

NUR AL-QALAM DAR

دار نور القلم

The 30-Day *Salah Companion*

One small thing to do each day for a month, so prayer becomes something your child keeps rather than something you enforce.

30 daily actions

4 weekly themes

Printable trackers for up to three children

COMPANION GUIDE

What this month is actually for

This isn't a chart for making your child pray. It's thirty days of changing what prayer feels like in your house.

Most families who struggle with salah have already tried the chart. Stickers, stars, a reward at the end of the week. It works for a while and then it stops, and when it stops the child is often further from prayer than before, because now the prayer was a task they were paid for and the payment has ended.

The reason is worth understanding before you start. There are two separate problems in a house where a child won't pray, and treating them as one is why most attempts fail.

The first is **habit**. The prayer isn't happening because nothing in the day makes it happen. That's a logistics problem, and it's solved with timing, rhythm, and removing friction.

The second is **association**. The prayer has become the place where your frustration lives. Every reminder carries an edge, every delay produces a confrontation, and the child has learned that salah is where they and you go to war. That's not solved by better logistics. It's solved by changing the emotional weather around the prayer, and it takes longer.

This month works on both. The first week deals almost entirely with association, because there's no point fixing the schedule of something your child has learned to dread.

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا

And instruct your family in prayer, and be steadfast in it yourself.

Qur'an, Surah Ta-Ha 20:132

Read the order of that verse carefully. The instruction to the family comes first, and then the command turns back on the one giving it. Whatever you're asking of your child, the verse asks the same of you, and in this particular matter the second half tends to do more work than the first.

The three rules for this month

1. **Habit before excellence.** If they prayed, that counts. Rushed, half-attentive, wrong order of movements. It counts. You have years to refine the quality. You have a much shorter window to establish that praying at all is simply what this family does.
2. **No anger at the prayer, for thirty days.** This is the hard one. If they miss it, deal with it flatly and without heat. A missed prayer handled calmly costs you almost nothing. A missed prayer that becomes a shouting match costs you the association you're trying to build.

3. **You do the day's action whether or not they cooperate.** Every one of the thirty is something *you* do. Their response isn't the measure. Your consistency is.

THREE THINGS TO AVOID THIS MONTH

Using Allah as the enforcement. "Allah will be angry with you" attaches your frustration to Him. Children who grow up with that often keep the fear long after they've dropped the prayer.

Correcting the quality this month. Not the speed, not the posture, not the wandering attention. Week two handles meaning gently. Week one says nothing at all.

Rewards for praying. Payment turns an act of worship into a transaction, and transactions end when the payment does.

How to use it with different ages

The daily actions work across ages, but the emphasis shifts. If you've read *The Age-by-Age Discipline Map*, this will look familiar.

Age	Where to put your weight	What to let go of
4 – 6	Presence and imitation. Let them stand next to you and copy. Two rak'ahs of joining in is a success.	Any expectation of completeness or correctness. They're learning the shape, not the obligation.
7 – 10	Rhythm and meaning. This is the age the prayer is commanded, and the age they can hold a reason. Both matter.	Perfectionism. The habit is the whole project right now.
11 – 14	Ownership. Hand them responsibility for one prayer and stop reminding them about it entirely.	The daily interrogation. Asking five times a day makes prayer feel like surveillance.
15 +	Honesty and companionship. Talk about your own struggle with it. Pray beside them, not at them.	Enforcement. It's gone. What's left is influence, and influence needs an open door.

A NOTE ON WHERE THIS FITS

This is a companion to *Raising Children Who Love Salah*. That book explains why children resist prayer and how to build the relationship underneath it. This one gives you thirty days of specific,

small actions to do with the book in hand. Read the day's entry in the morning. Do the one thing. Mark the tracker at night.

Make it warm

Say nothing about their prayer this week. Change what it feels like to be near yours.

This week has one job. If salah in your house currently carries tension, everything else you do will land on that tension. So for seven days you're going to work only on the temperature, and you're going to accept whatever their prayer looks like without comment.

That will be uncomfortable. Do it anyway. You're buying back something you'll need for the other three weeks.

DAY 1 **Pray where they can see you**

If you usually pray in your room with the door shut, move. Pray in the sitting room, the hallway, wherever the family is. Don't announce it or make a point of it. Just be visible.

