

Part 2: How to Memorise the Holy Qur'an?

Strengthening Your Memory

In narrations and traditions, advice has been given on the health of the mind, improving memory, remaining youthful and being joyful.

These can be divided in to four parts, and a summary is provided below. Each is a topic of its own and details are outside the scope of this booklet.

First: Hygiene

“Healthy Body, Healthy Mind” is sometimes used as a marketing tool for gym memberships, so called health snacks etc. It is in fact an important part of the steps needed to be taken to start memorising the Holy Qur'an. These include

- Regular exercise and practice recreational activities,
- Tooth brushing,
- Nail hygiene,
- Oiling the skin,
- Resting enough,
- A short sleep through the day,
- And blood cupping.

Second: Healthy Diet

A healthy diet and appropriate eating habits are very important in nurturing a healthy mind and memory

and preventing the erosion of our intellectual abilities. Foods that are good for the memory, according to narrations, including the following:

- Honey
- Lentil
- Meat
- Celery
- Zucchini
- Quince
- Purslane
- Citron
- Broad beans
- Vinegar
- Pomegranate
- Currants
- Curd
- Halwa
- Saffron
- Clove gillyflower
- Rue
- Beetroot

Notes:

1. Meat, especially the meat close to the animal's neck, and preferably that of sheep, camel, and ostrich. Avoid beef, and goes without saying; pork is forbidden!

2. Pomegranate: With the white skin inside it.

And likewise, avoid foods such as cheese, sour apples, and coriander as they weaken memory.

Importantly, it has been emphasised in narrations the avoidance of eating to ones fill and overeating and that one should get accustomed to eating less and fasting.

Third: Strengthening the Soul

Remembrance of Allah, seeking His help, recitation of the Holy Qur'an, especially Ayah Al-Kursi¹, keeping good manners with respect to others that are unknown to you, are all listed as matters which assist in strengthening memory.

The supplications listed above in 9. Supplications For Memorisation, should also be part of the program.

Fourth: Exercising the Mind

Just like the muscles of the body, the mind also needs to be exercised to build up its strength and abilities. Correct methodologies should be adopted and practiced in a consistent, systematic manner to maximise benefits. Those related to memorising the Holy Qur'an will be discussed later.

Preliminaries to Memorising the Holy Qur'an

Pure Intention

Any intention, other than purely for the pleasure of Allah and to seek closeness, will be rewarded with anything but Divine Pleasure. This intention must be constantly maintained and renewed, as intentions can easily and slowly stray into other areas.

Any intention other than for the pleasure of Allah and to seek closeness to Him, should be quickly changed and removed. Memorising so you can show off to others; to score political, social, or scholarly points; so as to give lectures, or other similar intentions are worldly and the reward will be worldly. Make sure these intentions are cleared and sincerely purified so that the intention is solely and purely for closeness to Allah.

Satan's whispers may also enter, either to discourage, demotivate, and to strengthen any feelings of hopelessness, or Satan may sneak in from the door of piety. Through this door, one may feel a sense of pride and achievement, progress, and dignity. Some begin to see themselves as better and more pious than others, arrogance sets in, and the rise before the fall begins. The same fate as that of Satan will befall the arrogant one, in being ejected from Heaven, for if there is an atom of arrogance in one's heart, they cannot be in Heaven.^{2,3}

A strong and correct intention will give strength to the mind and soul, and motivation to continue with the task at hand. This is important, as times will come where hopelessness and fear may set in and a sense of wanting to give up will set in. Here, renew your intention, re-read the narrations, repledge your promise to memorise and move forward on.

Will Power and Effort

Some may have the right motivations and desire to do something but no will power to do it with, lacking the effort to achieve their goals. Others may have weaker motivations, but a stronger will. The latter group are more likely to achieve their goals. Strong will power is a significant factor in ensuring success.

Planning And Consistency

A program to help assist with the desired task is a necessary. Proper planning prevents poor performance and leads to success.

Once a plan is drawn, consistently implementing it then becomes the key. Nothing should come in the way of implementing the daily, weekly, and monthly rotation of new memorisations and reviews of ayahs already memorised.

Supplication

Supplication is a form of worship that brings one closer to Allah and happiness to the heart of mankind. It brings blessings and spiritual success, and will make memorisation a much easier task. Our task, as worshippers, is to supplicate, and Allah will respond.

Seeking and asking for, through supplication, to make easier the task of memorisation, and application, of the Holy Qur'an has been advised through narrations. Intercession should also be sought through the Prophet (S) and his Purified Household (as).

A tried and tested deed that could also be utilised is to gift the recitation of the Holy Qur'an to those who have passed away before us, especially to the scholars and, more so, to souls of the Prophet (S) and his Purified Household (as).

Supplication is unfortunately a lost form of remedy to many of the problems we have in today's world. We tend to seek advice from doctors, take medications, see coaches, go training, work for pay, etc, but forget to supplicate for health and healing from the Healer and sustenance from the Sustainer. It needs to come back in to our daily life, and not one when we feel we have problems we cannot solve by ourselves or with the help of others, but rather, as the primary form of support.

