 - Modest clothing for men, women, and children. Company does ship out of the USA.
- Modanisa www.modanisa.com
 - Huge range of abayas, jilbabs, hijabs, and other modest clothing essential at very affordable prices. Ships out of Turkey.
- Niswa Fashion www.niswafashion.com
 - Abayas, jilbabs, maxi dresses, hijabs, mommy & me apparel, swimwear, nursing-friendly abayas & maxi dresses.

- Shukr Clothing www.shukronline.com
 - Offers a range of Islamic clothing for men and women. Clothing is on the pricier end but the quality is very good. Great sales around Black Friday, Ramadan, and Eid.
 - Sukoon Activewear www.sukoonactive.com
 - Hijab-friendly activewear
 - Urban Modesty www.urbanmodesty.com
 - New York-based modest fashion boutique offering abayas, gowns, maxi dresses, prayer outfits, and hijabs.
 - Veil Garments www.veilgarments.com
 - Modest, hijab-friendly activewear
 - Zahraa the Label www.zahraathelabel.com
 - Modern & modest maxi dresses, hijabs, and prayer outfits.
- What to buy to make your wardrobe more hijab-friendly!
 - Undershirts
 - Skirt slips
 - Long stockings
 - Leggings for underdresses and dresses if needed
 - Non-slip underscarves
 - Hijab magnets or pins
 - Volumizing scrunchies

Online Learning Centers and Scholars

- Online Learning Centers
 - Bayyinnah Institute
 - Online, Arabic Language and Quran, on-demand
 - Deen Stream www.deenstream.tv
 - Offers a variety of lectures on a range of Islamic topics from renowned scholars like Shiekh Hamza Yusuf and Dr. Umar Faruq Abd-Allah

- Faith Essentials by the Maghrib Institute
www.faithessentials.online
 - Online resource with on-demand video-based classes taught by well-known scholars.
- Qalam Institute www.qalam.institute
 - An Islamic seminary based in Texas that offers podcasts, online courses, intensives, and weekend seminars.
- New Muslims Academy www.newmuslimacademy.org
 - Online courses catered for new Muslims.
- Seekers' Guidance
 - Offers online courses and answers to various questions on Islamic topics.
- Yaqueen Institute
 - Features a collection of papers and research articles on religious topics and pressing issues within the Islamic community. Also has a YouTube channel with multiple lectures.
- Scholars
 - Shiekh Yasir Qadhi
 - Sheikh Yasir Birjas
 - Mufti Menk
 - Shiekh Hamza Yusuf
 - Dr. Umar Faruq Abd-Allah
 - Dr. Haifaa Younis
 - Dr. Omar Suleiman
 - Dr. Rania Awaad
 - Ustadha Hosai Mojaddidi
 - Maryim Amir
 - Dr. Tamara Gray
 - Shiekh Yahya Rhodes
 - Imam Khalid Latif
 - Ustadh AbdelRahman Murphy
 - Shiekh AbdulNasir Jangda
 - Nouman Ali Khan

- Shiekh Abdullah Oduro
- Ustadh Ubaydullah Evans
- Ustadh AbdelRahman Murphy

Quran Reading Resources

- <https://quranrevolution.com>
- <https://www.tanzel.org>
- <https://www.readandmemorizequran.com/>
- <https://www.studioarbiya.com>
- www.quran.com
- www.Quranexplorer.com
- <http://corpus.quran.com/wordbyword.jsp>

Grocery Shopping for New Muslims

Learning to differentiate between halal and haram food products in the grocery aisles can feel daunting sometimes. Many foods are easily determined to be halal or haram. This list is meant to help you discern some of the trickier items. By no estimate is this list meant to be exhaustive.