Children absorb far more from what's normal in the house than from what they're told. A prayer that happens behind a closed door is invisible, and invisible things don't become normal.

DAY 2 **Invite instead of instruct**

SAY: "I'm about to pray. Come and stand with me."

Not "have you prayed" and not "go and pray". An invitation to join something is a completely different transaction from an order to go and do something alone. Use it at least once today.

DAY 3 **Remove the friction**

Look honestly at what stands between your child and the prayer. Is the mat buried somewhere? Is the space cluttered? Do they have to hunt for clean clothes or a hijab? Is the television on at Maghrib every single day?

Fix one of those today. A dedicated corner with the mats already laid out removes more resistance than a week of reminders.

A surprising share of what parents read as laziness is friction. Reduce the number of steps between the intention and the prayer.

DAY 4 **Say nothing about their quality**

Today they will pray too fast, or fidget, or forget something. Say nothing about it. Not a correction, not a sigh, not a look.

This is the hardest day of week one for most parents. What you're protecting is the association. A child who is corrected every time they pray learns that prayer is where they get judged.

DAY 5 **Choose one prayer to make the good one**

Pick a prayer where the family is usually home together. For most households that's Maghrib. Make that one calm, unhurried, and warm for the rest of the month. No rushing, no shouting up the stairs, no correcting.

You don't need all five to feel good. You need one that reliably does, because that's the one their memory of praying will be built from.

DAY 6 **Let them see you want it**

SAY: "I've been waiting for this one all afternoon."

Said honestly, not performed. If a child only ever hears prayer discussed as a duty being enforced, they'll never suspect there's something in it for the person praying. Let them see it once today.

DAY 7 **Look at the week honestly**

Sit with the tracker tonight and ask yourself one question. Not how many prayers they made. Ask whether the tension around salah in this house went up or down this week.

If it went down, week one worked, regardless of the numbers. If it didn't, repeat week one before moving on. There's no benefit to rushing into week two on top of an unchanged atmosphere.

Make it make sense

A child who knows what they're saying prays differently from one who doesn't

Many children pray for years without ever being told plainly what the words mean. They perform a sequence in a language they don't speak, and then we wonder why their attention wanders.

This week you explain, in small pieces, without turning it into a lesson. One idea a day, told conversationally. There's a reference page at the back of this guide with the Arabic, the transliteration and the plain meaning if you want it in front of you.

DAY 8 Tell them what Allahu Akbar means

SAY: "When you say Allahu Akbar at the start, you're saying Allah is greater. Greater than whatever you were just thinking about. That's why we say it first. It's how you put the rest of the day down."

This one lands with almost every age, because every child understands the feeling of a mind that's still somewhere else.

DAY 9 Tell them what they're asking for in Al-Fatihah

SAY: "In every rak'ah you ask for one thing. Guide us on the straight path. You're asking Allah to show you the right way. Seventeen times a day."

Pick just that one line of the surah. Don't attempt the whole thing today. One clear idea outlasts a full explanation they stop following halfway through.

DAY 10 Explain the sujood

SAY: "The Prophet ﷺ said a servant is nearest to their Lord when they are in sujood. That's the closest point. So when your head is down, ask for something."

The report is in Sahih Muslim.

This is the single most useful thing you can tell a child about prayer, and most have never heard it. It converts a movement they perform into a moment they can use.

DAY 11 **Tell them one thing you ask for**

SAY: "You know what I asked for in my sujood today? I asked Allah to make things easy for your grandmother."

Something real and specific, not something impressive. Letting a child see that you actually use the prayer, rather than only performing it, does more than a month of instruction.

DAY 12 **Let them make dua in their own language**

SAY: "After you finish, ask for whatever you want. In English, in Yoruba, in Hausa, however you talk normally. He understands you."

A great many children believe dua only counts in Arabic and so they never make any. Correcting that belief is one of the fastest ways to make prayer feel like theirs.

DAY 13 **Tell them why it's five and not one**

SAY: "It's spread through the day on purpose. Morning, afternoon, evening, night. You never go very long without stopping. That's the point of it."

Children who understand the design of something resist it less. The spacing isn't arbitrary, and saying so answers a question most of them have quietly had.

DAY 14 **Ask what they'd like to understand**

SAY: "Is there anything in the prayer you say but don't really know the meaning of? I'll find out for you."

Then actually find out and come back with it. If you don't know, say you don't know. Following through on a small question is how you become the person they bring a large one to.