Find A Partner

A memorisation partner will catapult results as you motivate and encourage each other and move forward together. Some of the important characteristics to look for when selecting your memorisation partner are the following:

- Be similar in age, spiritual status, and mannerism.

- Be orderly, serious and puts effort in.
- Is interested and motivated.
- Be at a similar level of memorisation.
- Be similarly able to memorise.

Have attention to detail, able to comprehend the Holy Qur'an, and able to point out errors when listening to your recitation.

Your best partner may not be too far away. It may be your sibling spouse, your best friend, or work colleague.

Use a Guide and Mentor

Find a mentor to guide the memorisation process. A mentor who has themselves memorised the Holy Qur'an and is well versed can be very beneficial. Some points can only be raised or picked up with the help of a mentor who has already memorised the Holy Qur'an, such as similar ayahs in the Holy Qur'an, how to memorise particular ayahs and similar themes.

A class formed for this purpose where the mentor listens to daily memorisations of students is one of the most effective methods. Regular, consistent attendance to class will lead to success.

Choosing Your Holy Qur'an

Select a Holy Qur'an that you will use for this specific purpose and to be kept with you always. Visual assistance in memorisation is paramount, and using the same Holy Qur'an all the time will help continue reinforce the memory visually. If you use a different Holy Qur'an every day, and possibly having different scriptures, background colours and different type settings, this will make the visual memorisation more difficult. The same one used every day will naturally make it easier.

There are certain criteria for selecting your Holy Qur'an to maximise benefits and minimise and possible problems. These are as follows:

Standard scripture: The scripture of the Holy Qur'an you choose needs to be standardised, with all the appropriate characteristics of identifying where to start, stop, pause, where the Ayah starts and ends, its numbers etc all should be clear and easy to read.

The best scripture for this purpose is one written by the **Uthman Taha**, which is the most popularly circulated and available.

There are a number of special features in this scripture, such as:

- The page starts with the start of an Ayah, and ends at the end of an Ayah.
- There are fifteen lines to each page.
- Each chapter, or Juz, is 20 pages, except for the first and last chapters (21 and 23 pages respectively), totalling 604 pages.
- Easy to recognise symbols to help with the recitation rules.
- Clear, easy to read, and have appropriate spacing between words and lines.

Plain text: Avoid Qur'ans that are very colourful in decorating the pages. The plainer it is, the easier it is to focus on the scripture.

Also avoid Qur'ans that have in between line translations, or on opposites of the page, or on the sides, as that takes your focus away from the text again. Another Holy Qur'an with translation should be used for that purpose.

A simple, plain, Qur'anic scriptures that allow you to focus on the task at hand is the best one to select.

Background Colour: An appropriate background colour that's easy on the eyes and pleasing to look at. Pure white backgrounds tend to tire the eye, while light colours of blue or cream tend to be easier on the eye and commonly used by memorisers.

Size of the Holy Qur'an: An appropriate sized book should be chosen for your Holy Qur'an. If it is too large, it would be difficult to carry, if too small, it would be hard to read. An appropriate and common size may be the 5.25"x8" or 5"x7.5" trim size, or something close to that. That's the right size that makes it easy to carry as well as to read.

A smaller version can be utilised, if desired, for when you revise memorised ayahs, however, it should be emphasised that it should have the same scripture and structure as the one being used to memorise new ayahs.

Selecting a Translation

Now that you have selected the Holy Qur'an that will accompany you through the journey of memorising the Holy Qur'an, it is now time to select a translation of it.

To be able to remember what you are reciting, you must understand the meanings of the words. This not only helps understand the Ayah, but also helps remembering it and making sense of the structure of the Holy Qur'an.

Selecting a Reciter

One of the steps in memorising is utilising sound to assist in correct recitation and memorisation. An appropriately paced, clear, correct recitation of the Holy Qur'an should be selected to accompany your program in memorising ayahs and reviewing previously memorised ones.

A specific one should not be relied on totally, as that will make it difficult to recollect an Ayah easily and readily where the stop/start or tune of the recitation differs from the version memorised.

For the younger memorisers, however, this is difficult to avoid as they rely heavily on audio memorisation, and should listen to a reciter until they can mimic their style. But in the adult, it is better not to rely heavily on one single reciter, to be able to recite faster or slower, and in different tunes, as required.

Al-Minshawi, Parhizgar, and Al-Husary are three commonly used reciters who are excellent for the purpose, and each has a unique feature. For example,

- Al-Minshawi is well paced, and has a nice melody;
- Parhizgar is known for having a reason for each stop and each start of the recitation;
- Al-Husary for his well-paced but slower recitation if you wish to pin point recitation rules.

Of course, that's not to say that each one's strength takes away from the other, but rather, these are features that have been identified with each of the recitations.

Points to consider if selecting another reciter are the following:

- Correct Arabic recitation and pronunciations
- Correct starting and stopping of the recitation. This is especially important when stopping in the middle of an Ayah, as incorrect application can sometimes give the meaning of polytheism or other incorrect meanings.
- Correct use of tunes and melody and beautifying the recitation with an appropriately nice voice.
- Appropriate speed of recitation, that is, no faster than 50 minutes and no slower than 60 minutes per chapter.

