219643 - What Shoes to Wear for Hajj and `Umrah?

the question

I heard that it is not permissible for a man to wear shoes that cover the top of the feet when doing tawaf (during Ihram – this is the view of a number of Hanafis). Is that true? Or is it permissible to wear all kinds of shoes?

Summary of answer

1. It is not permissible for the pilgrim in Ihram to wear what covers the entire foot, plus the ankles such as the Khuff, boots that cover the ankle, army boots, and so on.
2. There is nothing wrong with wearing the sandal which is the same size as the sole of the foot, but leaves the top of the feet, the heels and the ankles uncovered.
3. If the shoe does not cover the ankles, but it covers the rest of the foot, such as the toes, the top of the foot and the heel, then there is a difference of scholarly opinion as to whether it may be worn in Ihram, because of the difference of opinion as to whether it resembles the Khuff or sandal.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

What the pilgrim in Ihram may wear on his feet is of several kinds, for each of which there is a ruling. In general terms, they may be summed up in three categories:

Prohibited footwear for pilgrims in Ihram

- That which covers the entire foot , plus the ankles [which are the two bones that protrude at the joint between the leg and the foot], such as the Khuff (a type of leather slipper have comes up past the ankle), boots that cover the ankle, army boots, and so on.

Such shoes are not permissible for the pilgrim in Ihram to wear, because of the report narrated by

Al-Bukhari (1543) and Muslim (1177) from `Abdullah ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), according to which a man said: O Messenger of Allah, what garments can the pilgrim in Ihram wear? The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “He should not wear chemises, head coverings, pants, burnooses, or Khufuf (leather slippers), except for one who cannot find sandals, in which case he may wear Khufuf, but he should cut them so that they come lower than the ankles.”

This Hadith clearly states that it is prohibited for the pilgrim in Ihram to wear Khufuf, and this is applicable by analogy to similar footwear that also covers the entire foot and ankle.

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “Wearing the Khuff (leather slipper) is prohibited for the man who is in Ihram, and this is agreed upon, whether the Khuff is intact or has holes in it, because of the general meaning of the authentic Hadith.” (Al-Majmu` Sharh Al-Muhadhdhab, 7/258)

Permissible sandals for pilgrims in Ihram

- The sandal is that which is the same size as the sole of the foot, but leaves the top of the feet, the heels and the ankles uncovered. There is nothing wrong with wearing it (when in Ihram).

In fact it is proven in the Sunnah that it is recommended to enter Ihram wearing sandals. The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Let one of you enter Ihram wearing an Izar (waist wrapper or lower garments), Rida’ (upper garment) and sandals.” (Narrated by Ahmad in his Musnad, 8/500; classed as authentic by Ibn Khuzaymah, 2601)

Ibn Qudamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “With regard to sandals, it is permissible to wear them no matter how they look, and it is not necessary to cut anything from them, because the ruling that they are permissible was narrated in general terms.” (Al-Mughni, 5/123)

Al-Juwayni (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“With regard to sandals, they may be worn by the pilgrim in Ihram, even if they have a strap that

comes over the top of the foot. There is nothing wrong with anything that is called sandals, even if the straps are wide. There may be a need to make it wide if one wants to walk for long distances." (Nihayat Al-Matlab fi Dirayat Al-Madhhab, 4/251)

In Tuhfat Al-Muhtaj (4/162) it says:

"What is meant by sandals is a kind of footwear that does not cover all the toes."

It says in Matalib uli An-Nuha (2/329):

"It is permissible for the pilgrim in Ihram to wear sandals, even if the sandal has a strap going across the foot and another strap going around the heel."

The point is that it does not matter if the sandal has straps that help to keep it on the foot, whether the straps go across the toes or around the heel.

Controversy over footwear that covers the ankles

- If the shoe does not cover the ankles, but it covers the rest of the foot, such as the toes, the top of the foot and the heel, then there is a difference of scholarly opinion as to whether it may be worn (in Ihram), because of the difference of opinion as to whether it resembles the Khuff (leather slipper) or sandal. Some scholars think that because it covers most of the foot, it should be regarded as being like the Khuff and should be disallowed for that reason. Others think that because it does not cover the ankles, it comes under the same ruling as sandals and is permissible. The majority of scholars are of the view that it is prohibited to wear anything that covers the foot, even if it does not cover the ankles, whether it covers all of the toes at the front or covers all of the heels, or covers the top of the foot.

