A Reference Grammar of

Modern Standard Arabic

Karin C. Ryding

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A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic is a comprehensive handbook on the structure of Arabic. Keeping technical terminology to a minimum, it provides a detailed yet accessible overview of Modern Standard Arabic in which the essential aspects of its phonology, morphology, and syntax can be readily looked up and understood. Accompanied by extensive carefully chosen examples, it will prove invaluable as a practical guide for supporting students’ textbooks, classroom work, or self-study and will also be a useful resource for scholars and professionals wishing to develop an understanding of the key features of the language. Grammar notes are numbered for ease of reference, and a section on how to use an Arabic dictionary is included, as well as helpful glossaries of Arabic and English linguistic terms and a useful bibliography. Clearly structured and systematically organized, this book is set to become the standard guide to the grammar of contemporary Arabic.

KARIN C. RYDING is Sultan Qaboos bin Said Professor of Arabic, Department of Arabic Language, Literature and Linguistics, Georgetown University. She has written a variety of journal articles on Arabic language and linguistics, and her most recent books include Early Medieval Arabic (1998) and Formal Spoken Arabic: Basic Course (second edition, with David Mehall, 2005).
I am especially indebted to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, Sultan of Oman, who generously endowed the position I occupy at Georgetown University, and whose patronage of study and research about Arabic language, literature, and culture is well known and widely respected. It is for this reason that I dedicate this book, with profound gratitude, to His Majesty.
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This basic reference grammar is intended as a handbook for the general learner—a step on the way toward greater understanding of the Arabic language. Many excellent and effective textbooks for teaching Classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) exist, as well as published research on a range of topics in Arabic linguistics (e.g., phonology, morphology, syntax, variation theory), but information in English on MSA grammatical topics tends to be scattered, and if a complete answer to a question regarding contemporary usage is needed, sometimes a number of sources need to be consulted.

The idea behind this reference grammar is to gather together in one work the essentials of MSA in such a way that fundamental elements of structure can be readily looked up and illustrated. It is intended primarily for learners of MSA as a practical guide for supporting their textbook lessons, classroom work, or self-study. This book is not intended in any way to supplant the exhaustive and profound analyses of classical and literary Arabic such as those by Wright (1896, reprint 1967) and Cantarino (1974–76). Those monumental books stand on their own and are irreplaceable reference works. This book is a work of considerably more modest goals and proportions.

1 Goals
This book is not designed to cover the entire field of literary or classical Arabic grammar. A comprehensive accounting of Arabic grammar is an undertaking of great complexity and depth, of competing indigenous paradigms (Basran and Kufan), of several dimensions (diachronic, synchronic, comparative), and of theoretical investigation across the spectrum of contemporary linguistic fields (e.g., phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis).

The Arabic language is a vast treasure-house of linguistic and literary resources that extend back into the first millennium. Its grammatical tradition is over a thousand years old and contains resources of extraordinary depth and sophistication. Works in English such as Lane’s dictionary (1863, reprint 1984), Wehr’s dictionary (fourth edition, 1979), Wright’s grammar (1896, reprint 1967), and
Howell’s grammar (reprint 1986) are seminal contributions in English to understanding the wealth of the Arabic linguistic tradition. Yet, for the neophyte, for the average learner, or for the non-specialized linguist, easily usable reference works are still needed. This is, therefore, not a comprehensive reference grammar covering the full range of grammatical structures in both Classical and Modern Standard Arabic; rather, it centers on the essentials of modern written Arabic likely to be encountered in contemporary Arabic expository prose.

2 Methodology
The choices of explanations, examples, and layouts of paradigms in this book are pragmatically motivated rather than theoretically motivated and are not intended to reflect a particular grammatical or theoretical approach. I have been eclectic in providing descriptions of Arabic language features and structures, always with the intent of providing the most efficient access to Arabic forms and structures for English speakers. For example, I have assigned numbers to noun declensions for ease of reference. Also, I refer throughout the text to “past tense” and “present tense” verbs rather than “perfect” tense and “imperfect” tense verbs, although this has not been standard practice for Arabic textbooks or grammars. I refer to the “locative adverbs” (Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan) as “semi-prepositions” (following Kouloughli 1994) because it captures their similarities to prepositions.

Many Arabic terms and classifications, however, such as the “sisters of \( \sqrt{\text{inna}} \)” and the “sisters of kaan-a” are highly useful and pragmatic ways of organizing and presenting morphological and syntactic information, even to nonnative speakers of Arabic, so they have been retained. I have endeavored to provide both English and Arabic technical terms for categorized phenomena.

There are those, both traditionalists and non-traditionalists, who will no doubt disagree with the mode of presentation and grammatical descriptions used in this book. However, since this text is aimed at learners and interested laypeople as well as linguists, I hope that the categories devised and the descriptions and examples provided will be useful, readable, and readily understandable. Transliteration is provided for all examples so that readers who do not have a grasp of Arabic script may have access to phonological structure.

3 The database
This reference grammar is based on contemporary expository prose, chiefly but not exclusively from Arabic newspapers and magazines, as the main resource for

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1 See the rationale for this choice in Chapter 21 on verb inflection, section 1.2.2.
topics and examples of current everyday Arabic writing practice. The grammatical
description that emerges therefore calibrates closely with contemporary written
usage. Media Arabic was chosen as a main source of data for this text because of
its contemporaneousness, its coverage of many different topics, and the extem-
porary nature of daily reporting and editing. As a primary source of information
about and from the Arab world, newspaper and magazine language reflects Arab
editorial and public opinion and topics of current interest. Various subject mat-
ter and texts were covered, ranging from interviews, book reviews, feature stories,
religion and culture, and sports reports, to straight news reports and editorials. In
addition to newspapers, other sources used for data collection included contem-
porary novels and nonfiction. This is therefore strictly a descriptive grammar that
seeks to describe MSA as it is within the parameters noted above, and not to
evaluate it or compare it with earlier or more elegant and elaborate forms of the
written language.

There are doubtless those who would assert that the ordinariness of media lan-
guage causes it to lack the beauty and expressiveness of literary Arabic, and there-
fore that it is unrepresentative of the great cultural and literary achievements of
the Arabs. To those I would reply that the very ordinariness of this type of lan-
guage is what makes it valuable to learners because it represents a widely used
and understood standard of written expression. As Owens and Bani-Yasin (1987,
736) note, “the average Arab is probably more exposed to this style than to most
others, such as academic or literary writing.” In fact, it is a vital and emergent
form of written language, being created and recreated on a daily basis, covering
issues from the mundane to the extraordinary. With limited time to prepare its
presentation style, media Arabic reflects more closely than other forms of the
written language the strategies and structures of spontaneous expression.

Media Arabic is straightforward enough in its content and style to form the
basis for advanced levels of proficiency and comprehension, to expand vocabu-
larv, to create confidence in understanding a wide range of topics, and particu-
larly

---

1 Media discourse is described by Bell and Garrett (1998, 3) as “a rich resource of readily accessible
data for research and teaching” and its usage “influences and represents people’s use of and
attitudes towards language in a speech community.” They also state that “the media reflect and
influence the formation and expression of culture, politics and social life” (1998, 4).
2 Cantarino, for example, in the introduction to his major work, The Syntax of Modern Arabic Prose,
vol. I, states that in compiling his illustrative materials, he consulted a variety of literary sources,
but “Newspapers have generally been disregarded, since Arabic journalism – like most news
writing around the world – does not necessarily offer the best or most representative standard of
literary language” (1974, 1x).
3 The discipline of “media discourse research” or “media discourse analysis” is a rapidly growing
one in linguistics. See Cotter 2001 for an overview of developments in this field. See also the
larly to provide clear reference points for issues of structural accuracy. As Widdowson has stated, students whose future contexts of use are broad and not clearly predictable need fundamental exposure to “a language of wider communication, a language of maximal generality or projection value” (1988, 7). I see media language as a cornerstone of linguistic and cultural literacy in Arabic; a medium which can be a useful goal in itself, but also a partial and practical goal for those who ultimately aim to study the Arabic literary tradition in all its elegance, diversity, and richness.

4 Contents
The book is arranged so that grammar notes are numbered and indexed for ease of reference; examples provided are based on information in the database. I have omitted or avoided names of persons and sometimes I have changed the content words to be less specific. For the most part, I have not created ad hoc examples; illustrations of syntactic structure are based on authentic usage. A section on how to use an Arabic dictionary is provided, as well as lists of Arabic and English technical terms, a bibliography that includes specialized and general works in Arabic, English, French, and German, and indexes based on Arabic terms and English terms.

Although I have tried to cover a wide range of aspects of contemporary written Arabic usage, there are bound to be lacunae, for which I am responsible. In terms of accuracy of description, the entire book has been submitted to native Arabic-speaking scholars and professional linguists for checking the grammatical descriptions and examples, but I alone am responsible for any shortcomings in that respect.

Procedures:

- Proper names have been left unwoveled on the final consonant, except where the voweling illustrates the grammatical point under discussion.
- For individual words or word groups taken out of context, the nominative case is used as the base or citation form.
- In giving English equivalents for Arabic structures, I have included in square brackets [ ] words inserted into English that are not present in the Arabic text but are necessary for understanding in English.
- I have included in parentheses and single quotes ( ’ ) a more or less exact wording in the Arabic text that does not appear in the English equivalent.

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6 In his article “Broadcast news as a language standard,” Allan Bell discusses the central role of media in reinforcing and disseminating a prestige standard language, especially in multilingual, multi-dialectal, or diglossic societies. See Bell 1983.
• In running text, English equivalents of Arabic lexical items are referred to in single quotes ‘’.
• In giving English equivalents for Arabic lexical items, essentially synonymous English meanings are separated by commas, whereas a semicolon separates equivalents with substantially different meanings.
• For purposes of brevity, in providing English equivalents of lexical items with broad semantic ranges, I have selected only one or two common meanings. These are not meant to be full definitions, only very basic glosses.
## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>adj.</td>
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<td>adv.</td>
<td>adverb</td>
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<td>AP</td>
<td>active participle</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>any consonant</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>Classical Arabic</td>
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<td>demons.</td>
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<td>ESA</td>
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<td>f./fem.</td>
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<td>Formal Spoken Arabic</td>
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<td>Modern Standard Arabic</td>
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<td>one's self</td>
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<td>p./pers.</td>
<td>person</td>
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</table>
Other diacritics:

**boldface words** indicate key words in examples

**boldface syllables** indicate primary word stress

- morpheme boundary¹

¹ For purposes of structural clarity I have indicated inflectional morpheme boundaries within words when possible. There are points where morpheme boundaries merge (as in the endings of defective verbs and nouns); in these cases I have omitted a specific boundary marker. I have also omitted the morpheme boundary marker before the *taa‘ marbūṭa* (*-at ~ -a*) and the sound feminine plural ending (*-aat*).
/ separates singular and plural forms of substantives and past/present citation forms of verbs, e.g.,
  dars/duruus 'lesson/s'
  daras-a/ya-drus-u 'to study'
// encloses phonemic transcription
' ' encloses glosses or translations
* indicates a hypothetical or reconstructed form
~ 'alternates with; or'
I am indebted to my first editor at Cambridge University Press, Kate Brett, for encouraging and shepherding this project in its initial stages. I gratefully acknowledge the support and help of my subsequent Cambridge editor, Helen Barton, who saw this project through its final stages, to Alison Powell and her production team, and to Jacque French for her careful copy editing. Deepest thanks go to Roger Allen and Mahdi Alish, to my Georgetown colleagues Mohssen Esseesy, Serafina Hager, Margaret Nydell, Irfan Shahid, and Barbara Stowasser; and especially to David Mehall, who worked closely with me in editing and providing the Arabic script of the text.

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Much gratitude is owed to my colleague Amin Bonnah who advised me throughout my research on knotty grammatical questions, and whose insight into and knowledge of the Arabic grammatical system is encyclopedic and unmatched. Invariably, when I had doubts or questions about particular structures or usages, I consulted Dr. Bonnah. Invariably, he had the answer or was able to find it out. If this reference grammar is found useful and valid, it is largely due to his guidance and contributions.

Any gaps, omissions, errors, or other infelicities in this text are my responsibility alone.

Sincere thanks go to all the faculty and students in the Arabic Department at Georgetown University who tolerated my obsession with collecting data, drafting, and compiling the book over a number of years. And I want to thank my husband, Victor Litwinski, who through his caring support and virtuoso editing skills made it possible for me to complete this project.
Introduction to Arabic

Arabic is a Semitic language akin to Hebrew, Aramaic, and Amharic, and more distantly related to indigenous language families of North Africa. It possesses a rich literary heritage dating back to the pre-Islamic era, and during the rise and expansion of the Islamic empire (seventh to twelfth centuries, AD), it became the official administrative language of the empire as well as a leading language of international scholarly and scientific communication. It is today the native language of over 200 million people in twenty different countries as well as the liturgical language for over a billion Muslims throughout the world.

1 Afro-Asiatic and the Semitic language family

The Semitic language family is a member of a broader group of languages, termed Afro-Asiatic (also referred to as Hamito-Semitic). This group includes four subfamilies in addition to Semitic, all of which are indigenous languages of North Africa: (1) Tamazight (Berber) in the Northwest (Morocco, Mauretania, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya); (2) the Chad languages (including Hausa) in the Northwest Central area; (3) ancient Egyptian and Coptic; and (4) the Cushitic languages of Northeast Africa (Somalia, the Horn of Africa). The Semitic part of the family was originally based farthest East, in the Levant, the Fertile Crescent, and the Arabian peninsula.

Arabic, Hebrew, Aramaic (including Syriac), and Amharic are living language members of the Semitic group, but extinct languages such as Akkadian (Assyrian and Babylonian), Canaanite, and Phoenician are also Semitic. The Semitic language family has a long and distinguished literary history and several of its daughter languages have left written records of compelling interest and importance for the history of civilization.

1 See Zaborski 1992 for a brief description of the Afro-Asiatic language family and its general characteristics.
2 For a general description of Arabic and the Semitic group, see Bateson 1967 (2003), 50–58 and Versteegh 1997, 9-22. For a more detailed discussion of the Semitic family and an extensive bibliography, see Hetzron 1987 and especially 1992, where he provides a list of fifty-one Semitic languages. For booklength introductions to comparative Semitic linguistic structure, see Wright 1966, Gray 1934, and especially Moscati 1969.
An overview of Arabic language history

The earliest stages of the Arabic language (Proto-Arabic or Old Arabic) are documented from about the seventh century BC until approximately the third century AD, but because of the paucity of written records, little is known about the nature of the language of those times. The only written evidence is in the form of epigraphic material (brief rock inscriptions and graffiti) found in northwest and central Arabia.3

The next period, the third through fifth centuries, is usually referred to as Early Arabic, a transitional period during which the language evolved into a closer semblance of Classical Arabic. There are again few literary artifacts from this age, but it is known that there was extensive commercial and cultural interaction with Christian and Jewish cultures during this time, an era of both Roman and Byzantine rule in the Levant and the Fertile Crescent.4

Classical Arabic

The start of the literary or Classical Arabic era is usually calculated from the sixth century, which saw a vigorous flourishing of the Arabic literary (or poetic) language, especially in public recitation and oral composition of poetry, a refined and highly developed formal oral art practiced by all Arab tribal groups and held in the highest esteem. During the sixth century, the Arabic ode, or qaṣīda, evolved to its highest and most eloquent form. It was characterized by sophisticated metrics and a “highly conventionalized scheme . . . upwards of sixty couplets all following an identical rhyme.”5

The form of language used in these odes is often referred to as the standard poetic language or the poetic koinè, and there are conflicting theories as to its nature – whether it was an elevated, distinctive, supra-tribal language shared by the leadership of the Arabic-speaking communities, or whether it was the actual vernacular of a region or tribe which was adopted by poets as a shared vehicle for artistic expression. In particular, debate has centered around the existence and use of desinential (i.e., word-final) case and mood inflection, a central feature of classical poetry but one which fell increasingly out of use in spoken Arabic, and which no longer exists in the urban vernaculars of today. Since little is

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5 Arberry 1957, 15. For further discussion of pre-Islamic Arabic poetry, see Nicholson 1987. See also Zwettler 1978 for a survey and analysis of the Arabic oral poetry tradition.
known about the nature of the everyday spoken Arabic of pre-Islamic times or the different levels of linguistic formality that might have been used on different occasions, certainty has not been reached on this point, although theories abound.⁶

In the seventh century AD the Prophet Muhammad was gifted over a period of years (622–632 AD) with the revelation of verses which constituted a holy book, the Qurʾān, in Arabic, which became the key text of the new monotheistic religion, Islam. The text was rendered into an official version during the reign of the Caliph ʿUthmān (644–656 AD). From that time on, Arabic was not only a language of great poetic power and sophistication, but also permanently sacralized; as the chosen language for the Qurʾān, it became the object of centuries of religious study and exegesis, theological analysis, grammatical analysis and speculation.⁷

Throughout the European medieval period, from the seventh through the twelfth centuries, the Arabic-speaking world and the Islamic empire expanded and flourished, centered first in Mecca and Madina, then Damascus, and then Baghdad.⁸ Arabic became an international language of civilization, culture, scientific writing and research, diplomacy, and administration. From the Iberian peninsula in the West to Central and South Asia in the East stretched the world of Islam, and the influence of Arabic. The vast empire eventually weakened under the growing influence and power of emerging independent Muslim dynasties, with inroads made by the Crusades, Mongol invasions from the East, and with the expulsion of Muslims from the Iberian peninsula in the West. Arabic remained the dominant language in North Africa, the Levant, the Fertile Crescent, and the Arabian Peninsula, but lost ground to indigenous languages such as Persian in the East, and Spanish in the West.⁹

The language era from the thirteenth century to the eighteenth is generally known as “Middle Arabic,” although there is some ambiguity to this term.¹⁰ During this time, the Classical Arabic of early Islam remained the literary language, but the spoken Arabic of everyday life shifted into regional variations, each geographical

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⁶ On the nature of the standard poetic language and the pre-Islamic koinē, see Zwettler 1978, especially Chapter 3; Rabin 1955; Fück 1955; Corriente 1976; and Versteegh 1984, especially Chapter 1.

⁷ For a brief introduction to the origins of Islam and the Qurʾānic revelations, see Nicholson 1930, especially Chapter 4.

⁸ The main dynasties of the Caliphate are: the Orthodox Caliphs (632–661 AD); the Umayyads, based in Damascus (661–750 AD); and the Abbasids, based in Baghdad (750–1258 AD).

⁹ Arabic has remained the dominant language in countries where the substratum language was originally Semitic or Afro-Asiatic, but not where the substratum languages were Indo-European, such as Persia or the Iberian peninsula. Aside from nationalistic and political considerations, linguistic compatibility between Arabic and its sister languages may have enabled certain populations to adapt more easily and thoroughly to Arabic. See Bateson 1967 (2003), 72–73 on this topic.

¹⁰ Versteegh (1997, 114–29) has a cogent discussion of the issues related to “Middle Arabic.” See also Blau 1961.
area evolving a characteristic vernacular. The spoken variants of Arabic were not generally written down and therefore not preserved or anchored in any way to formalize them, to give them literary status or grammatical legitimacy. They continued to evolve along their own lively and supple paths, calibrating to the changes of everyday life over the centuries, but never reaching the status of separate languages.

4 The modern period
The modern period of Arabic dates approximately from the end of the eighteenth century, with the spread of literacy, the concept of universal education, the inception of journalism, and exposure to Western writing practices and styles such as editorials, short stories, plays, and novels. Many linguists make a distinction between Classical Arabic (CA), the name of the literary language of the previous eras, and the modern form of literary Arabic, commonly known (in English) as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). Differences between CA and MSA are primarily in style and vocabulary, since they represent the written traditions of very different historical and cultural eras, from the early medieval period to the modern. In terms of linguistic structure, CA and MSA are largely but not completely similar. Within MSA, syntax and style range from complex and erudite forms of discourse in learned usage to more streamlined expression in the journalistic, broadcasting, and advertising worlds. The high degree of similarity between CA and MSA gives strong continuity to the literary and Islamic liturgical tradition.

In Arabic, both CA and MSA are referred to as al-lugha al-fuSHâ, or simply, al-fuSHâ, which means “the most eloquent (language).” Badawi (1985) draws a helpful distinction between fuSHâ al-caSr (of the modern era) (MSA) and fuSHâ al-turâth (of heritage) (CA). This is by no means a clear or universally accepted delineation, and opinion in the Arab world is apparently divided as to the scope and definition of the term fuSHâ.

11 There is speculation that the written/spoken Arabic dichotomy began much earlier, during the ninth century. See Blau 1961, Versteegh 1984, Fück 1955. For an evaluation of the main theories of Arabic dialect evolution and an extensive bibliography on the topic, see Miller 1986 and Bateson 1967 (2003), 94–114.

12 This contrasts distinctively with the situation in the Scandinavian countries, for example, where a similar situation prevailed in that a mother language, known as Common Scandinavian, prevailed from about AD 550–1050, and then evolved into six official, literary languages (Danish, Dano-Norwegian, New-Norwegian, Swedish, Faroese, and Icelandic), plus many dialects. Despite the fact that the offshoots are all considered independent languages, “within this core [mainland Scandinavia] speakers normally expect to be understood [by each other] when speaking their native languages” (Haugen 1976, 23–24).

13 See Parkinson’s informative 1991 article for an extensive discussion of fuSHâ. In his study of Egyptian native Arabic speakers’ ability with fuSHâ, he came to the conclusion that “The important point here is that people do not agree on a term, and that further they do not agree on what specific part of the communicative continuum, i.e., what specific varieties, any particular term should refer to” (33).
5 Arabic today

The Arab world today is characterized by a high degree of linguistic and cultural continuity. Arabic is the official language of all the members of the Arab League, from North Africa to the Arabian Gulf.14 Although geography (including great distances and land barriers such as deserts and mountains) accounts for much of the diversity of regional vernaculars, a shared history, cultural background and (to a great extent) religion act to unify Arab society and give it a profound sense of cohesion and identity.

MSA is the language of written Arabic media, e.g., newspapers, books, journals, street signs, advertisements – all forms of the printed word. It is also the language of public speaking and news broadcasts on radio and television. This means that in the Arab world one needs to be able to comprehend both the written and the spoken forms of MSA. However, in order to speak informally with people about ordinary everyday topics, since there is no universally agreed-upon standard speech norm, Arabs are fluent in at least one vernacular form of Arabic (their mother tongue), and they understand a wide range of others. This coexistence of two language varieties, the everyday spoken vernacular and a higher literary form is referred to in linguistic terms as “diglossia.”

5.1 Diglossia

The divergence among the several vernacular forms of Arabic, and between the vernaculars as a whole and the standard written form, make the linguistic situation of the Arab world a complex one.15 Instead of having one universally agreed-upon standard speech norm, each major region of the Arab world (such as the Levant, the Arabian Gulf, the western Arabian peninsula, western North Africa, Egypt, and the Sudan) has as its own speech norm, a spoken vernacular coexistent with the written standard – MSA. Vernacular speech is much more flexible and mutable than the written language; it easily coins words, adapts and adopts foreign expressions, incorporates the latest cultural concepts and trends, and propagates slang, thus producing and reflecting a rich, creative, and constantly changing range of innovation. Vernacular or colloquial languages have evolved their own forms of linguistic artistry and tradition in terms of popular songs, folk songs, punning and jokes, folktales and spontaneous performance art.

14 Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Mauretania, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrein, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.
15 For more on diglossia, see Ferguson 1959a and 1996, and Walters, 1996. See also Southwest Journal of Linguistics 1991, which is a special issue devoted to diglossia. Haeri 2003 is a book-length study of the relationships among Classical Arabic, MSA, and colloquial Arabic in Egypt.
Their changeability, however, also means that Arabic vernaculars may vary substantially from one another in proportion to their geographical distance. That is, neighboring vernacular dialects such as Jordanian and Syrian are easily mutually intelligible to native Arabic speakers; however, distant regional dialects, such as Moroccan and Kuwaiti, have evolved cumulative differences which result in the need for conscious effort on the part of the speakers to accommodate each other and adjust their everyday language to a more mainstream level. Educated native Arabic speakers have enough mutual awareness of dialect characteristics that they can identify and adjust rapidly and naturally to the communicative needs of any situation.16 This spontaneous yet complex adjustment made by Arabic speakers depends on their knowledge of the vast reservoir of the mutually understood written language, which enables them to intercommunicate. Therefore, Arabic speakers share a wealth of resources in their common grasp of the literary language, MSA, and they can use this as a basis even for everyday communication.

In the re-calibration of Arabic speech to be less regionally colloquial and more formal, however, some researchers have identified another variation on spoken Arabic, an intermediate level that is termed “cultivated,” “literate,” “formal,” or “educated” spoken Arabic.17 Thus, the Arabic language situation is characterized not simply as a sharp separation between written forms and spoken forms, but as a spectrum or continuum of gradations from “high” (very literary or formal) to “low” (very colloquial), with several levels of variation in between.18 As Elgibali states (1993, 76), “we do not . . . have intuition or scholarly consensus concerning the number, discreteness and/or stability of the middle level(s).”

These levels are characterized by (at least) two different sociolinguistic dimensions: first, the social function; that is, the situations in which speakers find themselves – whether those situations are, for example, religious, formal, academic, casual or intimate. Secondly, these levels are conditioned by the educational and regional backgrounds of the speakers. In this intricate interplay of speech norms, situations, and backgrounds, educated native Arabic speakers easily find their way, making spontaneous, subtle linguistic adjustments to suit the dimensions of the occasion and the interlocutors.

16 For a detailed discussion of variation in Arabic see Elgibali 1993.
17 This is known as “cultivated” speech in Arabic: ❮ًّمَّيِّضَةَ التَّمَثَّقَفِينَ, or لَغَةُ التَّمَثَّقَفِينَ. A number of Arabic linguists have researched and discussed this phenomenon, but there is no consensus as to the nature, extent, definition, and use of this part of the Arabic language continuum. The focus of the dispute centers around the ill-defined and unstable nature of this particular form of spoken Arabic and whether or not it can be distinguished as an identifiable linguistic level of Arabic. For more discussion of this point, see Badawi 1985, Elgibali 1993, El-Hassan 1978, Hary 1996, Mitchell 1986, Parkinson 1993, and Ryding 1990 and 1991.
18 See, for example, the five levels distinguished in Badawi 1985 and the “multiglossia” of Hary 1996.
5.2 Modern Standard Arabic: MSA

MSA is the written norm for all Arab countries as well as the major medium of communication for public speaking and broadcasting. It serves not only as the vehicle for current forms of literature, but also as a resource language for communication between literate Arabs from geographically distant parts of the Arab world. A sound knowledge of MSA is a mark of prestige, education, and social standing; the learning of MSA by children helps eliminate dialect differences and initiates Arab children into their literary heritage and historical tradition. It aids in articulating the connections between Arab countries and creating a shared present as well as a shared past. Education in the Arab countries universally reinforces the teaching and maintenance of MSA as the single, coherent standard written language.

A number of excellent Western pedagogical texts have been developed over the past fifty years in which MSA is discussed, described, and explained to learners of Arabic as a foreign language. However, up to this point, there has been no comprehensive reference grammar designed for use by western students of MSA.

5.3 Arabic academies

Grammatical and lexical conservatism are hallmarks of MSA. Arabic language academies exist in several Arab capitals (Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, Amman) to determine and regulate the procedures for incorporation of new terminology, and to conserve the overall integrity of MSA. Although foreign words are often borrowed into Arabic, especially for ever-expanding technical items and fields, the academies try to control the amount of borrowing and to introduce and encourage Arabic-derived equivalents, such as the Arabic word hâtif (pl. hawâtif) for ‘telephone’ (based on the Arabic lexical root h-t-f), to counteract the widespread use of the Arabized European term: tiliifûn.

According to Versteegh (1997, 178) “From the start, the goal of the Academy was twofold: to guard the integrity of the Arabic language and preserve it from dialectal and foreign influence, on the one hand, and to adapt the Arabic language to the needs of modern times, on the other.” Another researcher states

Arab academies have played a large role in the standardization of modern written and formal Arabic, to an extent that today throughout the Arab world there is more or less one modern standard variety. This is the variety used in newspapers, newsreel

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19 For a discussion and definition of this particular term, see McLaughlin 1972.
20 See, for example, Abboud and McCarus 1983; Abboud, Attieh, McCarus, and Rammuny 1997; Brustad, Al-Batal, and Al-Tonsi 1995 and 1996; Cowan 1964; Middle East Centre for Arab Studies (MECAS) 1959 and 1965; Rammuny 1994; Ziadeh and Winder 1957.
broadcasting, educational books, official and legal notices, academic materials, and instructional texts of all kinds. The three academies that have had the greatest influence are those based in Cairo, Damascus and Baghdad. Among the common objectives of these academies is the development of a common MSA for all Arabic-speaking peoples. 

(Abdulaziz 1986, 17).

5.4 Definitions of MSA
A fully agreed-upon definition of MSA does not yet exist, but there is a general consensus that modern Arabic writing in all its forms constitutes the basis of the identity of the language. Modern writing, however, covers an extensive range of discourse styles and genres ranging from complex and conservative to innovative and experimental. Finding a standard that is delimited and describable within this great range is a difficult task; however, there is an identifiable segment of the modern Arabic written language used for media purposes, and it has been the focus of linguists’ attention for a number of years because of its stability, its pervasiveness, and its ability to serve as a model of contemporary written usage. Dissemination of a written (and broadcast) prestige standard by the news media is a widespread phenomenon, especially in multilingual, diglossic, and multi-dialectal societies.

One of the most complete descriptions of MSA is found in Vincent Monteil’s L’arabe moderne in which he refers to “le néo-arabe” as “l’arabe classique, ou régulier, ou écrit, ou littéral, ou littéraire, sous sa forme moderne” (1960, 25). That is, he understands “modern Arabic” to be the modern version of the old classical language. He also states that “on pourrait aussi le traiter d’arabe ‘de presse’, étant donné le rôle déterminant qu’a joué, et que joue encore, dans sa diffusion... lughat al-jarâ’id” (1960, 27). Defining MSA through its function as the language of the Arabic news media is a useful way to delimit it since it is not officially codified as a phenomenon separate from Classical Arabic and because Arabic speakers and Arabic linguists have differing opinions on what constitutes what is referred to as al-lugha al-fuSHâ. As Monteil also remarks, “s’il est exact de reconnaître... que l’arabe moderne ‘se trouve être une langue assez artificielle, une langue plus ou moins fabriquée’ plutôt qu’un ‘usage codifié,’ il faut déclarer... que ‘c’est une langue vivante’ et qui ‘correspond à un besoin vital’” (1960, 28). It is these characteristics of newspaper language, its vitality and practicality, that make it a prime example of modern written Arabic usage.

Elsaid Badawi’s phrase, fuSHâ al-caSr, is his Arabic term for MSA (1985, 17), which he locates on a continuum (at “level two”) between Classical Arabic (“level one”) and Educated Spoken Arabic (“level three”). As he points out, the levels “are not segregated entities,” (1985, 17) but shade into each other gradually. He identifies level two (MSA) as “mostly written” rather than spoken, and levels
two and three as essentially “in complementary distribution” with each other (1985, 19), that is, they function in separate spheres, with some overlap.

Leslie McLoughlin, in his 1972 article “Towards a definition of Modern Standard Arabic,” attempts to identify distinctive features of MSA from one piece of “quality journalism” (57) and provides the following definition which he borrows from M. F. Sa’îd: “that variety of Arabic that is found in contemporary books, newspapers, and magazines, and that is used orally in formal speeches, public lectures, learned debates, religious ceremonials, and in news broadcasts over radio and television” (58). Whereas Sa’îd states that MSA grammar is explicitly defined in grammar books (which would bring it close to CA), McLoughlin finds several instances in which MSA differs from CA, some of which are lexical and some of which are syntactic (72–73).

In her *Arabic Language Handbook* (1967; 2003, 84), Mary Catherine Bateson identified three kinds of change that differentiate MSA from CA: (1) a “series of ‘acceptable’ simplifications” in syntactic structures, (2) a “vast shift in the lexicon due to the need for technical terminology,” and (3) a “number of stylistic changes due to translations from European languages and extensive bilingualism.”