In comparison, it can be said Egyptian reciters (Al-Minshawi is the best and most comprehensive) are better than that of the Saudi Arabians, and after the Egyptians, the Iranian reciters (Parhizgar).

There are numerous applications and websites available online and as downloadable applications on PC, tablet and mobile. A good site to visit where you can choose reciters, translations, search, and

display options as well Ayah repetitions for memorisation is <http://tanzil.net> [1].

Necessary Skills and Sciences

Like all other activities, there are necessary skills that need to be studied and learnt before proceeding to memorisation. These skills will not only make memorisation easier, it will also help with correct understanding and interpretation of the Holy Qur'an. They are as follows:

Recitation Skills

This is the first and most important step. In order to be able to memorise the Holy Qur'an correctly, you need to be able to pronounce the letters and words correctly, and finally to be able to recite sentences fluently.

Otherwise, memorisation can be a difficult task. It is more difficult to correct an Ayah that has been memorised incorrectly than to memorise correctly the first time! So, this important step should not be skipped.

Unfortunately, some insist on beginning the process of memorisation before adopting correct recitation, meeting difficulties along the way and then giving up on the task all together.

Recitation skills in itself has levels, from beginner to expert. Someone should be able to start memorisation where they can recite an entire page error-free within a three-minute interval.

This requires finding and attending classes regularly and practicing consistently each recitation rule as it is taught. The more familiarity one has with the Holy Qur'an, its text, rules of recitation, and listening to recitations, the easier the process of memorisation becomes.

Practice is essential. Listening to reciters such as those mentioned earlier and reading along, and reading to a mentor to have any issues identified can assist in quickly developing recitation skills.

Tajweed

The next step is Tajweed. This is the recitation with the correct Arabic accent and dialect. This science is divided in to theoretical and practical application. Both are required in order to not only be able to recite beautifully, but to be able to memorise more easily.

سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا عَبَدْنَا

These two Ayahs from Al-A'nam 6: 148 and An-Nahl 16:35 are quite similar, but the presence of a separated lengthening, highlighted in the first Ayah, will make this a distinguishing feature between the two.

At least, introductory Tajweed should be completed, which studies how letters are sounded from the mouth, their attributes, and rulings.

Conjugation and Syntax

Syntax, known as "Sarf", is how words are formulated from their root words and the changes that apply to the root word itself.

For example, in English, from the word "run", it can be modified to mean an action that occurred in the past ("ran"), present ("running"), future or as a command ("run").

In Arabic, there are differences between words with regards to gender (male/female), quantity (single, double, plural) and whether it is being spoken in the first person, to the second person, or third person. A total of fourteen variations is possible for each verb and noun.

Memorisation is made easier with this science as the Ayah will guide us, once we understand the meaning, as to which of these should be used. For example, is the Ayah talking to a group of male or female audience, a single person, two, or more...

Conjugation, or "Nahw", is the interaction of the words with each other and how one effects the other. If mastered, memorisation becomes a much simpler task. For example, if asking someone what they did yesterday, the reply may be "I went for a run." Although "run" does not indicate past tense, to say "I went for a ran" is incorrect.

Even more importantly, conjugation and syntax has a significant role to play in assisting the overall interpretation of the Ayahs being read, which becomes the foundation of better, stronger, more permanent memorisation of the Holy Qur'an.

The following site is an excellent example of how each Ayah can be broken down grammatically:

<http://corpus.quran.com/> [2]

Translation and Interpretation

As already pointed out, understanding the meanings of the Ayahs being memorised is extremely beneficial, and necessary, part of memorisation. It helps understand the flow of the recitation and is more easily imprinted in the mind. For this reason, Arab seeking individuals may find memorisation an easier task.

The following is one example where Qur'anic words can be found within the Holy Qur'an and their meanings translated online: <http://www.almaany.com/quran-b/> [3].

Understanding the Fundamentals of Memorisation of the Holy Qur'an

The understanding of how to memorise the Holy Qur'an makes the entire process a much more pleasant, rewarding one. Starting without a clear understanding of the fundamentals behind memorising can lead to feelings of hopelessness and failure.

Conditions of Initiation

What Age Is Suitable To Start?

This is often the first question that may be asked by parents who wish to have their children memorise the Holy Qur'an. It is possible for all ages to participate, children as young as five years old have been proven to be able to have the whole Holy Qur'an memorised with understanding⁴, and examples of much older people starting the process⁵. There are, however, general guidelines to follow.

Children under the age of seven, as per the manners of raising children according to the Ahlul Bayt (as), should not be put through the process of official schooling, but rather be allowed to play and be taught mannerism. That does not mean they should not be exposed to the Holy Qur'an, on the contrary, the Holy Qur'an should be part of our everyday life, and the companionship of the family with the Holy Qur'an should be the role model for them. This will set the foundations for the child to memorise as they grow up in that familiar environment and closeness with the Holy Qur'an.