In Minah Al-Jalil Sharh Mukhtasar Khalil (2/260) it says: "No sandals should be worn except those that have two straps to tie them to the foot, so that one may walk easily. It is not permissible for him to wear any shoes that have a wide strap going around the heel and a wide strap going over the top of the feet, because that results in covering much of the foot."

Abu Ishaq Ash-Shirani (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “Wearing Khufuf that have been cut so that they come lower than the ankle, when sandals are available, is not permissible, and compensation must be offered for that… because it is a garment that is fitted to that part of the body, and it resembles the Khuff (leather slipper).” (Al-Muhadhdhab fi Fiqh Al-Imam Ash-Shafa`I, 1/381)

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“With regard to wearing Khufuf that have been cut to come lower than the ankle, is it permissible to wear them when sandals are available? There are two well-known points of view concerning that which were mentioned by the author and his companions. The correct view, according to their consensus, is that it is prohibited; this is what is implied by the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in the authentic Hadith mentioned above: “Whoever cannot find sandals, let him wear Khufuf, but let him cut them so that they come lower than the ankles.” (Al-Majmu` Sharh Al-Muhadhdhab, 7/258)

Al-Mawirdi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Because the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) permitted the wearing of Khufuf that have been cut down, on condition that the individual does not possess any sandals, if that condition is not met, then it cannot be assumed to be permissible.” (Al-Hawi Al-Kabir, 4/97)

Ibn Qudamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Wearing cut-down Khufuf, when sandals are available, is an action for which compensation must be paid, and he (the pilgrim in Ihram) does not have the right to wear them. This was stated by Ahmad, and this was also the view of Malik… because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) stipulated, when he said that it was permissible to wear them, that one should not have any sandals. This indicates that (wearing cut-down Khufuf) is not permissible when a person does have sandals. Moreover, they are tailored to fit that part of the body. So the pilgrim in Ihram must give compensation if he wears them (without a valid excuse), as in the case of gloves (if worn by a

woman in Ihram).” (Al-Mughni, 5/122)

This view was favoured by Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him), who said:

“With regard to rubber boots that come below the ankles , some scholars say that there is nothing wrong with that, because the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said, according to the hadith of `Abdullah ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), “Whoever cannot find sandals, let him wear Khufuf, but let him cut them so that they come lower than the ankles.” He said: That is because, if they are cut so that they come lower than the ankles, they become like sandals.

But the apparent meaning of the Sunnah is that the ruling is general, so the correct view is that it is prohibited, and that it is not permissible for the pilgrim in Ihram to wear (western-style) shoes, even if they come below the ankles.” (Majmu` Al-Fatawa, 22/136)

Shaykh Muhammad Al-Mukhtar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“It is not permissible for the pilgrim in Ihram to wear shoes that cover his feet or most of his feet; rather he should wear shoes that do not cover most of the foot. If the shoes cover part of the foot, then his toes should be uncovered, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “…let him cut them so that they come lower than the ankles.” Based on that, the toes should be uncovered, and based on that, if the shoe covers the ends of the toes, then it is not permissible to wear it, like the kind of slipper that covers the front of the foot. This should not be worn.” (Sharh Zad Al-Mustaqni`, 5/135)

The Hanafis are of the view that it is permissible to wear something that covers the foot on condition that it does not cover the ankles. So if a person wears a shoe that covers the front of the foot and the heel and the top of the foot, there is nothing wrong with that so long as it does not cover the ankles.

They quoted as evidence the fact that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) advised a person who could not find any sandals to wear the Khufuf and cut them so that they

came lower than the ankles, which suggests that after cutting it, it has been transformed from a form that is prohibited to a form that is permissible, which indicates that it is permissible to wear anything that comes lower than the ankles.