Make it theirs

Transferring ownership, in pieces small enough that they can carry it

A prayer that only happens because you're standing there stops the moment you're not. This week you begin handing it over. Not all at once, and not as a test they can fail.

DAY 15 Give them a job in the prayer

Let them call the adhan, or announce the time to the household, or lay out the mats. Something small and real that belongs to them.

A child with a role in an event stops being a participant who was summoned to it. This works particularly well with younger children.

DAY 16 Let them choose their own mat

Their own prayer mat, chosen by them, kept where they decide. For a girl, her own prayer clothes in a colour she picked.

Ownership of the object transfers surprisingly well to ownership of the act. This is a small purchase with a long return.

DAY 17 Let them lead

If your son can lead, let him lead one prayer for the family or for a younger sibling. If they're too young or it's not applicable, let them stand directly beside you rather than behind.

Position matters more to children than adults remember. Being placed at the front of something changes how you feel about it.

DAY 18 Ask what's hard about it, and don't defend

SAY: "What's the hardest part of praying for you? I'm not going to argue with the answer."

Then don't. Whatever they say, receive it. Boring, too early, doesn't feel like anything. If you rebut it, you've taught them the question wasn't real and they won't answer the next one.

DAY 19 **Stop reminding for one prayer**

Pick one prayer a day and say nothing about it at all. Not a reminder, not a question afterwards. It's theirs now.

They may miss it. That's information, and it's the point. A child who has never once been left to hold the prayer themselves has no idea whether they can.

DAY 20 **Praise the choice, not the compliance**

SAY: "Nobody told you. You just went and prayed. That's yours now, not mine."

Naming the ownership out loud makes it more likely to stick. Praise for obeying reinforces the obeying. Praise for choosing reinforces the choosing.

DAY 21 **Review what they held**

Look at the prayer you handed over on Day 19. Did they hold it? Partly? Not at all? Adjust the size of what you hand over next, up or down, and say nothing critical about the result.

If it didn't hold, the piece was too big, not the child too weak. Make it smaller and try again.

Make it last

Building what survives after the thirty days end

DAY 22 Handle a missed prayer flatly

SAY: "You missed Asr. Pray it now."

That's the whole response. No lecture, no disappointment in your voice, no reference to how many times this has happened. The calmer a missed prayer is handled, the less useful missing it becomes as a way of getting at you.

DAY 23 Anchor it to something already fixed

Attach each prayer to something that already reliably happens. Fajr before the school uniform goes on. Maghrib before dinner is served, not after. Isha before the phones go on the shelf.

New habits attach to existing ones far more reliably than they survive alone. This is the most practical day in the month and it's worth taking seriously.

DAY 24 Pray in congregation

Take them to the masjid if that's available to you. If it isn't, gather the household and pray together in a line at home, deliberately, as an event.

Praying alone requires more from a child than praying in a group does. Let the group carry them sometimes.

DAY 25 Let them see you pray when it's hard

Tired, unwell, in the middle of something urgent. Let them watch you stop and pray anyway, without commentary about how difficult it is.

This is the day that teaches the most and requires the fewest words. What you do when it's inconvenient is the actual lesson.

DAY 26 Be honest about your own struggle

SAY: "There was a time in my life when I wasn't praying properly at all. I know what it's like. I'm not standing above you on this."

Only say it if it's true. For most parents it is. A child who thinks you've never struggled assumes you can't understand theirs, and stops telling you about it.

DAY 27 **Ask them to remind you**

SAY: "If you notice I haven't prayed Asr, tell me. I mean it."

This reverses the direction of the whole month for one day, and children take it seriously. It also quietly demonstrates that the obligation isn't something adults have graduated from.

DAY 28 **Talk about when you're not there**

SAY: "One day you'll be somewhere I'm not. What do you think you'll do about Maghrib then?"

Ask it as a genuine question rather than a warning. Older children in particular respond to being asked what they think rather than being told what will happen.

DAY 29 **Let them change one thing**

SAY: "Is there anything about how we pray as a family that you'd change? I'll actually consider it."

Then consider it, and if it's reasonable, do it. A household rule a child helped shape is one they defend rather than resist.

DAY 30 **Tell them what you noticed**

SAY: "I've been paying attention this month. Here's what I saw you do..."