From the age of four years of age, children may be taught short, useful Ayahs that are related to manners such as the following:

وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

....and to be good to parents.

and;

وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا

...and speak well to people.

This will help prepare the child and set the grounds for getting familiar with the Holy Qur'an, but also help raise them in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and Ahlul Bayt (as).

The most significant contributor, is the consistent role modelling by parents of having a strong relationship with the Holy Qur'an and behaving in accordance with Islamic teaching. These years, if filled with the fragrance and sounds of the Holy Qur'an in a loving home, attendance of Qur'anic gatherings and mosques, will set the right foundations for the child.

Once the child enters school, and starts to read and write, the thirtieth chapter should be the first to be memorised. With these shorter Surahs, these help both parent and child feel a sense of motivation and success as they progress through the short surah progressively.

Memorisation During Gestation?

Well not quite, but science has shown that the foetus does hear and can recognise words while in the womb. So, a pregnant woman, while reciting the Holy Qur'an or listening to it, will have an effect in the ground work in increasing familiarity for the child.

Likewise, it is emphasised that listening to inappropriate sounds or music should be avoided, as that will in turn have a negative effect.

Other items affecting the growing foetus are halal sustenance (source of income) and food, parental spiritual purity (constant ablution), and their attention to Islamic Jurisprudential issues.

Likewise, the above also applies to the baby once born, and breastfeeding while in spiritual purity, has an effect on the spirituality of the child as they grow.

Best Years

Youth of the age of 12 to 18 are in the best position to take in and remember new information, followed by the age group of 19–25 years of age.

They also generally have less responsibilities and duties and so can free their time for this purpose. As one grows, so do responsibilities. Higher education becomes more difficult, workloads increase, and family responsibilities also grows. Each of these will make the process harder to go through as time becomes a scarcer resource.

How Long Will It Take?

That depends on the capability and effort put in to the memorisation process. The following should also be taken in to account:

- Age
- Available time

- Current education and pressures
- Single or married
- Ability and readiness
- Familiarity with the Holy Qur'an
- Familiarity with the Arabic language
- Motivation to memorise

It is important to not put too much pressure on oneself, or neglect important parts of one's life, but rather, continue to work so long as motivated and to stop short before losing all energy, to rest, then reinitiating the process.

There are one year programs to memorise the Holy Qur'an, however, they are not recommended, as students need another two to three years of reinforcing their learnings and will end up with 3–4 years of work anyway, but will have had considerable pressure placed upon themselves, potentially leaving them exhausted, demotivated, and not having understood much of it.

The preferred option is to continue the process of memorisation with motivation and energy, at an appropriate speed to the individual, and a sense of satisfaction.

Any program to memorise needs to consider each of the seven days per week, and each day needs to have a program to memorise. Some days, for example Friday, may be rest days, however, the revision of the Ayahs memorised should not have a break.

The following is a table of expected duration for the process of memorisation the entire Holy Qur'an considering the number of lines memorised per day:



Based on experience, 3–4 years to memorise the entire Holy Qur'an is the best and most appropriate duration. Note that the number of lines do not necessarily need to be set in concrete, but the story behind the Ayahs should also be considered, and perhaps on occasion it may be better to add an extra line, or deduct one, so that memorisation of a story can be finished and a new one started the next day.

Best Time

Prioritise Tasks

To start memorisation, you should set aside the right time and place for the task. Your day should be planned so that multiple tasks are prioritised and given their time of day accordingly. And when it comes to the Holy Qur'an, the best time of day should be given. Having too many programs or trying to recite in

a busy, disruptive environment will lead to a stuttered and difficult memorisation.

For example, if you have two equally important tasks to do at a given time, one being the Holy Qur'an, the other studying for an exam, you should give each their own time and place and according to the priorities set, finish one before moving on to the other.

The best time may differ for different people. Some find the time before, or after, the morning prayers to be a good, quite time. The time between dawn and sunrise is set as a time of worship and sleep has been advised against in that time, so perhaps that may work for some.

Body and Mind Attentive

The time of day chosen should be one where the body and mind are alert, energetic and attentive. One where there has been at least a short period of rest beforehand.

After two hours at the cinemas, after a long day at work, or an exercise session, may not be the best times to choose.

Just before sleep is also considered a good time to memorise new Ayahs, and has been suggested to help with memorisation. Especially if the first thing done on waking up is to review the Ayah again. Conditional, of course, on the body not being overly tired.

Pavlovian Training

Once a time is chosen, stick to it. Keep consistent. This trains the mind and the body that at certain periods of time, or after a certain task, it becomes time to memorise the Holy Qur'an.

Very much like when the lunch time bell rings, students at school begin to ready themselves bodily and psychologically to consume lunch. They may not be hungry, but it has become routine, and the bell suggests that the time for food has come.

Serenity

Choosing the right time means considering the needs of your surroundings, such as your family, parents, children, colleagues, and others. It should be a time where it is generally known to be a quiet time around, where there is no hustle and bustle to distract you.