In the research done for this book, a wide variety of primarily expository texts, including Arabic newspaper and magazine articles, as well as other forms of MSA, were consulted and put into a database over a period of ten years. The morphological and syntactic features of the language used in these writings were then analyzed and categorized. This resulted in the finding that few structural inconsistencies exist between MSA and CA; the major differences are stylistic and lexical rather than grammatical. Particular features of MSA journalistic style include more flexible word order, coinage of neologisms, and loan translations from western languages, especially the use of the إضافة or annexation structure to provide equivalents for compound words or complex concepts. It is just this ability to reflect and embody change while maintaining the major grammatical conventions and standards that make journalistic Arabic in particular, a lively and widely understood form of the written language and, within the style spectrum of Arabic as a whole, a functional written standard for all Arab countries.
Phonology and script

This chapter covers the essentials of script and orthography as well as MSA phonological structure, rules of sound distribution and patterning, pronunciation conventions, syllable structure, and word stress. Four features of Arabic script are distinctive: first, it is written from right to left; second, letters within words are connected in cursive style rather than printed individually; third, short vowels are normally invisible; and finally, there is no distinction between uppercase and lowercase letters. These features can combine to make Arabic script seem impenetrable to a foreigner at first. However, there are also some features of Arabic script that facilitate learning it. First of all, it is reasonably phonetic; that is, there is a good fit between the way words are spelled and the way they are pronounced. And secondly, word structure and spelling are very systematic.

1 The alphabet

There are twenty-eight Arabic consonant sounds, twenty-six of which are consistently consonants, but two of which – waaw and yaa – are semivowels that serve two functions, sometimes as consonants and other times as vowels, depending on context. For the most part, the Arabic alphabet corresponds to the distinctive sounds (phonemes) of Arabic, and each sound or letter has a name. Arabic letter shapes vary because Arabic is written in cursive style, that is, the letters within a word are systematically joined together, as in English handwriting. There is no option in Arabic for “printing” or writing each letter of a word in independent form. There is no capitalization in Arabic script and therefore no distinction between capital and small letters. Letters are instead distinguished by their position in a word, i.e., whether they are word-initial, medial, or final. This is true

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1 “Certain consonants have some of the phonetic properties of vowels... they are usually referred to as approximants (or frictionless continuants), though [w] and [y] are commonly called semivowels, as they have exactly the same articulation as vowel glides. Although phonetically vowel-like, these sounds are usually classified along with consonants on functional grounds” Crystal 1997, 159. See also section 4.2.2. this chapter.

2 For further reading about the Arabic alphabet and its close conformity with the phonemes of the language, see Gordon, 1970, 193–97.
both in printed Arabic and in handwriting. Handwriting is not covered in this
text, but there are several excellent books that provide instruction in it.³

Every letter has four possible shapes: word-initial, medial, final, and separate.
The following table gives the names of the sounds of Arabic listed in dictionary or
alphabetical order, along with their shapes.⁴

### 2 Names and shapes of the letters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic letter shape</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Independent</th>
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<td>'alif</td>
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<td>ا١</td>
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<td>baa'</td>
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<td>taa'</td>
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<td>raa'</td>
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<td>Daad</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taa'</td>
<td>ط</td>
<td>ط</td>
<td>ط١</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

⁴ There is an older order which is not used for organizing dictionary entries, but which is used in
presenting elements of a text in outline, much as English speakers would make points A., B., and C. That order is called the ‘abjad, and is usually recited in the form of words: ‘abjad, hawwaz, 
\*HawTii, kalaman, sa’faS, qurishat, thaxadh-un DaZagh-un (أُبِّدِجُ لَهُمَا حَلَقًا لَّكُمَا سَعْفًا قَرَشَتْ تَخَذُّ صَطْحَ)
The cursive nature of Arabic script, as shown above, requires several forms for each letter. Most letters are joined to others on both sides when they are medial, but there are a few that are called “non-connectors” which are attached to a preceding letter, but not to a following letter. The non-connectors are: 'alif, daal, dhaal, raa', zaay, and waaw, as shown in the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Independent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zaa’</td>
<td>ظ</td>
<td>ظ</td>
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<td>‘ayn</td>
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<td>faa’</td>
<td>ف</td>
<td>في</td>
<td>في</td>
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<tr>
<td>qaaf</td>
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<tr>
<td>kaaf</td>
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<td>miim</td>
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<tr>
<td>haa’</td>
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<td>waaw</td>
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<tr>
<td>yaa’</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3 Consonants: pronunciation and description
It is impossible to provide a fully accurate description of Arabic sounds solely through written description and classification. Some sounds are very similar to English, others slightly similar, and others quite different. This section provides a phonemic chart and some general principles of pronunciation as well as
descriptions of Arabic sounds. The descriptions given here are for standard MSA pronunciation. Some sounds have allophones, or contextual variations, as noted.5

3.1 Phonemic chart of MSA consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stems</th>
<th>Labial</th>
<th>Labiodental</th>
<th>Interdental</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Uvular</th>
<th>Pharyngeal</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voiceless</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voiced</td>
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<td>Affricates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voiceless</td>
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<td>Voiced</td>
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<td>Fricatives</td>
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<td>Voiceless</td>
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<td>th ث</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voiced</td>
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<td>ع ع ع ع</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td>m م</td>
<td>n ن</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laterals</td>
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<td>Flaps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semivowels</td>
<td>w و</td>
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<tr>
<td>(approximants)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 Description of Arabic consonants

These descriptions are both technical and nontechnical, with examples relating to English sounds wherever possible.6

1. *hamza* (ُ) (َ) voiceless glottal stop: like the catch in the voice between the syllables of “oh-oh”;7
2. *baa* (ب) (ب) voiced bilabial stop; /b/ as in “big”;
3. *taa* (ت) (ت) voiceless alveolar stop; /t/ as in “tin”;

5 Colloquial regional variants, such as the pronunciation of /j/ as /y/ in the Arab Gulf region, or /k/ plus front vowel as /ch/ in Iraqi colloquial, are not provided here because they are nonstandard for formal pronunciation of MSA.
6 For an in-depth, traditional account of Arabic phonetics, see Gairdner 1925. For technical analyses of Arabic phonology and its history, see Al-Ani 1970 and Semaan 1968.
7 As Gairdner points out, another good example of this in English would be the hiatus prefixed to the stressed word “our” in the sentence “It wasn’t our fault” (1925, 30).
4 \textit{thaa‘} (th) (ت) voiceless interdental fricative; /θ/ or /th/ as in “thin”,

5 \textit{jiim} (j) (ج) There are three standard regional variants:
(a) voiced alveopalatal affricate; /j/ as in “jump”;
(b) voiced alveopalatal fricative (zh): as the /z/ in “azure” or the medial sound in “pleasure”;
(c) voiced velar stop; /g/ as in “goat”;\textsuperscript{9}

6 \textit{Haa‘} (H) (ح) voiceless pharyngeal fricative; a sound produced deep in the throat using the muscles involved in swallowing. Constrict these muscles while at the same time pushing breath through – as though you were trying to stage-whisper “Hey!”\textsuperscript{10}

7 \textit{xaa‘} (x) (خ) voiceless velar fricative; like the /ch/ in Bach or Scottish loch; in some romanization systems it is represented by /kh/;

8 \textit{daal} (d) (د) voiced alveolar stop; /d/ as in “door”;

9 \textit{dhaal} (dh) (ذ) voiced interdental fricative: /d/ or /dh/ pronounced like the /th/ in “this”;

10 \textit{raa‘} (r) (ر) voiced alveolar flap or trill: as /r/ in Italian or Spanish; a good example in English is to pronounce the word “very” as “veddy”;

11 \textit{zaay} (z) (ز) voiced alveolar fricative: /z/ as in zip;

12 \textit{siin} (s) (س) voiceless alveolar fricative: /s/ as in sang;

13 \textit{shiin} (sh) (ش) voiceless palatal fricative: /sh/ as in ship;

14 \textit{Saad} (S) (س) voiceless velarized alveolar fricative: /s/ but pronounced farther back in the mouth, with a raised and tensed tongue;

15 \textit{Daad} (D) (ض) voiceless velarized alveolar stop: /d/ but pronounced farther back in the mouth, with a raised and tensed tongue;

16 \textit{Taa‘} (T) (ط) voiceless velarized alveolar stop: /t/ pronounced farther back in the mouth, with a raised and tensed tongue;

\textsuperscript{8} Arabic has two different symbols for the two phonemes or different kinds of “th” in English - the voiceless, as in “think” (often transcribed as /θ/) and the voiced interdental as in “them” (often transcribed as /ð/). \textit{Thaa‘} /\textit{th}/ is the voiceless one whereas \textit{dhaal} /\textit{zh}/ is voiced. In this text, the voiceless version /θ/ is romanized as /th/, and the voiced /ð/ as /dh/.

\textsuperscript{9} The variations are essentially as follows: the first is more characteristic of the Arabian Peninsula and Iraq, the second more Levantine and North African, and the third specifically Egyptian and Sudanese pronunciation. Occasionally, a mixed pronunciation of \textit{jiim} is found, with one variant alternating with another, especially /j/ and /zh/.

\textsuperscript{10} The nature of the pharyngeal consonants \textit{Haa‘} and ‘\textit{ayn} is described in detail in McCarus and Rammuny 1974, 124-34 and in Gairdner 1925, 27–29.
There are two standard variants of this phoneme:
(a) voiced velarized interdental fricative: /dh/ as in “this” pronounced farther back in the mouth, with a raised and tensed tongue;
(b) voiced velarized alveolar fricative: /z/ pronounced farther back in the mouth with a raised and tense tongue;\(^{11}\)

voiced pharyngeal fricative: this is a “strangled” sound that comes from deep in the throat, using the muscles used in swallowing;\(^{12}\)

ghayn (gh) (غ) voiced velar fricative: a “gargled” sound, much like French /ʁ/;

voiceless labiodental fricative: as /f/ in “fine”;

voiceless uvular stop: this is made by “clicking” the back of the tongue against the very back of the mouth, where the uvula is;

voiceless velar stop: /k/ as in “king”;

voiced lateral: this has two pronunciations:
(a) /l/ as in “well” or “full” (back or “dark” /l/ );\(^{13}\)
(b) /l/ as in “lift” or “leaf” (fronted or “light” /l/ );\(^{14}\)

voiceless bilabial continuant: /m/ as in “moon”;

voiceless nasal continuant: /n/ as in “noon”;

voiceless glottal fricative: /h/ as in “hat”;

bilabial semivowel: /w/ as in “wind” or long vowel /uu/ pronounced like the “oo” in “food”;

palatal semivowel: /y/ as in “yes” or long vowel /ii/ pronounced like the long /i/ in “machine.”\(^{15}\)

The notation of Arabic consonants and their use in orthography is quite straightforward, except for the following considerations, which are described in detail: the orthography and pronunciation of the letter hamza, the spelling and pronunciation variants of the the taa’ marbu’uTa, and the doubling of consonant

\(^{11}\) Pronunciation of Dhaa / Zaa’ varies regionally; the interdental and alveolar fricatives are the most widely accepted.

\(^{12}\) See note 10.

\(^{13}\) Technically, this variant of /l/ is velarized. The tongue is raised in the back of the mouth. Although primarily an allophonic variant, for a theory of its status as a separate phoneme in Arabic, see Ferguson 1956.

\(^{14}\) This variant of /l/ is more fronted and palatalized even than the light /l/ in English and is closer to French /ʁ/ as in “belle.” See Gairdner 1925, 17–19 for discussion of “dark” and “light” /l/.

\(^{15}\) When yaa’ is the final letter of a word, it is printed without dots in Egyptian publications; elsewhere in the Arab world, it receives its two dots at all times and in all positions.
strength (gemination). The nature of the approximants (semivowels) waaw and yaa\(^2\) is also discussed at greater length under the section on vowels.

3.3 hamza rules: orthography and pronunciation

There are two kinds of hamza, strong and weak. Strong hamza is a regular consonant and is pronounced under all circumstances, whether in initial, medial, or final position in a word. Weak hamza or “elidable” hamza is a phonetic device that helps pronunciation of consonant clusters and only occurs at the beginning of a word. It is often deleted in context.

3.3.1 Strong hamza (hamzat al-qa\(^t\)): 

The Arabic letter hamza (\(^*\)) is often written with what is termed a “seat,” or “chair” (kursii كُرْسِي in Arabic), but sometimes the hamza sits aloof, by itself. There is a set of rules to determine which chair, if any, hamza will take, depending on its position within a word, as follows:

3.3.1.1 CHAIR RULES

(1) The chairs used for hamza are identical with the letters for long vowels: ʼalif, waaw, and yaa\(^2\). When yaa\(^2\) is used as a seat for hamza, it loses its two dots.

(2) When used as chairs, the long vowels are not pronounced. They appear in the script only as seats for the hamza, not as independent sounds.

(3) The choice of which chair to use (ʼalif, waaw, or yaa\(^2\)) is determined by two things: position of the hamza in the word and/or the nature of the vowels immediately adjacent to hamza.

3.3.1.2 INITIAL hamza CHAIR RULES: When hamza is the initial consonant in a word, it has an ʼalif seat. When the vowel with hamza is a fatHa or Damma, the hamza is written on top of the ʼalif, and when the vowel with the hamza is kasra, the hamza is usually written under the ʼalif.\(^{16}\) Note that the vowel after hamza can be a short or a long one. In written Arabic, hamza in initial position is usually invisible, along with its short vowel. Here it is provided.

mother ʼumm أم`
professor ʼustaadh أَسْتاذ
where? ʼayna أَيْن
bigger ʼakbar أَكْبَر
Islam ʼislaam إِسْلَام
Iran ʼiiraan إِيرَان

\(^{16}\) In certain kinds of script, the hamza with kasra is split, with the hamza remaining on top of the ʼalif and the kasra being written below.
3.3.1.3 **MEDIAL hamza** When hamza occurs in the middle of a word, it normally has a seat determined by the nature of its adjacent vowels. The vowel sounds contiguous to hamza, on either side, whether short or long, have a firm order of priority in determining the seat for hamza. That order is: i-u-a. That is, the first priority in seat-determination is an /i/, /ii/, or /y/ sound, which will give hamza a *ya’* seat (*ya’* without dots). In the absence of a /i/ sound, an /u/ or /uu/ sound gives hamza a *waaw* seat, and this has second priority. If there is no /i/ or /u/ sound, an /a/ or /aa/ gives hamza an *alif* seat, and this has the lowest priority. This system is easier to understand with examples:

(1) *ya’* seat:

- organization *hay’a* هيئة
- deputy *naa’ib* نائب
- Israel *’israa’il* إسرائيل
- well *bi’r* يَبْرَ
- refuge *maw’il* مَولِل
- he was asked *su’ila* سُئِلَ

(2) *waaw* seat:

- educator *mu’addib* مُؤْدِبٌ
- affairs *shu’uun* شُؤُون
- he composes *yu’alif* يُؤِلَف
- question *su’aal* سِؤَال
- feminine *mu’annath* مَأْنَث

(3) *’alif* seat:

- visa *ta’shiira* تَشِيْرة
- she asked *sa’alat* سَالَتَ
- head *ra’s* رَأس
- late, delayed *muta’axxir* متَأَخَرِ

(4) **Medial aloof hamza**: When hamza occurs medially after *waaw* as long vowel /uu/, or after *’alif* followed by an /a/ sound, it sits aloof. In general, Arabic script avoids having two adjacent *alifs*. 
measures  
attacks 
manliness, valor 
he wondered

3.3.1.4 **Final hamza:** When *hamza* is the final letter of a word, it can either sit aloof or have a seat.

(1) **Aloof:** *Hamza* sits aloof at the end of a word when it is preceded by a long vowel:

- calmness  
- port  
- free; innocent 

Or when it is preceded by a consonant (with *sukūn*):

- part  
- thing  
- burden

(2) **On a seat:** Final *hamza* sits on a seat when it is preceded by a short vowel. The nature of the short vowel determines which seat *hamza* will have. A *fatḥa* gives it an *‘alif* seat, a *kasra* gives it a *yaa* (without dots) seat, and a *damma* gives it a *waaw* seat.

- prophecy  
- shore  
- warm  
- principle

(3) **Shift of seat with suffixes:** It is important to note that word-final *hamza* may shift to medial *hamza* if the word gets a suffix and *hamza* is no longer the final consonant. Suffixes such as possessive pronouns (on nouns) and verb inflections cause this to happen. Short vowel suffixes (case and mood-markers) normally do not influence the writing of *hamza*. Here are some examples:

- friends (nom.)  
- our friends (nom.)
our friends (gen.)  

أصدقاءنا

our friends (acc.)  

أصدقاءنا

he read  

قَرَأَنَا

we read  

قَرَأْتِنَا

they (m.) read  

قَرَأْتُوا

you (f.) are reading  

tَا قَرَأْتِنِينَ

3.3.2 hamza plus long /aa/ madda

A special symbol stands for hamza followed by a long /aa/ sound: /’aa/. The symbol is called madda (‘extension’) and looks like this: ی. It is always written above ‘alif and is sometimes referred to as ‘alif madda. It can occur at the beginning of a word, in the middle, or at the end. Even if it occurs at the beginning of a word, the madda notation is visible, unlike the regular initial hamza.

Asia  

آسيا

final  

آخر

mirror  

مرآة

minarets  

مآذن

the Qur’an  

القرآن

establishments  

منشآت

ey (2 m.) began  

بدأ

3.3.3 Weak hamza (hamzat al-waSl)

Hamzat al-waSl, elidable hamza, is a phonetic device affixed to the beginning of a word for ease of pronunciation. It is used only in initial position, and is accompanied by a short vowel: /i/, /u/, or /a/. For purposes of phonology and spelling it is necessary to know whether an initial hamza is a strong one or an elidable one, since elidable hamza drops out in pronunciation unless it is utterance-initial. When elidable hamza drops out, its ‘alif seat remains in spelling, but it gets a different symbol on top of it, called a waSla, which indicates deletion of the glottal stop and liaison between the previous vowel and the following consonant. If a word starting with

17 It is the style in certain Arab countries to write even the third person masculine plural with hamza sitting on ‘alif, e.g., qara’uu. Either way is correct.

18 It is a phonological rule that no word may start with a consonant cluster in Arabic, but certain morphological processes result in patterns or groupings of affixes that cause consonant clusters.

19 The technical term for this process is aphaeresis or aphesis, deletion of an initial vowel of a word and substituting for it the final vowel of the previous word, as the deletion of the initial “a” in “are” in the contraction “we’re” or the initial “i” of “is” in “she’s.”
elidable hamza is preceded by a consonant, a “helping vowel” is affixed to the consonant in order to facilitate pronunciation. Neither hamza al-waSl nor waSla are visible in ordinary text.

In the transcription system used in this text, words that start with initial hamza al-waSl do not have the transliterated hamza symbol (‘). The main categories of words that begin with hamza al-waSl are as follows:

3.3.3.1 DEFINITE ARTICLE, al-ال: The short vowel that accompanies elidable hamza of the definite article is fatHa.

(1) **Sentence-initial**: The sentence-initial hamza is pronounced.

ال الوزراء هنالك. al-wizaarat-u hunaaka.  
The ministry is (over) there.  

al-munaafasat-u qawiyyat-un.  

Competition is strong.

(2) **Non-sentence-initial**: The hamza and its short vowel /a/ on the definite article are deleted, although the 'alif seat remains in the spelling.

هُمُ في الوزارة.  

They are at the ministry.  

لكنَ ال منافسة قوية.  

But the competition is strong.

3.3.3.2 CERTAIN COMMON WORDS: The short vowel that accompanies elidable hamza of this set of words is kasra.

- son: *ibn*
- name: *ism*
- woman: *imra’a*
- two: *ithnaan*

(1) **Utterance-initial**: The hamza is pronounced.

ابْنُ اسْمُ الْلَّهِ  

My son is travelling.  

اسمُ اللَّهِ  

(2) **Non-utterance-initial**: The hamza and its kasra are omitted in pronunciation. Sometimes the 'alif seat of the hamza is also omitted in these words.

بَنِي السافر مَعَ ابْنِي.  

He traveled with my son.  

بَنِي السافر مَعَ ابْنِي.  

in the name of God
3.3.3.3 FORMS VII-X VERBAL NOUNS AND PAST TENSE VERBS: The short vowel that accompanies elidable hamza of this set of words is kasra. The ʿalif seat remains in spelling.

َانْخَبَ السَّعْبُ رَئيْسًا جَدِيْدًا.
intaxab-a l-shaʿ b-u raʿiis-an jadiid-an.
The people elected a new president.

َوَانْخَبَ السَّعْبُ رَئيْسًا جَدِيْدًا.
wantaxab-a l-shaʿ b-u raʿiis-an jadiid-an.
And the people elected a new president.

3.3.3.4 IMPERATIVE VERBS OF FORMS I AND VII–X: The short vowel that accompanies these imperative forms is either kasra or Damma. The ʿalif seat remains.

َأَسْتَمِعْ.
istamiʿ.
Listen.

َأَقْرَأْ هَذِهِ الْكُلُّمَاتِ.
iqraʿ haadhihi l-kalimaat-i. wa-qraʿ haadhihi l-kalimaat-i.
Read these words. And read these words.

3.3.3.5 SPELLING BORROWED WORDS THAT START WITH CONSONANT CLUSTERS: Terms borrowed from other languages into Arabic and which start with consonant clusters, need a helping vowel to facilitate the onset of the pronunciation of the consonant cluster. The helping vowel is written with hamza and seated on an ʿalif Tawīla. For example:

studio istuudyuu
strategic istraatiijiyy
stable; barn isTabl

3.4 taaʾ marbuuTa

3.4.1 Spelling

The taaʾ marbuuTa is a spelling variant of regular taaʾ. It occurs only in word-final position on nouns and adjectives. It is not an optional variant, but determined by word meaning and morphology. In shape, it looks like a haaʾ with two dots over it.
3.4.2 Meaning and use
In most cases, taa’ marbuTuTa is a marker of feminine gender. For example, an Arabic word that refers to a person’s occupation may be either masculine or feminine, depending on whether one is referring to a man or woman (i.e., engineer, teacher, doctor, student). The masculine singular is a base or unmarked form, and the feminine singular is marked by the presence of a taa’ marbuuTa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>سفیر/سفيرة</td>
<td>ambassador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ملك/ملكة</td>
<td>king/queen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أمير/أميرة</td>
<td>prince/princess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طالب/طالبة</td>
<td>student (m./f.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some nouns, however, are inherently feminine in gender and always spelled with taa’ marbuuTa. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عاصفة</td>
<td>storm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جزيرة</td>
<td>island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ثقافة</td>
<td>culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>زهرة</td>
<td>flower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to showing feminine gender on nouns, taa’ marbuuTa also shows feminine gender on adjectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>المنظمة الدوّلية المُسلمّة</td>
<td>international organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-تايلبا l-muslima</td>
<td>the Muslim student (f.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مملكة مستقلة</td>
<td>an independent kingdom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.3 Pronunciation
In pronunciation, taa’ marbuTuTa sometimes has the haa’ sound and other times, taa”, so that it is a combination of taa’ and haa’ in terms of its written shape and its pronunciation. One consistent feature of taa’ marbuuTa is that it is always preceded by an /a/ sound, usually short /a/ (fatHa), but sometimes, long /aa/ (‘alif).
ship  safiina  سَفِينَة
apple  tuffaaHa  تُفَاحَة
giraffe  zaraafa  زَرَاافة
life  Hayaat  حَيَاة
canal; channel  qanaat  فَنَاة
prayer  Salaat  صَلَاة

3.4.3.1 FULL FORM: In full form pronunciation, the taa’ marbuuTa plus final inflectional vowel is pronounced as /t/:

shabkat-un ma’luumaatiyyat-un  شِبْكَة مَعْلُومَاتٍ
information network  في حَيَاة طَوِيلاً
in a long lifetime

al-jaami’at-u l-waTaniyyat-u  جَامِعَة الْوَطِينَة
the national university  عاصِمَة الْبَلَد
the capital of the country

3.4.3.2 PAUSE FORM PRONUNCIATION: In pause form, the final inflectional vowel is not pronounced, and, usually, neither is the taa’ marbuuTa. In most pause form situations, the pronunciation of taa’ marbuuTa becomes haa’. Because a final /h/ sound is hard to hear, it sounds as though the word is pronounced only with a final /a/, the fatHa that precedes the taa’ marbuuTa.20

a democratic republic  جِمْهُورِيَة دِمَقَرَاطِيَّة
jumhuuriyya dimuqraaTiyya  جِمْهُورِيَة دِمَقَرَاطِيَّة

a large island  جَزِيرَة كَبِيرَة
jaziira kabiiira  جَزِيرَة كَبِيرَة

(1) Exceptions:
(1.1) If the taa’ marbuuTa is preceded by a long /aa/, pronunciation of the /t/ in pause form is optional:

life  Hayaat or Hayaa(h)  حَيَاة
young woman  fataat or fataa(h)  فَتَاة
equality  musaawaat or musaawaa(h)  مِساوَاة

20 For pronunciation of taa’ marbuuTa on the first term of an annexation phrase (‘iDaafa), see Chapter 8, section 1.2.1.5.
(1.2) If the word ending in *taa’* marbuuTa is the first term of an annexation structure (*’iDaafa*), the *taa’* is usually pronounced, even in pause form:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>مَدِينةٌ دِمَشَقَ</th>
<th>قَصَةُ حُبٌْ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>madiinat dimashq</td>
<td>qisSat Hubb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(both words in pause form) (both words in pause form)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the city of Damascus a love story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5 Consonant doubling (gemination): *tashdiid* تَشْدِيد

Sometimes consonants are doubled in Arabic. This is both a spelling and pronunciation feature and means that the consonants are pronounced with double strength or emphasis. The technical term for this kind of doubling is “gemination.” In Arabic, the doubling process is called *tashdiid*, and instead of writing the letter twice, Arabic has a diacritical symbol that is written above the doubled consonant which shows that it is pronounced with twice the emphasis. The name of the symbol is *shadda* (‘intensification’), and it looks like this: ﺪ. Like the short vowels, *shadda* does not normally appear in written text, but it is necessary to know that it is there. Here are some examples of words that include doubled or geminated consonants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>freedom</th>
<th>Hurriyya</th>
<th>حَرِيَّةُ</th>
<th>surgeon</th>
<th>jarraaH</th>
<th>جَرَاح</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pomegranate</td>
<td>rummaan</td>
<td>رَمَّان</td>
<td>very</td>
<td>jidd-an</td>
<td>جَدًا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to appoint</td>
<td>‘ayyana</td>
<td>عَيْنٍ</td>
<td>pilgrimage</td>
<td>Hajj</td>
<td>حَج</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>love</td>
<td>Hubb</td>
<td>حُبُّ</td>
<td>to sing</td>
<td>ghannaa</td>
<td>غَنِيَّ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doubt</td>
<td>shakk</td>
<td>شَكَّ</td>
<td>to destroy</td>
<td>xarraba</td>
<td>خَرَابَ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5.1 Reasons for gemination

Gemination can result from a lexical root that contains a doubled root consonant (such as the root *H-b-b* for *Hubb*, ‘love’), or it can result from a derivational process, that is, it can change word meaning and create words. For example, the verb stem *daras* means ‘to study,’ but a derived form of that verb, *darras*, with doubled *raa’*, means ‘to teach.’ The meanings are related, but not the same.

Gemination can also be the result of assimilation, the absorption of one sound into another. In these cases, the process is phonetic and not phonemic, i.e., it is a

---

21 In English, the spelling of a word with a double consonant does not indicate that the pronunciation of that consonant is stronger (e.g., kitten, ladder, offer). However, when an identical consonant is pronounced across word boundaries, it is pronounced more strongly. For example, in the following phrases, the last letter of the first word and the first letter of the last word combine together and result in stronger pronunciation: “shelf-full,” “good deed,” “hot tea,” or “still life.” This kind of consonant strengthening resembles the process of gemination in Arabic.
Phonology and script

rule of pronunciation and does not affect the meaning of a word. For example, the /l/ of the definite article /al-/ is assimilated to certain consonants when they begin words (e.g., \(\text{al-daftar}, \) ‘the notebook,’ is pronounced \(\text{ad-daftar}\)). \(^{22}\)

4 Vowels

The Modern Standard Arabic sound system has six vowel phonemes: three “long” ones and three “short”: /iː/ and /i/, /uː/ and /u/, /aː/ and /a/. The difference in length is not a difference in vowel quality, but in the length of time that the vowel is held. The distinction between short and long is similar to difference in length in musical notation, where there are quarter notes, half notes, and whole notes, each one held twice as long as the other. It is possible to think of short vowels as resembling quarter notes and long vowels as half notes, the long vowels being held approximately double the length of time of the short vowels. Long vowels are represented in the Arabic alphabet by the letters \(\text{'alif (aa), waaw (uu) and yaa' (ii)}\). They are written into words as part of the words’ spelling. Short vowels, on the other hand, are not independent letters and are written only as diacritical marks above and below the body of the word. In actual practice, short vowels are not indicated in written Arabic text; they are invisible.

The pronunciation of vowels, especially /aː/ and /a/, varies over a rather wide range, depending on word structure and the influence of adjacent consonants, but also on regional variations in pronunciation. Moreover, the letter \(\text{'alif}\) has several different spelling variants and the letters \(\text{waaw and yaa’}\) function both as vowels and as consonants.

4.1 Phonemic chart of MSA vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>/iː/</td>
<td>/uː/</td>
<td>/aː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>/i/</td>
<td>/u/</td>
<td>/a/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>/a/</td>
<td>/a/</td>
<td>/a/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Long vowels

4.2.1 \(\text{'alif}\)

4.2.1.1 PRONUNCIATION: The letter \(\text{'alif}\) represents a long /aː/ sound. The quality of this sound varies from being fronted (as in the English word “fad”), a low

---

\(^{22}\) See section 8.1 on the definite article in this chapter.
central vowel (as in “far”), or a low back vowel (as in the English word “saw.”) Here are some words with long /aa/:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fronted:</th>
<th>Backed:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>people</td>
<td>naas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during</td>
<td>xilaal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>door</td>
<td>baab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peace</td>
<td>salaam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ruler</td>
<td>Haakim</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Usually, in order to have the central or backed pronunciation, the word has a back consonant, either a velarized one (S, D, T, or Z) or a qaaf, as the ones above illustrate. The backed pronunciation is also used when ‘alif is followed immediately by raa’ (as in the words manaara, naar, and jaar). However, in certain parts of the Arab world, especially the Eastern regions (such as Iraq), the backed pronunciation is more frequent.

4.2.1.2 SPELLING VARIANTS OF ‘alif. There are three variations of the letter ‘alif: ‘alif qaSiira (‘dagger’ ‘alif’), ‘alif maqSuura (‘shortened’ ‘alif’) and regular ‘alif (‘alif Tawiila – ‘tall’ ‘alif’). These variants are not optional but are determined by derivational etymology and spelling conventions.

4.2.1.3 ‘alif Tawiila licts طويق. This is the standard form of ‘alif. It is a non-connecting letter written into the word:

(1) ‘alif Tawiila in initial position: In initial position, ‘alif is not a vowel; it is always a seat for hamza (accompanied by a short vowel) or madda (hamza plus long /aa/).

(1.1) ‘alif with hamza and short vowel:

- four: ‘arba’a أربعة
- brothers: ‘ixwaan إخوان
- pipe: ‘unbuub أنبوب

(1.2) ‘alif with madda:

- August: ‘aab أَب
- instrument: ‘aala آلّة
- other (m.): ‘aaxar آخَر
(2) **‘alif in medial position:** In medial position, ‘alif Tawiila is connected to the letter that precedes it, but it does not connect to the following letter:

- north; left \( shamaal \)
- she said \( qaalat \)
- side \( jaanib \)

The letter ‘alif has a special relationship with a preceding laam: it sits inside the curve of the laam at an angle. This special combination of letters is called a “ligature,” and is even occasionally cited as part of the alphabet ("laam-‘alif").