Be specific and be generous. Name a real thing, even a small one. This is the last impression of the month, and you want it to be that being watched felt good rather than felt like inspection.

THE TRACKER

Thirty days, one page

Print one for each child. Or one for the family and one for yourself.

Mark it at night, not throughout the day, so the tracker doesn't become another thing hanging over the prayer. A tick is a tick. Don't grade the quality on here.

The last column is the important one. A single word about how the day felt is worth more at the end of the month than a full row of ticks, because it's the column that tells you whether the atmosphere is changing.

ONE SUGGESTION

Let the child mark their own tracker. A chart someone else fills in about you is a report card. A chart you fill in yourself is a record. The difference matters more than it sounds like it should.

Name: _____ Month: _____

Day	Fajr	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha	Today's action done	How the day felt
1							
2							
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Four short check-ins

Five minutes at the end of each week. Answer honestly, since nobody else is reading it.

End of Week One

Did the tension around salah go up or down this week?

What did I say about their prayer that I should not have said?

End of Week Two

Which explanation landed? Which one did they not follow?

Did they ask me anything about the prayer this week?

End of Week Three

What did I hand over, and did it hold?

What did they tell me was hard about praying?

End of Week Four

What is different in this house compared to Day 1?

What is the one thing I'll keep doing after today?

REFERENCE

What they're actually saying

For the week two conversations. Keep it simple and take one at a time.

You don't need to teach all of this. It's here so that when your child asks what something means, you have a plain answer ready rather than a promise to find out later.

In the prayer	Said as	What it means
اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ	<i>Allahu Akbar</i>	Allah is greater. Greater than whatever was on your mind a moment ago.
سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ	<i>Subhana Rabbiyal Adheem</i>	Said in ruku. How perfect is my Lord, the Most Great.
سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْأَعْلَى	<i>Subhana Rabbiyal A'la</i>	Said in sujood. How perfect is my Lord, the Most High.
سَمِعَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ	<i>Sami'Allahu liman hamidah</i>	Allah hears the one who praises Him. Said as you rise from ruku.
رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي	<i>Rabbighfir li</i>	My Lord, forgive me. Said sitting between the two sujood.
السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ	<i>As-salamu alaykum wa rahmatullah</i>	Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah. How the prayer is closed, to the right and then the left.

The line from Al-Fatihah worth explaining first

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Guide us on the straight path.

Qur'an, Surah Al-Fatihah 1:6. Recited in every rak'ah of every prayer.

If your child understands one sentence of what they say each day, make it this one. It reframes the whole prayer from a thing being performed into a thing being asked for.

Two reports worth telling them

The Prophet ﷺ said that the servant is nearest to their Lord while in sujood, and encouraged making supplication in that position.

Sahih Muslim

He ﷺ described the five daily prayers as being like a river running past a person's door in which they wash five times a day, asking what would remain of their dirt.

Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim

That second image works particularly well with children between about seven and eleven, because it's concrete. Tell it once and don't explain it afterwards. Let it sit.

What thirty days can and can't do

Let me be honest with you about the ceiling on this.

Thirty days will not guarantee that your child prays for the rest of their life. Nothing does. There are righteous parents whose children drifted, and there are careless households that produced people of remarkable faith. The outcome was never entirely in your hands, and any guide that suggests otherwise is selling you something.

What thirty days can do is change what prayer means in your house. Whether it's the thing you fight about or the thing you do together. Whether your child associates salah with your warmth or your frustration. That association will outlast the habit, and it's the thing they'll carry into the years when you're no longer there to remind them.

So if you finish this month and the ticks on the tracker are uneven, look past them. Ask whether the atmosphere changed. That's the real measure, and it's the one that predicts what happens at nineteen.

The other thing worth saying is that the second half of that verse in Surah Ta-Ha is where most of the work actually is. Instruct your family in prayer, and be steadfast in it yourself. Children calibrate to what they observe far more accurately than to what they're told, and thirty days of watching a parent pray without being asked to teaches something that thirty days of reminders cannot.

After the thirty days.

Pick the one day from this month that changed something, and keep doing only that. Not all thirty. One.

For most families it's Day 5, the prayer you chose to make the calm one, or Day 23, the anchoring. Whichever it was for you, that's the practice worth carrying forward.

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي

My Lord, make me one who establishes the prayer, and from my descendants also.

Qur'an, Surah Ibrahim 14:40

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