

حُكْمُ سِتْرِ الْوَجْهِ فِي الْمَذْهَبِ الْحَنْفِيِّ

The final **rājih** and **mu'tamad** position of the Hanafi madhhab is that while a woman's face is not 'awrah, it is still **wājib** (**obligatory**) for a woman - except elderly women who are no longer desired (al-qawā'id min al-nisā') - **to cover her face** in front of non-mahram men due to fear of **fitnah**, making it **manhī 'anhu** (**prohibited/forbidden**) **to leave the face uncovered**, i.e., women are **prohibited (mamnū'ah)** from **uncovering their faces** in front of strange men / in public. This is the position which is reiterated by the authoritative **fuqahā'** of the madhhab, including **Imam Zayn al-Dīn Ibn Nujaym** (d. 970 AH) in the sharḥ text of the Hanafi madhhab **Al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq**, and **Imam 'Alā' al-Dīn al-Ḥaṣkafī** (d. 1088 AH) in **Al-Durr al-Mukhtār**. This position is the official, relied-upon (**mu'tamad**) legal position of the Hanafi school in **Radd al-Muḥtār 'alā al-Durr al-Mukhtār** by the Hanafi mujtahid fi'l-madhhab **Imam Ibn 'Ābidīn al-Shāmī** (d. 1252 AH), **Khātimat al-Muḥaqqiqīn**.

In **Al-Durr al-Mukhtār**: "a young woman is **forbidden from uncovering her face** in the presence of men, not because it is 'awrah, but rather due to the fear of **fitnah** [temptation]" (vol. 1, p. 406, Dār al-Fikr):

وفي "الدر المختار": (وَتَمْنَعُ) الْمَرْأَةُ الشَّابَّةُ (مَنْ كَشَفَ الْوَجْهَ بَيْنَ رَجَالٍ)، لَا لِأَنَّهُ عَوْرَةٌ؛ بَلْ لِخَوْفِ الْفِتْنَةِ

In Ibn 'Ābidīn's **Ḥāshiyah**:

"The meaning is: she is **forbidden from uncovering [her face]** lest men see her face and temptation (**fitnah**) arises; because when it is uncovered, looking at her with desire (shahwah) may happen" (vol. 1, p. 406):

قال ابن عابدين في حاشيته: «وَالْمَعْنَى: تَمْنَعُ مِنَ الْكَشْفِ لَخَوْفِ أَنْ يَرَى الرِّجَالُ وَجْهَهَا فَتَمْنَعُ الْفِتْنَةَ؛ لِأَنَّهُ مَعَ الْكَشْفِ قَدْ يَقَعُ النَّظَرُ إِلَيْهَا بِشَهْوَةٍ

This position represents **al-fatwā al-muftā bihā** (the finalised, official ruling) of the Hanafi school. It is likewise affirmed by the early authorities (**mutaqaddimīn**) of the madhhab.

Imam Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī (d. 189 AH), one of the **ṣāhibayn** (the two great direct students) of **Imam al-A'ḍham Abū Ḥanīfah**, states in **Al-Aṣl**:

المرأة المحرمة ترخي على وجهها بخرقة، وتجافي عن وجهها». قالوا: هذه المسألة دليل على أن المرأة منبهة عن إظهار وجهها للرجال من غير ضرورة؛ لأنها منبهة عن تغطية الوجه لأجل نكسك، لولا أن الأمر كذلك، وإلا لما أمرت بهذا الإرخاء.

"The muḥrim woman lets down a cloth over her face while keeping it away from her face." They said: "This issue is evidence that a woman is **prohibited from showing her face** to men without necessity; for she was only prohibited from covering her face because of iḥrām. Were that not the case, she would not have been instructed to let the cloth down over her face."

Thus, one of the books of the **Zāhir al-Riwāyah**, the most authoritative transmitted texts of the Hanafi madhhab, indicates that a woman is **prohibited from uncovering her face** before non-maḥram men without necessity.

Imam Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī (d. 333 AH), **Imām al-Mutakallimīn** of the Hanafi madhhab and the Imam of the **Māturīdī** school of 'aqīdah, states in **Ta'wīlāt Ahl al-Sunnah**:

Commenting on the verse of the Qur'an:

(al-Aḥzāb: 59) يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ

وفي الآية دلالة رخصة خروج الحرائر للحوائج؛ لأنه لو لم يجوز لهن الخروج لم يؤمرن بإرخاء الجلباب على أنفسهن، ولكن نهين عن الخروج بغيره. «جلباب، فدل أنه يجوز لهن الخروج للحاجة، والله أعلم».

