



وفاق العلماء

WWW.WIFAQULULAMA.CO.UK

@wifaqulu@wifaqululama.co.uk <https://twitter.com/WifaqulUlama> <https://www.facebook.com/wifaqululama/>

# PAINTBALLING

## THE USE OF GELATINE

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**Revision:** Conclusion revised and reworded.

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## Question:

Paintballs actually consist of two parts, the shell and the fill. The shell compromises the outer portion that breaks on impact, and the fill itself is the dye and solvent which make the trademark splatter on contact. The shell of paintballs is almost invariably constructed of gelatine. The origins of the Gelatine cannot be guaranteed and cannot be predicted. Most manufacturers state that it is composed of animal Gelatine and no further information is given. It is pretty certain the animal gelatine is used in the process. The composition of paintballs is closely guarded by manufacturers and the ingredients are not shared. What is your advice for Muslims who wish to engage in paintballing?

Question, *as received*.

## Abstract:

هو الموفق  
حامدا ومصليا ومسلما  
الجواب ومنه الصواب

The query was deliberated amongst the Scholars at Department of *Dārul-Iftaa* ([Wifaqul Ulama](#)) and the conclusion reached after discussion was as follows:

In conclusion, Muslims should not engage in paintballing when it is factually determined or there is reasonable doubt that the paintballs are composed of Gelatine (derived from pigs). The usage of (non-swine sourced) gelatine for making paintballs is permissible. In the absence of *Harām* ingredients, the (paintballing) activity must be compliant to the rules and regulations as set forth in *Islāmic* principles.

1. Mufti Amjad Mohammed
2. Mufti Bilāl Issāk
3. Mufti Faisal al-Mahmudi (Canada)

4. Qādhi Imrān Sayed Falāhi
5. Mufti Mohammed Ashfāq
6. Qāri Muhammad Shoyaib Nurgat
7. Mufti Zakāria Akudi
8. Mufti Zubāir Dudha

May *Allāh* preserve them all.

## Response:

Paintballs must be specifically engineered to withstand the pressure of being fired at high velocity from a gun but must also burst on impact. The paintball must deform on impact (decreasing) its speed and then burst. Its path during flight must be predictable and accuracy must be ensured.

In order to fulfil these precise requirements paintballs have a tough (elastic) outer shell (made from gelatine) and a liquid centre. The liquid is encapsulated within a thin gelatine membrane similar to how the pharmaceutical industry makes capsules or soft gels.

The gelatine used in paintballs is commonly derived from pigs because it tends to make the best paintballs. The ingredients and the origins of gelatine is often not listed on the paintballs because the manufacturers closely guard the secrets behind their products. The paintballing centres often have no information about the ingredients of used in the manufacturing of the paintballs.

It is possible to purchase paintballs manufactured using non-animal based ingredients or purchase paintballs manufactured using (non-swine sourced) gelatine.

During paintballing, players wear gloves, overalls, helmets so it is entirely possible for the outer shell of paintball to never make contact with the skin. However, it is not permissible in *Islāmic* principles to derive any

benefit from a pig or to use any of the by-products derived from it.

During the process to make gelatine, the raw ingredients do not undergo a change which is considered sufficient to alter the ruling. The usage of (non-swine sourced) gelatine for making paintballs is permissible. We have not found any paintballs made from fish based gelatine.

Paintballing is not a genuine need to allow for the usage of porcine derived ingredients. We advise Muslims to not use paintballs manufactured using porcine gelatine. The usage of (non-swine sourced) gelatine for making paintballs is permissible. In addition, where there are no *Harām* ingredients used in making the paintballs, the (paintballing) activity must be compliant to the rules and regulations as set forth in *Islāmīc* principles.

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والله أعلم وعلمه أتم