Again, between dawn and sunrise is typically a good time. It is highly recommended against sleeping at those times in narrations, which makes it prime time to memorise.

Best Place

Simplicity

When studying or reciting the Holy Qur'an, remove distractions such as social media⁶ and television. Have a set place where you can sit and memorise quietly if possible, in a well-lit and simple room. Sitting on a white cloth will also help minimise visual lateral distraction.

Holy Places

If possible, choose a quiet mosque or holy place to sit in a quiet corner where interruptions are unlikely. This can help elevate levels of spirituality.

If not possible, choose a quiet spot with minimal distractions that you can easily and regularly access. This may also be where you pray at home.

Consistency

As with the time, keep the location consistent as much as possible.

Places such as buses while in motion and in cars or trains, are inappropriate. They can, however, be used to maximise effective use of time for preparing the ground work to a memorisation session or listening to previously memorised Ayahs.

Continue Regardless

Despite the importance placed on the right time and place to choose for memorisation, simply having them changed, voluntarily or otherwise, should not be used as an excuse to skip the day. If the time changes, or if the place changes, or even if both change simultaneously, keep going on with the program regardless – that is the key to success.

Kinds of Memorisations

A brief look at methods utilised around the world in memorising the Holy Qur'an.

Sequential Memorisation

For the serious player, sequential memorisation is the best form, where you memorise the entire Holy Qur'an cover to cover. Generally, starting with the final one or two chapters, and then going back to chapter one and continuing from there.

Chapter 30 has 37 surahs, so it gives a huge sense of achievement when completed having memorise 37 of the 114 Surahs in the Holy Qur'an.

When memorising sequentially, a little of the thematic memorisation should also be taken in to account.

In that when aiming to memorise, for example, five lines, do not stop at the end of the fifth line, and start the new memorisation on the sixth line, regardless of where an Ayah starts or stops, or where a theme starts or stops. Keep all these factors in mind, and memorising a little more or less to help with the understanding and fluidity of memorisation with themes is very helpful.

Of course, a theme may need to be memorised over several days if it extends over a number of pages.

Thematic Memorisation

For those who feel their time is limited, thematic memorisation can be utilised. A selection of themes can be chosen and appropriate Ayahs to represent that theme selected to memorise. The selection of the Ayahs should be under the supervision of someone who has mastered the Holy Qur'an. Alternatively, publications are available on this topic.[7](#)

Selected Surahs

If it is impractical for either sequential or thematic memorisation to be achieved, this is another option. Surahs that can be beneficial in practical application could be selectively memorised.

These may be the Surahs in Chapter 30, Al-Mulk (67), Al-Waqi'a (56), Ar-Rahman (55), Ya-Sin (36), and the seven Surahs known as the Musabihat (Surahs 17,57,59,61,62,64,87).

Methods of Memorisations

Audio Only

Continuously listening to the same Ayah until memorised. How many times this is needed will depend on the ability of each individual.

The first couple of times listening should be purely to listen to the Ayah, then reciting along with the audio, followed by reciting along from memory and checking accuracy.

A minimum of five repetitions are needed, but up to ten or more may also be required. The melody can also be memorised through this technique.

Longer Ayahs need to be divided in to suitable portions for memorisation.

This technique is suited to the very young, illiterate, or blind.

Prompting

A mentor recites to the student, the students listen then repeat the Ayah from the prompt of the mentor. This repeated until the Ayah is memorised.

It is important that the mentor is well versed with recitation rules of the Holy Qur'an to correctly recite and teach the Ayahs.

Some parents choose this technique and accompany their children in the memorisation processes.

Writing

By using a whiteboard or other writing tools, and looking at the Ayahs in the Holy Qur'an, repeatedly writing and rewriting the Ayah intended to be memorised until it is.

Repeated Reading

The most popular method is reading from the Holy Qur'an and repeating the Ayah until it is memorised.

This method has the benefit of looking at the holy scripture as well, which has blessings with it, but also reinforces the memory with visual image of the page being memorised for a more permanent effect.

The Eight Step Method of Memorisation

Having briefly covered the popular techniques for memorisation, the following presents the best and most comprehensive method of memorisation, taking the best of the general techniques and putting it in to an eight-step technique.

Step 1: Translation and Understanding

An understanding of what each word means, what the overall meaning of the Ayah is, how it is constructed, and a brief exegesis should be read to get an understanding of what message the Ayah is conveying.

By understanding the Ayah and the message within it, memorisation becomes a pleasurable experience and practical applications can be considered. With this, the blessings of the Holy Qur'an will flow as the Ayah is not just being memorised, but also understood and acted upon. Also, the words in the Holy Qur'an will become more and more familiar as progress is made.

Step 2: Listening to Reciters

This improves the auditory perception of the Holy Qur'an and improves ability to memorise through the auditory system. Choice of role model reciters has been discussed under the heading Selecting a Reciter earlier.