"The verse indicates that free women are permitted to go out for their needs; for had it not been permissible for them to go out, they would not have been commanded to draw the jilbāb over themselves. Rather, they were **prohibited** from going out without a jilbāb."

Thus, Allah permitted women to leave their homes for their needs, but **commanded** them not to go out without the jilbāb.

Imam Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ (d. 370 AH) states in **Aḥkām al-Qur'ān**:

قال أبو بكر: في هذه الآية دلالة على أن المرأة الشابة مأمورة بستر وجهها عن الأجانب وإظهار الستر والعفاف عند الخروج لئلا يطمع أهل «الريب فيهن».

"This verse indicates that the young woman is **commanded to cover her face** from non-maḥram men and to display concealment and chastity when going out, so that the people of suspicion do not become desirous of them."

Thus, the early **fuqahā'** of the Hanafi madhhab affirmed that **the young woman must cover her face before non-maḥram men.**

This position represents **al-fatwā al-muftā bihā** (the finalised, official ruling) of the Hanafi school that a woman must cover her face in public to prevent **fitnah**, affirmed by the Hanafi **fuqahā'** throughout the centuries, including:

1. **Imam Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī** (d. 189 AH), **Al-Aṣl**

المرأة المحرمة ترخي على وجهها بخرقعة، وتجافي عن وجهها». قالوا: هذه المسألة دليل على أن المرأة منبهة عن إظهار وجهها للرجال من غير ضرورة؛ لأنها منبهة عن تغطية الوجه لأجل نكسك، لولا أن الأمر كذلك، وإلا لما أمرت بهذا الإرخاء.

"The muḥrim woman lets down a cloth over her face while keeping it away from her face." They said: "This issue is evidence that a woman is **prohibited from showing her face** to men without necessity; for she was only prohibited from covering her face because of iḥrām. Were that not the case, she would not have been instructed to let the cloth down over her face."

2. **Imam Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī** (d. 333 AH), **Ta'wīlāt Ahl al-Sunnah** (4:136)

وفي الآية دلالة رخصة خروج الحرائر للحوائج؛ لأنه لو لم يجوز لهن الخروج لم يؤمرن بإرخاء الجلباب على أنفسهن، ولكن نهين عن الخروج» «بغير جلباب، فدل أنه يجوز لهن الخروج للحاجة، والله أعلم.

"The verse indicates that free women are permitted to go out for their needs; for had it not been permissible for them to go out, they would not have been **commanded** to draw the jilbāb over themselves. Rather, they were **prohibited** from going out without a jilbāb."

3. **Al-Ḥākim al-Shahīd** (d. 334 AH), **Al-Muntaqā** (as cited in **Majma' al-Anhur**, 1:81)

4. **Imam Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ** (d. 370 AH), **Aḥkām al-Qur'ān** (5:245)

قال أبو بكر: في هذه الآية دلالة على أن المرأة الشابة مأمورة بستر وجهها عن الأجانب وإظهار الستر والعفاف عند الخروج لئلا يطمع أهل» «الريب فيهن.

"This verse indicates that the young woman is **commanded to cover her face** from non-maḥram men and to display concealment and chastity when going out, so that the people of suspicion do not become desirous of them."

5. **Abū al-‘Abbās al-Nāṭifi** (d. 446 AH), **Al-Wāqi‘āt** (as cited in **Al-Muḥiṭ al-Burhānī**, 2:494, 3:499)

6. **Qāḍī Khān** (d. 592 AH), **Fatāwā Qāḍī Khān** (1:141, 1:286)

7. **Imam al-Marghīnānī** (d. 593 AH), **Al-Tajnīs wa'l-Mazīd** (2:479)

8. **Al-Kirmānī** (d. c. 600 AH), **Al-Masālik fi'l-Manāsik** (1:356)

9. **Ibn Māzah al-Bukhārī** (d. 616 AH), **Al-Muḥiṭ al-Burhānī fi'l-Fiqh al-Nu‘mānī** (2:494, 3:499)

ودلت هذه المسألة على أن المرأة منبهة عن إظهار وجهها للرجال من غير ضرورة؛ لأنها منبهة عن تغطية الوجه لحق نسك، لولا أن الأمر كذلك، وإلا لما عرف بهذا الإرخاء في النواهي .