- peace \( salaam \)
- Jordan \( al-‘urdun \)
- no \( laa \)

(3) **‘alif Tawiila in final position:**

(3.1) **‘alif as long vowel in word-final position:** At the end of a word ‘alif Tawiila may occur:

- here \( hunaa \)
- Malta \( maalTaa \)
- this (m.) \( haadhaa \)

(3.2) **‘alif Tawiila with nunation:** A word-final ‘alif may be written with two fatHas above it, signaling that the word is nunated, that is, marked for indefinite accusative case (and pronounced *-an*). In this case, the ‘alif is not pronounced; it is only a seat or “chair” for the two fatHas that mark the indefinite accusative. The accusative case often indicates that a noun is an object of a transitive verb, or it may mark an adverbial function. For further description and examples of the accusative, see Chapter 7 on noun inflections. Some examples of adverbial accusatives ending with ‘alif plus nunation include:

- welcome \( ‘ahl-an \)
- tomorrow \( ghad-an \)
- thanks \( shukran \)
- greatly \( kathiiran \)
- very \( jidd-an \)
- finally \( ‘axtiir-an \)
(3.3) silent inflectional ‘alif Tawiila: The ‘alif Tawiila is written as part of the third person masculine plural past tense inflection, but it is only a spelling convention and it is not pronounced. If a pronoun suffix is added to this verb inflection, then the silent ‘alif is deleted:23

لاا حملوها على ظهورهم.
They noticed. They were like that. They carried it on their backs.

4.2.1.4 “DAGGER” ‘alif: ‘alif qaSiira: This form of ‘alif is a spelling convention used only with certain words. It is a reduced version of ‘alif Tawiila written above the consonant (hanging above it rather like a dagger), rather than beside it in the body of the word. As with the short vowels written above or below the word, this form of ‘alif is not normally visible in ordinary text. It is therefore necessary to know that a word is spelled with ‘alif qaSiira in order to pronounce it correctly. The words spelled with ‘alif qaSiira are not many in number, but some of them are used with great frequency. The most common ones include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
<td>الله 'الله</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>god</td>
<td>إله إلإ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this (m.)</td>
<td>هذَا هذَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this (f.)</td>
<td>هذِه هذِه</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>these</td>
<td>هؤلاء هؤلاء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that (m.)</td>
<td>ذَلَك ذَلَك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thus</td>
<td>هَكُذا هَكُذا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td>لاكِنْ لاكِنْ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.2.4 ‘alif maqSuura: The ‘alif maqSuura looks like a yaa’ without dots. This form of ‘alif occurs only at the end of a word. It is a spelling convention occurring with certain words because of their derivational etymology. Sometimes a dagger ‘alif is added above the ‘alif maqSuura to distinguish it from a final yaa’. Some words spelled with ‘alif maqSuura are proper names, such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>لَيْلاّ</td>
<td>Leila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مُوسى</td>
<td>Moses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مُنِئٌ</td>
<td>Mona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مُصطفى</td>
<td>Mustafa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23 This ‘alif is called ‘alif al-faaSila or “separating ‘alif.” It is also sometimes referred to as “otiose ‘alif.”
Other words ending in 'alif maqSuura may be any form class: verb, preposition, noun, adjective:

- he built: banaa
- upon: ‘alaa
- to, toward: 3ilaq

Sometimes, in an indefinite noun or adjective, the 'alif maqSuura is a seat for the indefinite accusative marker, fatHataan, and the word is pronounced with an /-an/ ending instead of -aa. This depends on the word’s etymology. For declension and more examples of these words, see Chapter 7 on noun inflections.

- hospital: mustashfan
- echo: Sadan
- coffeehouse: maqhan

Most words spelled with final 'alif maqSuura have to change it to 'alif Tawiila if the word receives a suffix and the 'alif is no longer final:

- level, status: mustawan
- his status: mustawaa-hu
- villages: quran
- our villages: quraa-naa
- he threw: ramaa
- he threw it (f.): ramaa-haa

Certain function words spelled with 'alif maqSuura shift from 'alif to a diphthongized yaa when they receive pronoun suffixes:24

- with, at: ladaa
- with her: laday-haa
- to, toward: ‘ilaa
- to them (m.): ‘ilay-him
- on, upon: ‘alaa
- upon you (pl.): ‘alay-kum

4.2.2 Semivowels/semi-consonants waaw and yaa

The letters waaw and yaa have two functions. They represent the consonant sounds /w/ and /y/, respectively, and they also represent the long vowels /uu/ and /ii/. English has something similar to this because the letter “y” can act as a consonant, as in the word “yellow” or it can act as a vowel, as in the word “sky.”26 The Arabic /ii/ sound symbolized by yaa is like the /i/ in English “machine.” The /uu/ sound symbolized by waaw is like the /u/ in “rule.”

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24 For rules and full paradigms of these prepositions, see Chapter 16 on prepositions and prepositional phrases.
25 This particle also has the sense of possession: ‘she has.’
26 See note 1.
4.2.2.1 THE SOUNDS OF \textit{waaw}: The letter \textit{waaw} represents either the sound of /w/ or the long vowel /uu/. For example, in the following words, it is /w/:

- boy \textit{walad} وَلَدَ
- season \textit{mawsim} مَوْسِمٌ
- state \textit{wilaaya} وَلِيَةَ
- first \textit{aawwal} أَوْلُ

And in the following it is /uu/:

- breakfast \textit{faTuur} فَطُور
- light \textit{nuur} نُور
- entry \textit{duxuul} دُخُول
- season \textit{mawsim} مَوْسِمٌ
- first \textit{aawwal} أَوْلُ
- forbidden \textit{mamnuu} مَمنوع

4.2.2.2 THE SOUNDS OF \textit{yaa}: The letter \textit{yaa} represents either the sound of /y/ as in “young” or the long vowel /ii/ as the “i” in “petite.” For example, in the following words it is /y/:

- Yemen \textit{yaman} يَمَنَ
- white \textit{abyaD} أَبْيَضٌ
- day \textit{yawm} يَوْم

In the following words it is pronounced as /ii/:

- elephant \textit{fiil} فِيْل
- dune \textit{kathiib} كَتِب
- religion \textit{diin} دِين

4.3 Short vowels and sukuun (al-Harakaat wa l-sukuun) 

The set of three short vowels consists of the sounds /a/, /i/, and /u/. They are not considered part of the Arabic alphabet and are not as a rule visible in written Arabic. The short vowels are referred to in Arabic not as letters (\textit{Huruuf}) but as “movements” (\textit{Harakaat}). That is, they are seen as a way of moving the voice from one consonant to another.

Short vowels can be written into a text, but ordinarily they are not. Two exceptions to this are the Qur’ân and children’s schoolbooks. In the Qur’ân, the short vowels are made explicit so that readers and reciters can be absolutely certain of the correct pronunciation of the sacred text. In schoolbooks, they are inserted so that children can study and master word structure and spelling as they learn how to read MSA. As reading skill progresses, the use of short vowels in pedagogical texts is phased out. This is done because the patterning of short vowels is largely predictable and therefore marking them is considered redundant.

For learners of Arabic as a foreign language, the absence of short vowels requires extra attention to word structure and morphological patterning, and
memorization of the exact sound of the word as well as its spelling. Just because the vowels are invisible doesn’t mean they don’t exist.

4.3.1 fatHa: ﻓَﺗْﺣَة short /a/
The short vowel /a/, called fatHa, ranges in pronunciation from low central (as in “dark”) to lowered mid front (as in “best”), depending on context. The short vowel /a/ is represented, when written, by a small diagonal mark sloping downward to the left ('). It is placed above the consonant that it follows in pronunciation. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>country</td>
<td>بَلَد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she danced</td>
<td>رَقَصَت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mint</td>
<td>نَعْنَع</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2 kasra : ﻦَﺴْرَة short /i/
The short vowel /i/, called kasra, ranges in pronunciation from a high front vowel (as in “petite”) to a lower front vowel (as in “sit”). Kasra is represented by a mark similar to fatHa, but is written underneath the consonant it follows ('). Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pepper</td>
<td>ﻓَﻴْفِل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skin</td>
<td>ﺝِﻴْد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apricots</td>
<td>مِﺸْﻤِﻴْش</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.3 Damma: ﺪَمْﻤَة short /u/
The short /u/ sound in Arabic, called Damma, ranges from a high back vowel (as in “duke”) to a lower rounded back vowel (as in “bull”). The Damma is represented by what looks like a small waaw, or an English apostrophe ('). It is written above the consonant which it follows. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cities</td>
<td>ﻣُﺪْﻨَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ear</td>
<td>ﻉُﺪْﻨَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quarter</td>
<td>ﺭِﺒْﻴِع</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.4 Absence of vowel: sukuun سَﮑْﻮَن
A consonant is not always followed by a vowel. Sometimes one consonant comes immediately after another, or a consonant will end a word. In order to indicate clearly that a consonant is not followed by a vowel, Arabic uses a diacritical mark called a sukuun ('silence') which looks like a mini-zero (') placed directly above the consonant.
As with the short vowel indicators, the sukuun is invisible in ordinary script. It is shown here in the following examples:

room ghurfa غرفة we drink nashrab نشرب
temple ma'bad معبد sand raml رمل

### 4.3.5 Extra short or helping vowels

An epenthetic or helping vowel may be inserted at the end of a word in context in order to prevent consonant clusters and facilitate smoothness of pronunciation within a sentence. In a sentence, these helping vowels are added to words that would otherwise end with sukuun when the following word begins with a consonant cluster. The determination of the helping vowel is as follows:

#### 4.3.5.1 Helping Vowel Kasra: The short vowel kasra is by far the most frequent helping vowel.

- نشأته الجريدة الأخبار
- nasharat-i l-jariidat-u l-axbaar-a.
- هل انتهى المؤتمر؟
- hal-i ntahaa l-mu'tamar-u?
- The newspaper published the news. Did the conference end?

#### 4.3.5.2 Helping Vowel Damma: The helping vowel Damma is used with the second person plural personal pronouns and third person plural pronouns when they are spelled with Damma:

- استقبلتهم البعثة الرسمية
- istaqbal-at-hum-u l-bi'that-u l-rasmiyyat-u.
- The official delegation met them.

- يعتبرونكم الرواد
- ya-tabir-uuna-kum-u l-ruwwaad-a.\(^{27}\)
- They consider you (m. pl.) the pioneers.

- هل استمتعتم الطعام؟
- hal-i shtaray-tum-u l-Ta'aam-a?\(^{28}\)
- Did you (m. pl.) buy the food?

---

\(^{27}\) Phonetically, ya-'tabir-u-kum-u r-ruwwaad-a.

\(^{28}\) Phonetically, hal-i shtaray-tum-u _Tā'aam-a_. There are two helping vowels here, a kasra on the question-word hal in order to prevent a consonant cluster with the past tense Form VIII verb, and Damma after the subject marker _tum_ affixed to the past tense verb.
4.3.5.3 LONG VOWEL \textit{waaw} AS HELPING VOWEL: A special case of a long helping vowel /\textit{uu}/ occurs when the object of the verb following the second person masculine plural past tense suffix /-tum/ happens to be a pronoun. A long /\textit{uu}/ is inserted as a buffer between the subject marker on the verb and the object pronoun:

\[
\text{؟ هل نَشَرْتِ مَوْهَا؟}
\]

\textit{hal nashar-tum-\textit{uu}-haa?}

Did you (m. pl.) publish it?

4.3.5.4 HELPING VOWEL \textit{fatHa}: The short vowel \textit{fatHa} has restricted use as a helping vowel. With the word \textit{min} ‘from,’ the helping vowel is \textit{fatHa} before the definite article and otherwise, \textit{kasra}.

\[
\text{من الكويت من العرب}
\]

\textit{min-a l-kuwayt-i} \quad \textit{min-a l-gharb-i}

from Kuwait from the west

\[
\text{من انتهاء الحرب من اسمنا}
\]

\textit{min-i ntihaa-\textit{a} l-Harb-i} \quad \textit{min-i sm-i-naa}

from the end of the war from our name

4.4 Diphthongs and glides

Diphthongs or glides in Arabic are combinations of short vowels and semivowels. The sequences that occur are /\textit{aw}/, /\textit{ay}/, /\textit{iy}/, and /\textit{uw}/. The sequences */\textit{iw}/* and */\textit{uy}/* are usually prohibited.

4.4.1 Diphthongs

4.4.1.1 /\textit{aw}/ (PRONOUNCED LIKE THE “ow” IN “power”)\textsuperscript{29}

\begin{align*}
\text{above} & \quad \text{\textit{fawqa}} & \text{ فوق} & \text{almonds} & \text{\textit{lawz}} & \text{لُؤْز} \\
\text{pine-nuts} & \quad \text{\textit{Sanawbar}} & \text{صُنُوبر} & \text{appointment} & \text{\textit{maw'ida}} & \text{مَوْعِد} \\
\end{align*}

4.4.1.2 /\textit{ay}/ (PRONOUNCED LIKE ENGLISH “eye,” OR “aye”)\textsuperscript{30}

\begin{align*}
\text{egg} & \quad \text{\textit{bayDa}} & \text{بِيضة} & \text{car} & \text{\textit{sayyaara}} & \text{سَيَارَة} \\
\text{to change} & \quad \text{\textit{ghayyar}} & \text{غيرِ} & \text{night} & \text{\textit{layl}} & \text{لِيل} \\
\end{align*}

\textsuperscript{29} In less formal spoken Arabic and in colloquial Arabic the diphthong /\textit{aw}/ changes to a long vowel /\textit{oo}/, pronounced like the /o/ in “note.”

\textsuperscript{30} Again, in less formal Arabic and colloquial Arabic, the diphthong /\textit{ay}/ changes to the long vowel /\textit{ee}/, pronounced like the long /a/ in “date.”
4.4.2 Glides

Glides are vowel–consonant combinations where the vowel and consonant have very close points of articulation, such as /iy/ (high front vowel plus palatal sonant) and /uw/ (high back vowel plus rounded bilabial sonant). In most cases the glide consonant is doubled.

4.4.2.1 HIGH FRONT GLIDE /iy/:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic (f.)</th>
<th>‘arabiyya</th>
<th>Egyptians</th>
<th>mIsriyy-un</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>denied</td>
<td>manfiyy</td>
<td>yearly</td>
<td>sanawiyy-an</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.2.2 HIGH BACK GLIDE /uw/:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>growth</th>
<th>numuww</th>
<th>enemy</th>
<th>‘aduww</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>youth</td>
<td>futuwwa</td>
<td>height</td>
<td>‘uluww</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 MSA pronunciation styles: full form and pause form

When reading MSA formally, aloud, words are pronounced according to certain rules.

5.1 Full form

When complete voweling is observed, all vowels are pronounced, including all the short vowels that are contained in the words but not visible in the text. This also includes any word-final inflectional vowels and is called “full” form pronunciation.

HaDar-a ra’iis-u l-jumhuuriyyat-i ‘ila Simat-i laylat-a ‘ams-i.
The president of the republic came to the capital last night.

5.2 Pause form

There is also a standard Arabic pronunciation principle that a word-final short vowel may be left unpronounced. This is called “pause form” in English and waqf (‘stopping’) in Arabic. There are two variants of this principle:

5.2.1 Formal pause form

When reading MSA aloud, the standard practice is to use pause form on the final word of a sentence, or (if it is a long sentence) wherever there is a natural “pause” for breath.
The president of the republic came to the capital last night.

5.2.2 Informal pause form:
When reading MSA aloud or when speaking MSA less formally, pause form is sometimes used on most or all words ending with a short vowel.

The president of the Republic came to the capital last night.

5.2.2.1 PAUSE FORM FOR WORDS ENDING IN taa’ marbuuTa: A word that terminates in taa’ marbuuTa is usually pronounced as ending in -a or -ah in pause form unless it is the first term of an iDaafa, in which case it is pronounced as a /-t-/ sound.

capital ‘aaSimaa
university jaami’aa
organization munaZZama

‘aaSimat ‘umaaan jaami’at bayruut

the capital of Oman the university of Beirut

6 MSA syllable structure
There are a limited number of possible syllable sequences for MSA word structure. First of all, no word or syllable may start with a vowel. If a word appears to start with a vowel, such as ‘islaam or ‘umma or ‘abadan, what is actually heard is a vowel preceded by a glottal stop (hamza). English speakers tend not to hear the glottal stop because it is not phonemic (meaningful) in English. It is, however, a real consonant in Arabic.

I ‘anaa إذا
week ‘usbuu أسبوع
if ‘idhaa إذا

31 Final short vowel /i/ is unpronounced.
32 Note that in order to avoid consonant clusters and ease pronunciation, when speaking in pause form, sometimes helping vowels have to be inserted.
33 For a more detailed description of taa’ marbuuTa pronunciation, see McCarus and Rammuny 1974, 112–13. See also section 1.2 of Chapter 7, on feminine gender marking.
The second rule is that no word or syllable may begin with a consonant cluster, such as /sk/ or /br/. Consonant clusters within syllables are prohibited, except for one situation: In pause form, a word may end in a consonant cluster, such as: ٌفَهِمْتَ ‘I understood’ or ٌيَسْتَعْمَلْت ‘I used’. Syllable structure in MSA is therefore limited to the following five combinations of consonants and vowels.

6.1 Full form pronunciation syllables
(1) “Short” or “weak” syllable: CV (consonant–short vowel)
   e.g., -ma, -bi, -hu
(2) “Long” or “strong” syllables: CVV (consonant–long vowel)
   or CVC (consonant–short vowel–consonant)
   e.g., -faa, -dii, -ras, -tab

6.2 Additional pause form pronunciation syllables
(1) “Super-strong” syllables: CVVC (consonant–long vowel–consonant)
   or CVCC (consonant–short vowel–consonant–consonant)
   e.g., -riim, -nuun, -sart, -rabt
These super-strong sequences occur primarily in word-final position.34

7 Word stress rules
Stress rules refer to the placement of stress or emphasis (loudness) within a word. In English, stress is not fully predictable and is learned by ear or along with word spelling. Some words in English are differentiated only by stress, for example: invalid (noun and adjective), present (noun, adjective, and verb), suspect (noun and verb), conduct (noun and verb).

Stress in Modern Standard Arabic, on the other hand, is essentially predictable and adheres to some general rules based on syllable structure. Because MSA is not a spontaneously spoken language, the rules given here for stress patterns are for the way MSA is pronounced when read out loud or used in speaking from prepared texts in the Eastern Arab world. In Egypt and the Sudan, stress rules are different for MSA as well as the colloquial language. Nonetheless, the standard Eastern form is “a nearly universal norm,” acceptable and understandable throughout the Arab world.35

34 Active participles of geminate Form I verbs contain an internal CVVC sequence, for example, حَاجِم ‘pilgrim.’ مَادَّة ‘substance.’ كَافِئ ‘entirety.’ سَام ‘poisonous.’ جَافِ ‘dry.’ عَامَ ‘public; general.’ خاصَ ‘private; special.’ حَار ‘hot.’ Some borrowed words also contain this sequence, such as رادَيو ‘radio.’ See Chapter 6 on participles, section 1.1.2.
35 McCarthy and Prince 1990a, 252. They also note that “there is inconsistency in the stressing of standard Arabic words between different areas of the Arab world, and no direct testimony on this subject exists from the Classical period.”
Different sets of rules are used for full form pronunciation and pause form pronunciation. They overlap to a great extent, but there are some differences. The major feature of all these stress rules is that stress placement is calculated from the end of a word – not the beginning. Note that some Arabic words are composed of several morphological elements, including case endings and pronoun suffixes of various sorts, so that the length of words may vary substantially.

7.1 Full form stress rules

7.1.1 Stress is never on the final syllable

Therefore, in words of two syllables, stress is on the first, no matter what that first syllable is like (strong or weak). Examples (stress is indicated by boldface):

- to, towards: ḫila َّa
- what: muada
- she: hiya

7.1.2 Stress on penult

Stress is on the second syllable from the end of the word (the penult) if that syllable is strong (CVC or CVV). Examples:

- efforts (nom.): juhuudun
- students (acc.): Tulabaan
- they taught her: darrasuuhaa
- they (f.) write: yaktubna
- you (m. pl.) worked: ʿamiltum

7.1.3 Stress on the antepenult

If the second syllable from the end of the word is weak (CV), then the stress falls back to the third syllable from the end (the antepenult):

- a capital: ʿaaSimatun
- all of us: kullunaan
- a library (nom.): maktbatun
- he tries: yuHaawilu
- Palestinian (f.): filasTiiyyatun
7.1.4 Summary: word length
Therefore, in full-form pronunciation, MSA stress falls either on the second or third syllable from the end of the word. Note that if a suffix is attached to a word, it increases the number of syllables and may change the stress pattern, e.g.,

- university: jaamiʿatun
- our university: jaamiʿatunaa
- office: maktabun
- his office: maktabuḥu
- we studied: darasaḥaa
- we studied it (f.): darasnaḥaa

7.2 Pause form stress rule
The same basic set of rules applies to pause form, but there is an important additional rule for pause form pronunciation: Stress falls on the final syllable of a word if that syllable is a super-strong one (CVCC or CVVC).

- minister: waʿziir
- discussions: mubaaḥāta
- boundaries: Huḍūūd
- I tried: Haawālt

7.2.1 Summary
To summarize, MSA stress falls on either the second or the third syllable from the end of the word or, in pause form, on the final syllable if it is super-strong.36

7.2.2 Other pause form conventions

7.2.2.1 PAUSE FORM nisba: Words in pause form that end with the nisba (relative adjective) suffix -iyy should technically have stress placed on that final syllable (CVCC), e.g.,

- Yemeni: yamaniyy
- Arab: ʿarabiyy
- official: raʾisiyy
- Bedouin: badawiyy

And this is done in very formal spoken MSA. However, it is often the case in spoken MSA (as in colloquial Arabic) that this ending is treated not as -iyy but simply

---

36 As McCarthy and Prince concisely note: “The stress system is obviously weight-sensitive: final syllables are stressed if superheavy CvC or CvCC; penults are stressed if heavy Cv or CvC; otherwise the antepenult is stressed” (1990a, 252).
as long \( ii \), in which case the stress is placed as though the last syllable contained an open long vowel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yemeni</th>
<th>Yamanii</th>
<th>عمان</th>
<th>official</th>
<th>ra‘isi</th>
<th>Official</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>‘arabii</td>
<td>أردني</td>
<td>Bedouin</td>
<td>badawi</td>
<td>بدوي</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2.2.2 **PAUSE FORM CHANGE IN STRESS FOR CERTAIN WORDS SPELLED WITH \( \text{taa'} \), \( \text{marbuuTa} \):** In pause form, \( \text{taa'} \) \( \text{marbuuTa} \), along with its case ending, is not pronounced, and this eliminates a syllable from the word. Therefore, stress has to be recalculated, and certain words spelled with \( \text{taa'} \) \( \text{marbuuTa} \) shift the stress when pronounced in pause form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full form (includes case ending)</th>
<th>Pause form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>university</td>
<td>jaami‘at-un</td>
<td>jaami‘a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>madrasat-un</td>
<td>madrasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lecture</td>
<td>muHaaDarat-un</td>
<td>muHaaDara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The shift in stress in the above examples occurs because when the \( \text{taa'} \) \( \text{marbuuTa} \) plus case ending is deleted, the third syllable from the end becomes the second syllable from the end, and because it is weak (CV), it cannot receive the stress, so the stress shifts back to the previous syllable. There are also cases where the deletion of \( \text{taa'} \) \( \text{marbuuTa} \) plus case ending does not alter the stress pattern. This happens if the syllable that originally had the stress is a strong syllable. In this case the strong syllable retains the stress, in keeping with the general rules.37

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full form</th>
<th>Pause form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>city</td>
<td>madiinat-un</td>
<td>madiina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dove</td>
<td>Hamaamat-un</td>
<td>Hamaama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heroism</td>
<td>buTuulat-un</td>
<td>buTuula</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

37 For additional reading on Arabic word stress and generative phonology, see Brame 1970 and Abdo 1969.
8 Definiteness and indefiniteness markers

8.1 Definite article \textit{الـ \textendash al-} \\

8.1.1 Spelling 

The definite article in Arabic is spelled with ‘\textit{alif-laam}’ and is attached as a prefix. This spelling convention makes a word with the prefixed definite article look like just one word. The definite article thus never occurs independently (\textit{الـ \textendash al-}). It is a proclitic particle, i.e., always attached to a word – either a noun or an adjective.

- the sheikh \textit{al-shaykh}
- the night \textit{al-layla}
- the genie \textit{al-jinnii}
- the women \textit{al-nisaa’}

8.1.2 Pronunciation 

In general, the definite article is pronounced “\textit{al}” but many speakers shorten the /a/ sound so that it sounds more like “\textit{el}” (as in English “elbow”). It is spelled with elidable hamza (\textit{hamzat al-waSl}) (see above), so if the definite article is not utterance-initial, the hamza drops out in pronunciation and the vowel pronounced with the \textit{laam} of the definite article is actually the final vowel of the preceding word (see also above under \textit{hamzat al-waSl}).

8.1.2.1 SUN AND MOON LETTERS 

(1) Sun Letters (\textit{Huruuf shamsiyya} حُرُوف شَمْسَيْة): Certain sounds assimilate or absorb the sound of the \textit{laam} in the definite article. These sounds or letters are called “sun letters” (\textit{Huruuf shamsiyya}). When a word begins with one of these sounds, the ‘\textit{alif-laam}’ of the definite article is written, but the \textit{laam} is not pronounced; instead, it is absorbed or assimilated into the first letter or sound in the word and that letter is doubled in strength. A \textit{shadda} is written over the sun letter itself to show that the /l/ is assimilated into it and strengthens it, but the shadda does not show in normal printed Arabic.

The sun letters or sounds that absorb the /l/ of the definite article are as follows:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Pronounced</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the commerce</td>
<td>at-tijaara</td>
<td>التَجَارَةَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the culture</td>
<td>ath-thaqaafa</td>
<td>الثقافة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Moon letters (Huruuf qamariyya): “Moon letters” do not absorb the /l/ of the definite article. The moon letters are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Pronounced</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the religion</td>
<td>ad-diin</td>
<td>الدُّنْيَاءِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the gold</td>
<td>adh-dhabab</td>
<td>الْجَهْرَةِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the lord</td>
<td>ar-rabb</td>
<td>الرَّبِّ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the flowers</td>
<td>az-zuhur</td>
<td>الزُّهُورِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the secret</td>
<td>as-sirr</td>
<td>السِّرُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the sun</td>
<td>ash-shams</td>
<td>الْشَّمْسِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the wool</td>
<td>aS-Suuf</td>
<td>الْصَّوَفِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the noise</td>
<td>aD-Dajja</td>
<td>الضَّجْهَةِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the doctor</td>
<td>aT-Tabiib</td>
<td>الطَّبِيبِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the shadow</td>
<td>aZ-Zill</td>
<td>الْفِطْرِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the clothing</td>
<td>al-libaas</td>
<td>الْبَلَاذِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the light</td>
<td>an-nuur</td>
<td>الْنَّورِ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Pronounced</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>al-‘islaam</td>
<td>الأَسْلَامِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the bedouin</td>
<td>al-badw</td>
<td>الْبَدْوِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the pocket</td>
<td>al-jayb</td>
<td>الجِيَبِ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.1.2.2 SUMMARY: SUN AND MOON LETTERS: The Arabic alphabet, or inventory of consonant sounds, is therefore divided into two groups: sounds that assimilate the /l/ of the definite article and sounds that do not. The sounds are best learned through memorization, listening, and speaking practice. Note that in many transliteration systems (Library of Congress, for example), when written Arabic is romanized into Latin letters, the definite article is spelled “al” even though in pronunciation the /l/ may be assimilated. That is the case in the romanization in this text.

8.2 Indefinite marker: nunation (tanwiin نَتَوَيْنَ) Indefiniteness, which corresponds to the use of “a” or “an” in English, is not marked with a separate word in Arabic. Instead, it is marked with a suffix, an /n/ sound that comes at the end of a word. This /n/ sound is not written with a regular letter /nuun/. It is indicated by writing the final inflectional vowel on a word twice. In the case of Damma, nunation is often indicated by giving the Damma a “tail” or flourish at the end, rather than doubling it.38

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Pronounced</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the luck</td>
<td>al-HaZZ</td>
<td>الحظَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the mustard</td>
<td>al-xardal</td>
<td>الخردلَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Arabs</td>
<td>al-‘arab</td>
<td>العربَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the west</td>
<td>al-gharb</td>
<td>الغربَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the pepper</td>
<td>al-filfil</td>
<td>الفلفلَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the moon</td>
<td>al-qamar</td>
<td>القمرَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the treasure</td>
<td>al-kanz</td>
<td>الكنزَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the center</td>
<td>al-markaz</td>
<td>المركَّزَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the engineering</td>
<td>al-handasa</td>
<td>الهندسةَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the ministry</td>
<td>al-wizaara</td>
<td>الوزارةَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the hand</td>
<td>al-yad</td>
<td>اليَدَ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

38 The writing conventions for this indefinite marking are described in detail in Chapter 7, section 4.2.1.
Nunation as a marker of indefiniteness may appear on nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. Certain classes of words (e.g., diptotes) are restricted from having nunation.

- a house (nominative) \(bayt-u-n\) بيت
- a house (genitive) \(bayt-i-n\) بيت
- a house (accusative) \(bayt-a-n\) بيتا

Note that the accusative form of nunation often needs a “seat” or “chair” which is usually \(^{39}\) alif Tawiila. For example:

- place \(makaan-an\) مكانا
- bridge \(jisr-an\) جسرًا
- many \(kathiir-an\) كثيرًا

In words spelled with \(\text{taa}^{\prime}\) marbu\(\text{Ta}\), the nunation sits atop the final letter and the accusative nunation does not require an \(^{39}\) alif chair. This is also the case in words that end with hamza preceded by a long vowel.

- an embassy (nominative) \(sifaarat-u-n\) سفاره
- an embassy (genitive) \(sifaarat-i-n\) سفاره
- an embassy (accusative) \(sifaarat-a-n\) سفاره
- an evening (nominative) \(masaa^{\prime}-u-n\) مساء
- an evening (genitive) \(masaa^{\prime}-i-n\) مساء
- an evening (accusative) \(masaa^{\prime}-a-n\) مساء

\(^{39}\) Certain “defective” nouns use \(^{39}\) alif maqSuura as a seat for the fatHataan in both the nominative and the accusative cases, e.g., معنى ma’nant ‘meaning’ or مقهى maqhan ‘coffeehouse.’ See section 5.4.4 of Chapter 7 for further details of this declension.
Arabic word structure: an overview

“The Semitic root is one of the great miracles of man’s language.”

1 Morphology in general

Morphology, or word structure, pertains to the organization, rules, and processes concerning meaningful units of language, whether they be words themselves or parts of words, such as affixes of various sorts. Meaningful components and subcomponents at the word level are referred to as morphemes. Arabic morphology is different from English in some very basic respects but it is highly systematic. In fact, Arabic and the Semitic languages have had substantial influence on the development of certain key concepts in theoretical morphology.

Theories of word structure, or morphology, usually focus on two essential issues: how words are formed (derivational or lexical morphology) and how they interact with syntax (inflectional morphology, e.g., marking for categories such as gender, number, case, tense). Arab grammarians, starting in the late eighth and early ninth centuries AD, developed sophisticated analyses of Arabic morphology that differ from modern Western theories, but interrelate with them in interesting ways. Because this reference grammar is intended primarily for the use of Western readers, it is organized along the lines of traditional Western categories, with inclusion of the Arabic terminology.

