



**Fiqh of the Miswāk**  
From  
The Jurisprudential Digest  
Of  
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The legality of the miswāk is the use of a stick or what resembles it for the teeth and gums to remove what is caught between them from tartar (yellowness) and odor. Indeed, it has been reported that it (the miswāk) is a sunnah of the prophets, consequently the first to use the miswāk was Ibraaheem (alaihi salaam) and the Messenger (sallalAllahu alaihi was sallam) has explained that it is a purifier for the mouth, meaning a cleaner for it from that which is disliked, and that it is a pleaser to The Lord, meaning it pleases The Lord The Most High. It has been reported in his explanation and incitement to it in more than 100 ahâdeeth which establishes it as a confirmed Sunnah that, The Legislator (Allâh) incites to and encourages. It has great benefits, from the greatest and most collective, is what has been pointed out in the hadeeth:

**“Verily it is a purifier for the mouth and pleasing to The Lord.”**

Cleaning (brushing) the teeth with the miswāk is done with a soft stick from araaq (miswāk tree), the olive tree, corymb, or other than that which does not crumble nor cut the mouth. Using the miswāk is a Sunnah at all times, even throughout the day of the one whom is fasting upon that which is correct. It is also confirmed for specific times; at the time of wudoo according to the statement of the Messenger (sallalAllahu alaihi was sallam),

**“If it wasn’t for the difficulty upon my nation, verily I would have**

**ordered them with the miswāk at the time of every wudoo”.**

Thusly, this hadeeth establishes the certainty of the miswak at the time if wudoo being mustahab (a sunnah), which takes place during the cleaning of the mouth (putting water in the mouth with the right hand 1 to 3 times) for this is more substantial (effective) in purifying and cleaning the mouth. The miswāk is also confirmed before the prayer, obligatory or supererogatory, for we are ordered to be in a condition of perfection and cleanliness at the time of approaching (or getting close to) Allāh, displaying the high rank of worship. The use of the miswāk is also confirmed when waking from a night’s sleep or a day’s sleep. Indeed he (sallalAllahu alaihi was sallam) would scrub (rub) his mouth with the miswāk because sleep changes one’s breath, which is caused by the rising of fumes from the stomach, and the miswāk in this condition cleans the mouth from its traces. The miswāk is also confirmed when one’s breath changes from eating or other than that. It is also confirmed to use it before reading the Qurān to clean the mouth and freshen it for the recitation of Allāh's speech, Mighty and Majestic is He.

The characteristics of (using) the miswāk are; passing it over the gums and teeth, beginning from the right side and moving to the left, and holding the miswāk with the left hand.