Listening to the Ayah in question should be repeated a number of times while looking at the Ayah in the Holy Qur'an. This is to reinforce visual auditory connections between the sounds and the scriptures. Attention should be paid to

- Possible errors in recitation
- Strengthening recitation skills
- Stop/start locations

Overtime, this step will improve your ability to recite beautifully and minimise errors.

The memoriser can also indicate on the personal Holy Qur'an any difficult words and start/stop locations to replicate that in their own recitation and memorisation. Listening to the reciter and achieving these goals can be accomplished with a minimum of three repetitions:



Step 3: Recitation

With close attention to the scripture in the Holy Qur'an, recite with a moderate voice the Ayahs carefully and with detail, mimicking the audio. The number of times this is to be repeated needs to be so the memoriser has a clear overall picture of all the Ayahs being memorised in the mind.

To reach this level of proficiency, usually three to five attentive repetitions are required.

Step 4: Subdivision and Repetition

This is the most important step. Once we have understood what we are memorising, and have listened and recited the Ayah several times, the Ayah should be subdivided into bite-sized sentences or segments that are able to be memorised easily. Obviously, this applies to longer Ayahs and short Ayahs do not need to be subdivided. Some may also be able to memorise longer Ayahs more easily than others... so which Ayah is to be subdivided is relative to the individual.

The following demonstrates this: [8](#)



Each colour may represent one segment to memorise. The blue/underlined part of the Ayah would be memorised in the first instance, followed by the red/bold, then final/italicised segment of the Ayah.

In order to memorise each segment, a minimum of three to five recitations are required while reading from the scripture, with the intention of memorising the segment. It is imperative in this step to be looking at the scripture in detail. This image is what will be recalled when reciting from memory and will greatly assist the memorisation process.

Thereafter, without looking at the scripture, attempt to repeat the segment from memory a number of times. Once we have mastered the first segment, we can move on to the next.

This is the step that the mind will rely on the most in order to recall the Ayahs and is what leads to success. It is important to be attentive and not rush this step.

Step 5: Connecting the Dots

Between Sentences of an Ayah

After completing the second segment, re-read the scripture to reinforce the visual image for the first and second segment. Then recite the first and second segment from memory sequentially.

Then, repeat the process for the third (and subsequent) segment(s).

Once repeated from memory to the point where there is confidence in having memorised solidly, move on to the next Ayah.

Between Ayahs

After memorising each Ayah, you need to make the connection with the previous Ayah also. That creates a connection between the previous and the new Ayah memorised, so that when we hear the previous Ayah, our minds automatically lock in to the next one.

With every new Ayah memorised, go back to the last few Ayahs and recite them sequentially so that the connection between them grows exponentially. Those who forget the sequence of Ayahs typically forgo this exercise.

Likewise, as you memorise each Ayah and make a connection with the preceding Ayahs, a connection also needs to be made between the pages, themes, and different Surahs, so that each flow in to the next sequentially and fluidly. Attention is therefore needed to the name of the Surah, the themes, the page number and the beginning Ayah of each page. After each of these are memorised, reciting with attention to these subdivisions and the surroundings of what was memorised for the day needs to be recited three to five times to help solidify in the mind what has been memorised and its relationship to what was preceding it.

Step 6: Strengthening and Finalising

After some hours completing the above steps, some of what was memorised may be lost over the next few hours or the mind begins to discard what was memorised in the short-term memory. It is therefore important to reinforce the days learning.

Repeating what was memorised through the day is therefore imperative so as to not suffer any loss. It is recommended to repeat the days memorisation after two, six and twelve hours from initially memorising it, and finally, once more before sleep. Should anything have been forgotten in during this stage, a brief revision, repetition, and some practice, will help set everything back in to place.

Step 7: Writing from Memory

While learning, writing can help reinforce what has been learnt. Re-write what you have memorised on a white board and identify any weaknesses.

When writing the Ayahs, it is best to start and end each Ayah as it is on the page of the Holy Qur'an, which will reinforce the visual memorisation.

Step 8: Repetition and Passage

Thus far, everything has been to work on the short-term memory. It is now necessary to move everything to the medium, and then finally to long-term permanent memory.

To that effect, what was memorised on day one needs to be repeated over the next few days. Depending on your ability to memorise, the minimum number of days each day's memorisation should be repeated is ten days. For the average individual, it is twenty days and for those with weaker memories, forty days. After which what has been memorised will be solidly and firmly placed in the medium-term memory.

To move it to the long-term department, all that has been memorised needs to be repeated every three to ten days at least. Slowly, but surely, the Ayahs of the Holy Qur'an will move in to permanent storage, and eventually, become second nature.



While this may take a number of years, the important factor here is that what has been memorised will not be easily forgotten. And once firmly memorised, it would no longer be necessary to repeat every three to ten days, but rather passage can be made every month in order to maintain the memorisation.

Sample Memory Chart

Assuming one page a day is memorised, here is what a memory chart may look like:



A blank copy of the above sample is in Appendix 2: One Month Daily Memorisation Chart, page 52.