Derivational or lexical morphology has to do with principles governing word formation (such as analysis of the English words “truthful” or “untruthfulness”

1 Lohmann 1972, 318.
2 Aronoff (1976, 7) gives this general definition of morphemes: “the units into which words are analyzed and out of which they are composed.” This definition is adequate as a start, although Aronoff notes that it is problematic in certain ways for morphological theory. For a general introduction to traditional morphology a good place to begin is Matthews 1974. He writes: “the morpheme is established as the single minimal or primitive unit of grammar, the ultimate basis for our entire description of the primary articulation of language. Words, phrases, etc., are all seen as larger, complex or non-primitive units which are built up from morphemes in successive stages” (1974, 78). For further developments in morphological theory see Aronoff 1976 and 1994, Anderson 1992, and Spencer 1991.
3 "It may thus well be that all Western linguistic morphology is directly rooted in the Semitic grammatical tradition” (Aronoff 1994, 3).
4 For discussion of how Arabic morphological categories interrelate with Western theories, see Ryding 1993. See also discussions in Aronoff 1994, esp. 123–64 and Anderson 1992, 57–58; Monteil (1960, 105–223) has an excellent overview of MSA morphological issues.
Arabic word structure: an overview

Derived from the base word “true”). Inflectional morphology describes how words vary or inflect in order to express grammatical contrasts or categories, such as singular/plural or past/present tense. Derivation, since it is the process of creating words or lexical units, is considered procedurally prior to inflection, which subsequently acts upon the word stem and modifies it, if necessary, for use in context (by affixing /-s/ in English for plural, for example, or /-ed/ for past tense). These are two fundamental categories, therefore, in approaching language structure. However, the boundaries between derivation and inflection are not as clear-cut in Arabic as they are in English because Arabic morphology works on different principles, and because Arabic morphological theory views elements of word structure and sentence structure from a different perspective.

Readers who are consulting this reference grammar for answers to specific questions may want to skip over the morphological theory and consult the paradigms (inflectional charts), and the book is designed to allow them to do so. However, those who are studying Arabic with goals of understanding the processes and categories of Arabic language structure will find that descriptions of the morphological structure are helpful not only in understanding the theoretical framework of Arabic, but also in organizing their knowledge in order to serve as a foundation for higher levels of achievement and proficiency. Moreover, without a sound grasp of Arabic morphological principles, learners will be unable to make use of Arabic dictionaries.

2 Derivation: the Arabic root-pattern system

Arabic morphology exhibits rigorous and elegant logic. It differs from that of English or other Indo-European languages because it is to a large extent based on discontinuous morphemes. It consists primarily of a system of consonant roots which interlock with patterns of vowels (and sometimes certain other consonants) to form words, or word stems. This type of operation is not unknown in English. If one looks at the consonant sequence s-ng, one knows that its meaning

5 In the word “untruthfulness,” for example, there are four morphemes: un-, truth, -ful, and -ness. Three of these morphemes are bound, i.e., they cannot occur on their own, and one (“truth”) is “free.”

6 The two major categories of grammatical analysis in Arabic are Sarf صرف, and nāḤw نحو, which are often translated as morphology and syntax, respectively. However, the boundary between them is not the same boundary as in Western grammatical theory. The category of Sarf covers many areas of derivational morphology (e.g., the ten forms of the verb) and some inflectional morphology (e.g., the past tense paradigm); but it does not include the study of case and mood. A further category of Arabic grammatical analysis, isḥīqaq, is often translated as ‘etymology’ but actually deals more with Arabic derivational morphology. It is etymology (the study of word origins and development) in the sense that it deals extensively with the creation of words from the lexical root system, but not in the Western diachronic sense that examines the evolution of lexical items and their meanings over time and through different, though related stages of language evolution.
has to do with vocal music. By inserting different vowels into the vowel slot between the /s-/ and the /-ng/ several different English words can be formed:

- sing  (v.)
- sang  (v.)
- sung  (v.)
- song  (n.)

All of these items are words, or stems that can have suffixes such as “sing-ing,” “song-s,” “sing-s,” “song’s,” “sing-er,” or prefixes, such as “un-sung.” As a comparison, the consonant sequence s-ng corresponds roughly to the concept of an Arabic consonantal root, whereas the vowels and affixes would correspond approximately to the Arabic concept of pattern. The procedure of differentiating meaning by means of word-internal vowel change is known technically as “ablaut” or “introflection,” defined as a word-internal change that signals a grammatical change. Other examples in English include: man/men, foot/feet, mouse/mice, know/knew, sink/sank/sunk. In English, the change usually involves just one vowel; however, in Arabic, it can involve several, for example:

- he wrote  
  he corresponded  
  it was written  
  book  
  books  
  writer; (adj.) writing  
  writers  
  write! (2 m.s.)

These words, or stems, can have inflectional suffixes such as katab-at ‘she wrote,’ or kutub-an ‘books’ (accusative case). The root or three-consonant ordered sequence k-t-b has to do with “writing,” and most words in the Arabic language that have to do with writing are derived from that root, through modifying patterns of vowels (and sometimes also adding certain consonants). This is a typically Semitic morphological system. In Arabic, this root-pattern process has evolved extensively and very productively in order to cover a vast array of meanings associated with each semantic field (such as “writing”). A few more examples:

- office; desk  
- offices; desks
library maktaba (n.) مكتبة

she writes ta-ktub-u (v.) تكتب

we write na-ktub-u (v.) نكتب

writing kitaaba (n.) كتابة

written maktuub (PP) مكتوب

As seen in the above examples, the shifting of patterns around the consonantal root accomplishes a great deal in terms of word creation (derivation) and to some extent, word inflection (e.g., pluralization). The consonant root can be viewed as a nucleus or core around which are constellated a wide array of potential meanings, depending on which pattern is keyed into the root. Roots and patterns are interacting components of word meaning and are both bound morphemes. They each convey specific and essential types of meaning, but neither one can exist independently because they are abstract mental representations.7

2.1 A definition of root

A root is a relatively invariable discontinuous bound morpheme, represented by two to five phonemes, typically three consonants in a certain order, which interlocks with a pattern to form a stem and which has lexical meaning.8

The root morpheme (for example, /k-t-b/) is “discontinuous” because vowels can be interspersed between those consonants; however, those consonants must always be present and be in the same sequence: first /k/, then /t/, then /b/. The usual number of consonants in an Arabic root is three and these constitute “by far the largest part of the language” (Haywood and Nahmad, 1962: 261). However, there are also two-consonant (biliteral), four-consonant (quadriliteral) (such as z-l-z-l, b-r-h-n, t-r-j-m), and five-consonant roots (quinquiliteral) (such as b-r-n-m-j).9

The root is said to contain lexical meaning because it communicates the idea of a real-world reference or general field denotation (such as “writing”). It is useful to think of a lexical root as denoting a semantic field because it is within that

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7 The fact that they are abstract does not diminish the fact that they are strong psychological realities for Arabic speakers. According to Frisch and Zawaydeh (2001, 92) “there is clear psycholinguistic evidence that Arabic consonantal roots are a distinct component of the Arabic mental lexicon.”

8 I am indebted to Professor Wallace Erwin for this definition.

9 Aside from the reduplicated four-consonant root, such as w-s-w-s or h-m-h-m, which is inherently Arabic, four- and five-consonant roots can be borrowings from other languages. Some have been part of the Arabic lexicon for hundreds of years; others are recent borrowings (such as t-l-f-n ‘to telephone’). The Arab grammarian al-Khalil ibn Ahmad (d.791) made an extensive study of Arabic lexical roots and determined which were Arabic and which were not according to rules of Arabic phonology and phonotactics. See Sara 1991 on al-Khalil’s phonology.
2.2 A definition of pattern

A pattern is a bound and in many cases, discontinuous morpheme consisting of one or more vowels and slots for root phonemes (radicals), which either alone or in combination with one to three derivational affixes, interlocks with a root to form a stem, and which generally has grammatical meaning.11

The pattern is defined as discontinuous because it intersperses itself among the root consonants (as in the word kaatib).12 It is useful to think of it as a kind of template onto which different roots can be mapped.13 The “derivational affixes” mentioned in the definition include the use of consonants that mark grammatical functions, such as the derivational prefix mu- for many participles, the prefix ma- for a noun of place, or the relative adjective suffix -iyy. Consonants that are included in Arabic pattern formation are: /a/ (hamza), /t/ (taa’), /m/ (miim), /n/ (nuun), /s/ (siin), /y/ (yaa’), and /w/ (waaw). These consonants may be used as prefixes, suffixes or even infixes.14 One further component of patterning is gemination or doubling of a consonant. Therefore, the components of MSA pattern-formation include: six vowels (three long: /aa/, /ii/, /uu/; three short: /a/, /i/, and /u/); seven consonants (’, t, m, n, s, y, w); and the process of gemination.15

Patterns are said to possess grammatical (rather than lexical) meaning because they signify grammatical or language-internal information; that is, they distinguish word types or word classes, such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives. They can even signal very specific information about subclasses of these categories. For example, noun patterns can readily be identified as active participle, noun of place, noun of instrument, or verbal noun, to name a few. Because patterns are

10 Kouloughli (1994, 60) cites about 6,500 lexical roots found in a dictionary of 50,000 lexical items. Greenberg (1950) bases his study of Arabic root phonotactics on 3,775 verb roots found in Lane (1863) and Dozy (1881).
11 This definition is also from Professor Wallace Erwin.
12 There are a few patterns that consist of just one vowel (such as _a_, for example, Harb ‘war’ or nawm ‘sleep,’ and these patterns are not considered discontinuous. Most patterns, however, involve more than one vowel.
13 Patterns are sometimes referred to as “prosodic templates” or “stem templates” in discussions of morphological theory (see, e.g., Aronoff 1994, 134. Spencer 1994). For the concept of “templatic morphology” see McCarthy and Prince 1990.
14 Such as the taa’ infixed between the root consonants jiim and miim in the Form VIII verb ijtima’a-‘a ‘to meet,’ for example, from the root j-m- ‘gathering together.’ Another example is the infixing of waaw in the word shaara’, the plural of shaari ‘street.’ Again, the infix is inserted between the first and second consonants of the root.
15 A traditional mnemonic device for remembering Arabic morphological components is the invented word sa’altumaunthaa ‘you (pl.) asked me it.’
limited to giving grammatical or intralinguistic information, there are fewer Arabic patterns than roots.

3 Word structure: root and pattern combined
Most Arabic words, therefore, are analyzed as consisting of two morphemes – a root and a pattern – interlocking to form one word. Neither an Arabic root nor a pattern can be used in isolation; they need to connect with each other in order to form actual words. A word such as kaatib ‘writer,’ for example, consists of two bound morphemes: the lexical root k-t-b and the active participle pattern _aa_i_ (where the slots stand for root consonants). When a root is mapped onto a pattern, they together form a word, “writer,” (“doer of the action of writing”). This word can then act as a stem for grammatical affixes such as case-markers. For example, the accusative indefinite suffix -an:

قابلنا كاتباً
qaabal-naa kaatib-an.
We met a writer.

Understanding the system of root–pattern combinations enables the learner to deduce or at least wisely guess at a wide range of word meanings through compositional semantics by putting together root and pattern meanings to yield a word meaning. This ultimately lightens the load of vocabulary learning.

4 Dictionary organization
Arabic dictionaries are based on lexical roots and not word spelling. Instead of relying on the exact orthography of a word, Arabic dictionaries are organized by the root or consonant core of a word, providing under that entry every word derived from that particular root. The root is therefore often called a “lexical root” because it is the actual foundation for the lexicon, or dictionary. The lexical root

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16 In their work on Arabic templatic morphology, McCarthy and Prince propose separating Arabic root and pattern components into distinct “tiers” in accordance with the “Prosodic Morphology Hypothesis” (1990, 3–6).

17 It is important to note that not all Arabic word-meanings are semantically transparent, despite the rigor of the system. Many words have come to have particular connotations due to cultural, historical, and regional factors and need to be learned through use of the dictionary. (See Bateson 2003, 1–3.) For a helpful analysis of Arabic morphology as it relates to the lexicon, see Stowasser 1981.

18 The roots in an Arabic dictionary are listed alphabetically according to the order of letters in the Arabic alphabet. For example, the root k-t-f comes after k-t-b because /f/ comes after /b/ in the alphabet. Therefore, in order to find the root, one has to know the order of the alphabet. This is dealt with further in Appendix 1. This system applies to genuinely Arabic words or words that have been thoroughly Arabized. However, loanwords – words borrowed from other languages – are listed in an Arabic dictionary by their spelling. Note that pre-modern Arabic dictionaries may have alternative arrangements of the root consonants. See Haywood 1965 on the history of Arabic lexicography.
provides a semantic field within which actual vocabulary items can be located. In this respect, an Arabic dictionary might be seen as closer to a thesaurus than a dictionary, locating all possible variations of meaning in one referential domain or semantic field under one entry. See Appendix 1 for a summary of how to use an Arabic dictionary.

5 Other lexical types
5.1 Compounding into one word (naHt نحت)
Another word-formation process exists in Arabic: compounding, composing a word by conjoining other words. There are several subprocesses or variations on this procedure, and although it is not common in traditional Arabic morphology, it is used in MSA for recently coined items and for loan-translations, especially technical terms. The classic MSA example is the word ra’smaal ‘capital’ formed from conjoining the words ra’s ‘head’ and maal ‘money.’ Another example is laa-markaziyya ‘decentralization,’ from the words laa ‘no’ and markaziyya ‘centralization.’ Sometimes only part of a word is used in the compound, as in the word for ‘supersonic,’ faw-SawTiyy, abbreviating the word for ‘above, super’ fawq to faw-, joining it with the noun SawT ‘sound,’ and suffixing the adjectival /-iyy/ ending.19

5.2 Compounding into two words (tarkiib تركيب)
Sometimes the lexical item created is not one single word in Arabic, but a noun phrase, such as ‘adam wujuud ‘non-existence’ or kiis hawaa ‘airbag,’ or a combined participle-noun phrase such as muta‘addid-u l-‘atraaf, ‘multilateral.’ With the necessity for rapid translation of technical and computational terms from Western languages into Arabic, these kinds of lexical compounds have become more prevalent over the past two or three decades. See Chapter 5, section 15.2 for further detail on this type of lexical innovation.

5.3 Solid stems
Solid stems are words which cannot be reduced or analyzed into the root–pattern paradigm. They consist of primarily three sets in Arabic: pronouns, function words, and loanwords. Solid-stem words are listed in Arabic dictionaries according to their spelling.

5.3.1 Pronouns
Arabic pronoun categories include personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, and relative pronouns. These categories do not fit precisely into the standard root and pattern system, although they show definite phonological relationships to

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19 See Stetkevych 1970, 48–55. See also Chapter 5, section 15.1.
each other within their categories, such as the relation between *haadhaa* ‘this (m.)’ and *haadhihi* ‘this (f.).’

### 5.3.2 Function words

Another common subset of solid stems consists of Arabic function words – such as prepositions and conjunctions. These are high-frequency items, and in terms of their structure, they are usually short or even monosyllabic. For example: *fii*, ‘in; at,’ * ila*, ‘to, towards,’ or *wa-*, ‘and.’

### 5.3.3 Loanwords

There are also a number of words (primarily nouns) in MSA that are borrowed directly from other languages, and these are considered, for the most part, to have solid stems, e.g., they cannot be broken down into roots and patterns, such as the words *raadyuu* ‘radio’ and *kumbyuutir* ‘computer’.20

Many proper nouns fall into this category, as well, including Middle Eastern place names such as *baghdaad*, ‘Baghdad’ and *bayruut* ‘Beirut’.21 Such words are discussed at greater length in Chapter 5.

### 6 Inflection: an overview of grammatical categories in Arabic

The term “inflection” generally refers to phonological changes a word undergoes as it is being used in context. In English, some common inflectional categories are: number (singular and plural), tense (e.g., past, present), and voice (active and passive).

Generally speaking, Arabic words are marked for more grammatical categories than are English words. Some of these categories are familiar to English speakers (such as tense and number) while others, such as inflection for case or gender, are not. There are eight major grammatical categories in Arabic: tense/aspect, person, voice, mood, gender, number, case, definiteness. Six of these apply to verbs (tense/aspect, person, voice, mood, gender, number), four apply to nouns and adjectives (gender, number, case, definiteness), and four apply to pronouns (person, gender, number and – to a limited extent – case).

Here is a brief summary of these categories and their roles in Arabic. Details on all these topics are found as noted under specific reference points.

#### 6.1 Tense/Aspect

Tense and aspect can be seen as two different ways of viewing time. Tense usually deals with linear points extending from the past into the future. Aspect sees the

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20 A few words borrowed from Western languages, such as “film” and “bank” fit so well into the root–pattern system that Arabic plurals have evolved for them – *aflaam* and *bunuuk*, respectively.

21 These names are not originally Arabic but derive from other languages of the region such as Aramaic or Persian.
completeness of an action or state as central: is the action over with and completed, ongoing, or yet to occur? The points of view of the two terms are different: one focuses on when the action occurs and the other focuses on the action itself—whether it is complete or not. These two grammatical categories do overlap to some extent and have in practice blended into one in MSA.  

There are two basic morphological tenses in Arabic: past and present, also called perfective and imperfective, respectively. In dealing with the modern written language, many linguists and teachers find it more pragmatic to describe Arabic verbs in terms of tense, and the terms past/present (referring to time or tense) and perfect/imperfect (referring to aspect) are often used interchangeably. There is also a future tense, indicated by prefixing either sa- or sawfa to a present tense form. Other tenses exist, such as the past perfect, the future perfect, and the past continuous, but they are compound tenses involving the use of auxiliary verbs and particles.

6.2 Person

Arabic verbs and personal pronouns inflect for three persons: first person (I, we), second person (you), and third person (she, he, they). There are differences with English, however, in the gender and number of these persons. For the Arabic first person (‘anya, naHnu) there is no gender distinction. For the second person, there are five forms of “you”: masculine singular (‘anta), feminine singular (‘anti), dual (‘antumaa), masculine plural (‘antum) and feminine plural (‘antunna). For the third person, there are six verbal distinctions and five pronoun distinctions: he (huwa), she (hiya), they-two masculine (humaa), they-two feminine (humaa), they masculine (hum) and they feminine (hunna). (See charts in Chapter 12.) Thus, the total number of person categories in Arabic is thirteen, as opposed to the seven of English (I, you, he, she, it, we, they).

6.3 Voice

The category of voice refers to whether an Arabic verb or participle is active or passive. Generally speaking, the passive is used in Arabic only if the agent or doer of the action is unknown or not to be mentioned for some reason. There are sets of

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22 In his description of “the states (tenses) of the verb” in Classical Arabic, Wright (1967, I:51) says: “The temporal forms of the Arabic verb are but two in number, the one expressing a finished act, one that is done and completed in relation to other acts (the Perfect); the other an unfinished act, one that is just commencing or in progress (the Imperfect)” (emphasis in original). On the same page he gives an indication of the complexity of Arabic tense/aspect relations when he states that “The Arabian Grammarians . . . have given an undue importance to the idea of time, in connection with the verbal forms, by their division of it into the past (al-maaDii) the present (al-Haal الحااضر) and the future (al-mustaqbal المستقبل) the first of which they assign to the Perfect and the other two to the Imperfect.”

23 See Chapter 21 on verb inflection.
morphological inflections and syntactic constructions particular to the passive and these are dealt with in Chapter 38.

6.4 Mood
Mood or “mode” refers to verb categories such as indicative, subjunctive, imperative, or (in Arabic) jussive. These categories reflect contextual modalities that condition the action of the verb. For example, whereas the indicative mood tends to be characteristic of straightforward statements or questions, the subjunctive indicates an attitude toward the action such as doubt, desire, wishing, or necessity, and the imperative mood indicates an attitude of command or need for action on the part of the speaker.

The issue of mood marking is a central one in Arabic grammar (along with case marking). Moods fall under the topic of morphology because they are reflected in word structure; they are usually indicated by suffixes or modifications of suffixes attached to the present tense verb stem, and the phonological nature of the verb stem determines what form the suffix will take. The mood markers are often short vowel suffixes, for example, /-u/ for indicative and /-a/ for subjunctive.

In Arabic, mood marking is done only on the imperfective or present tense stem; there are no mode variants for the past tense. The Arabic moods are therefore non-finite; that is, they do not refer to specific points in time and are not differentiated by tense. Tense is inferred from context and other parts of the clause.

Mood marking is determined either by particular particles which govern or require certain moods (e.g., the negative particle lam requires the jussive mood on the following verb) or by the narrative context in general, including attitude of the speaker and intended meaning. See Chapters 34 and 35 on verb moods.

6.5 Gender
Arabic exhibits two genders: masculine and feminine.24 For the most part, gender is overtly marked, but there are words whose gender is covert and shows up only in agreement sequences. The gender category into which a noun falls is semantically arbitrary, except where nouns refer to human beings or other living creatures. Gender is marked on adjectives, pronouns, and verbs, as well, but is not inherent, as it is in nouns. Gender is discussed at greater length in Chapter 7.

6.6 Number
Arabic has three number categories: singular, dual, and plural. Whereas singular and plural are familiar categories to most Western learners, the dual is less

24 A very few nouns are both masculine and feminine, for example: ‘salt’ milH and ‘spirit’ ruuH (see Chapter 7 for further discussion).
familiar. The dual in Arabic is used whenever the category of “two” applies, whether it be in nouns, adjectives, pronouns, or verbs.

The concept of plural therefore applies to three or more entities. This category interacts in specific ways with the category of gender and also with a morphological category which is peculiar to Arabic: humanness. Both gender and humanness affect the way in which a noun, participle, or adjective is pluralized.

Numerals themselves, their structural features and the grammatical rules for counting and sequential ordering, constitute one of the most complex topics in Arabic. They are discussed in Chapter 15.

6.7 Case
Arabic nouns and adjectives normally inflect for three cases: nominative, genitive, and accusative. Cases fall under the topic of morphology because they are part of word structure; they are usually suffixes attached to the word stem, and the nature of the word stem determines what form the suffix will take. In general, the case markers are short vowel suffixes: -u for nominative, -i for genitive and -a for accusative, but there are substantial exceptions to this. A case-marking paradigm is usually referred to as a declension; there are eight different nominal declensions in Arabic and these are discussed in Chapter 7.

Cases also fall under the topic of syntax because they are determined by the syntactic role of a noun or adjective within a sentence or clause. To indicate roughly how the system works, the nominative case typically marks the subject role (most often the agent or doer of an action); the accusative marks the direct object of a transitive verb or it may mark an adverbial function; and the genitive is used mainly in two roles: marking the object of a preposition and marking the possessor in a possessive structure. For case roles and rules, see Chapter 7, section 5.

6.8 Definiteness: determiners
Arabic has both definite and indefinite markers. The definite marker is a word (al-) which is not independent but is prefixed to nouns and adjectives; the indefiniteness marker is an affix (-n), normally suffixed to the case-marking vowel on nouns and adjectives; thus, al-bayt-u (‘the house’ – nominative, definite), but bayt-u-n (‘a house’ – nominative, indefinite). The suffixed /-/ sound is not written with the

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25 In English, there are some words that refer specifically to two items such as “both” and “pair.”
26 For example, a diptote word such as wuzaraa’ ‘ministers’ will show the genitive marker as fatHa, not kasra, because of the nature of its morphological pattern: CuCaCaa’.
27 The exceptions fall into two categories: exceptions determined by morphological rules (such as the word pattern) and exceptions determined by phonological rules (such as the rule that two vowels cannot combine).
28 Traditional Arabic grammar deals with case inflections as a category of syntax (naHw) rather than morphology (Sarf).
letter /n/ (nuun) but is indicated by modifying the short vowel case-marker (see Chapter 7, section 4). Whereas the definite article is visible in Arabic script, the indefinite marker normally is not.\(^{29}\)

7 Distribution of inflectional categories: paradigms

In terms of the distribution of the above eight categories of inflection, Arabic verbs inflect for the first six: tense/aspect, person, voice, mood, gender, and number. Nouns and adjectives inflect for the last four: gender, number, case, and definiteness. Pronouns inflect for gender, number, and – to some extent – case. Any verb, for example, can be analyzed as being marked for six categories; any noun can be analyzed for four categories and any pronoun for three. This means that word structure in MSA is complex, and that verbs have the most complex structure of all.

Grammatical paradigms are charts or frameworks for words which show all their possible inflections.\(^{30}\) In traditional Western grammars, there are two major divisions of paradigms: verbs and nominals (nouns, adjectives and pronouns). A verb paradigm is called a conjugation; a nominal paradigm is called a declension. Verbs are said to “conjugate” or inflect for verbal categories of tense, person, number, gender, mood, and voice. Nominals are said to “decline,” to inflect for case, number, gender, and definiteness.

The forms or phonological realizations that these categories take in any particular word are determined by that word’s membership in an inflectional class.\(^{31}\)

8 MSA inflectional classes

An inflectional class contains words whose inflections (either declension or conjugation) are identical, or at least highly similar.

Criteria for inflectional classes: Verbs fall into several classes by virtue of their phonological structure, which affects how they inflect (e.g., hollow verbs, defective verbs, assimilated verbs). So do nouns and adjectives (e.g., triptotes and dipototes). In addition, nouns and/or adjectives may fall into certain classes because of their origins and etymology. In order to help learners with these many categories and the forms that they take, this reference grammar provides paradigms or

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\(^{28}\) The exception to this is the accusative indefinite suffix -\(\text{an}\), which is often written into the script with an ‘\(\text{alif}\) and two \(\text{fatHa}\).

\(^{30}\) Carstairs-McCarthy points out that there is an abstract notion of paradigm (“the set of combinations of morphosyntactic properties or features . . . realized by inflected forms of words (or lexemes) in a given word-class (or major category or lexeme class) in a given language”) as well as a concrete one: “the set of inflectional realizations expressing [an abstract paradigm] for a given word (or lexeme) in a given language” (1994, 739).

\(^{31}\) I am following Aronoff’s (1994, 65) definition of inflectional class: “a set of lexemes whose members each select the same set of inflectional realizations.” Carstairs-McCarthy gives a similar definition: “a set of words (lexemes) displaying the same paradigm in a given language” (1994, 739).
inflectional charts for each inflectional class as well as descriptions of the main morphophonemic processes underlying the resulting forms.

9 Case and mood: special inflectional categories in Arabic

As can be seen in the above descriptions, there are two Arabic inflectional categories that interface with syntax: case and mood. Both of them mark this interfacing by short vowel suffixes, called in English “moods” or “modes” when they apply to verbs, and “cases” when they apply to nouns or adjectives. One of the interesting features of Arabic structure is that the nominative case (on nouns and adjectives) and the indicative marker (on verbs) are to a large extent identical: suffixed /-u/; and the accusative and subjunctive markers are largely identical as well: suffixed /-a/.

32 It is important for learners of Arabic to know that in Arabic grammar these two categories are referred to as one; that is, nominative and indicative are considered one category: raf’ or marfu’u, and accusative and subjunctive are considered another: naSb or manSuub.

Because of these formal similarities, case and mood are treated as categories of syntax (naHw) in traditional Arabic grammar, and for very sound and compelling reasons. Moreover, there is no theoretical distinction in Arabic between case and mood. Readers who are interested in morphological theory or in studying Arabic grammar more extensively should keep in mind that Arabic sets these categories apart, and that they are of great – even central – importance in Arabic syntactic theory. One can certainly say that these two categories are closer to the syntactic level of analysis than to the semantic or lexical level.

32 This is, of course, a generalization. Other formal realizations of these categories exist, but this is the major one.

33 See Ryding 1993 for more on this topic. See also the entries Sarf and naHw in the Encyclopedia of Islam; and Bohas, Guillaume and Kouloughli 1990, especially Chapters 3 and 4.
This chapter deals with very basic sentence structure and relations among sentence elements.

1. Essential principles of sentence structure
There are two major syntactic principles that affect the structure of Arabic phrases and clauses: agreement/concord and government.

1.1 Agreement or concord (muTaabaqa مطابقة)
Agreement or concord is where words in a phrase or clause show feature compatibility, that is, they match or conform to each other, one reflecting the other’s features. For example, a verb is masculine singular if it has a masculine singular subject. A feminine singular noun takes a feminine singular adjective, and so forth. In order to undertake this matching or agreement of features, one needs to be aware of the rules for agreement, and of the categories that constitute feature compatibility.

Generally, in discussion of case systems, the term concord is used to refer to matching between nouns and their dependants (typically adjectives, other nouns, or pronouns), whereas agreement refers to matching between the verb and its subject.\(^1\) Often, however, these terms are used synonymously. Categories of concord and agreement in Arabic include: gender, number, definiteness, and case for nouns and adjectives, and inflection for gender, number, and person for verbs and pronouns.\(^2\)

1.2 Government (‘amal عمل)
Government is a syntactic principle wherein certain words cause others to inflect in particular ways — not in agreement with the “governing” word (the ‘aamil عمل), but as a result of the effect of the governing word.\(^3\)

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1 See Blake 1994, 186, footnote 6.
2 For a detailed historical overview of Arabic and Semitic agreement structures, see Russell 1984.
3 The term “government” as an equivalent for the Arabic term ‘amal is used extensively, but other terms such as “operation” and “regimen” are also used in English translations. All these terms refer to the power of one word, one structure, or one concept to affect the inflection of another word.

Typical “governors” (‘awaamil عوامل) in Arabic are verbs, prepositions, and particles. For example, a transitive verb takes or “governs” a direct object in the accusative case. Or a certain particle, such as the negative future marker *lan*, requires the subjunctive mood on the following verb; a preposition requires that its noun object be in the genitive case, and so on.

Case (on substantives) and mood (on verbs) are the two categories affected by government in Arabic.5

1.3 Dependency relations
Because of these essential principles that characterize the structure of words in phrases and clauses, Arabic can be seen as a language that has a network of dependency relations in every phrase or clause. These relations are key components of the grammatical structure of the language.

2. The simple sentence
Traditional Arabic grammatical theory divides sentences into two categories depending on the nature of the first word in the sentence. Sentences whose first word is a noun or noun phrase are termed *jumal ismiyya جمل اسمية*, or ‘nominal sentences,’ and sentences whose initial word is a verb are termed *jumal fi-liyya جمل فعلية*, or ‘verbal sentences.’ This first-word criterion is not based on whether the sentence contains a verb, but on whether the verb is initial or not.6

In the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language, however, a different distinction is often used for classifying Arabic sentences. This distinction is based on whether or not the sentence contains a verb. The English term “equational sentence” is used to refer to verbless predications. The term “verbal sentence” refers to predications that contain a verb. As Abboud and McCarus state, “Arabic sentences are of two types, those with verbs, called verbal sentences, and those not containing verbs, called *equational sentences*” (emphasis in original; 1983, Part 1:102).

Confusion sometimes arises with the term “verbal sentence” because if one uses it to refer to the traditional Arabic term, one means “sentence starting with

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4 Hasan 1987, I:441. The definition is given in an extensive footnote that describes the types of ‘aamil.
5 Sometimes the governor is an abstraction (‘aamil ma’nawiyy عامل معنوي), such as the concept “subject of an equational sentence” (ibtida’ أيتادة). For a general outline of the Arabic theory of government in English see Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughi 1991, 57-62. See also Hasan 1987 for further description in Arabic of ‘aamil lafZiyy ‘overt governor’ and ‘aamil ma’nawiyy ‘abstract governor.’
6 This theoretical distinction, however, is disputed. See Ayoub and Bohas 1983 for a counter argument to the word-order criterion. For more on this, see Cantarino 1974, I:2.
a verb.” But if “verbal sentence” is used to refer to the distinction between verbless and verb-containing sentences, it means “sentence containing a verb.” Similarly, sometimes the terms *jumla ismiyya* and “equational sentence” are taken to be equivalents, but they are not. A *jumla ismiyya* is a sentence that starts with a noun, including those that contain verbs. An equational sentence refers to a predication that is specifically verbless. These terms are not equivalent because they are based on different criteria.

In this text, in keeping with the terms used by Abboud and McCarus, I use the term “equational” to refer to verbless sentences, and “verbal sentence” to refer to those containing a verb.

