

## 106815 - Guidelines on women working outside the home

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### the question

I am a 20-year-old girl studying engineering. I work during the summer in a stationary store; in order to pay my college fees, am I sinful? I wear niqab, and sometimes feel that no religious man proposes to me for this reason.

### Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The basic principle is that a woman should remain at home, and not go out except for necessary purposes. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And stay in your houses, and do not display yourselves like that of the times of ignorance”

[al-Ahzaab 33:33].

Although this is addressed to the wives of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), it also applies to the believing women. It is only addressed to the wives of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) because of their honour and status with the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and because they are examples for the believing women.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Woman is ‘awrah, and if she goes out, the shaytaan raises his hopes (of misguiding her). She is never closer to Allaah than when she

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stays in her house.” Narrated by Ibn Hibbaan and Ibn Khuzaymah; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in al-Silsilah al-Shaheehah, no. 2688.

And he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said concerning a woman’s prayer in the mosque: “Their houses are better for them.” Narrated by Abu Dawood (567) and classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

For more information please see the answer to question no. [6742](#).

Secondly:

It is permissible for a woman to go out of her house for work, but that is subject to certain conditions. If they are met, it is permissible for her to go out. They are:

- That she needs to work in order to acquire the money she needs, as in your case.
- The work should be suited to the nature of woman, such as medicine, nursing, teaching, sewing, and so on.
- The work should be in a place that is only for women, and there should be no mixing with non-mahram men.
- Whilst at work she should observe complete shar’i hijab.
- Her work should not lead to her travelling without a mahram.
- Her going out to work should not involve committing any haraam action, such as being alone with the driver, or wearing perfume where non-mahrams can smell it.
- That should not lead to her neglecting things that are more essential for her, such as looking after her house, husband and children.

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Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen said: The field in which a woman works should be only for women, such as if she works in teaching girls, whether in administration or technical support, or she works at home as a seamstress sewing clothes for women and so on. As for working in fields that are for men, this is not permissible for her because it requires her to mix with men, which is a great fitnah (source of temptation and trouble) and should be avoided. It should be noted that it is proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "I have not left behind me any fitnah that is more harmful to men than women; the fitnah of the Children of Israel had to do with women." So the man should keep his family away from places of fitnah and its causes in all circumstances. End quote.

Fataawa al-Mar'ah al-Muslimah (2/981)

If these conditions are met in your work, then there is nothing wrong with you doing it in sha Allaah.

We ask Allaah to grant you a righteous husband, for He is able to do that.

And Allaah knows best.