- Pork and pork derivatives are forbidden (haram).
 - Lard
 - Sausage
 - Bacon
 - Ham
 - Pancetta
 - Gelatin*
- Alcohol
 - Wine
 - Beer
 - Vodka
 - Bourbon
 - Rum
 - Sherry
 - Cognac

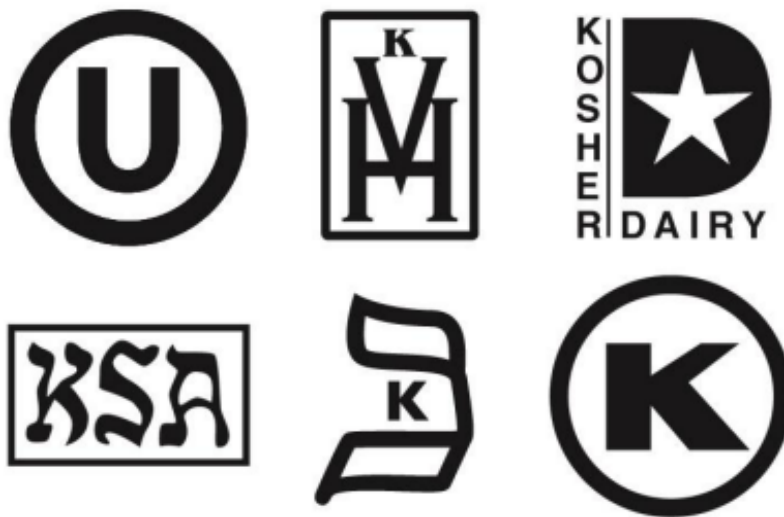
- The list for alcohol ingredients could go on and on. These are some of the more common ones to look for in the ingredients listed on the labels. Check sauces, ice cream, chocolates, and prepared soups. These are common items that are often found to contain alcohol of some type.
- Other:
 - Mirin (asian cooking wine) & white wine used for cooking (substitute white wine in cooking for rice vinegar or other vinegars to produce similar effect*)
 - Gummies like some fruit snacks (check ingredient list for gelatin)
 - Tiramisu (some places use rum as an ingredient)
 - Pasta with vodka sauce
 - Medicines with gelatin capsules (unless it specifies that is it vegetable, fish, or bovine gelatin, it is most like porcine gelatin)
 - Pop Tarts with frosting (contains gelatin)
 - Marshmallows & treats with marshmallows like rice crispies

*In regard to Gelatin—There are many sources of gelatin. The sources include pork, beef, fish, and vegetables. In the US, if the label is not clear as to the source, we must assume that it is pork unless there is a halal or kosher certification on the label. Kosher designates that the food is permissible for Jews to eat. Pork is forbidden for Jews also. When relying on kosher designation, double check that the food product has no alcohol. Examples of kosher and halal certifications are as follows:

*Vinegar - vinegar is halal even though it contains a percentage of alcohol. This is because the production of alcohol in vinegar occurs *naturally* (meaning nothing was added to it to purposefully produce alcohol). Furthermore, no matter how much vinegar you drink, it will never intoxicate. This is true for certain fruits as well which will always have a small portion of

alcohol in them - but because this percentage is so low and occurs naturally, it is halal to consume. We also know from various sources that our Prophet (saws) consumed vinegar!

Keep in mind this is a learning process! Be diligent with checking ingredient labels & most waiters / waitresses at restaurants will happily check for you if you suspect something on their menu might contain pork, gelatin, or alcohol.



These are examples of kosher indicators that can be found on various food labels and are especially helpful when buying fruit flavored yogurts.



The symbols above are representative of halal designations.

Besides yogurt, there are several food items to be cautious when considering. Anything with marshmallows! Don't despair, there are some delicious halal marshmallows available and halal rice krispie treats can be found in most halal meat shops. Lucky Charms cereal, Frosted Pop Tarts, hot chocolate with marshmallows in the mix, puddings and pie fillings are some common items that use gelatin. Fans of gummy candies, beware! Gummy candies usually contain gelatin but the local halal meat shops often carry halal brands of gummy candy. Haribo is a common brand of gummy candy and they warrant extra attention. Whether Haribo is halal depends on where it is made. The Haribo candy made in Turkey is good to go. The Haribo from Germany is not allowable. Check the labels.

This is not an exhaustive lesson in halal/ haram. It's intended just to help with basic grocery shopping food choices.