"And this issue indicates that a woman is **prohibited from showing her face** to men without necessity; for she was only prohibited from covering her face due to the right of the ritual. Were that not the case, this suspension of the veil would not be recognized within the prohibitions."

10. **Al-Sunnāmī** (d. after 700 AH), **Niṣāb al-Iḥtisāb** (p. 123)

11. **Al-Ṣighnāqī** (d. 714 AH), **Al-Nihāyah** (as cited in **Al-Baḥr al-‘Amīq**, 1:713)

12. **Al-Qurashī** (d. 854 AH), **Al-Baḥr al-‘Amīq** (1:713)

13. **Imam Ibn al-Humām** (d. 861 AH), **Fath al-Qadīr** (2:405, 2:514)

ودلت المسألة على أن المرأة منبهة عن إبداء وجهها للأجانب بلا ضرورة

"And the issue indicates that a woman is **prohibited from displaying her face** to non-maḥram men without necessity."

14. **Al-Quhustānī** (d. 950 AH), **Jāmi‘ al-Rumūz** (2:350)

15. Imam Zayn al-Dīn Ibn Nujaym (d. 970 AH), *Al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq* (1:284, 2:381, 5:53, 7:310)

قال مشايخنا تمنع المرأة الشابة من كشف وجهها بين الرجال في زماننا للفتنة

"Our scholars said: A young woman is **forbidden from uncovering her face** among men in our time due to temptation."

16. Imam Zayn al-Dīn Ibn Nujaym (d. 970 AH), *Minḥat al-Khāliq* (2:381)

قالوا هذه المسألة دليل على أن المرأة منبهة عن إظهار وجهها للرجال من غير ضرورة؛

"They said: This issue is evidence that a woman is **prohibited from showing her face** to men without necessity."

17. Sinān al-Khalwatī (d. 989 AH), *Qurrat al-'Uyūn fī Manāsik al-Ḥajj* (fol. 44a)

18. 'Umar ibn Nujaym (d. 1005 AH), *Al-Nahr al-Fā'iq* (2:98)

19. Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī (d. 1014 AH), *Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ* (5:1852, 2078) & *Manāsik* (p. 115)

20. Al-Shurunbulālī (d. 1069 AH), *Ḥāshiyat al-Shurunbulālī 'alā al-Durar* (1:234)

21. Shaykhizādah (d. 1078 AH), *Majma' al-Anhur fī Sharḥ Multaqā al-Abḥur* (1:81, 1:285)

ودلت المسألة على أن المرأة لا تكشف وجهها للأجانب من غير ضرورة

"And the issue indicates that a woman is **prohibited from uncovering her face** to non-maḥram men without necessity."

22. 'Abd al-Ḥalīm (d. 1088 AH), *Ḥāshiyat 'Abd al-Ḥalīm 'alā al-Durar* (1:149)

23. Imam 'Alā' al-Dīn al-Ḥaṣkafī (d. 1088 AH), *Al-Durr al-Mukhtār* (vol. 1, p. 406, Dār al-Fikr)

• (وَمَنْعَ) الْمَرْأَةِ الشَّابَّةِ (مِنْ كَشْفِ الْوَجْهِ بَيْنَ رِجَالٍ)، لَا لِأَنَّهُ عَوْرَةٌ؛ بَلْ (لِخَوْفِ الْفِتْنَةِ)

"A young woman is **forbidden from uncovering her face** in the presence of men, not because it is 'awrah, but rather due to the fear of **fitnah** [temptation]"

24. **Al-Taḥṭāwī** (d. 1231 AH), **Ḥāshiyat al-Taḥṭāwī ‘alā Marāqī al-Falāḥ** (p. 241) & **Ḥāshiyat al-Taḥṭāwī ‘alā al-Durr** (1:331)

ومنع الشابة من كشفه لخوف الفتنة لا لأنه عورة

"And a young woman is **forbidden from uncovering her face** due to the fear of temptation, not because it is 'awrah."