Target Number of Chapters for Daily Passage

Passage for memorisers who have progressed through to having memorised the first Chapter and beyond, are shown below and will depend on the target number of years to memorise the whole of the Holy Qur'an:

Minimum Amount of Passage for 5-6-Year Duration

Memorised 1–10 Chapters: Half a chapter.

Memorised 11–20 Chapters: One chapter.

Memorised 21–30 Chapters: One and a half chapters.

Minimum Amount of Passage for 3–4– Year Duration

Memorised 1–10 Chapters: One chapter.

Memorised 11–20 Chapters: Two chapters.

Memorised 21–30 Chapters: Two and a half chapters.

Minimum Amount of Passage for 2– Year Duration

Memorised 1–10 Chapters: One and a half chapters

Memorised 11–20 Chapters: Two and a half chapters.

Memorised 21–30 Chapters: Three chapters.

Minimum Amount of Passage for 1– Year Duration

Memorised 1–10 Chapters: Two chapters

Memorised 11–20 Chapters: Three chapters.

Memorised 21–30 Chapters: Four chapters.

The above information is displayed in a tabulated form on page 53.

Tips for New Ayahs

Here are some tips for memorising new Ayahs.

Group

When memorising a new section, look at the overall picture of the Ayahs and see if they can be grouped in to different sections. Each section should be memorised separately and then joined for sequential linking

For example, the first five Ayahs of Surah Al-Baqarah is about believers, Ayahs six to seven are about the disbelievers, and Ayahs 8–20 are about hypocrites. So these three sections can be memorised separately, then linked to sequentially follow each other.

Focus

When overviewing what is being memorised, identify portions that are familiar, and that you have heard before, and those which are completely new and possibly even foreign. Some words may be difficult to pronounce, or simply new to the individual.

These more difficult words should be focused on to master them. Of course, that is not to say the rest should be quickly scanned and feebly memorised.

Scansion

This is where we divide the Ayah to determine the pattern of the Ayah.

For example, when trying to remember a mobile number, it is hard to remember as a 10-digit number, such as 0432441196. Rather, it would be easier to break it in to portions, or a pattern. The first four numbers being the header: 0432... then pair up the rest, so it would be remembered as 0432 44 11 96.

It would also be more difficult if the scansion was inappropriately divided, such as to memorise it as 04324 41 196, and even more inappropriate where the meanings of the words come in to consideration. Therefore, when deciding on how to determine the pattern, ensure the meaning been taken in to account.

An example of the Holy Qur'an was demonstrated in Step 4: Subdivision and Repetition on page 42.

Experience

Sometimes, and with some Ayahs, a personal experience can be associated with the Ayah. This may make it easier to remember.

For example, a particular Ayah may have been recited somewhere such as special event. By associating the Ayah with that personal experience, the memory can be reinforced.

Imagination

Many Ayahs can be imagined in the mind, take for instance Surah Al-Feel, The Elephant. The Surah can be imagined and scenes can be produced in the mind to portray the Ayahs one after the other as a storyline would.

During the normal process of the memorisation, if done properly and with adequate attention, this normally occurs without proactively visualising the Ayah or creating a storyline. Hence perhaps more importantly from this point of view, is to give adequate attention to what is being memorised.

Rest

Memorisation takes much effort and energy, ensuring rest before and after each session is important.

Sometimes, an Ayah may be difficult to memorise, but after a short rest, it becomes easier.

Exercise

Practicing such exercises as recollecting the beginning of each Ayah on a page, the first Ayah of each page, writing the Ayahs from memory, memorising and practicing Ayah numbers, completing Ayahs asked by a partner or mentor, reciting to your partner or mentor, re-hearing audio, researching the meanings of the Ayahs again, explaining it to others, can all form part of the exercises useful in helping to strengthen the memory.

For The Younger Ones

For the younger ones who cannot read and write, it is apparent a slightly different program needs to be set. This requires the assistance of a mentor or parent to help the child memorise the Holy Qur'an using the following steps:

- Listening to Audio through Qur'anic software or mentor.
- Repeating after the mentor short portions of the Ayah being memorised.
- Connecting the sentences of each Ayah memorised with the help of the mentor.
- Connecting the Ayahs memorised with the help of the mentor.
- Exercises practiced with the mentor.
- Repeating new Ayahs memorised for at least the next ten days, with the mentor.
- Repeating past memorised Ayahs every 3–10 days, with the mentor.

Tips for Parents

Tip 1: Try to provide an appropriate environment for Qur'anic lifestyle.

Tip 2: Please note – our children are not how we want them to be! They will become who how we are. The parents need to be ever in touch with the Holy Qur'an so that the children too are affected by this.

Tip 3: Remember that memorising the Holy Qur'an is recommended, not obligatory. What is important is that the child befriends the Holy Qur'an, understands it, can recite it, act on it, and love it. If they show a desire to memorise with your encouragement, then be thankful and provide the necessary support to do

so.

Tip 4: The environment should be fun and attractive, encouraging for the child and something to look forward to.

