

## 265777 - Is it essential to wash away dirt under the nails when doing wudu?

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### the question

I have a few questions regarding wudu. what is meant by when washing the face it needs to be done from "ear to ear" does it mean where the top of the ear connects to the head going towards the face so include in some of the side burns? please clarify also when wiping the ear does the entire ear have to be wiped front to back because the ear and on my foot toe nail of the nail is average big and if firmly on the skin should i live the nail with a thin object to allow water through without pain? Also is washing under chin needed? Is this hadeeth strong?- Anas (RA) narrates that the Prophet (SAW), when he made wudu, used to take a handful of water and enter it below his chin and rub it through his beard and said, "This is what my Lord - the Great and Exalted - has ordered me to do." (Sahih - Abu Dawood, Al-Baihaquee, Al-Haakim) And finally how does one tell of the dirt on his hand or something will prevent water. would be nice if all questions can get clear answer please so i can move away from doubts during wudu

### Detailed answer

Firstly:

You do not have to use something to lift the nail so that the water can pass beneath it; rather that is a kind of strictness that is not acceptable according to Islamic teachings. If the person who is doing wudu washes the parts of his body in an ordinary manner, then he has obeyed the command of Allah, may He be exalted, and has done what is required of him.

If it so happens that there is a small amount of anything under the nail that the water does not reach, then it comes under the heading of negligible matters that are pardoned, such as dirt under the nails and cracks in the feet; the one who is doing wudu does not have to make sure that water enters every single crack or to check them and examine them.

It says in Mataalib Ooli an-Nuha (1/116): A small amount of dirt under the nails and the like does not matter, and the same applies to the inside of the nose, even if it prevents water reaching where it should, because these are things that usually happen a great deal, and if wudu were not valid in the case of such matters, then the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) would have explained it, because it was not permissible for him to delay explaining at the time when such knowledge was needed.

To that – i.e., the issue of a small amount of dirt – Shaykh Taqiy ad-Deen ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) added every small thing that could prevent water reaching the skin, such as dried blood or dough on any part of the body. This was the view he favoured by analogy with dirt under the nails.

That also includes cracks that may appear on some parts of the body. End quote.

See the answers to questions no. [27070](#) and [227587](#) .

Secondly:

What is enjoined in the Book of Allah is to wash the face. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“O you who believe! When you intend to offer As-Salat (the prayer), wash your faces...” [al-Maa'idah 5:6].

With regard to the area under the chin, it is not included in the definition of the face, so it does not have to be washed.

Al-Kaasaani said: Because the face is what is seen when looking at a person; whatever is not seen is not part of the face."(Badaa'i' as-Sanaa'i' 1/3).

Thirdly:

With regard to the hadith mentioned in the question, there is a difference of opinion concerning it.

Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Regarding the hadith of Anas, it was narrated by Abu Dawood, but its isnad includes al-Waleed ibn Zarwaan, whose status is unknown....

It also has other isnaads from Anas, but they are da'eef (weak).

End quote from at-Talkhees al-Habeer (1/86).

It was classed as saheeh by Ibn al-Qayyim in Tahdheeb as-Sunan, and by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

Assuming that it is saheeh, the command mentioned in the hadith may be understood as meaning that it is mustahabb, so as to reconcile between this and other reports, because the majority of those who narrated reports about the Prophet's wudu did not mention running the fingers through the beard (to make the water reach the skin); if it were obligatory, he would not have omitted it from his wudu (and would have done it every single time), and if he had done it in every wudu, then those who narrated descriptions of his wudu would have mentioned it, and they would have made sure to describe how he did it in a clear way, or most of them would have done that.

For the ruling on running the fingers through the beard (to ensure that water reaches the skin), please see the answer to question no. [85031](#) .

Fourthly:

Determining what materials prevent water from reaching the skin is dependent on the nature of these materials. The scholars studied this matter, and reached the conclusion that materials are of two types:

The first type is material that has substance, i.e., it remains as a layer (on the skin), so when it is placed on the body it remains cohesive, separate from the skin, and can be removed by peeling or wiping it off.

The second type is material that has no substance, i.e., it does not form a layer, and as soon as it lands or is placed on the body, it loses its cohesiveness and it breaks down and is absorbed by the skin, and there is nothing left of it; rather only traces of it remain, such as colour and the like.

See the answer to question no. [240518](#) .

Based on that, it may be said:

If the dirt has substance in the sense that it forms a layer on the skin to the extent that it prevents water from reaching the skin, then it must be removed when doing wudu.

If it is simply a matter of colour, or it had substance but it is very little and can be removed with water, then it does not make wudu invalid.

And Allah knows best.