2.1 Equational sentences in general

Equational sentences are verbless. The reason these sentences are verbless is because the Arabic verb ‘to be’ (*kaan-a*) is not normally used in the present tense indicative; it is simply understood. These sentences consist of a subject or topic (*mubtada*': ‘what is begun with’) and predicate (*xabar*: ‘piece of information; news’). That is, they typically begin with a noun phrase or pronoun and are completed by a comment on that noun phrase or pronoun. The comment or predicate may take the form of different classes of words and phrases: nouns, predicate adjectives, pronouns, or prepositional phrases. These sentences are “equational” because the subject and predicate “equate” with each other and balance each other out in a complete proposition, or equation.

2.1.1 The structure of equational sentences

The subject or topic of an equational sentence is in the nominative case, and so is the predicate, if it is a noun or adjective. When the predicate is a noun, pronoun, or adjective, it agrees with the subject in gender and number, but not in definiteness. Generally, the subject is the first element in the sentence, but sometimes the order is reversed, and the predicate comes first.

2.1.1.1 COMMON TYPES OF EQUATIONAL SENTENCES:

1. **Noun/adjective:** Here the subject is a noun with the definite article, and the predicate is an adjective (or adjective phrase) marked for indefiniteness.

   *العالم قرية صغيرة.*
   *الطرق طويل.*
   *al-`aalam-u qaryat-un Saghiirat-un.*
   *al-Tariiq-u Tawiil-un.*
   The world [is] a small village. The road [is] long.

Blake (1994, 191, note 2) gives a clear description of the subject-predicate relationship for equational sentences when he states that “the concord between a predicative noun or adjective and a subject would normally be described as concord of the predicative word with the subject, since it typically involves inherent features of the subject being marked on the predicate.”
Competition [is] strong. Cherries [are] red.

The winds [are] moderate southeasterly.

Noun phrase/adjective: Here the subject is a noun phrase and the predicate an indefinite adjective or adjective phrase.

The king’s palace [is] huge. All of them [are] political films.

Pronoun/adjective or adjective phrase:

He [is] intelligent. She [is] an American of Arab origin.

Pronoun/noun:

You (f.) [are] my friend. He [is] an expert. We [are] Arabs.

Demonstrative pronoun/noun:

This [is] my notebook. This [is] an important experiment.

Demonstrative pronoun/adjective or adjective phrase:

This [is] new.

Noun/noun or noun/noun phrase:

Agriculture [is] a world language.
(8) Noun/prepositional phrase:

الحمد لله. Praise [be] to God.  
al-Hamd-u l-laah-i.  
السلام عليكم. Peace [be] upon you.  
al-salaam-u ‘alay-kum.

(9) Reversal of subject and predicate: Sometimes the predicate of an equa-
tional sentence will come before the subject. This most often happens
when the subject lacks the definite article.

بيئهما سيدتان.  
huna ‘Hammaam-u-naa. bayn-a-huma sayyidat-aani.  
Here [is] our bathroom. Between (‘the two of’) them [are] two women.

(10) Expression of possession: Possession is usually predicated by means of a
preposition or semi-preposition, and it often is the first element of the
equational sentence. Because the predication is in the form of a
prepositional phrase, the item that is possessed is in the nominative case,
being the subject of an equational sentence.

لها أربع أرجل.  
l-haa ‘arba‘-u ‘arjul-in.  
They have (‘to-them are’) four legs.

(11) Existential predications: “there is/there are”
(11.1) With hunaaka “there is; there are”:

فهناك موضوعان مهمان.  
hunaaka mawDu‘-aani muhimm-aani.  
There [are] two important topics.

(11.2) With thammat-a “there is; there are”:

فثمة قيمة مختلفة.  
fa-thammat-a qiyam-un muxtalifat-un.  
For there [are] different values.

(12) Equational sentences with definite predicates: the copula pronoun:
These require the copula or “pronoun of separation” to distinguish the
subject from the predicate. The pronoun agrees with the subject (or mubtada) in gender and number:

المهم هو العودة.

al-muhimm-u huwa l-‘awdat-u.
The important [thing] [is] to return (‘returning’).

المهم هو العمل.

al-muhimm-u huwa l-‘amal-u.
The important [thing] [is] work.

الأم هي نموذج كل النساء.

al-‘umm-u hiya namuddaj-u kull-i l-nisaa-i.
The mother [is] the model for all women.

(13) **Equational sentence with clause as predicate:** In the following equational sentence, the subject is a compound one, and the predicate actually consists of another equational sentence “their source is one.”

المسيحية والإسلام أصلهما واحد.


Christianity and Islam [are from] one source (‘their source is one’).

(14) **Negation of verbless sentences:** Verbless sentences are usually made negative with the use of the verb lays-a ‘to not be’ (see Chapter 37 for further description of lays-a). When lays-a is used, it changes the predicate of the sentence from the nominative case to the accusative case.

(14.1) **Positive statement:** Negation:

أنت صديقنا.

las-ti Sadiiqat-u-naa.

You [are] our friend.

Vous [are not] our friend.

(14.2) **Positive statement:** Negation:

هو خبير.

lays-a xabii-r-an.

He [is] an expert.

He is not an expert.

8 Eid (1991, 33) suggests that “the copula pronoun be analyzed as a predicate expressing the relation of identity.”

9 It is therefore one of what are called the nawaasix or ‘converters-to-accusative’ described in Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.8.
(14.3) Positive statement:  
الطريق طويل.
al-Tariiq-u Tawiil-un.  
The road [is] long.

Negation:  
ليس الطريق طويلًا.  
lays-a l-Tariiq-u Tawiil-an.  
The road is not long.

(14.4) Positive statement:  
زوجتي طبيبة.  
zawjat-ii Tabiibat-un.  
My wife [is] a doctor.

Negation:  
ليست زوجتي طبيبة.  
lays-at zawjat-ii Tabiibat-an.  
My wife is not a doctor.

(15) Non-present tense indicative equational sentences: Sentences that are equational in the present tense indicative need a form of the verb kaan-a in other tenses or moods. The verb kaan-a, like lays-a, requires that the predicate of the equational sentence be in the accusative case (see Chapter 36):

(15.1) Present:  
قصر الملك ضخم.  
qaSr-u l-malik-i Daxm-un.  
The king’s palace [is] huge.

Past:  
كان قصر الملك ضخماً.  
kaan-a qaSr-u l-malik-i Daxm-an.  
The king’s palace was huge.

(15.2) Present:  
الطريق طويل.  
al-Tariiq-u Tawiil-un.  
The road [is] long.

Past:  
كان الطريق طويلًا.  
kaan-a l-Tariiq-u Tawiil-an.  
The road was long.

(15.3) Present:  
زوجتي طبيبة.  
zawjat-ii Tabiibat-un.  
My wife [is] a doctor.

Future:  
ستكون زوجتي طبيبة.  
sa-ta-kuun-u zawjat-ii Tabiibat-an.  
My wife will be a doctor.

2.2 The simple verbal sentence (jumla fi’liyya جملة فعلية)

2.2.1 Subject as verb inflection only

The simplest verbal sentence consists of a verb and its pronoun subject. The subject pronoun is incorporated into the verb as part of its inflection. It is not necessarily mentioned separately, as it is in English. Past tense verbs inflect with a subject suffix; present tense verbs have subject prefix and also a suffix.

10 In current linguistic terms, Arabic is a “pro-drop” language. That is, its verbs incorporate their subject pronouns as part of their inflection, and separate subject pronouns are not necessary for indicating person.
2.2.2 Specification of noun subject

When a subject noun or noun phrase is specified, it usually follows the verb and is in the nominative case. The verb agrees with the specified subject in gender. The subject and verb together form a structural unit, or jumla جملة.

‘aad-a. na-tasharraf-u. najaH-at. yu-Haawil-uuna. He returned. We are honored. She succeeded. They try.

2.2.3 Intransitive verbs (al-‘af ‘aal ghayr al-muta‘addiya; al-‘af ‘aal al-lazima الأفعال غير المتعدية الأفعال اللازمة)

If the verb is intransitive, it does not take a direct object, but it may be complemented by an adverbal or prepositional phrase:


2.2.4 Transitive verbs (al-‘af ‘aal al-muta‘addiya الأفعال المتعدية)

If the verb is transitive, it takes a direct object, which is in the accusative case. It may be a noun, a noun phrase, or a pronoun.

I do not know anything. He encountered resistance. They conducted talks.

2.2.5 Mention of both subject and object

If both the subject and the object of the verb are specified, the word order is usually Verb–Subject–Object (VSO). This is the standard word order of verbal sentences in Arabic.

She packed her suitcase. He raised They (two) formed his hand. a joint committee.
Karim opened his mouth.

Egypt signed an agreement.

The ambassador is carrying a letter.

2.3 Summary of basic sentence relations
The basic dependency relations in a simple Arabic verbal sentence are therefore as follows:

1. The subject is incorporated in the verb as part of its inflection.
2. The subject may also be mentioned explicitly, in which case it usually follows the verb and is in the nominative case. The verb agrees in gender with its subject.
3. A transitive verb, in addition to having a subject, also takes a direct object in the accusative case. This object follows the verb and any mentioned subject.
4. The basic word order is thus VSO: Verb–Subject–Object.
5. The word order may vary to SVO (Subject–Verb–Object) or even VOS (Verb–Object–Subject) under certain conditions.

2.4 Further dependency relations
There are a few issues that add to the complexity of the basic structure of syntactic relations. These have to do with verb–subject agreement and word order.

2.4.1 Verb–subject agreement
In a verb-initial sentence or clause, the verb agrees with its subject in gender, but not always in number. If the verb precedes the subject and the subject is dual or plural, the verb remains singular. Thus a dual or plural noun subject when it follows the verb, does not influence verb inflection for number.13

2.4.1.1 PLURAL OR DUAL SUBJECT FOLLOWING VERB: If the subject is plural or dual, and it follows the verb, the verb inflects only for gender agreement, and not number agreement. The verb remains singular.

See Parkinson 1981 for a study of word-order shift in MSA.

This restriction on the number inflection of the Arabic verb is sometimes referred to as "agreement asymmetry." See Bolotin 1995 for further analysis of this topic.

See Mohammed 1990 for extensive analysis of issues in subject–verb agreement in MSA.
The students laughed. ('He-laughed, the students.')

The Russians appear [as] noble and generous. ('He-appears, the Russians . . .')

The two presidents arrived in Damascus yesterday. ('He-arrived, the two presidents . . .')

The women buy bread. ('She-buys, the women . . .')

The cities witnessed an extensive strike. ('She witnessed, the cities . . .')

2.4.1.2 VARIATION IN WORD ORDER: Occasionally, the subject of a verbal sentence or clause precedes the verb. In that case the verb agrees with it in gender and in number:

(1) Subject–Verb–Object (SVO): Within the body of a text the writer may choose to start a sentence with a noun or noun phrase for stylistic reasons or for emphasis. This inverted word order also happens in embedded clauses. Moreover, certain fixed expressions are in the SVO order. When the subject precedes the verb, the verb agrees with it in gender and in number. Technically, this word order converts a jumla fi‘liyya (verbal sentence) into a jumla ismiyya (nominal sentence).

The city possesses an Islamic heritage.

Happiness overwhelms me.

14 Note that the subject here is nonhuman, and therefore takes feminine singular agreement.

15 When a noun or noun phrase is sentence-initial, the sentence is considered a jumla ismiyya even if it contains a verb, in accordance with traditional Arabic grammatical theory which bases sentence categories on the nature of the sentence-initial word. See also note 6.
Many of them are traveling on an organized tour.

الله يسلامك.
allaaah-u yu-sallim-u-ka.

The forces are launching an extensive campaign to search for weapons.

وهناك أيضا فتيات يمارسن كرة القدم.
wa-hunaaka 'ayD-an fatayaat-un yu-maaris-na kurat-a l-qadam-i.
(And) there are also young women who play ('practice') soccer.

(2) **Headlines and topic sentences:** In Arabic newspapers it is often the case that the headline will be SVO whereas the first or lead sentence in the article, recapping the same thing, will be VSO. This shift in word order illustrates the attention-getting function of the SVO word order.16

**Headline:** SVO:

Franseha tawdhar al-naashit-ul islamiyyin.
faransaa tu-Hadhdhir-u l-naashiT-iina l-`islaamiyy-iina.
France warns Islamic activists.

**Lead sentence:** VSO:

Hadhdhar-at faransaa `ams-i `islaamiyy-iina mutashaddid-iina.
France yesterday warned Islamic extremists.

(3) **Preposed direct object (topic and comment):** For stylistic reasons, an object of a verb or preposition may be preposed at the beginning of a sentence. In this case, a transitive verb (or prepositional phrase) requires a pronoun object to replace and refer to the preposed noun object. The pronoun object on the verb agrees with the noun it refers to in gender and number.

This opportunity can only be found in Cairo.

(‘This opportunity, we do not find it except in Cairo.’)

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16 See Watson’s (1999) article on the syntax of Arabic headlines for more on this topic.
The Arabs had a relationship with the life of Spain. (The Arabs, [there] was to-them a relationship . . .’)

Sometimes, when this is done, the connectives ‘amma . . . fa- (‘as for . . .’) are used to identify the topic and comment on parts of the sentence:

أما هذه الفرصة فلا نجدها إلا في القاهرة.

As for this opportunity, it can only be found in Cairo.

(4) Verb–Object–Subject (VOS): In some cases, the verb will come first, and the object will come before the subject of the verb. This is especially true if the object is substantially shorter than the subject. In the following sentences, the object is set in boldface type.

حضر اللقاء عدد من أصحاب الاختصاص.

A number of specialists attended the meeting. (‘Attended the meeting a number of specialists.’)

غطي أحداثها عشرون ألف صحفى.

Twenty thousand reporters covered its events. (‘Covered its events twenty thousand reporters.’)

سيشارك في الندوة عدد من الأساتذة.

A number of professors will participate in the seminar. (‘Will participate in the seminar a number of professors.’)

(4.1) Object plus adverb: Sometimes an adverb will also be placed before the subject, especially if it is short.

يغادر القاهرة اليوم متوجهًا إلى باريس وفد مصري.

An Egyptian delegation left Cairo today heading for Paris. (‘Left Cairo today heading for Paris an Egyptian delegation.’) 17

وغادر عمان أمس مساعد وزير الخارجية.

17 In this sentence, the object (al-qaahirat-a), a short adverb (l-yawm-a), and an adverbial phrase (mutawajjih-an ‘ilaa baaris) ‘heading for Paris’ have all been inserted before the subject.
The assistant minister of foreign affairs left Amman yesterday. ('Left Amman yesterday the assistant minister of foreign affairs.')

2.5 Doubly transitive verbs
There are a number of verbs in Arabic that take two objects. Both objects may be expressed as nouns or noun phrases, or one or both may be expressed as a pronoun.

2.5.1 Both objects expressed as nouns or noun phrases
This occurs especially with verbs of asking, considering, requesting, and appointing.

سألوا الطلاب أسئلة كثيرة.
sa’al-uu l-Tullab-a ‘as-ilat-an kathiirat-an.
They asked the students many questions.

اعتبر العمانيون هذه الخطوة إنجازًا تاريخياً كبيرًا.
i’tabara l-‘umaaniyy-uuna haadhihi l-xuWat-a ‘injaa-an taariixiyyy-an kabiir-an.
The Omanis considered this step a great historical accomplishment.

أعتبروا الهجوم نوعًا من الدفاع عن النفس.
i’tabar-uu l-hujuum-a naw’-an min-a l-difaa’-i ‘an-i l-nafs-i.
They considered the attack a type of self-defense.

2.5.2 One object expressed as noun or noun phrase, the other as pronoun
أعطتهم تمارينات.
‘a’t-at-hum tamriinaat-in.
She gave them exercises.

يعتبرونهم نجومهم المفضلين.
ya-‘tabir-uuna-hum njuuum-a-hum-u l-mufaDDal-iina.
They consider them their favorite stars.

يعتبره آخرون ضمانة.
ya-‘tabir-uu-hu ‘aaxar-uuna Damaanat-an.
Others consider it an assurance.

ناشدوه القيام بدور.
naashad-uu-hu l-qiyam-a bi-dawr-in
They implored him to take a role.

2.5.3 Both objects expressed as pronouns
In this case, one object pronoun is suffixed onto the verb and the other attached to the pronoun-carrier ‘iyyaah-. This occurs mainly with verbs of giving and sending.
2.5.4 One object a noun or noun phrase, the other a predicate adjective

In this kind of double accusative, a definite noun serves as object of the verb and an indefinite adjective describes the state or condition of that noun.

\[ \text{Fatima's family sent it to me ('sent me it').} \]
\[ \text{He gave it to us ('gave us it').} \]

\[ \text{شَاهِدُ الدُّنْيَا جميلة.} \]
\[ \text{شااهد الدنیا جميلة.} \]
\[ \text{He saw the world [as] beautiful.} \]
\[ \text{He left the door open.} \]

2.5.5 Passive constructions with doubly transitive verbs

When a doubly transitive verb is in a passive construction, one object becomes the subject of the passive verb (an in the nominative case if mentioned specifically) and the other object remains in the accusative case:

\[ \text{He was crowned champion.} \]
\[ \text{The athlete was crowned champion.} \]

\[ \text{سَئِلَ الطلاَبُ أسئلة كثيرة.} \]
\[ \text{سائع الطالب أسئلة كثيرة.} \]
\[ \text{The students were asked many questions.} \]
\[ \text{He was appointed [as] special physician to the Caliph.} \]

2.5.6 Dative movement with doubly transitive verbs

Where one of the objects of the verb is an indirect object, or beneficiary of the action, an optional structure using the dative-marking prepositions \( \text{li-} \) or \( \text{?ilaa} \) is possible. It is only permissible, however, if the beneficiary noun follows the direct object, e.g.:

\[ \text{ أعطِي الكَتابِ للدَّبَّة.} \]
\[ \text{ أعطيت الكتاب للبنين.} \]
\[ \text{I gave the book to the girl.} \]

Otherwise, the beneficiary noun precedes the object noun and is in the accusative case.\(^{18}\)

\(^{18}\) These examples are taken from Ryding 1981, 19–23.
I gave the girl the book.

2.5.7 Semantic structure of doubly transitive verbs

These verbs fall into four semantic classes:

2.5.7.1 Where the second object is what would be termed an indirect object or beneficiary of the action (“I gave Noura the book,” i.e., “I gave the book to Noura”):

أعطتهم تمريناً.

She gave them exercises.

2.5.7.2 Where the second object is equivalent to the first (“We consider him a great author.”) This includes evaluative verbs of deeming, judging, and considering, such as i’tabara.¹⁹

يعتبرونهم نجومهم المفضلين.

They consider them their favorite stars.

2.5.7.3 Where the first accusative is caused to be the second (“They appointed her ambassador”) but both refer to the same entity. These verbs include actions such as making, creating, naming, and appointing.

عيّنها سفيرة.

They appointed her ambassador.

2.5.7.4 Where each object is different (“He taught the students English” = “He caused the students to learn English.”). These are usually Form II or Form IV verbs, causatives of transitive base verbs, such as (Form II) darras-a ‘to teach’ (‘to cause someone to study something’) or (Form IV) ’araa ‘to show’ (‘to cause someone to see something’).²⁰

¹⁹ This group has a special designation in Arabic called ‘af’aal al-qalb, ‘af’aal qalbiyya or ‘af’aal qulūb ‘verbs of the heart’ because they denote intellectual or emotional evaluations. See Chapter 7, section 5.3.3 on accusative case.

²⁰ For detailed analysis of double accusatives in MSA see Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 2:93–96 and for Classical Arabic, see Wright 1967, II:47–53.
3. Other sentence elements

Sentence elements other than verb, subject, and object (in verbal sentences) and subject and predicate (in equational sentences) include various types of adverbials.21

3.1 Placement of adverbials in basic sentences

Arabic adverbial expressions are considered “extras” in the sentence (faDla فضلة) because they give information external to the core VS or VSO structure. They are usually quite flexible in their placement and can occur at almost any point in a clause, especially if they consist of short words. More than one may occur in a sentence.

يقضي لياليه في الصلاة.
yaa-qDii layaalii-hi fii l-Salaat-i.
He spends his nights in prayer.

غادر القاهرة أمس السفير الأمريكي الجديد.
ghaadara l-qaahirat-a ʻams-i l-saafia-r-u l-amriiyy-u l-jadiid-u.
The new American ambassador left Cairo yesterday.

4. Compound or complex sentences

Compound or complex sentences consist of more than one predication. They contain clauses related by means of coordinating conjunctions such as wa- ‘and,’ fa- ‘and; and so,’ or bal ‘but rather.’ These conjunctions have little or no effect on the syntax or morphology of the following clause but build up the sentence contents in an additive way.

Complex sentences, on the other hand, consist of a main clause and one or more subordinate or embedded clauses. Subordinate clauses are of three main

21 For further discussion of this, see Chapter 11.
types – complement clauses, adverbial clauses, and relative clauses. In each case, there is usually a linking or connective element (such as 'anna ‘that’ or li-kay ‘in order that’ or alladhi ‘who; which’) bringing the two clauses into relation with each other. Many Arabic subordinating conjunctions have a grammatical effect on the structure of the following clause. For example, 'anna and related particles are followed by a clause whose subject is either a suffixed pronoun or a noun in the accusative; li-kay is followed by a verb in the subjunctive mood.

Specific compound and complex sentence types are dealt with in the following chapters:

Chapter 14: Relative pronouns and relative clauses
Chapter 18: Connectives and conjunctions
Chapter 19: Subordinating conjunctions: the particle 'inna and her sisters
Chapter 34: Moods of the verb I: indicative and subjunctive
Chapter 35: Moods of the verb II: jussive and imperative
Chapter 36: Verbs of being, becoming, remaining, seeming (kaan-wa-'axawaat-u-haa)
Chapter 37: Negation and exception
Chapter 39: Conditional and optative expressions
Arabic noun types

Arabic nouns fall into a number of different categories depending on their morphology and their relationship to Arabic lexical roots.¹ The extensive range of noun types yields a wealth of lexical possibilities that contribute to what Charles Ferguson has called the sense of “vastness and richness of the Arabic lexicon.”² Two morphological criteria traditionally define Arabic nouns: they can take the definite article and/or they can take nunation.

Most Arabic nouns are derived from triliteral or quadriliteral lexical roots, and all nouns derived from a particular root are found in an Arabic or Arabic–English dictionary clustered under that root entry. Some nouns, however, have restricted roots; certain ones have only two root consonants, others have up to five root consonants. Yet other nouns have solid stems, unanalyzable into roots and patterns. This chapter is intended to give an overview of these noun types, with examples. It is by no means exhaustive and does not go into derivational detail within categories.³ For inflectional characteristics of nouns, see the chapter on noun inflection.

Arabic nouns are usually derived from lexical roots through application of particular morphological patterns. The use of patterns interlocking with root phonemes allows the formation of actual words or stems. Noun patterns themselves carry certain kinds of meaning, such as “place where action is done,” “doer of action,” “name of action,” or “instrument used to carry out action.” The most frequent MSA noun patterns are as follows.⁴

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¹ In traditional Arabic grammar, the term *ism* ‘noun’ covers a wide range of form classes. As Abboud et al. (1997, 67) state: “Nouns are divided into five subclasses: nouns, pronouns, demonstratives, adjectives and noun-prepositions.” In this chapter, the topic is restricted to nouns per se. Note that the traditional Arabic definition of a noun is: *kalimat-un dall-at ‘alaa ma’nan fii nafs-i-hi, wa-lays-a l-zaman-u juz’an min-haa;* ‘a word indicating a meaning in itself and not containing any reference to time’ (ʿAbd al-Latif et al. 1997, 9).

² Ferguson 1970, 377. On the same page he points to the “very complex but highly regular and symmetrical structure of the derivational system.”


⁴ Fleisch 1961, I:267 has a useful chart of noun types: “Tableau du développement morphologique en arabe.”
1 Verbal noun (al-maṣdar
almuṣdar)

Verbal nouns are systematically related to specific verb forms and can come from triliteral or quadriliteral roots. The verbal noun or maṣdar names the action denoted by its corresponding verb, for example, wuṣul ‘arrival’ from the Form I verb waṣal-a ‘to arrive,’ or ḍiḍara ʿadministration; management’ from the Form IV verb ḍaddaara ‘to manage, direct.’ Each maṣdar is systematically related to a specific verb form and can be derived from triliteral or quadriliteral roots. Verbal nouns are often abstract in meaning, but some of them have specific, concrete reference e.g., binaa ‘building’ (either the act of building, or the structure itself). In terms of their syntactic usage, verbal nouns may also express in Arabic what an infinitive expresses in English.

This section provides an outline of the typical verbal noun derivation patterns from verb forms I–X and for quadriliterals I–IV. There is further elaboration on these forms in each section devoted to the particular form and its derivations. In this section also there are examples of the typical functions of verbal nouns in context.

1.1 Triliteral root verbal nouns

These nouns name the action denoted by the forms of the verb. The Form I verbal noun patterns are abundant and hard to predict; the derived form verbal nouns are much more predictable in their patterns. These patterns and noun classes are described in detail in the chapters on the various verb forms. Examples here serve to illustrate the extent of this noun class and the types of meaning conveyed by verbal nouns.

1.1.1 Form I

The morphological patterns for creation of verbal nouns from Form I are many and not predictable. Wright lists forty-four possible verbal noun patterns for Form I or as he terms it, “the ground form” of the ordinary triliteral verb (1967, I:110–12); Ziadeh and Winder (1957, 71–72) list eighteen of the most commonly

---

5 The Arabic term maṣdar/maṣaṣdur also means ‘source,’ an indication that the term for this type of noun refers to its essential nature as the name of an activity or state. The different schools of medieval Arabic grammatical analysis, the Basrans and Kufans, debated whether the noun or the verb is the most basic element of language, the Basrans arguing that the verbal noun is prior, and the Kufans that the verb is prior.

6 Note that the citation form of the verb in Arabic is not an infinitive but a finite, inflected verb form (third person masculine singular past tense). The maṣdar is much closer in meaning to an infinitive, but it is not used as a citation form in Arabic.

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used ones in MSA. ‘Abd al-Latif, ‘Umar, and Zahran give an extensive list (in Arabic) with examples and some explanations (1997, 83–86). Following are examples of some of the most common Form I verbal noun patterns found in MSA:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>swimming</td>
<td>sibaHa</td>
<td>سباحة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>invitation</td>
<td>da‘wa</td>
<td>دعوة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forgiveness</td>
<td>ghufraan</td>
<td>غفران</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clarity</td>
<td>wuDuuH</td>
<td>وضوح</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bravery</td>
<td>buTuula</td>
<td>بطولَةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>honor</td>
<td>sharaf</td>
<td>شرف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glory</td>
<td>majd</td>
<td>مجد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>part</td>
<td>juz³</td>
<td>جُزء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blessing</td>
<td>baraka</td>
<td>بركة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>ma‘rifa</td>
<td>معرفة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.1.2 Form II

Patterns: taf‘il تَفَعُّلٍ and (for defective roots, especially) taf‘ila تَفَعُّلَةٍ; occasionally taf‘ila تَفَعُّلَةٍ. Less common variants include taf‘al تَفَعَّلٍ or tifaal تَفَعَّلْ.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strengthening</td>
<td>ta‘ziiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equalization</td>
<td>taswiya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implementation</td>
<td>tanfiidh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reminder; souvenir</td>
<td>tadhkaar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ticket</td>
<td>tadhkira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experiment</td>
<td>tajriba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.1.3 Form III

Patterns: mufaa‘ala مَفَاعِلَةٍ and fi‘aal فَعَالٌ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>attempt</td>
<td>muHaawala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>debate</td>
<td>munaaqasha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>struggle</td>
<td>jihaad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>defense</td>
<td>difaa⁶</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

8 For an extensive list of Form II verbal noun variants in Classical Arabic see Wright 1967, I:115–16.
1.1.4 Form IV
Pattern: *if’al إفعل; for hollow verb roots *ifaa إفعل; for defectives, *if’aa إفعل

- exportation: ḍiSdaar إصدار
- preparation: ḍi’daad إعداد
- administration: ḍidaara إداره
- abolition: ḍilghaa إلغاء

1.1.5 Form V
Pattern: tafa‘ul تفاعل; for defectives tafa‘-in تفاع

- tension: tawattur توتر
- delay: ta’axxur تأخر
- behavior: taSarruf تصرف
- challenge: taHadd-in تحد
- wish, desire: tamann-in تمن

1.1.6 Form VI
Pattern: tafa‘ul تفاعل; for defectives tafa‘-in تفاع

- disparity: tafaawut تفاوت
- mutual exchange: tabaadul تبادل
- rivalry: tanaafus تنافس
- meeting, encounter: talaaq-in تلاقی
- avoidance: tafaad-in تفاد

1.1.7 Form VII
Pattern: infi‘al إنفعال; hollow verb roots, infiyaal إنفعال; for defectives, infi‘aa إنفعال

- reflection: in‘ikaas انعكس
- preoccupation: inshighaal انشغال
- compliance: inqiyaad انقياد
- elapsing: inqiDaa انقضاء
1.1.8 Form VIII
Pattern: *ifti‘aal*  افْتِئَال; hollow verb root, *iftiyaal* افْتِئَال; defective, *ifti‘aa‘* افْتِئَاء

- acquisition: *iktisaab* اِكْتِيَاب
- election: *intixaab* اِنْتِخَاب
- choosing: *ixtiyaar* اِخْتِيَار
- beginning: *ibtidaa‘* اِبْتَیَاء

1.1.9 Form IX
Pattern: *if‘ilaal* افْعَالْ

- greenness: *ixDiraar* اِخْضَرَار
- reddening: *iHmiraar* اِحْمِرَار
- crookedness: *i‘wijaaj* اْعِوجَاج

1.1.10 Form X
Pattern: *istif‘aal* اسْتِفْعَاء; hollow root, *istifaala* اسْتِفْعَاء; defective, *istif‘aa‘* اسْتِفْعَاء

- readiness: *isti‘daad* اِسْتِعْدَاد
- investment: *istithmaar* اِسْتِثْمَار
- benefit: *istifaada* اِسْتِفَادَة
- exception: *istithnaa‘* اِسْتِتْنَاء

1.1.11 Forms XI–XV
These Forms of the verb are rare in MSA. For information about their structure see Chapter 33.

1.2 Quadriliteral root verbal nouns
Verbal nouns from quadriliteral verbs are primarily from Forms I, II, and IV of those verbs, as follows:

1.2.1 Form I: *fa‘lal-a* فَعُلْلَة
The most common Form I quadriliteral verbal noun patterns are: *fa‘lala* فَعُلَّة and *fi‘laal~fu‘laal~fa‘laal* فَعَلْلَة

- explosion: *farqa‘a* فَرْقَعَة
- somersault: *shaqlaba* شَقْلِبَة
earthquake  zilzaal  زِلْزَال
evidence  burhaan  بَرْهَان

1.2.2 Form II: tafa‘l-a
The Form II quadriliteral verbal noun pattern is tafa‘lul تَفَعُّل.:
oscillation  tadhabdhub  تَدْبِدْب
decline  tadahwur  تَدْهُور
serial  tasalsul  تَسَلْسُل

1.2.3 Form III: if‘anlala
The quadriliteral Form III verbal noun pattern is: if‘inlaal افْعَلَلْ. It is extremely rare.

1.2.4 Form IV: if‘alalla
The form IV verbal noun pattern is if‘ilaal افْعَلَل:
serenity  iTmi‘naan  اَطْمِنَان
shuddering  ishmi‘zaaz  اَشْمَنْزَار

1.3 Special characteristics of verbal nouns in context
The function and distribution of verbal nouns parallel that of other nouns except that in addition to those functions, the verbal noun may retain some of its verbal force. There are three ways in which verbal nouns are distinctive in their use:

(1) they may serve as the equivalent of an infinitive;
(2) when the verbal noun is from a transitive verb and serves as the first term in an ِiDaafa إضافة structure, it may take an object in the accusative case;
(3) they may be used as verb intensifiers in the cognate accusative (maf‘uul مَفْعُول مَلْطِق) construction.

1.3.1 Verbal noun as equivalent to gerund or infinitive
The verbal noun may be used as the object of a verbal expression where the English equivalent would be either a gerund or an infinitive.9

I shall try to shed/shedding light.

