

Laying a Slab above the Howdh and the Dimensions of the Howdh

Q: Masaajid and Madaaris-2 : By the grace of Allaah, the people performing Salaah in your Masjid are increasing and the Masjid is therefore becoming too small. Since we are in the process of constructing a new Howdh, what is the ruling concerning laying a slab above it so that people may perform their salaah there when the crowd is excessive? Would you also please specify the minimum dimensions of the Howdh according to the Shari'ah as well as the required depth.

Answer: If the Howdh is a square in shape. then it has to measure at least 10 arm's lengths in length and breadth. In today's terms, it needs to measure 1225 square feet. If the space allows, it will be best for it to measure 1275 square feet. Of course, if it can be made bigger, it will be better since extra caution is always advised. The depth needs to be only so much that the bottom of the Howdh does not become exposed when one scoops up a handful.

It is permissible to lay a slab over the Howdh on condition that the slab is higher than the water level and does not affect the flow of the water in any way. The Howdh will not be regarded as a Howdh in the Shari'ah if the slab is placed on the water's surface. Furthermore, if the pillars supporting the slab are placed in the water, the dimensions of the Howdh needs to be 1225 square feet after subtracting the area occupied by the pillars. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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