25. **Imam Ibn ‘Ābidīn al-Shāmī** (d. 1252 AH), **Radd al-Muḥtār ‘alā al-Durr al-Mukhtār** (vol. 1, p. 406, Dār al-Fikr)

قال ابن عابدين في حاشيته: «وَالْمَعْنَى: تَمْنَعُ مِنَ الْكَشْفِ لِخَوْفِ أَنْ يَرَى الرَّجَالُ وَجْهَهَا فَتَقَعَ الْفِتْنَةُ؛ لِأَنَّهُ مَعَ الْكَشْفِ قَدْ يَقَعُ النَّظَرُ إِلَيْهَا بِشَهْوَةٍ» (وتمنع) المرأة الشابة (من كشف الوجه بين رجال) لا لأنه عورة بل (لخوف الفتنة) كمسه وإن أمن الشهوة لأنه أغلظ

"The meaning is: she is **forbidden from uncovering [her face]** lest men see her face and temptation (**fitnah**) arises; because when it is uncovered, looking at her with desire (shahwah) may happen. And a young woman is **forbidden from uncovering her face** in the presence of men, not because it is 'awrah, but rather due to the fear of **fitnah**, just like touching it, even if safe from desire, because it is more severe."

26. **Imam ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Ābidīn** (d. 1306 AH), **Al-Hadiyyah al-‘Alā’iyyah** (p. 282)

وتمنع الشابة من كشف وجهها خوف الفتنة.

"And a young woman is **forbidden from uncovering her face** out of fear of temptation."

27. Shaykh **Muḥammad Sa‘īd al-Burhānī** (d. 1387 AH), **Al-Durar al-Mubāḥah fī al-Ḥaẓr wa al-Ibāḥah** (p. 73)

وتمنع الشابة من كشف وجهها لا لانه عورة بل لخوف الفتنة

"And a young woman is **forbidden from uncovering her face**, not because it is 'awrah, but rather out of fear of temptation."

28. **‘Abd al-Ḥayy al-Laknawī** (d. 1304 AH)

29. **Al-Sawātī** (d. 1346 AH)

30. Al-Naḥlāwī (d. 1350 AH)

Furthermore, claims by modern or contemporary Hanafis that the niqāb is not **wājib** by following certain conditional earlier positions of the **mutaqaddimīn** (early authorities) for this issue - positions that do not apply to our times - are methodologically void (**bāṭil**); because within the **uṣūl** (legal framework) of the madhhab, it is strictly **wājib** to follow the final **al-fatwā al-muftā bihā** established by the **muta'akhkhirūn**, and to bypass this settled **mu'tamad** position to choose an earlier, conditional allowance may constitute **tashahhī** (following one's whims) and unauthorised **ijtihād** (which is **ḥarām** for the 'awām).

The **muta'akhkhirūn** did not introduce a new ruling, but finalised the madhhab's ruling in accordance with its established legal principles, including **sadd al-dharā'i'** (blocking the means to prohibited matters) and preventing **fitnah**. The obligation of covering the face before non-maḥram men is found from the earliest authorities of the madhhab, beginning with **Imam Muḥammad** in **Al-Aṣl**, and was affirmed continuously by the Hanafi fuqahā' and became the **mu'tamad** (relied-upon) position of the school. This continuous affirmation by the Hanafi **fuqahā'** - beginning with the earliest authorities of the madhhab, through the **mutaqaddimīn**, and culminating in **al-fatwā al-muftā bihā** - establishes the settled Hanafi position that **the young woman is prohibited from uncovering her face before non-maḥram men due to fear of fitnah**. Accordingly, the duty of the **muqallid** is to follow the final ruling (**al-fatwā al-muftā bihā**) of the madhhab - which is determined by the rules of **Rasm al-Muftī** - not to leave it in favour of earlier opinions which the madhhab itself no longer gives fatwā upon.

And Allah ﷻ knows best.

Download the Official PDF:

[View the Complete Document: Official Mu'tamad Hanafi Fatwa on Covering the Face / Niqab PDF](#)

[View the Complete Post and Discussion on Reddit at r/TraditionalMuslims](#)

[View the Complete Document on SCRIBD](#)

This text and document are licensed under a Creative Commons NoDerivatives 4.0 International License (CC ND 4.0). You are free to copy, paste, download, and distribute this text across any forum or platform, provided the wording remains completely unaltered and unmanipulated. No personal attribution is required.