9 In such constructions, the verbal noun is normally interchangeable with the particle ‘an plus a subjunctive verb.
She tried to break/breaking tradition.

He tried to save/saving a man’s life.

It is inescapable (‘it is not possible to escape/escaping from it’).

with the aim of having (‘making’) the graduates (f.) work in it

It grants the American side assurance.

1.3.2 Verbal nouns in ْiDaafa or with pronoun suffix
The verbal noun may be used in any part of an ْiDaafa, as the first or second term:

1.3.2.1 VERBAL NOUN AS FIRST TERM OF CONSTRUCT:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>استثمار بلايين الدولارات</td>
<td>the investment of billions of dollars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>انشغال المسؤولين</td>
<td>the preoccupation of the officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تعيين القضاة</td>
<td>the appointing of judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>زِية القصر</td>
<td>visiting the castle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3.2.2 AS SECOND TERM:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>فرصَة الزّيارة</td>
<td>the chance to visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>حِزام أمان</td>
<td>safety belt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3.2.3 OR EVEN AS BOTH TERMS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>دفع التعويض</td>
<td>the payment of compensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>حق اللجوء</td>
<td>the right of asylum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.3.2.4 VERBAL NOUNS FROM TRANSITIVE VERBS: SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS. When a verbal noun derived from a transitive verb is the first term of an 'iDaafa, a number of possibilities exist for expressing both the doer of the action (the subject of the verb underlying the verbal noun) and the recipient of the action (the object of the underlying verb).

(1) The first term of the 'iDaafa is a verbal noun and the second term is the subject of the underlying verb:

- استقبال الرئيس: istiqbaal-i l-ra’iis-i - the president's reception
- مغادرة السفير: mughadaarat-u l-safiir-i - the departure of the ambassador

(2) The second term of the 'iDaafa may be the object of the underlying verb. Here the first term of the 'iDaafa is a verbal noun derived from a transitive verb and the second term is the object of the verb.

- رفع العلم: raf’-u l-‘alam-i - the raising of the flag
- دخول الكنيسة: duxuul-u l-kanisat-i - entering the church
- لعب دور: la‘b-u dawr-in - playing a role
- باستخدام ذيله: bi-stixdaam-i dhayl-i-hi - by using its tail

(3) Verbal noun + subject and object: When the subject of the underlying verb is the second term of the 'iDaafa, or when it takes the form of a pronoun suffix on the verbal noun, the object of the underlying verb may still be mentioned. It follows the 'iDaafa or the verbal noun plus pronoun and is in the accusative case. Thus the verbal noun retains some of its verbal force in making the object noun accusative.

In most cases in the data covered for this work, the subject of the underlying verb takes the form of a pronoun suffix on the verbal noun.

- دعا إلى تشكيك جيش: da‘aa ’ilaa tashkiil-i jaysh-in. - He called for the formation of an army.
- أدى إلى منع الكتاب: 'addaa ’ilaa man’-i l-kitaab-i. - It led to banning the book.

- قبل مغادرة العاصم: qabl-a mughadaarat-i-hi l-‘aaSimat-a - before his leaving the capital
During his meeting yesterday a delegation of families of the missing

and their refusal of that/their refusing that

upon their refusal of that/their refusing that

since her winning her first prize

just after his announcing [his] withdrawal from public life

their hearing the sounds

1.3.2.6 Doubly Transitive Verbal Noun: The verb underlying the verbal noun in an 'iDaafa may be doubly transitive, taking two objects, one of which becomes the second term of the 'iDaafa, and the other of which remains in the accusative case, coming after the 'iDaafa:

appointment of the general [as] director of the department

appointing Murad [as] leader of the security forces

1.3.3 Verbal noun and preposition

If a verbal noun derives from a verb-preposition idiom, the preposition is still part of the verbal noun expression:

in order to win the presidency

in order to win the presidency

to the truth
transforming the dream into reality

(Hawwal-a 'ilaa = ‘to transform s.th. into s.th.’)

أكد نائب الرئيس رغبته بلاده في تحقيق السلام.

'akkad-a naa' ibu l-ra' iiis-i raghbat-a bilaad-ihi fii taHqiq-i l-salaam-i.
The vice-president affirmed the desire of his country for achieving peace.

(raghib-a fii = ‘to desire s.th.’)

استمرا في البحث عن تفسيرات.

istamarr-uu fii l-baHth-i ‘an tafsiiraat-in.
They continued to search for explanations.

(baHath-a ‘an = ‘to search for s.th.’)

1.3.4 The cognate accusative: al-maf‘uul al-muTlaq

المفعول المطلق

The cognate accusative emphasizes or intensifies a statement by using a verbal noun derived from the main verb or predicate (which may also be in the form of a participle or verbal noun). The verbal noun and any modifying adjectives are usually in the indefinite accusative. For more on this topic, see Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.4.

He became extremely angry. They became extremely afraid.

maSaaliH-u-naa murtabiTat-un irtibaaT-an wathiiq-an bi-maSaaliH-i l-duwal-i l-arabiyyat-i.
Our interests are firmly entwined with the interests of the Arab states.

2 Active and passive participle (ism al-faa‘il, اسم الفاعل,
isn al-maf‘uul اسم المفعول)

Arabic participles are descriptive terms derived from verbs. The active participle describes or refers to the doer of the action and the passive participle describes or refers to the object of the action. An entire chapter (Chapter 6) is devoted to these multifunctional words but they are also included briefly here in order to provide examples of yet another noun type in Arabic.

In terms of their structure, participles are predictably derived according to the ten forms of the verb and have characteristic shapes. They may occur as masculine or feminine. When participles refer to human beings, they reflect the gender of the individual referred to. Some participles have acquired specific noun meanings and may be either masculine in form (e.g., shaari‘ شارع ‘street’) or feminine (qaa’ima قائمة ‘list’).
Arabic verbs have both active and passive participles. This section lists examples of both, but more extensive descriptions of base and variant forms are found in Chapter 6 and in the chapters on each form (I–X) of the verb.

2.1 Form I active participle (AP): ُ akt

The Form I AP has the typical pattern of ُ akt or ُ akt. For AP nouns, the form of the plural depends on whether the AP refers to a human being or not. APs referring to humans take either a sound plural or the broken plural ُ akt; those referring to nonhuman entities often take the ُ akt plural but may take other plurals as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>راكِب / رَكَاب</td>
<td>rider/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ناطِق / ناطِقون</td>
<td>spokesman/men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شَاعِر / شَوارِع</td>
<td>street/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دَانِرَة / دَوائِر</td>
<td>circle/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>قَاعدَة / قواعد</td>
<td>base; rule/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ضاحِية / ضواج</td>
<td>suburb/s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 The extended Form II–X AP nouns

Form II–X APs are typified by having a prefix /mu-/ and a stem vowel kasra (/i/). Hollow and defective forms have special patterns described in Chapters 22–31. As a general rule, the plurals for nonhuman referents are formed with the sound feminine plural and for human referents with either the sound masculine or the sound feminine plural.

II: ُ akt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مُنَاصِق</td>
<td>coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مَفَتِّش</td>
<td>inspector</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III: ُ akt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مُسَاعِد</td>
<td>assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مُتَدِّر</td>
<td>supervisor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV: ُ akt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مُحَاضِر</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V: ُ akt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مُتَخَصِّصَة</td>
<td>volunteer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10For the most part, only transitive verbs have passive participles.
VI: *mutafa‘ il*

synonym *mutaraadif*

VII: *munfa‘ il* is rarely used as a noun.

VIII: *mufta‘ il*

listener *mustami*

elector *muntaxib*

X: *mustaf‘ il*

orientalist *mustashriq*

importer *mustawrid*

2.3 Quadriliteral AP nouns: *mufa‘ il*

Quadriliteral active participles of Form I are also characterized by a prefix */mu/* and a stem vowel *kasra* (/i/). QPPs with human referents take either the sound masculine or sound feminine plural; with those referring to nonhuman entities, the sound feminine plural is usually used. Further discussion of quadriliteral participles is found in Chapter 33.

**engineer/s**

*muhandis/muhandisuuna*  مَهْنِيِّسُ / مَهْنِيِّسُونَ

**translator/s (m.)**

*mutarjim/mutarjimuuna*  مُتَرَجِّمُ / مُتَرَجِّمُونَ

**translator/s (f.)**

*mutarjima/mutarjimaat*  مُتَرَجِّمَةُ / مُتَرَجِّمَاتَ

**explosive/s**

*mufarqi / mufarqi‘aat*  مَفْعُوقُ / مَفْعُوقَاتِ

2.4 Passive participles (PP)

Passive participles that have evolved into use as nouns have a wide range of meanings, and it is not always possible to see immediately how their form relates to their meaning. In the derived forms (II–X), the passive participle often functions as the noun of place for that particular form of the verb (e.g., Form X PP: *mustashfan* ‘hospital, place of healing’ or Form VIII PP: *muxtabar* ‘laboratory, place of experiment’).

2.4.1 Form I: *maf‘uul*

The PP of Form I has the typical pattern of *maf‘uul* or *maf‘uala*. The plural for non-human PP nouns in this form is often *mafa‘a‘il* or the sound feminine plural; for human referents, the sound plural is usually used.

**concept/s**

*mafhuum/mafaahimm*  مَفْهُومٌ / مَفْهُومٍ

**plan; project/s**

*mashruu‘ / mashaariit*  مَشْرَوْعٌ / مَشْرَوْعَاتِ
2.4.2 Forms II–X
The PPs of the extended forms used as nouns have a /mu-/ prefix and fatHa (/a-/) as their stem vowel:

Form II: mufa‘al
organization munaZZama volume (book) mujallad
Form III: mufaa‘al is rare
Form IV: muf‘al
attaché mulHaq lexicon mu‘jam
Form V: mutafa‘al
requirements mutaTallabaat
Form VI: mutafaa‘al
availability; reach mutanaawal
Form VII: munfa‘al
slope munHadar lowland munxafaD
Form VIII: mufta‘al
society mujtama‘ laboratory muxtabar
Form X: mustafa‘al
future mustaqbal hospital mustashfan

2.4.3 Quadriliteral PP nouns: mufa‘al
These PPs have the same characteristics as the derived form triliteral PPs: a prefixed /mu-/ and stem vowel fatHa (/a-/).

camp mu‘askar series musalsal

3 Noun of place (ism makaan)
Certain noun patterns refer to the place where the activity specified by the verb occurs. These nouns are systematically related to triliteral verbs.

11Usually occurs in the plural.
3.1 Form I nouns of place: *maf*\(^{al}\) مَفْعُول

For Form I, most nouns of place are of the pattern *maf*\(^{al}\) مَفْعُول or *maf*\(^{a}l\) مَفْعَٰل, or, in some cases *maf*\(^{il}\) مَفْعَٰل. The plural of this type of noun is most often of the *mafaa*\(^{il}\) مَفَاعِيل pattern or *mafaa*\(^{a}l\) مَفَاعِل pattern.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>center</td>
<td>markaz</td>
<td>library</td>
<td>maktaba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entrance</td>
<td>madxal</td>
<td>school</td>
<td>madrasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exit</td>
<td>maxraj</td>
<td>mosque</td>
<td>masjid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>playground</td>
<td>mal’ab</td>
<td>(Arab) west</td>
<td>maghrib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>restaurant</td>
<td>maT'am</td>
<td>(Arab) east</td>
<td>mashriq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swimming pool</td>
<td>masbaH</td>
<td>bank</td>
<td>maSrif</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some nouns of place have both *maf*\(^{al}\) and *maf*\(^{il}\) forms:

- foothold *mawtI* and *mawTa* مَوْطِئ/مَوْطَأ

3.2 Forms II–X nouns of place

For nouns of place from derived forms (II–X), the passive participle is used. The most common derived nouns of place are from forms VII, VIII and X. The sound feminine plural is used for the plural of these nouns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lowland</th>
<th>munxafaD</th>
<th>VII</th>
<th>مَخْفَضَة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>level</td>
<td>mustawan</td>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>مَسْتَوى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colony</td>
<td>musta’mara</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>مَستعمرة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>settlement</td>
<td>mustawTana</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>مَستوطنة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future</td>
<td>mustaqbal</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>مَستقبل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hospital</td>
<td>mustashfan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>مَستشفى</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Noun of instrument (*ism al-*’aala اسم الآلة)

A specific derivational pattern is used to denote nouns of instrument, i.e., nouns that denote items used in accomplishing a certain action. The patterns are *mif*\(^{a}al\) مَفَعَّال, *mif*\(^{il}\) مَفَعِيل, and *mif*\(^{a}la\) مَفْعَل. See also section 5.2 below.
Some examples include:

- key: miftaaH
- elevator: miS'ad
- broom: mikanasa
- scissors: miqaSS
- scale: miqyaas
- refinery: miSfaat

5 Nouns of intensity, repetition, profession

A special noun pattern exists to denote intensity of action or repeated action: fa‘eal. For human beings the nouns usually denote profession, for example:

- artist (m./f.): fannaan/fannaana
- baker (m./f.): xabbaaz/xabbaaza
- tailor (m./f.): xayyaal/xayyaalTa
- weightlifter (m./f.): rabbaa/rabbaaTa

5.1 Nouns of profession

The abstract noun denoting the name of a profession is often of the verbal noun pattern fi‘aala. as follows:

- beekeeping: niHaala
- surgery: jiraaHa
- carpentry: nijaara

5.2 Nouns of intensity as nouns of instrument

Occasionally, the pattern for nouns of intensity (fa‘eal or fa‘ala) is used to denote an instrument. For machines or instruments that perform specified tasks, the feminine form of the noun of intensity is often used:

- opener: fattaaHa
- freezer: thallaaja
- dryer: nashshaafa
- car: sayyaara
- washer: ghassaala

6 Common noun (al-ism)

This is a vast category. Common nouns derived from triliteral lexical roots include an extensive range of items which can be of either gender. These nouns may or may not be related to lexical roots that generate verbs.

---

12 Nouns of intensity usually have a shadda on the middle radical, just as the Form II verb doubles the middle radical in order to denote frequency or intensity. A certain iconicity appears to exist in Arabic between doubling the strength of a consonant and reference to intensity or frequency of action. For more on iconicity and sound symbolism in Arabic see E. K. Wright 2000.
7 Generic noun (ism al-jins اسم الجنس) and noun of instance (ism al-marra اسم المرة)

Generic nouns refer to something in general, such as “laughter” or “agriculture.” Sometimes they refer to something that can be counted and sometimes it is not possible to pluralize the noun because it is an abstraction and a generality. It can be said that the concept of “generic” contrasts with “specific.” Examples of generic nouns in Arabic would be:

- dancing raqS رقص
- safety 'amaan أمان
- support da‘m دعم
- victory fawz فوز
- safety raqSa رقصة
- a dance raqSa رقصة
- support da‘m دعم
- safety fawz فوز
- a wave mawja موجة
- waves mawj موج
- a building binaa بناة
- shipping shaHn شحن
- a building binaa بناة
- a shipment shaHna شحنة
- an a building binaaya بناء
- many laughs DaHkaat-un kathiirat-un ضحكات كثيرة
- traditional dances raqSaat-un taqliidiyyat-un رقصات تقليدية
- heat waves mawjaat-un Haarrat-un موجات حرارة

The plural used for counting or referring to a number of these instances of action is often the sound feminine plural, but may also be a broken plural, especially if the feminine singular is not used as the instance noun (e.g., binaa بناة ‘a building’).

---

13 See Hurford 1994, 81–82, for good examples of generic nouns and noun phrases in English.
There is thus a formal distinction in Arabic between a noun that denotes a
generic activity or state and a semelfactive noun, that is, a noun that denotes a
single occurrence or instance of that activity and which is usually feminine. The
units or instances can be pluralized or counted using a plural form of the “noun
of instance.”

8 Diminutive (al-taSghiiر التصغير)
There are specific noun patterns used to denote smallness or endearment. These
nouns can refer to small things such as a pocket dictionary, a short period of time,
or to people and people’s names.14 The main pattern is CuCayC or CuCayyaC.

very small state duwayla d-w-l
little garden junayna j-n-n
little tree, sapling shujayra sh-j-r
lake (‘little sea’) buHayra b-H-r
a little before qubayl-a q-b-l
electron kuhayrib k-h-r-b
a little while (adv.) hunayhat-an h-n-h
little daughter bunayya b-n
Hussein Husayn H-s-n

9 Abstraction nouns ending with -iyya
Although many nouns with abstract meaning exist in Arabic, there is a morpho-
logical process for creating even more through suffixing the feminine nisba end-
ing -iyya (يَبِي) to an already existing word stem. In this way, new concepts can be
readily created, and this category is an important one in MSA.15 In fact, its preva-
ience has led the Arabic Language Academy in Cairo to declare that this type of
noun may be derived from any word at all.16 Nouns created with this process take

14 The diminutive can also express contempt, but no examples of this occurred in the data.
15 For a survey of these types of nouns in modern Arabic, see Monteil 1960, 124–26.
wa-dhammiyyat-i-hi ‘uSdara majma‘-u l-qahhat-i l-arabiyyat-i bi-l-qahhirat-i qaraar-an bi-qiyasaSiyat-i-hi
min “ayy-i kalimat-in.”
the sound feminine plural if they are count nouns. Some examples include the following.

9.1 Derivation from a singular noun
This noun can be of any sort, derived or non-derived:

theory naZariyya نَظَرِيَّةَ Christianity al-masiiHiyya المَسْحِيَّةَ
diversification ta‘addudiyya تَعْدِيَّةَ operation ‘amaliyya عَمْلِيَّةَ
legitimacy shar‘iyya شِرْعِيَّةَ terrorism ‘irhaabiyya إِرْهَابِيَّةَ
diary yawmiyya يُوْمِيَّةَ

Sometimes from a noun stem which is otherwise not regularly in use:
divinity ‘uluuhiyya أَلْوَهِيَّةَ oneness, unity waHdaaniyya وَحَدَانِيَّةَ

9.2 Derivation from a plural noun

stardom nujuumiyya نُجُومِيَّةَ horsemanship furuusiyya فُرُوسِيَّةَ

9.3 Derivation from an adjective
The adjective can be in the comparative form as well as in the base form.

importance ‘ahammiyya أَهْمِيَّةَ priority ‘afDaliyya أَفْضَلِيَّةَ
majority ‘akthariyya أَكْثَرِيَّةَ effectiveness fa‘aaliyya فَعَالِيَّةَ
minority ‘aqalliyya أُقْلِيَّةَ priority ‘awwaliyya أُولَىَّةَ-أَوْلَوْيَةَ

fehnaak uIluwiyat limbs fa-hunaaka ‘awlawiyyaat-un ‘ahamm-u.
There are more important priorities.

There is a preference for those who have mastered English.

9.4 Derivation from a particle or pronoun

identity huwiyya هُوَيَّةَ quantity kammiyya كَمْيَةَ
quality kayfiyya كِيْفِيَّةَ

9.5 Derivation from a participle

responsibility mas‘uuliyya مَسْؤُوْلِيَّةَ majority ghaalibiyya غَالِبِيَّةَ
9.6 Derivation from a borrowed word
chauvinism shuufiniyya دبلوماسيه شوفينيه
diplomacy diibluumaasiyya دبلوماسيه
transcendentalism tiraansindantaliyya تراستندتليه

10 Nouns not derived from verb roots

10.1 Primitive nouns
Certain nouns in Arabic are not derived from verb roots. Some of these are what Wright (1967) and others refer to as “primitive,” i.e., well-attested substantives that form part of the core lexicon of the language but are not verbal derivatives. In certain dictionaries, verbs may be listed with these nouns, but the verbs are usually denominative – derived from the noun.

10.1.1 Triliteral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>man</td>
<td>rajul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eye</td>
<td>‘ayn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>head</td>
<td>ra‘s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trap</td>
<td>faxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>day</td>
<td>yawm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>panther</td>
<td>fahd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cheetah</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.1.2 Biliteral primitives
A few archaic nouns in Arabic have just two consonants (sometimes just one) in the root. These often refer to basic family relationships, body parts, or essential physical or social concepts. Some of the most frequently used ones include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mother</td>
<td>‘umm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father</td>
<td>‘ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brother</td>
<td>‘ax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
<td>ibn/bin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family</td>
<td>fam/fuu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>name</td>
<td>ism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water</td>
<td>maa²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possessor</td>
<td>dhuu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blood</td>
<td>dam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.1.3 The five nouns (‘al-‘asmaa‘ al-xamsa الأخمسا الخمسة)
A subset of five of these nouns (‘ab, ‘ax, fuu, Ham, dhuu)19 inflect for case by using a long vowel instead of a short vowel when they are the first term of an annexation structure or when they have a personal pronoun suffix.20

18 As Lecomte states (1968, 64) “Certains noms sont ireductibles a une racine verbale, et paraissent bien constituer le glossaire fondamental de la langue concrète.”
19 In some cases, a sixth noun is included. It did not occur in the corpus consulted for this text.
20 For more information on these nouns and their inflectional paradigms, see Chapter 7, section 5ff.
11 Common nouns from quadriliteral and quinquiliteral roots:

("asmaa' rubaa'iyya wa xumaasiyya")

11.1 Quadriliteral

A number of Arabic common nouns are quadriliteral. Some of these words are of Arabic origin, and some of them derive from other languages. These quadriliteral nouns rarely have corresponding verb forms. For example:

- eternity: sarmad
- scorpion: 'aqrab
- bomb: qunbula
- box: Sanduuq
- noise: DawDaa' (noise)

11.2 Reduplicated quadrilaterals

Certain quadriliteral noun roots consist of reduplicated pairs of consonants. These often refer to naturally occurring phenomena. Some of these nouns are associated with quadriliteral verbs that denote a particular repetitive sound or motion.

- skull: jumjuma
- sesame: simsim
- mint: na'na

11.2.1 Nouns from quadriliteral reduplicated verbs

- earthquake: zilzaal
- fluttering: rafrafa

Other examples:
- eternity: sarmad
- scorpion: 'aqrab
- bomb: qunbula
- box: Sanduuq
- noise: DawDaa'
waswasá rustling, whispering (to whisper: waswasá دَوْسَة ِsounds)

11.3 Nouns from quinquiliteral roots
Some common nouns are based on quinquiliteral (five-consonant) roots.21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chess</td>
<td>shaTranj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>program</td>
<td>barnaamaj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parsley</td>
<td>baqduunis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spider</td>
<td>‘ankabuut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>violet</td>
<td>banafsaj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quince</td>
<td>safarjil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salamander</td>
<td>samandal~ samandar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cauliflower</td>
<td>qarnabiiT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ginger</td>
<td>zanjabiil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12 Collective nouns, mass nouns, and unit nouns (ism al-jins اسم الجنس; ism al-waHda اسم الوحدة)
Certain Arabic nouns are terms that refer to groups of individual things in general (grapes, bananas, trees) or to something which occurs as a “mass,” such as wood or stone. Normally, these nouns refer to naturally occurring substances and forms of life. In these cases, reference can also be made to an individual component of the collection or the mass, and so Arabic provides a morphological way of noting this distinction through use of a “unit” noun (ism al-waHda اسم الوحدة). Most mass nouns or collective nouns are masculine singular, whereas most unit nouns (or “count” nouns, as they are sometimes called) are feminine singular. Here are some examples:

12.1 Collective/mass term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chicken(s)</td>
<td>dajaaj نَجَاح</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eggs</td>
<td>bayD بَيْض</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>owls</td>
<td>buum بُوم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish</td>
<td>samak سمك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bees</td>
<td>naHl نَحَل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stone</td>
<td>Hajar حِجْر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>almonds</td>
<td>lawz لُوْز</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feathers</td>
<td>riish ريش</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21 Many of these nouns have a peculiarity in that in the plural, in order to fit into the Arabic broken plural system, they actually lose a consonant, for example, ‘ankabuut /‘anaakib ‘spider/s’. See Chapter 7, section 3.2.3 for more detail.
12.2 Unit term

a chicken  

\textit{dajaaja}  

\textit{دجاجة}  

an egg  

\textit{bayDa}  

\textit{بيضَة}  

an owl  

\textit{buuma}  

\textit{ثَومَة}  

a fish  

\textit{samaka}  

\textit{سمَكة}  

a bee  

\textit{naHla}  

\textit{نَحلة}  

a stone  

\textit{Hajara}  

\textit{حَجرَة}  

an almond  

\textit{lawza}  

\textit{لُؤَزَة}  

a feather  

\textit{riisha}  

\textit{ريَشَة}  

12.3 Plural of unit nouns

If there is a need to count individual nouns or units, or imply variety, the counted noun takes a specific kind of plural that refers not to the generic grouping, but to a number of individual units. That countable plural is often the sound feminine plural, but it may also be a broken plural.

five chickens  

\textit{xams-u dajaajaat-in}  

\textit{خمسُ دجاجاتِ}  

six owls  

\textit{sitt-u abwaam-in}  

\textit{ستُ أَبْوَامُ}  

three eggs  

\textit{thalaath-u bayDaat-in}  

\textit{ثَلَاثُ بَضَاتٍ}  

types of fish  

\textit{?anwaat-l-asmaak-i}  

\textit{أنواعُ الأسماكِ}  

13 Borrowed nouns

In addition to incorporating terms from other Middle Eastern languages, over the centuries Arabic has incorporated words from European languages, such as Latin and Greek. In recent times, much of the borrowing has been from English and French. Most of these borrowed nouns are considered solid-stem words, not analyzable into root and pattern.

music  

\textit{muusiiqaa}  

\textit{موسيقى}  

camera  

\textit{kaamiiraa}  

\textit{كاميرا}  

comedy  

\textit{kuumidiyyaa}  

\textit{كوميديا}  

doctor  

\textit{duktuur}  

\textit{دكتور}  

petroleum  

\textit{batruul}  

\textit{بروتول}  

ton  

\textit{Tann}  

\textit{طن}  

computer  

\textit{kumbiyuutir}  

\textit{كمبيوتر}  

film  

\textit{film}  

\textit{فلم}  

television  

\textit{taflizyuun}  

\textit{تلفزيون}  

bank  

\textit{bank}  

\textit{بنك}  

telephone  

\textit{talifuun}  

\textit{تلفون}  

Certain common everyday terms, such as “telephone,” “camera,” and “doctor,” also have Arabic-based equivalents (loan translations) (e.g., \textit{haatif}, \textit{?aalat taSwiir}, \textit{Tabiib}, respectively), most of which have been coined by consensus of authorities on Arabic language in the Arabic language academies in Cairo, Baghdad, and
Damascus. These academies are scholarly research institutes whose primary goal is to maintain the accuracy, richness, and liveliness of the Arabic language through defining standards, prescribing correct usage, and setting procedures for the coining of new terms.

The actual choice of using the borrowed term or the Arabic term varies from country to country, author to author, and from publication to publication. The largest category of current loanwords is in rapidly developing technology fields such as biology, medicine, and computer science. Efforts have been made to keep coining Arabic-based equivalents to these technical terms, but it is a challenge to keep pace with the amount of technical data used in the media every day. Here are just a few terms found in current Arabic newspapers:

- **video** (فيديو) - فيديو
- **cassette** (كاست) - كاست
- **radar** (رادار) - رادار
- **hormones** (هورمونات) - هورمونات
- **cocaine** (كوكايين) - كوكايين
- **viruses** (فيروسات) - فيروسات
- **radar** (رادار) - رادار
- **viruses** (فيروسات) - فيروسات

### 13.1 Borrowed acronyms

Arabic newspaper writing in particular also borrows acronyms for international bodies and uses them as individual words, spelled in Arabic:

- **UNESCO** - اليونيسكو
  - الم働きم ا"lan-a-hu l-yuuniiskuu
  - UNESCO announced it.
- **OPEC** - اوپک
  - daaxil-a "uubiik wa-xaarij-a-hu
  - inside OPEC and outside of it
- **UNICEF** - اليونيسيف

### 14 Arabic proper nouns

Proper nouns include names of people and places. These come from a variety of sources, many of them Arabic, but some non-Arabic.

#### 14.1 Geographical names

Names of cities, countries, geographical features. Sometimes these include the definite article, sometimes they do not. If the name does not have the definite article, then it is diptote.

- **Tunisia** (تونس) - تونس
- **Morocco** (المغرب) - المغرب
- **The Euphrates** (الفرات) - الفرات
- **The Nile** (النيل) - النيل
- **Jidda** (جدة) - جدة
- **Cairo** (القاهرة) - القاهرة
14.2 Personal names
Arabic personal names are a rich source of cultural information. Most given names consist of one word, but some names are actually phrases that include family information (e.g., “son of,” “mother of,” “father of,” “daughter of”) or else reference to religious concepts (e.g., “servant of the merciful,” “light of the religion”). The structure of Arabic family names is highly complex and may include reference to family information, place of origin (e.g., bayruutiy ‘from Beirut’), profession (e.g., Haddaad ‘blacksmith’), religion (e.g., nuur-u l-diin ‘light of religion’), or even physical characteristics (e.g., *aHdab ‘humpbacked’). Moreover, naming practices vary throughout the Arab world.

Because of the absence of capitalization in Arabic script, learners of Arabic sometimes find it challenging to distinguish proper names from ordinary adjectives and nouns within a text.

14.2.1 Women’s given names
Women’s names may be Arabic or borrowed from another language; if Arabic, they are usually nouns or adjectives denoting attractive qualities. Sometimes a mother will be known by a matronymic, referring to her as the mother of her eldest child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karima</td>
<td>‘generous’</td>
<td>كريمة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farida</td>
<td>‘incomparable’</td>
<td>فريدة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afaf</td>
<td>‘chastity’</td>
<td>عفاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yasmine</td>
<td>‘jasmine’</td>
<td>ياسمين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>‘lily of the valley’</td>
<td>سوسن</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.2.1.1 MATRONYMICS: Arabic uses tekronymics – names derived from a child’s given name. It is not uncommon for an Arab mother to acquire a female teknonym or matronymic once she has had a child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Umm Hasan</td>
<td>Mother of Hasan</td>
<td>أم حسن، *umm-u Hasan-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umm Ahmad</td>
<td>Mother of Ahmad</td>
<td>أم أحمد، *umm-u Ahmad-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.2.2 Men’s given names
Men’s names include descriptive adjectives and nouns, but also include a wide selection of phrasal names. Here are just a few examples:

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22 See Nydell 2002, 57–61, for a succinct description of Arab naming systems and traditions.

23 See Badawi et al. 1991, for a comprehensive Arabic reference work on Arab names.
(1) Adjectives:
Sharif ‘noble’ shariif شريف
Karim ‘generous’ kariim كريم
Said ‘happy’ sa‘iid سعيد

(2) Nouns:
Raad ‘thunder’ ra‘d رعد
Leith ‘lion’ layth ليث
Fahd ‘panther’ fahd فهد

(3) Participles:
Mahmoud ‘praised’ maHmuud محمود
Adil ‘just’ ‘aadil عادل
Mukhtar ‘chosen’ muxtaar مختار

(4) Nisba adjectives:
Shukri ‘thankful’ shukriyy شكري
Lutfi ‘kind’ luTfiyy لطفي

(5) Traditional Semitic names: These are names shared within the Semitic languages and traditions.
Ibrahim (Abraham) ‘ibraahiim إبراهيم
Yousef (Joseph) yuusuf يوسف
Younis (Jonas) yuunus يونس
Suleiman (Solomon) sulaymaan سليمان
Musa (Moses) muusaa موسى

(6) Inflected verbs: These names are actually inflected verb forms:
Yazid ‘he increases’ ya-ziid يزيد
Ahmad ‘I praise’ ْa-Hmad أحمد

(7) Phrase names: Arabic has phrasal names, usually in the form of construct phrases:
Aladdin ‘nobility of the religion’ ‘ala‘-u l-diin علاء الدين
Abdallah ‘servant of God’ ‘abd-u llaah عبد الله
Abdurahman ‘servant of the merciful’ ‘abd-u l-raHmaan عبد الرحمن
Teknonymics: The Arabic term for this kind of name is *kunya*. It is common in many parts of the Arab world for a man to acquire a teknonym once he has had a child, especially a male child, and he is often known by the name of his first male child.