Tip 5: Start easily, just one easy Ayah, and remove any expectation to have that Ayah perfected in the first session, even if it is

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Tip 6: Do not insist on learning the Holy Qur'an in a direct manner, sitting in a corner just listening and reciting. Indirect methods may work best, using games and fun activities, and using applications on electronic devices to help.

Tip 7: Ensure the child is full of energy. At the first hint of feeling tired or uninterested, you should not continue that session.

Tip 8: Do not set goals and timelines for your child, that they must have memorised so much by such a time. Rather, continue at the pace of the child.

Tip 9: Never fall short of encouragement, and always show your satisfaction for their efforts.

Tip 10: For the issue of memorising the Holy Qur'an, you do not have permission to punish them at any time. This may only discourage and create distaste.

Tip 11: Short, topical Ayahs that are to help with the manners of your child could be ideal to start with, such as Ayahs about prayers, forgiveness, good deeds, saying the truth, being good to parents saying "Peace be upon you", reacting to bad with good etc.

Tip 12: After short theme related Ayahs, start with Surah Al-Nas, the last Surah in the Holy Qur'an, and work backwards through the 30th Chapter.

Tip 13: Attempt to explain each Ayah as they are memorised, defining the words alongside memorisation.

Tip 14: With each session, teach some pointers about recitation rules, correct pronunciations, mimicking the reciters on audio, and understanding the meaning of the Ayah according to the age appropriate level and interest of the child.

Memorising Ayah Numbers

One of the questions raised is should the Ayah numbers be memorised. There are both pros and cons to doing this.

Pros

The first benefit is that the Ayahs will be far more firmly memorised if the Ayah numbers are correctly learnt. The Ayahs are grouped correctly and there are less mistakes in the mind of the memoriser.

The second benefit is the ability to recall an Ayah more quickly and easily, and able to find Ayahs in their mind comfortably. The visual memory is strengthened and those who memorise the Ayahs and their numbers are able to recall the location of the Ayah on a page, and are able to recall the Ayahs before and after more efficiently also.

Cons

Firstly, an individual may get stuck in to memorising the Ayah with the numbers and would not be able to recall an Ayah unless they can also recall the number, and they forget a number of one Ayah they may not be able to recall anything that follows.

Secondly, if not taken seriously and memorised correctly, weak memory of the Ayah numbers will lead to weaker memorisation of the Ayahs. It is therefore important to memorise the Ayah numbers, if desired, firmly from the beginning.

Thirdly, some make the mistake of remembering some Ayah numbers but not others. This mix and match technique will do more damage overall. This is because some Ayahs will only be recalled along with an Ayah number while others without, causing an overall weakness in the memorisation progress.

Finally, an individual may become obsessive in memorising unnecessarily the number of pages, words in an Ayah, number of letters...while there are surprising miracles in these facts, the main task at hand needs to be in focus: The memorisation, understanding and practical application of the Holy Qur'an.

Methodology

The best method for memorising the Ayah numbers is after memorising a group of Ayahs, a final portion of memorisation is allocated specifically to the Ayah numbers. Write down each Ayah followed by its number sequentially below each other, and after passing through them a number of times, one should be able to easily recall their numbers. Answering questions about Ayah numbers from a partner or mentor will help further strengthen this.

The following is an example:



Some prefer to memorise the Ayah number as part of the Ayah itself from the initial stages of the memorisation process, while others like to group Ayahs in fives or tens and only memorise the fifth or tenth Ayah number respectively. As an example, only Ayah numbers 5,10,15,20... or 10,20,30,40... and over time, the in between Ayah numbers becomes memorised through practice, passage, and answering

questions. This may be beneficial where the Surah is shorter and there are lots of smaller Ayahs.

[1.](#) Holy Qur'an 2:255

[2.](#) Al-A'raf 7: 13:

قَالَ فَاهْبِطْ مِنْهَا فَمَا يَكُونُ لَكَ أَنْ تَتَكَبَّرَ فِيهَا فَاخْرُجْ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الصَّاغِرِينَ

Said He, 'Get thee down out of it; it is not for thee to wax proud here, so go thou forth; surely thou art among the humbled.'

[3.](#) (Usool Al Kafi – اصول الكافي) V2 P310, Chapter on Arrogance:

عن زرارة عن أبي جعفر وأبي عبد الله (عليهما السلام) قال: لا يدخل الجنة من في قلبه مثقال ذرة من كبر.

“He will not enter paradise who has in their heart an atoms worth of arrogance.”

[4.](#) For example; Syed Muhammad Tabatabaei.

[5.](#) Such as Ayatollah Khomei, may his soul rest in peace.

[6.](#) Turn off the internet!

[7.](#) Publication are available in Persian to that effect called Thematic Memorisation of the Holy Qur'an –Five Volumes:

درسنامه حفظ موضوعی قرآن – توسط فرهنگ قرآن و عترت نور الثقلين.

One Volume:

درسنامه حفظ موضوعی قرآن – جامعة القرآن الكريم.

[8.](#) Ar-Ra'd 13:29

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Links

[1] <http://tanzil.net>

[2] <http://corpus.quran.com/>

[3] <http://www.almaany.com/quran-b/>