Al-Kasani (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Some of our later shaykhs granted a concession allowing the wearing of shoes, by analogy with the cut-down Khufuf, because it is similar to it.” (Bada’i` As-Sana’i`, 2/184)

As-Sarkhasi (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “Based on that, our later shaykhs said: There is nothing wrong with the pilgrim in Ihram wearing that which does not cover the ankle, so it is like sandals.” (Al-Mabsut, 4/127)

In Al-Mawsu`ah Al-Fiqhiyyah (2/154) it says: “The Malikis, Shafa`is and Hanbalis included with the Khuffayn any footwear that covers part of the feet, so they did not regard it as permissible to wear Khuffayn that are cut to come below the ankle, except in cases where sandals are not available. If sandals are available, then it is not permissible for him to wear them (the cut-down Khuffayn), and he must take them off if he has put them on. But if he has put them on because of an excuse such as illness, then he is not sinning and he does not have to offer compensation.

As for the Hanafis, they said: Anything that does not cover the ankles is permissible for the pilgrim in Ihram to wear.”

This view was favoured by Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him).

He said:

“The correct view is that it is permissible to wear anything that comes below the ankles, whether sandals are available or not.” (Majmu` Al-Fatawa, 26/110)

He said concerning the Hadith, “If he cannot find sandals, let him wear Khufuf , but let him cut them so that they come lower than the ankles”:

“This indicates that that which has been cut down to be like sandals is permissible to be worn in all

cases, and one may wear things that are similar to them, of various kinds of footwear. This is the view of Abu Hanifah and is one of the views narrated from Imam Ahmad and others. My grandfather Abu'l-Barakat (may Allah have mercy on him) used to issue fatwas to this effect towards the end of his life, when he did Hajj.

Rather the hadith mentions the one who cannot find sandals because cutting the Khufuf when sandals are available is damaging the Khufuf and wasting wealth unnecessarily, which is prohibited. That is different from the case when there are no Khufuf. This has been made an alternative in that case, so as not to waste wealth." (Al-Fatawa Al-Kubra, 1/327)

And he said:

"The words "let him wear Khufuf, but let him cut them so that they come lower than the ankles" clearly indicate what is permissible to wear and what makes it different than the Khufuf, which is disallowed, and makes it like sandals which is permissible. Otherwise there would be no difference between wearing cut-down Khufuf and intact Khufuf. This is a concession granted to the one who cannot find sandals, because of what is mentioned above. Moreover, a concession was granted after that allowing people to wear Khufuf and pants, for one who has no alternative.

Moreover, the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) only forbade the pilgrim in Ihram to wear Khufuf and he allowed wiping over the Khufuf; the cut-down Khufuf and other types of shoes are not Khufuf and do not come under the same heading as Khufuf, so they are not included in the prohibition just as they are not included in what may be wiped over, especially when forbidding the pilgrim to wear the Khufuf implies that it is permissible for him to wear other things, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) was asked about what garments the pilgrim in Ihram may wear, and he said: ""He should not wear such and such…" So so he limited what the pilgrim is forbidden to wear, and whatever he did not mention is permissible.

Moreover, if the foot needs to be covered, then that which is required by necessity must inevitably be permitted. Many people cannot walk in sandals, so it is essential that they be granted a

concession allowing them to wear other kinds of footwear." (Sharh `Umdat Al-Qari, 3/46)

This view is also favoured by Shaykh Ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him), who said:

"If someone wears Western-style shoes that come below the ankles, that does not matter, because they come under the same heading as sandals according to the more correct of the two scholarly opinions, and because the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said to the one who could not find any sandals: "let him wear Khufuf, but let him cut them so that they come lower than the ankles."

This indicates that those that have been cut down come under the same heading as sandals, and many of the scholars regarded as correct the view which says that it is permissible to wear Khufuf without cutting them down if no sandals are available.

In conclusion, that which is cut down is that which is cut so that it comes below the ankle; there is nothing wrong with this. So if a shoe comes below the ankle and does not cover the ankle, then the ruling on it is the same as the ruling on sandals, and there is nothing wrong with that." (Fatawa Nur `ala Ad-Darb, 17/275)

And he said:

"It is permissible for the pilgrim in Ihram to wear Khufuf that come below the ankles, because they come under the same heading as sandals." (At-Tahqiq wal Idah, p. 34)

Although the view of the Hanafis, which was also favoured by Shaykh Al-Islam (may Allah have mercy on him) and other scholars, is strong in terms of evidence and rationality, it is more on the safe side for the Muslim and his worship not to do that, especially since sandals are available and plentiful, unless there is a need for that, such as if he is someone who will be harmed by wearing sandals or he cannot easily walk in them.

And Allah knows best.