Abu Hassan ‘Father of Hassan’  
Abu Bakr ‘Father of Bakr’

Patronymics: A patronymic is a name derived from the father’s given name:

Ibn Fadlan ‘Son of Fadlan’  
Ibn Khaldoun ‘Son of Khaldoun’  
Ibn Saud ‘Son of Saud’

15 Complex nouns, compound nouns, and compound nominals

Sometimes there is a need to express semantically complex concepts in noun form. This area of noun formation in Arabic is not as clear-cut as the other areas. “The debate on compounding in Arabic has long been bedeviled by failure to define terms precisely and apply consistent criteria. There are two fundamental definitional problems: the term for compounding itself, and the status of the components of a compound” (Emery 1988, 34).

Here three categories are distinguished: complex nouns, compound nouns, and compound nominals (phrases). Complex nouns are created from parts of words fused into one word. Compound nouns are created by combining two full words into one, and compound nominals are phrases of two words that are used to refer to one concept. In general in Arabic, the term *naHt* refers to complex and compound nouns, whereas the term *tarkiib* refers to compound nominals.

15.1 Complex nouns

Complex nouns are created through fusing two (or more) word stems into one. This is called *naHt* (literally ‘chiseling’) in traditional Arabic grammar. There are several sub-processes or variations on this procedure, and although it is not common in traditional Arabic morphology, it tends to be used in MSA for recently coined items and for loan translations, especially technical terms.

15.1.1 Blending word segments into one word

In this process, parts of words are segmented and re-blended into a word that combines parts of two word stems:
boulder  

\[ \text{julmuud--jalmad} \]

(from \text{jalida} جلدة ‘to freeze’ and \text{jamuda} جمدة ‘to harden’)  

supranationalism  

\[ \text{al-fawqawiyya} \]

(from \text{fawq-a} فوق ‘above’ and \text{awiyya} عمومية ‘nationalism’)  

amphibian  

\[ \text{barmaa'iy} \]

(from \text{barr} بَر ‘land’ and \text{maa} ماء ‘water’ with \text{nisba} suffix -\text{iyy})

15.1.2 Formula nouns

This word-formation process consists of using the initial letters or syllables of a string of words in a traditional, formulaic saying to create a quadriliteral noun, usually ending with a \text{taa’ marbuuta}.  

\underline{basmalah}

the act of saying: \text{bi-ism-i laah-i} بالاسم الله ‘(in the name of God)’  

\underline{Hawqalah}

the act of saying: \text{laa Hawl-a wa-laa quwwat-a} لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله ‘(There is no power and no strength save in God)’

15.2 Compound nouns

Compounding refers to combining two complete word stems into one syntactic unit. The classic MSA example is the word \text{ra’s-maal} ‘capital’ formed from conjoining the words \text{ra} ‘head’ and \text{maal} ‘money’.24 Another example is \text{laa-markaziyya} لا مركزية ‘decentralization,’ from the words \text{laa} ‘no’ and \text{markaziyya} ‘centralization.’ Other examples include:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \text{invertebrate}  
  \[ \text{laa-faqaariyy} \]
  \[ \text{‘no spinal column’} \]
  \item \text{invertebrates}  
  \[ \text{al-laafafaariyyaat} \]
  \item \text{petition, application}  
  \[ \text{'arD-u-Haal} \]
  \[ \text{‘presentation of situation’} \]
  \item \text{petitions}  
  \[ \text{'ard-u-Haalaat} \]
  \item \text{course of events}  
  \[ \text{maa jaraa} \]
  \[ \text{‘what flows’} \]
  \item \text{courses of events}  
  \[ \text{maa jarayaat} \]
  \item \text{lottery}  
  \[ \text{yaa-naSiib} \]
  \[ \text{‘O chance! O fate! O luck!’} \]
\end{itemize}

24 The plural of \text{ra’s-maal} is found both as \text{rasaamiil} رساميل and as \text{ru’uus ‘amwaal} روؤوس أموال.
Note that compound nouns function as word stems and may receive plurals or definite articles.

15.3 Compound nominals: (tarkiib تركيب): Coherent composite phrases
Sometimes the noun concept is not expressed as a single word in Arabic, but as a noun phrase, usually an 'iDaafa, such as ‘adam-u wujuud-in ‘nonexistence' or kiis-u hawaa-in ‘airbag.' In such cases, the dual or plural is usually made by adding the dual suffix to or pluralizing the head noun, the first noun in the phrase.

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bedroom</td>
<td>غرفة نوم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two bedrooms</td>
<td>غرفتَا نوم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bedrooms</td>
<td>غرف نوم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reaction</td>
<td>رد فعل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two reactions</td>
<td>ردَّا فعل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reactions:</td>
<td>ردود فعل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passport</td>
<td>جوازاً سفر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two passports</td>
<td>جوازاَّا سفر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passports:</td>
<td>جوازاَات سفر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as a reaction to the attacks</td>
<td>خمس غرف نوم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five bedrooms</td>
<td>غرف نوم</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participles: active and passive

Arabic participles are descriptive words derived from particular stem classes, or Forms, of a verbal root. The active participle (ism al-faa’il) describes the doer of an action and the passive participle (ism al-maf’uul) describes the entity that receives the action, or has the action done to it.1 Arabic participles therefore describe or refer to entities involved in an activity, process, or state.

Arabic participles are based on a distinction in voice: they are either active or passive. This contrasts with English, where participles are based on tense (present or past) and are used as components of compound verb forms. Arabic participles are not used in the formation of compound verb tenses.2

In form, participles are substantives, that is they inflect as nouns or adjectives (for case, definiteness, gender, number).3 In terms of their function, however, they may serve as nouns, adjectives, adverbs or even verb substitutes.4 As Beeston notes (1970, 34), “it may be impossible when quoting a word out of context to assert that it is either [substantive or adjective], this being determinable only by the syntactic context.” This is particularly true for Arabic participles. They are distinguishable by their form, but their syntactic functions are multiple.5

1 According to Holes (1995, 122) “The basic difference between the two types of participle is that the active describes the state in which the subject of the verb from which it is derived finds itself as a result of the action or event which the verb describes, while the passive refers to the state in which the object or complement of the verb from which it is derived finds itself after the completion of the action/event.”

2 “The participles have no fixed time reference – this has to be interpreted from the context” (Holes, 1995, 122). Also, as Kouloughli states in this context, “Il est plus éclairant de penser que le participe actif renvoie au sujet du verbe actif alors que le participe passif renvoie, lui, au sujet du verbe passif” (1994, 217) rather than associating either participle with any sort of temporal notion.

3 Lecomte (1968, 95) refers to Arabic participles as “the hinge between the verb and the noun” (“la charnière entre le verbe et le nom”) because of their noun form combined with verbal qualities.

4 “The active participle can function syntactically as a noun, verb or attributive adjective . . . while the passive participle is often used predicatively as quasi-verbal adjective to indicate the result or present relevance of a completed action” (Holes, 1995, 122–23).

5 The description of Arabic participles varies substantially because of their wide-ranging functional nature. For example, they are referred to by Depuydt (1997, 494) as “adjectival verb forms,” whereas Beeston (1970, 35) states that “the participle is a noun (substantive or adjective) which like the verbal abstract [i.e., verbal noun], matches the verb.” Arabic grammar classifies both nouns and adjectives under the term ism ‘noun; name’ and thus refers to the participles as ism al-faa’il and ism al-maf’uul.
The meanings of active and passive participles are directly related to their descriptive nature and the verb from which they derive. However, within that semantic range participles have a wide range of meanings. “Many words which have the pattern of a participle contain highly specialized senses within their semantic spectrum, in addition to the fundamental value” (Beeston 1970, 35).

The derivational rules for participles are described in greater detail in the chapters on the individual forms (I–X, XI–XV, and quadriliteral).

1 Active participle (AP): (ism al-faa’il اسم الفاعل)

When an active participle is used as a substantive to refer to the doer of an action, often the English equivalent would be a noun ending in /-er/ or /-or/, such as ‘inspector’ or ‘teacher.’ In Arabic, the term for ‘teacher’ (mudarris مدرس), for example, is an active participle, as is the term for ‘visitor’ (zaa’ir زائر). As a noun, when the AP refers to or describes a human being, it takes the natural gender of the person; when referring to something abstract, it may be either masculine or feminine. Also as a noun, it will take a particular form of the plural, which is not always predictable.

Used as an adjective, the active participle acts as a descriptive term, as, for example, the AP jaaff ‘dry’ in the phrase jaww-un jaaff-un ‘dry air.’ It may also correspond to an English adjective ending in /-ing/, such as the Form VIII AP mubtasim ‘smiling’ in the phrase bint-un mubtasimat-un, ‘a smiling girl.’ As a predicate adjective, it may serve as a verb substitute. For example, using the Form III AP musaafir ‘traveling’: huwa musaafir-un ‘He is traveling.’

The active participle (AP) can be derived from any form (stem class) of Arabic verbs, from I–X. AP’s can be derived from quadriliteral verbs as well as triliteral. They describe the doer of the action. They have predictable and distinctive forms.

1.1 Form I AP

The pattern of the active participle in Form I of the triliteral verb is CaaCic (faa’il فاعل). This pattern shows slight modification when used with irregular root types, as described in Chapter 22, section 10.

1.1.1 Form I AP nouns

APs that refer to human beings take either a sound plural or a plural of the fu “aal pattern. The nonhuman AP noun may be masculine or feminine and it may take the sound feminine plural or a broken plural, usually jawaal ‘il.

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6 Note, however, the temporal and aspectual ambiguity of the AP in context. It may refer to a state of current activity, or of having accomplished a certain activity. As Depuydt notes, “the inability to distinguish unambiguously between simultaneity and anteriority may occasionally be an impediment to using a participle” (1997, 494).

7 In terms of meaning, note that an active participle (e.g., nuaD-in ‘satisfied’ from ruDhya ‘to be satisfied’) may have an English equivalent that ends in /-ed/, but it is still an active participle.
Strong/regular root: fa‘il

- guard/s: Haaris/Hurraas
- researcher/s: baaHith/-uuna
- rider/s; passenger/s: raakib/rukkaab
- coast/s; shore/s: saaHil/sawaaHil
- floor/s; storey/ies: Taabiq/Tawaabiq
- side/s: jaanib/jawaanib
- rule/s; base/s: qaa‘ ida/qawaa‘id
- fruit/s: faakiha/fawaakih
- university/ies: jaami‘a/-aat

Geminate root:

- material/s: maadda/mawaadd
- pilgrim/s: Haaji/Hujjaaj/Hajiij

Hamzated root:

- reader/s: qaari‘/qurraa‘
- accident/s; emergency/ies: Taari’a/Tawaari

Assimilated root:

- mother/s: waalida/-aat
- father/s: waalid/-uuna
- import/s: waarid/-aat
- duty/ies; homework: waajib/-aat

Hollow root:

- visitor/s: za‘ir/zuwwaar
- leader/s: qa‘id/quwwaad
- fluid/s; liquid/s: sa‘il/sawaa‘il
- being/s: ka‘in/-aat

---

8 Of a building. Also pronounced Taabaq.
9 The plural mawaadd is the form that the plural pattern fa‘aa‘il takes in geminate nouns because of the phonological restriction on sequences that include a vowel between identical consonants. *mawaadd -> mawaadd.
menu/s; list/s \( qaa^{im}-aat-qawa^{im} \) قائم/قائمات

circle/s; department/s \( daa^{ira}/dawaa^{ir} \) دائرة/دوائر

Defective root:
judge/s \( qaaD-in/quDaah \) قاض/قضاة
club/s \( naad-in/nawaadin \) ناد/نواب
corner/s \( zaawiya/zawaayaa \) زاوية/زوايا

Examples of Form I APs as nouns in context:

الوالدة والولد في خير. العادي العربي

\( al-waali\al-dat-u wa-l-mawluud-u fii xayr-in \)

Mother and child are well (‘in goodness’). the Arabic club

ناطق باسم الملكة

\( naa\tiq-un bi-ism-i l-malikat-i \)
a spokesman in the name of the queen

1.1.2 Form I APs as adjectives
APs functioning as adjectives reflect the gender of the noun that they modify. In context they may function either as noun modifiers or predicate adjectives.

Strong/regular root:

able, capable \( qaabil \) قابل former \( saabiq \) سابق

frowning; stern \( ‘aabis \) عابي unable \( ‘aajiz \) عاجز

ruling \( Haakim \) حاكم next, coming \( qaadim \) قادم

Assimilated root:

wide, broad \( waasi^e \) واسع clear \( waaDiH \) واضح

Geminate root:

This form of AP creates a unique monosyllabic stem consisting of a long vowel followed by a doubled consonant: CVVCC.\(^{10}\)

dry \( jaaff \) جاف harmful \( Daarr \) ضار

important \( haamm \) هام special; private \( xaaSS \) خاص

hot \( Haarr \) حار poisonous \( saamm \) سم

\(^{10}\) See also Chapter 2, note 34.
Hamzated root:

- sorry, regretful: ًأًAstif/']asif
- calm, peaceful: ٌHaadi/']aadi
- final; last: ًأًاAxir/']axir

Hollow root:

- visiting: ُAa‘ir
- frightful; amazing: ُHa‘il

Defective root:

- growing: ناَمِ-in
- satisfied; pleased: راَدِ-in
- high: عَالِ-in
- last; past: مَااَدِ-in
- remaining: بَاَا-in

Examples of APs in context as adjectives:

الاثناء الماضي
al-thulaathaa‘-a l-maadiy-a
last Tuesday

المرة القادمة
al-marrat-a l-qaadimat-a
the next time

المناسبات السابقة
al-maafa‘-a l-baaqiyyat-u
the remaining projects

الاستخدام الضار بالبيئة
al-istixdaam-u l-Daarr-u bi-l-bii‘at-i
use injurious to the environment

آخر التطورات
ًأًاAxir-u l-taTaawwuraat-i
the latest developments

المعلومات اللازمة
al-ma‘luumaat-u l-haazimat-u
the necessary information

وزير الاقتصاد الأردني السابق
waziir-u l-iqtisaad-i l-urduniyy-u ٌ-l-saabiq-u
the former Jordanian minister of economy

قال المدرب إنه راضٍ
qaa-al-a l-mudarrib-u ُ-inna-hu raaD-in.
The coach said that he was satisfied.

يفتح مجالات واسعة.
yu-faAll-u majaalaat-in waasi‘at-an.
It opens wide fields.

الخلفاء الراشدون
al-xulafa‘-a l-raashid-uuna
the orthodox caliphs

في قائمة الدول الداعمة للإرهاب
fii qaa‘imat-i l-duwal-i l-uda‘imat-i
li-l-‘irhaab-i
on the list of countries supporting terrorism

11 From the hamzated root ُ-x-r; the initial hamza followed by the long ًaaj of the faa‘il pattern create ًaaj, spelled with ًalif madda.
1.1.3 Identical noun and adjective AP

It may happen that the AP for a particular verb is used both as a noun and as an adjective. In that case, they look identical in the singular, but the plurals usually differ.

1.1.3.1 AP NOUN PLURAL: The Form I AP masculine human noun takes a broken plural of the form (fu‘u‘aal) (فحصاء). The feminine human noun takes the sound feminine plural.

- visitor/s (m.) zaa‘ir/zuwwaar
- visitor/s (f.) zaa‘ira/-aat
- worker/s (m.) ‘aamil/‘ummaal
- worker/s (f.) ‘aamila/-aat
- writer/s (m.) kaatib/kuttaab
- writer/s (f.) kaatiba/-aat
- ruler/s (m.) Haakim/Hukkaam
- ruler/s (f.) Haakima/-aat

1.1.3.2 AP ADJECTIVE PLURAL: The Form I AP adjective takes the sound masculine or the sound feminine plural if it modifies or refers to a human plural noun.

- visiting zaa‘ir/-uuna~zaa‘ira/-aat
- working ‘aamil/-uuna~‘aamila/-aat
- writing kaatib/-uuna~kaatiba/-aat
- ruling Haakim/-uuna/~Haakima/-aat

1.2 Derived form active participles (II–X)

As with Form I, the derived form AP may refer to humans or nonhuman entities and may function either as a noun or adjective, many of them doing double-duty. When referring to or denoting human beings, the plural is either masculine sound plural or feminine sound plural, depending on the natural gender of the head noun.

If, however, the participle noun refers to a nonhuman entity, such as muxaddir مخيص ‘drug,’ its plural is sound feminine plural, muxaddir-aat مخصصات ‘drugs.’

1.2.1 Form II AP: mufa‘il مفعل

- coordinator munassiq/-uuna
- inspector mufattish/-uuna
teacher
mudarris/-uuna

hors d’oeuvres
muqabblat

drug, narcotic
muxaddir/-aat

note; reminder
mudhakkira/-aat

historian
mu’arrix/-uuna

distinctive feature;
characteristic
mumayyiza/-aat

singer
mughann-in/mughannuuna

person praying
muSall-in/muSalluuna

Form II AP’s in context:

عدد من المؤرخين العرب
‘adad-un min-a l-mu’arrix-iina l-arab-i
a number of Arab historians

muHaayidat-un
neutral
muHaayid
neutral

Form III AP: mu’aa’il

assistant musaa’id

citizen muwaaTin

lector muHaaDir

on duty munaawib

lawyer muHaam-in

traveler/traveling musaafir

observer muraaqib

neutral muHaayid

Form III APs in context:

ابني مسافر.
ibn-ii musaafir-un.
dawlat-un muHaayidat-un

My son is traveling.
a neutral country

1.2.3 Form IV AP: mu’al

Muslim muslim

rainy mumTir

ocean muHiiT

snowy muthlij

12 This expression usually occurs in the plural.
Participles: active and passive

manager mudīr مِـدِّر boring mumīl مُـمِّل
sunny mushmis مَـشِمِس possible mumkin مُـمِكِن

Form IV APs in context:
الأيام المشمسةشيء مؤسف جداً shay‘-un mu‘sif-un jidd-an
the sunny days a very distressing thing
المحيط الأطلسيأقرب وقت ممكن al-muHiiT-u l-‘aTlasiyy-u
the soonest possible time the Atlantic Ocean
اللجنة المشرفةالنسائم المنعسة
al-lajnat-u l-mushrifat-u al-nasaa‘im-u l-mun‘ishat-u
the supervisory committee the refreshing breezes

1.2.4 Form V AP: mutafa‘il مُـفَعَّل
volunteer mutaTawwi مَـتَّوِعَتَ voluteer sorry muta‘assif مَـتَّاسِف
specialist mutaxaSSis مَـتَخِصَتَ صव صَخصَتَ abundant mutawaffir مَـتَوَفِّر
extremist mutaTarrif مَـتَتَرَفَ divisible various mutanawwi مَـتَنَوَعَ

Note that some Form V APs can have passive meanings:
moved mutazawwij مَـتَزَاوَج
late; delayed muta‘axxir مَـتَأَخَر
frozen mutajammid مَـتَجمَد

Form V APs in context:
It arouses the excitement of the spectators.

المتحدث باسم الحكومة al-mutaHaddith-u bi-sm-i l-Hukuumat-i
the spokesperson in the name of the government

الالمحيط المتجمد الشمالي al-muHiiT-u l-mutajammid-u l-shimaaliyy-u
the Arctic Ocean (‘the frozen northern ocean’)

Note that some Form V APs can have passive meanings:
1.2.5 Form VI AP: _mutafa‘āl_ مَتَفَاعَل

- successive: _mutataal-in_ مَتَتَالٌ 
  - _mutakafī_ مَتَكَافِٰٗ
  - commensurate
- increasing: _mutazaayid_ مَتَزَايِدٌ 
  - optimistic: _mutafa‘āl_ مَتَفَاعِلٌ
- scattered: _mutanaathir_ مَتَنَاثِرٌ 
  - _mutashā‘ām_ مَتَشَأَمٌ

**Form VI APs in context:**

- **successive**
  - _sanawaat-un_ mutataaliyat-un
  - _‘ilab-un_ mutanaathirat-un

- **scattered**
  - _al-ikhtaam-u_ l-mutazaayid-u bi-l-‘islaam-i
  - _mubaarat-un_ mutakafī‘at-un

- **equal**
  - _un_ _al-ikhtaam-u_ l-mutazaayid-u bi-l-

1.2.6 Form VII AP: _munfa‘āl_ مَنَفَعٌ

No noun forms were encountered in the data, only adjectival APs of Form VII:

- sliding: _munzaliq_ مُنزَلِقٌ 
  - isolated: _mun‘azil_ مُنْعَزِلٌ
- originating: _munbathiq_ مَنْبَثِيقٌ 
  - notched, indented: _munba‘ij_ مَنْبِعَجٌ

**a sliding door**

- _baab-un_ munzaliq-un

1.2.7 Form VIII AP: _mutafa‘āl_ مَتَفَاعِل

- listener: _mustami‘_ مُستَمِعٌ 
  - _muHtarim_ مُحَتَرِمٌ
- waiting: _muntaZir_ مُنتَظِرٌ 
  - _mubtasim_ مُبَتَسِمٌ
- agreeing: _muttafiq_ مَتَفِقٌ 
  - _mu‘tadil_ مَعْتَدِلٌ

1.2.7.1 FORM VIII AP WITH PP MEANING: A Form VIII AP may occasionally have the meaning of a passive participle:

- full of; filled with: _mumtali‘ (bi-)_ مَمْتَلِيٌّ (بِ)
- united: _muttaHid_
- hidden: _muxtabi‘_ مَخْتَبِيٌّ
Participles: active and passive

Form VIII APs in context:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Expression</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-umam-u l-muttaHidat-u</td>
<td>the United Nations in order to please various tastes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alfataat-u l-mubtasimat-u</td>
<td>the smiling girl Your adversary is hidden.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2.8 Form IX AP: muf ‘all مُفعَّل

The Form IX APs are rare.

1.2.9 Form X AP: mustaf ‘il مُستَعْفَل

orientalist mustashriq مُستَشرق consumer; user mustaxdim مُستَخدَم
continuous mustamirr مُستَمر impossible mustaHil مُستَحِيل
circular mustadiir مُستَدَير

Form X APs in context:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Expression</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bi-Sifat-in mustamirrat-in</td>
<td>in a continuous way; continuously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thalaathat-u mustaHilaat-in</td>
<td>three impossible [things] for every consumer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3 Quadriliteral APs

Quadriliteral APs may function as nouns or adjectives. As with the derived-form triliteral-based APs, quadriliteral AP nouns, when referring to human beings, take the sound masculine or feminine plural, according to natural gender; when referring to nonhuman entities, the sound feminine plural is used.

Form I: mufa‘il مَفعُول

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Expression</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>engineer/s</td>
<td>muhandis/-uuna مَهْنِدِس/مُهَنِّدسنَونَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>translator/s</td>
<td>mutarjim/-uuna مَتَرِجم/مُتْرِجَمُونَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explosive/s</td>
<td>mufarqi‘/mufarqi‘aat مُفْرَقَع/مُفْرَقَعَات</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Form II: *mutafa'il* مُتَفَعَّلُ

deteriorating *mutadahwr* مَتَدَهْر
profound; far-reaching *mutaghalhil* مَتَغَالِحَلِ

Form IV: *muf'alill* مُفْعَلٌ

serene, calm *muTma'in* مُطَمِّنٌ
vanishing *muDmaHill* مَضَمَّحٌ
dusky, gloomy *mukfahirr* مَكَفَهْرَ

Quadriliteral APs in context:

هم في حال صحة متدهرة. خبراء المفروقات.
*hum fii Haal-i SiHHat-in mutadahwirat-in. xubaraa3-u l-mufarqi 'aat-i*

They are in a *deteriorating* state of health. *explosives experts*

1.4 Special functions of APs

The active participle has a wide range of syntactic functions in Arabic. As noted, it
may serve as a noun or adjective. As a predicate of an equational sentence, it may
function to indicate a verb-like action:

*هو مسافر.*
*huwa musafir-un.*
He is traveling/has gone traveling.

*الطلاب زائرون.*
*al-Tullaab-u za'ir-unaa.*
The students are visiting.

*أنا فاهم.*
*'anaa faahim-un.*
I understand ('I am understanding').

1.4.2 The *Haal* حال construction

A particular adverbial function of active participles is their use in the *Haal* or cir-
cumstantial accusative construction. The active participle is used to describe addi-
tional circumstances of a verbal action, coordinating a state or circumstances
with the action denoted by the verb. The AP used in the *Haal* structure agrees with
the doer or sometimes with the object of the action in number and gender, but is
always in the accusative case.

*دخل الصف متأخراً.*
*daxal-a l-Saff-a muta’axxir-an.*
He entered the classroom *late.*
They (two) entered the country by ship, coming from Algeria.

They departed, returning to their houses.

1.4.2.1 AP + NOUN OBJECT: If the Haal AP is from a transitive verb, it may take an object in the accusative case:

He returned to Cairo carrying a letter from the Libyan leader.

The minister gave a speech transmitting the greetings of the president.

For further discussion of the Haal construction, see Chapter 11, section 2.3.1.

2 Passive participle (PP): ism al-maf ‘uu l

Like the active participle, the passive participle (PP) can be derived from any Form (stem class) of Arabic verbs, from I–X, and PPs can be formed from quadriliteral verbs as well as triliteral. In general, in order to have a passive participle a verb should be transitive, i.e., able to take an object complement or direct object, inasmuch as PPs describe the state of the object of the action.

Passive participles acting as nouns often correspond to English nouns ending in /-ee/ ‘employee’ (muwaZZaf ‘موظف’, or they may correspond to an English past/present participle (e.g., maktuub ‘written’). However, a second important function of the PPs of derived verb forms (II–X) and quadriliterals is to function as nouns of time and place, so the requirement for transitivity is not always met. These include, for example, the nouns mustashfan ‘hospital’ (X PP), mustabar ‘laboratory’ (VIII PP), and mu‘askar ‘camp’ (Quad. I PP).

2.1 Form I passive participle: maf ‘uu l

This form of the PP describes the result of an action, whether it functions as a noun or an adjective. It may take a broken plural or the sound feminine plural if

A good description of both present and past participles in English is found in Hurford 1994, 157–60 and 195–98. Note especially his description of the contrast between the English past participle and the Arabic passive participle, p. 159.
it refers to a nonhuman entity, and the sound masculine plural if it refers to human males.

**Form I PP noun:**

- concept/s: mafhuum/mafuahim
- group/s: majmuu’a/-aat
- plan/s: mashruu’/-aat~ mashaarrii
c- manuscript/s: maxTuuT/-aat
- implication/s: madluul/-aat
- topic/s: mawDuu’/mawDuu’aat~ mawaaDii
c- creature/s: maxluuq/-aat
- sound/s: masmuu’/-aat
- prisoner/s: masjuun/-uuna

**PP adjective:**

- known: ma’ruuf
- busy: mashghuul
- blessed: mabruuk
- forbidden: mamnuu

2.1.2 Form I PPs in context

الوالدة والمولود في خير.

fii manshuuraat-i-haa haadhihi al-waalidat-u wa-l-mawluud-u fii xayr-in.
in these of its publications  Mother and [new]born are well.

الجهود المبذولة لإعادة السلام

al-juhuud-u l-mabdhuulat-u li-‘aadat-i l-salaam-i
the efforts exerted to re-establish peace

2.2 Derived form passive participles II–X

As nouns, these participles usually take sound plurals when referring to human beings. When referring to nonhuman entities, the sound feminine plural is usually used. Passive participles are less likely to occur in the reflexive/reciprocal and intransitive Forms V, VI, VII, and IX. Note that PPs as nouns of time and place are especially frequent in Forms VII–X.

14 The singular occurs both as maxTuuT and as maxTuuTu.
2.2.1 Form II PP: *mufa‘al* مُفعَّل

**Nouns:**

- organization: munaZZama مُنظَّمة
- volume (book): mujallad مَجلِد
- triangle: muthallath مَثل

**Adjectives:**

- illustrated: muSawwar مَصور
- preferred; favorite: mufaDDal مَفضل

**Examples:**

- **MufawwaD-u l-sharikat-i:** the company agent
- **Li-mujarrad-i ʿithbaat-in:** at the designated time

---

2.2.2 Form III PP: *mufaa‘al* مُفَعَّل

- addressed, spoken to: muxaaTab مَخاطِبَ

---

2.2.3 Form IV PP: *muf‘al* مَفعَّل

- attaché: mulHaq/-uuna مَلحق/ملحقون
- lexicon: muʿjam/maʿaajim معجم/معاجيم
- compact/ed: mudmaj مَدُمج
- cast; seamless: mufragh مَفرَغ
- disused; disregarded: muhmal مَهل

**Examples:**

- **Al-muHaq-q-u l-ʿaskariyy-u:** the military attaché
- **QurS-un mudmaj-un:** a compact disk
2.2.4 Form V PP: *mutafa‘al*

change *mutaghayyar* expected; *mutawaqqa‘al*
anticipated

They spent more time than expected.

2.2.5 Form VI PP: *mutafa‘al*
The form VI PPs are rare.

2.2.6 Form VII PP: *munfa‘al*
These usually occur as nouns of place or time:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place/Time</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>slope/s</td>
<td>munHadar/-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lowland/s</td>
<td>munxafaD/-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>end of the month</td>
<td>munsalax¹⁵</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.7 Form VIII PP: *mutfa‘al*

When they occur as nouns, the Form VIII PPs sometimes denote nouns of place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place/Time</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>level/s</td>
<td>mustawan/-ayaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>content/s</td>
<td>muHtawan/-ayaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>society/s</td>
<td>mujtama‘/-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid-point; half way</td>
<td>muntaSaf/-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technical term/s</td>
<td>muSTalaH/-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elected</td>
<td>muntaxab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chosen</td>
<td>muxtaar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occupied</td>
<td>muHtall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹⁵ Literally ‘sloughed off, detached.’
2.2.7.1 FORM VIII PPs IN CONTEXT:

الراضي المحتلة

\( \text{al-araaDii l-muHtallat-u } \) \( \text{fii } \text{muntaSaf-i l-layl-i} \)

the occupied lands at midnight

Sometimes an AP of Form VIII will have a passive connotation, e.g.,

الولايات المتّحدة

\( \text{al-wilaayaat-u l-muttaHidat-u} \)

the United States

2.2.8 Form IX PP: \textit{muf ‘al} مَعْلُور

- greened \( \text{muxDarr} \)

2.2.9 Form X PP: \textit{mustaf ‘al} مُستَعْتَرِف

- future/s \( \text{mustaqbal/-aat} \)
- hospital/s \( \text{mustashfan/-ayaat} \)
- warehouse/s \( \text{mustawda’/-aat} \)
- counselor/s \( \text{mustashaar/-uuna} \)
- imported \( \text{mustawrad} \)
- borrowed \( \text{musta’aar} \)

2.2.9.1 FORM X PPs IN CONTEXT:

- ًاسماء مستعارة
  
  \( ^3 \text{asmaa} ‘\text{un } \text{musta} ‘\text{aarat-un} \) \( ^3 \text{uTuur-un } \text{mustawradat-un} \)

  pseudonyms (‘borrowed names’) \( \) \text{imported essences}

- ًأحد مستشاري الرئيس
  
  \( ^3 \text{aHad-u } \text{mustashaar-ii l-ra’iis-i} \)

  one of the president’s counselors

2.3 Quadriliteral PPs

Passive participles of quadriliteral verbs tend to occur chiefly in Forms I and II.

2.3.1 Form I QPP: \textit{mufa ‘al} مُفْرَطَح

- camp \( \text{mu’askar} \)
- flattened \( \text{mufarTaH} \)
- series \( \text{musalsal} \)
- embellished \( \text{muzarkash} \)
- old-timer \( \text{muxaDram} \)
- crystallized \( \text{mubalwar} \)

- مُفْرَطَح

- مُعْسَكَر

- مُسْلَسَل

- مُخَضَّرَم

- مُبْلُور

- مُزَرِّكَش
2.3.2 Form II QPP: mutafa‘lal مَفْعُولَة
This form is rare.

2.3.3 Quadriliteral PPs in context
musalsal-un jadiid-un
a new series

As for the old-timer, she came in fourth.

2.4 PP nouns in the plural
Certain PP nouns are used idiomatically in the plural. They refer to collective inanimate entities (often prepared foods), take the sound feminine plural, and include items such as the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>PP I</th>
<th>PP II</th>
<th>PP IV</th>
<th>PP VIII</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>edibles; foods</td>
<td>ma‘kuulaat</td>
<td>mashruubaat</td>
<td>allabaat</td>
<td>muntaaarat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refreshments</td>
<td>mashwiyyaat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grilled [meats]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>muntajaat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information</td>
<td>ma‘luumaat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>canned [goods]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nuts</td>
<td>mukassaraat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>variety; mixture</td>
<td>munawwa‘aat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>products</td>
<td>muntaaarat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>selections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mukhsarat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

Five inflectional features characterize Arabic nouns: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case. Gender and humanness are inherent in the noun; number and definiteness are determined semantically by the nature of the specific noun referent in context, and case is determined by the syntactic role of the noun (e.g., subject of the verb, object of a preposition) in a clause. Every Arabic noun in context manifests these five features, and all of these features are key components in determining agreement with phrase and clause constituents.

For example, gender, humanness, and number are essential factors in feature compatibility, or agreement, between the verb and its subject; whereas gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case are all factors in feature compatibility between nouns and their modifiers.

Arabic nouns have a base form, or stem, which is used in a word list or looked up in a dictionary. This is also called the “citation form.” It is the bare-bones singular noun. Sometimes it is listed without any case ending, but often, in word lists, the nouns will be in the nominative case if read out loud. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>سفير</td>
<td>ambassador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>خريطة</td>
<td>map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مدخل</td>
<td>entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شعر</td>
<td>poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مجد</td>
<td>glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>فضة</td>
<td>silver</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Gender

Arabic nouns are classified as either feminine or masculine. The gender category into which a noun falls is semantically arbitrary, except where a noun refers to a human being or other creature, when it normally conforms with natural gender. From the point of view of word structure, or morphology, the masculine form is the simplest and most basic shape, whereas feminine nouns usually have a suffix that marks their gender. For the most part, gender is overtly marked, but there are a few words whose gender is covert (see cryptomasculine and cryptofeminine nouns) and shows up only in agreement sequences.

1 A very few nouns can be either masculine or feminine. See section 1.4 “dual gender nouns.”
1.1 Masculine nouns
This is the base category, consisting of a vast range of nouns including male human beings and other living creatures, abstract and concrete nouns, and proper names. As a very general rule, if an Arabic noun does not have a feminine suffix, it is masculine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Word</th>
<th>English Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nahr</td>
<td>river</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waziir</td>
<td>minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>majlis</td>
<td>council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taqaddum</td>
<td>progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burhaan</td>
<td>proof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salaam</td>
<td>peace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.1.1 Masculine proper names

1.1.1.1 PERSONAL NAMES: Arabic male given names are considered masculine, even though some of them end with taa’ marbuuTa or ‘aIlf:

- Makram makram مكرم
- Osama ‘usaama أسامة
- Amin ‘amiin أمين
- Moses muusaa موسى
- Fouad fu’aad فؤاد
- Mustafa muSTafaa مصطفى

1.1.1.2 COUNTRIES: Country names are usually feminine, but there are a few masculine ones, including:

- Morocco al-maghrib المغرب
- Jordan al-urdunn الأردن
- Iraq al-‘iraq العراق
- Sudan al-suudaan السودان
- Lebanon lubnaan لبنان

1.1.2 Cryptomasculine nouns
A few words look overtly feminine because they are spelled with taa’ marbuuTa, but they are actually masculine. Some of these are plural or collective forms. Some examples include:

**Singular:**
- ‘allaama علامة
- Caliph khalifa خليفة

---

2 Wehr (1979) identifies the country of Jordan (al-urdunn) as either masculine or feminine. As the name of the River Jordan, it is strictly masculine.

3 This pattern, fa’araa, is one that implies greatness or intensity. Another example is ‘globe-trotter’ raHHaala رحالة.
1.2 Feminine nouns
Most feminine nouns are marked by the taa’ marbuut suffix (pronounced -ah or -a in pause form). Some of the most common categories for feminine nouns are: female human beings, female creatures, abstract concepts, individual units of naturally occurring classes (e.g., banana, tree), names of cities, names of most countries, and parts of the body that come in pairs (e.g., legs, hands, eyes).

1.2.1 Common nouns
- picture: Suura صورة
- tribe: qabiila قبيلة
- storm: ‘aaSifa عاصفة
- meal: wajba وجبة

1.2.2 Concepts
- Arabism: ‘uruuba عروبة
- trust: thiqa ثقة
- culture: thaqaafa ثقافة
- civilization: HaDaara حضارة

1.2.3 Abstract ideas
- diversification: ta‘addudiyya تعددية
- importance: ‘ahammiyya أهمية
- stardom: nujuumiyya نجومية
- freedom: Hurriyya حرية

1.2.4 Instances (a single instance of an action)
- a convulsion: za‘za‘a زععة
- a shipment: shaHna شحنة
- a coincidence: Sudfa صدفة
- a burst of laughter: qahqaha قهقهة

1.2.5 Unit nouns (individual units of larger collective entities)
- a tree: shajara شجرة
- a fish: samaka سمكة
- a grape: ‘inaba عنبة
- a thorn: shawka شوكة

---

\[ This\ is\ a\ "plural\ of\ a\ plural.\ (See\ section\ 3.2.5\ for\ details\ on\ this\ structure.)\]
1.2.6 Cities
Names of cities are considered feminine because the Arabic word for ‘city’ is madiina, a feminine word. This is true for all cities, not just Arab cities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tunis</td>
<td>tuunis</td>
<td>Beirut</td>
<td>bayruut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>al-qaahira</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>al-qaahira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerusalem</td>
<td>al-quds</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>baariis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunis</td>
<td>tuunis-u l-xaDraa-u</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Certain cities have titles or epithets which reflect the feminine gender of the city name. For example:

- Medina “the Enlightened” al-madiinat-u l-munawwarat-u 
- Mecca “the Venerable” makkat-u l-mukarramat-u
- Tunis “the Verdant” tuunis-u l-xaDraa-u

1.2.7 Countries
Most countries are considered feminine, especially if their names end in -aa. Exceptions are noted above in section 1.1.1.2. Some examples of feminine gender countries are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>miSr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>suuriyaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>faransaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>3amriika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>al-Siin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>3isbaanya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of phrases:

- Muslim Spain 3isbaanya l-muslimat-u
- North America 3amriika l-shimaaliyyat-u
- ancient Egypt miSr-u l-qadiimat-u

1.2.8 Female proper names
Names of women and girls are considered feminine since they refer to female human beings. They may or may not end with taa’ marbuuta. Female names are diptote.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zahra</td>
<td>zahra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alia</td>
<td>‘aaliya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karima</td>
<td>kariima</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeinab</td>
<td>zaynab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selma</td>
<td>salmaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanan</td>
<td>Hanaan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanan</td>
<td>Hanaan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zineb</td>
<td>Zinab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmi</td>
<td>Selma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanan</td>
<td>Hanan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2.9 Nouns spelled with final \textit{taa}'
Two common words that are feminine by nature but spelled with a final \textit{taa}' (rather than \textit{taa}' \textit{marbuuTa}):

\begin{itemize}
  \item daughter; girl \textit{bint} بنت
  \item sister \textit{uxt} أخت
\end{itemize}

1.2.10 Parts of the body
Certain parts of the body are considered feminine although not marked with \textit{taa}' \textit{marbuuTa}, especially those parts that come in pairs. For example:

\begin{itemize}
  \item foot \textit{qadam} قدم
  \item hand \textit{yad} يد
  \item eye \textit{'ayn} عين
  \item ear \textit{'udhun} أذن
\end{itemize}

1.2.11 Borrowed nouns
Nouns borrowed from other languages that end with an -\textit{ah} or -\textit{aa} sound are usually treated as feminine:

\begin{itemize}
  \item doctorate (Fr. ‘doctorat’) \textit{duktuuraah} دكتوراه
  \item cinema (Fr. ‘cinéma’) \textit{siinamaa} سينما
  \item music \textit{muusiiqaa} موسيقى
  \item opera \textit{'uubiraa} أبرا
  \item delta (Greek ‘delta’) \textit{daltaa} دلتا
\end{itemize}

1.2.12 Other feminine suffixes
Some nouns are marked feminine by suffixes other than \textit{taa}' \textit{marbuuTa}. These endings include: '\textit{alif} plus hamza (-\textit{aa}’ ء) or ‘\textit{alif} Tawiila (-\textit{aa}’ آ) or ‘\textit{alif} maqSuura (-\textit{aa}’ ی). These endings are suffixed after the root consonants.\footnote{As in \textit{daltaa l-niil-i} ‘the Nile Delta.’} For example:

\begin{itemize}
  \item desert (root: \textit{S-H-r}) \textit{SaHraa}’ صحراء
  \item remembrance (root: \textit{dh-k-r}) \textit{dhikraa} ذكري
  \item universe; world (root: \textit{d-n-y}) \textit{dunyaa} دنيا
\end{itemize}

\footnote{Note that there are also a number of masculine nouns that end with ‘\textit{alif} plus hamza, ‘\textit{alif} Tawiila, or ‘\textit{alif} maqSuura. The ‘\textit{alif} ending in those instances represents the final defective consonant of the lexical root and is not an affix. Some of these masculine nouns include:}

\begin{itemize}
  \item song (root: \textit{gh-n-y}) \textit{ghinaa}’ غناء
  \item meaning (root: \textit{'n-y}) \textit{ma'nan} معنى
  \item stream (root: \textit{j-r-y}) \textit{majran} مجرى
  \item formal legal opinion (root: \textit{f-t-y}) \textit{fatwaa} قتوى
\end{itemize}
1.2.13 Cryptofeminine nouns

A few nouns are not overtly marked for feminine gender and yet are feminine. This is a small, defined set and includes:

- bride: ‘aruus (روس) self; soul nafs نفس
- mother: ُumm (أم) wine xamr خمر
- fire: naar (نار) well bi’r بئر
- house: daar (دار) cup ka’s كأس
- earth; ground; land: ُarD (أرض) sun shams شمس
- war: Harb (حرب) tooth; age sinn سن

Examples of cryptofeminine nouns and modifiers:
- the afterlife: al-daar-u ُaaxirat-u الدار الآخرة
- the Holy Land: al-‘arD-u l-muqaddasat-u الأرض المقدسة
- common ground: ُarD-un mushtarakan-un أرض مشتركة
- the First World War: al-Harb-u l-‘alaamiyyat-u l-‘uulaa الحرب العالمية الأولى
- in a deep well: fii bi’r-in ‘amiiqat-in في بئر عميقة

1.3 Natural gender nouns

Many nouns that refer to human beings or other living creatures have both a masculine and a feminine form. They vary in gender depending on the nature of the referent, just as English has pairs of words such as “host” and “hostess.” The general rule is that the masculine is the base form and the feminine is denoted by the addition of taa’ marbuutTa. Examples of some of these include:

- king/queen: malik/malika ملكة
- artist (m/f): fannaan/fannaana فنانة
- ambassador/ambassadress: safiir/safiira سفيرة
1.4 Dual gender nouns
A very small number of Arabic nouns are either masculine or feminine. They can be treated syntactically as either one, although feminine agreement predominates in the data gathered for this study. There are not many nouns in this group, but some of them are fairly frequent:

market suuq روح
road; path Tariiq سماء
bag kiis لسان
salt milH حال

Examples:
the black market al-suq-u l-sawdaa-
The Arab spirit al-ruuH-u l-arabiyyat-u
in good condition fii Haal-in jayyidat-in

2 Humanness
A unique and important morpho-semantic feature of Arabic nouns is humanness, that is, whether or not they refer to human beings. This is a crucial grammatical point for predicting certain kinds of plural formation and for purposes of agreement with other components of a phrase or clause. The grammatical criterion of humanness applies only to nouns in the plural.

2.1 Agreement
Agreement with nouns in the plural depends on whether the noun refers to human beings.

2.1.1 Nonhuman referent
If a plural noun refers to nonhuman entities, be they creatures or inanimate things, it takes feminine singular agreement. This is sometimes referred to as “deflected” agreement. This applies to agreement with verbs, adjectives, and also pronouns.

7 See Wright 1967, II:181–83 for a comprehensive list of dual gender nouns.
8 See Belnap and Shabaneh 1992 on this topic.


2.1.2 Human referent

When the referent of the plural noun is human, then the agreement is straightforward, using masculine or feminine plural forms as appropriate:

الأفراد العرب

al-sufaraa\(^{2}\)-u l-'arab-u
the Arab ambassadors

الخلفاء الراشدون

al-xulafa\(^{2}\)-u l-raashid-uuna
the orthodox caliphs

قادة عسكريون

qaadat-un `askariyy-uuna
military leaders

الإخوان المسلمين

al-\(^{2}\) ixwaan-u l-muslim-uuna
the Muslim Brotherhood (‘Brothers’)

2.1.3 Special cases

2.1.3.1 GROUPS OF HUMANS AS ABSTRACTIONS: Sometimes, although the noun referents are human, they are being referred to as abstractions, and thus the plural is treated as a nonhuman plural:

السلالات الرومانية

al-sulutaat-u l-ruumaaniyyat-u
the Roman authorities

جميع أسرهم الكريمة

jamii\(^{2}\)-u `user-i-him-i l-kariimat-i
all their distinguished families

من أهم الشخصيات النسائية في التاريخ

min `ahamm-i l-sha\(^{3}\)fiyyat-i l-nisaa\(^{2}\)-iyyat-i fii l-taariix-i
among the most important female personalities in history

هناك فئات كثيرة من الشعب تعيش تحت الأرض

hunaaka fi`aat-un kathirat-un min-a l-sha`b-i ta`iish-u talH-ta l-arD-i.
There are many groups of people [who] live underground.
but the majority plunged into violent debate.

At least five persons were killed.

2.1.3.2 ‘PEOPLE’ WORDS: sha‘b شعب AND naas ناس

(1) sha‘b شعب: The word sha‘b ‘people’ although semantically plural, is usually treated as masculine singular, as a collective noun. Its plural, shu‘uub, ‘peoples’ is treated as a nonhuman plural with feminine singular agreement:

مثل أي شعب آخر mithl-a ‘ayy-i sha‘b-in ‘aaxar-a like any other people

الشعوب العربية والإسلامية al-shu‘uub-u l-‘arabiyyat-u wa-l-‘islaamiyyat-u the Arab and Islamic peoples

مجرد شعوب وثنية mujarrad-u shu‘uub-in wathaniyyat-in mere pagan peoples

باركها الشعب كله baarak-a-haa l-sha‘b-u kull-u-hu. All the people blessed it.

(2) naas ناس: The word naas ‘people’ has inconsistent agreement patterns. From the triliteral root -n-s, and related to the words ’insaan ‘human being,’ and ’aaansa ‘young lady,’ it refers to people or folk in general. Sometimes its agreement patterns follow the rules for words referring to human beings, i.e., the agreement is masculine plural; other times (even in the same text) it may be treated as an abstraction and the agreement is feminine singular:

Plural agreement:

اطلاعات ناس شرفاء.

al-Talyaan-u naas-un shurafa‘-u. The Italians are noble (pl.) people.

فالناس يتناولون أنواعاً مختلفة من الأغذية.

fa-l-naas-u ya-tanaaval-uuna ’anwa‘-an muxtalif-an min-a l-‘aghhdhiyat-i.

People eat (pl.) different sorts of food.

9 The agreement here is not with the feminine form of the number, since it is actually masculine (agreeing via reverse gender with the singular of ’ashxaaS, shaxS).
(2.2) Feminine singular agreement:

Many people only eat (f. sg.) food from plant sources (‘do not eat food except from plant sources’).

2.2 Form of the noun plural

Certain plural patterns are used only with nouns that denote human beings.

2.2.1 The sound masculine plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>engineer/s</td>
<td>muhandis/muhandis-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cook/s</td>
<td>Tabbaax/Tabbaax-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omani/s</td>
<td>‘umaaniyy/‘umaaniyy-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese</td>
<td>lubnaaniyy/lubnaaniyy-uuna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.2 Broken plurals of certain patterns

a. fu‘alaa’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>president/s</td>
<td>ra’ iis/ru’asaa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ambassador/s</td>
<td>safiir/sufaraa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prince/s</td>
<td>‘amiir/’umaraa’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. ‘af‘ilaa’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>friend/s</td>
<td>Sadiiq/‘aSdiqaa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doctor/s</td>
<td>Tabiib/‘aTibbaa’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.3 Human/nonhuman homonyms

Sometimes two nouns may look identical (i.e., they are homonyms) but have different meanings, one human and one nonhuman, and so the plural is different,
according to the noun referent:

worker/s  ‘aamil/‘ummaal  عامل/عوامل
factor/s  ‘aamil/‘awaamil  عامل/عوامل

3 Number
Arabic nouns are marked for three different kinds of number: singular, dual, and plural. Because Arabic has a special morphological category for the dual, plural in Arabic refers to three or more. The singular is considered the base form of the noun, and the dual and plural are extensions of that form in various ways.

3.1 The dual (al-muthannaal المثنى
Arabic has a separate number category for two of anything. Instead of using the number “two” (ithnaani إثنان or ithnataani إثنانان) plus the plural noun, as does English (“two hands”), Arabic uses a dual suffix on the singular stem to mark the noun as being dual (e.g., yad-aani ‘two hands’). The suffix has two case forms, the case being signaled by the change of the long vowel in the suffix from /-aa-/ to /-ay-/:

- aani  (nominative)
- ayni  (genitive/accusative)

Nominative:

woصل سفيران.
waSal-a safiir-aani.
Two ambassadors arrived.

Genitive:

بين سفیرین
bayn-a safiir-ayni
between two ambassadors

Accusative:

زروا السفرین.
zaar-uu l-safiir-ayni.
They visited the two ambassadors.

3.1.1 Dual with taaʷ marbuwuTa
When the dual suffix is added to a noun ending in taaʷ marbuwuTa, the taaʷ marbuwuTa is no longer the final letter in the word and it turns into regular taaʷ.
3.1.2 Dual plus waaw or yaa

When the dual suffix is added to certain words that are biliteral in origin, or to words in the defective declension, a waaw or yaa is inserted before the dual suffix:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>أبوان</td>
<td>parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أخوان</td>
<td>two brothers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>محاميان</td>
<td>two lawyers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>قاضيان</td>
<td>two judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مقهيان</td>
<td>two cafés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مستشفيان</td>
<td>two hospitals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.3 Definiteness in the dual

One of the features of the dual suffix is that it shows no distinction between definite and indefinite. It cannot be marked for nunation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مهربان</td>
<td>two smugglers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>المهربان</td>
<td>the two smugglers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مع مهربين</td>
<td>with two smugglers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مع المهربين</td>
<td>with the two smugglers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.4 Nuun-deletion in iDaafa

If a dual noun is the first term of an iDaafa or annexation structure, the nuun plus kasra (\(\text{n} \)) of the dual suffix is deleted. Thus, -aani becomes -aa and -ayni becomes -ay.

---

10 Whether the additional consonant is waaw or yaa depends on the root consonants and on derivational morphology. See Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 2: 14–17.

11 The dual suffixes -aani and -ayni as well as the sound masculine plural suffixes -uuna and -iina both terminate with the consonant nuun, followed by a short vowel, and this feature behaves to a certain extent as a form of nunation (being deleted if the noun has a possessive pronoun suffix, for instance). Additional nunation is not used for these suffixes.

12 In Arabic annexation structures, there is a general prohibition on the first term (the muDaaf), against noun suffixes ending with an -n sound. This applies to nunation (indefiniteness marking), to the dual suffix, and to the sound masculine plural.
3.1.5 Nuun-deletion with pronoun suffix

The same process occurs when a noun in the dual gets a possessive pronoun suffix. The -ni of the dual suffix is deleted and the possessive pronoun suffix is attached directly to the -aa or -ay of the dual suffix. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>بين يديه</td>
<td>in front of him (‘between his two hands’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>min jaanib-ay-hi</td>
<td>from its two sides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تفتح ذراعيها.</td>
<td>She opens her arms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waSal-a manduub-aa-hu.</td>
<td>His two delegates arrived.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.6 Dual agreement

When a noun in the dual is modified by an adjective, is referred to by a pronoun, or is the subject of a following verb, then these form classes conform to the dual inflection as well. Thus, the concept of dual is present not only in nouns, but in adjectives, pronouns and verbs. These are discussed separately under each of the form-class headings, but here are some examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hunaaka mawDuu-aani muhimn-aani.</td>
<td>There are two important subjects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xilaal-a l-sanat-ayni l-maadDiyat-ayni</td>
<td>during the past two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xaadim-u l-Haram-ayni l-shariif-ayni</td>
<td>the Servant of the two Holy Places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bayn-a haadh-ayni l-Hadath-ayni</td>
<td>between these two events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13 In this and the following phrases the -ay dual ending is given a “helping vowel” kasru because of the consonantal nature of the -y ending on the dual suffix -ay, in order to help pronunciation and liaison with the following word. (See Wright 1967, I:21 on this point.)

14 A traditional title of the ruler of Saudi Arabia.
3.2 The Plural (الجمع)

Arabic nouns form their plurals in three ways. Two of these are “external” plurals consisting of suffixes added to the singular stem (the sound feminine and sound masculine plurals). The third way of pluralizing occurs inside the noun stem itself (the “broken” or internal plural), shifting the arrangement of vowels, and sometimes inserting an extra consonant or two. To add to this diversity, a noun may have two or three (or more) alternative plurals.

3.2.1 The sound feminine plural (جمعتها سالمة)

This form of plural is very common and applies to an extensive range of Arabic noun classes, both human and nonhuman. It consists of a suffix -aat (اّت) attached to the singular stem of the noun. Note that when this suffix is attached to a noun that has taa’ marbuuta in the singular, it replaces the taa’ marbuuta:

- power/s: quwwa/quww-aat
- oasis/ies: waaHa/waaH-aat
- company/ies: sharika/sharik-aat
- station/s: maHaTTa/maHaTT-aat
- society/ies: mujtamae/mujtamae-aat
- airport/s: maTaar/maTaar-aat
- oasis/-es: waaHa/waaH-aat
- company/ies: sharika/sharik-aat
- station/s: maHaTTa/maHaTT-aat
- society/ies: mujtamae/mujtamae-aat
- airport/s: maTaar/maTaar-aat

3.2.1.1 Inflection of the Sound Feminine Plural: The sound feminine plural suffix has a special declension of its own. It inflects for definiteness (definite and indefinite) and for case, but only shows two case variations instead of the normal three: /-u/ or /-un/ for nominative and /-i/ or /-in/ for genitive/accusative. The sound feminine plural ending never takes fatHa /-a/. For inflectional paradigms see section 5.4.2.1, subsection (3), in this chapter.

Nominative:

- companies: sharik-aat-un
- the companies: al-sharik-aat-u

Genitive:

- in companies: fii sharik-aat-in
- in the companies: fii l-sharik-aat-i

Accusative:

- He founded companies: ُассا-as-sa sharik-aat-in.
- He founded the companies: ُассا-as-sa l-sharik-aat-i.
3.2.1.2 VARIANTS: BUFFER SOUNDS INSERTED BEFORE SOUND FEMININE PLURAL SUFFIX: Some nouns insert a *waaw* or *yaa* or a *haa* to the noun stem before affixing the */aat/* ending. Most of these nouns end in the singular with a vowel or */alif-hamza*, but some end with *taa* or *taa marbuuTa*:

(1) *waaw* insertion:

(1.1) Two common bi-consonantal nouns insert *waaw* before the */aat/* ending:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sister/s</td>
<td><em>sana/sana-w-aat</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>year/s</td>
<td><em>sana/sana-w-aat</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.2) Certain borrowed words ending in */alif Tawiila* take the sound feminine plural with *waaw* as buffer between the two */alifs*. Note that even though the referents of these nouns are human males, the plural is sound feminine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pasha/s</td>
<td><em>baashaa/baashaa-w-aat</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pope/s</td>
<td><em>baabaa/baabaa-w-aat</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.3) Nouns ending in the suffix */aa* often drop the final *hamza* and add a *waaw* between the stem and suffix:15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>green (f.)/greens</td>
<td><em>xaDraa</em>/xaDraa-w-aat*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desert/s</td>
<td><em>SaHraa/SaHraa-w-aat</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parrot/s</td>
<td><em>babbaghaa</em>/babbaghaa-w-aat*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.4) Nouns ending in */alif* plus */taa* */marbuuTu* usually shorten */alif* to */fatHa*, and add a *waaw*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>channel/s; canal/s</td>
<td><em>qanaat/qana-w-aat</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prayer/s</td>
<td><em>Salaat/Sala-w-aat</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) *yaa* insertion: Nouns that end with */alif maqSuura* shorten the */alif* to */fatHa* and insert *yaa* before the sound feminine plural suffix:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>memory/jies</td>
<td><em>dhikraa/dhikra-y-aat</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sweet/s</td>
<td><em>Halwaa/Halwa-y-aat</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15 Note that if the *hamza* in the */aa* ending is part of the root, then the *hamza* is not deletable, as in: 

*ijraa*/ijraa-w-aat.

16 Alternative plurals for *SaHraa* are *SaHaaraa* صحاري and *SaHaar-in* صحار.
fever/s Hummaa/Humma-y-aat  حمى/حميات
level/s mustawan/mustawa-y-aat  مستوى/مستويات
hospital/s mustashfan/mustashfa-y-aat  مستشفى/مستشفيات

(3) **haa** insertion: The word ‘umm, ‘mother’ inserts a haa preceding the sound feminine plural:

mother/s ُumm/ُumm-ah-aat  أم/أمهات

Borrowed words ending with a long vowel (especially -uu) often insert haa as a buffer before the /-aat/ suffix in order to avoid two long vowels coming together:

casino/s kaaziinuu/kaaziinuu-h-aat  كازينو/كازينوهات
radio/s raadyuu/raadyuu-h-aat  راديو/راديوهات
studio/s (i)stuudyuu/(i)stuudyuu-h-aat  (إ) ستوديو/(إ) ستوديوهات

3.2.1.3 Where the Sound Feminine Plural is Used: The following categories describe the types of nouns which make their plural using the sound feminine plural suffix -aat. Some categories are general, like number 1, and some are specific, like 3 and 4. In some cases there is more than one form of the plural. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but covers major categories.

(1) Many (but not all) nouns ending in taaْ marbuuTa:

embassy/ies sifaara/sifaar-aat  سفارة/سفارات

government/s Hukuuma/Hukuum-aat  حكومة/حكومات

language/s lugha/lugh-aat  لغة/لغات

ticket/s biTaaqa/biTaaq-aat~baTaaْ iq  بطاقة/بطاقات ~ بطاق

pharmacy/ies Saydaliyya/Saydaliyy-aat  صيدلية/صيدليات

continent/s qaarra/qaarr-aat  قارة/قارات

barracks thukna/thukn-aat~thukan  ثكنة/ثكنات ~ ثكن

(1.1) Vowel variation: Feminine nouns ending with taaْ marbuuTa or taaْ that have sukuun on the second radical, often use the sound feminine plural with a slight internal vowel change, usually a shift to an additional vowel inserted after the second radical. When the original short vowel is fatHa or

---

17 The word ‘umm, in addition to meaning literally ‘mother,’ also has abstract meanings such as ‘source, origin, original version, essence.’ See Wehr 1979 for examples and details.
kasra, the change tends to be to fatHas; if the short vowel is Damma, then the Damma may be copied or there may be a change to fatHas.

| Service/s | xidma/xidam-aat=xidam |
| Experience/s | xibra/xibar-aat |
| Girl/s; daughter/s | bint/ban-aat |
| Session/s | jalsa/jalas-aat |
| Sister/s | ُuxt/ُaxaw-aat |
| Circle/s; ring/s | Halqa/Halaq-aat |
| Authority/ies | sulTa/suluT-aat |

(2) **Nouns referring strictly to female human beings.** Many of these nouns are actually participles used as substantives (nouns). Some denote professions, but others are simply common nouns. When the sound feminine plural is used to refer to groups of human beings, it only denotes **exclusively female groups.**

| Lady/ies | sayyida/sayyid-aat |
| Queen/s | malika/malik-aat |
| Actress/es | mumaththila/mumaththil-aat |
| Professor/s (f.) | ُuestaadh/ُuestaadh-aat |
| Customer/s (f.) | zabuuna/zabuun-aat |
| Muslim/s (f.) | muslima/muslim-aat |
| Expert/s (f.) | xabiira/xabiir-aat |

(3) **Verbal nouns from derived forms II–X of triliteral roots and also from Forms I–IV of quadriliteral roots.** These verbal nouns all take the sound feminine plural, even though most of them are masculine in the singular. In the Form II verbal noun, the -aat plural often alternates with a broken plural.

**Verbal nouns from triliteral roots:**

| Arrangement/s | II. tartiib/tartiib-aat |
| Negotiation/s | III. mufaawaDa/mufaawaD-aat |

---

18 If even one human male is present within the group, the masculine plural form is used.

19 The optional Form II plural is usually of the CaCaCiiC pattern. See section 3.2.3.2, subsection (4.1.4), in this chapter.
announcement/s IV. ٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍٍ_20 The singular occurs both as \(maxTuuT \cdot W \#fl\) and \(maxTuuTa \#W \#fl\).
(5) Active (AP) and passive (PP) participles of the derived verb forms (II–X) and quadrilaterals if they do not refer to human beings. These nouns may be either masculine or feminine in the singular.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun Type</th>
<th>II PP</th>
<th>III PP</th>
<th>IV PP</th>
<th>V PP</th>
<th>VI PP</th>
<th>VII PP</th>
<th>VIII PP</th>
<th>IX PP</th>
<th>X PP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volume/s</td>
<td>mujallad/mujallad-aat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Foundation/s</td>
<td>mu’assasa/mu’assas-aat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drug/s</td>
<td>muxaddir/muxaddir-aat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Note/s</td>
<td>mudhakkira/mudhakkir-aat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Establishment/s</td>
<td>munsha’a/munsha’a-aat</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean/s</td>
<td>muHiiT/muHiiT-aat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change/s</td>
<td>mutaghayyar/mutaghayyar-aat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Synonym/s</td>
<td>mutaraadif/mutaraadif-aat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slope/s</td>
<td>munHaDar/munHaDar-aat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference/s</td>
<td>mu’tamar/mu’tamar-aat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Level/s</td>
<td>mustawan/mustaway-aat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Settlement/s</td>
<td>mustawTana/mustawTan-aat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hospital/s</td>
<td>mustashfan/mustashfay-aat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swamp/s</td>
<td>mustanqa’fi/mustanqa’fi-aat</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp/s</td>
<td>mu’askar/mu’askar-aat</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explosive/s</td>
<td>mufarqi’fi/mufarqi’fi-aat</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that of course, participles of any verb form that refer (strictly) to female human beings will also take the sound feminine plural, in accordance with the rule in 3.2.1.3(2) above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun Type</th>
<th>II AP</th>
<th>III AP</th>
<th>IV AP</th>
<th>V AP</th>
<th>VI AP</th>
<th>VII AP</th>
<th>VIII AP</th>
<th>IX AP</th>
<th>X AP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/s (f.)</td>
<td>mudarrisa/mudarris-aat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen/s (f.)</td>
<td>muwaatina/muwaaTina-aat</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor/s (f.)</td>
<td>mushrif/mushrif-aat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist/s (f.)</td>
<td>mutaxaSSisa/mutaxaSSis-aat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer/s (f.)</td>
<td>mustahlika/mustahlik-aat</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(6) With most (but not all) loanwords borrowed directly from a foreign language into Arabic.21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>computer/s</td>
<td>كمبيوتر/كمبيوترات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>telephone/s</td>
<td>تلفون/تلفونات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taxi/s</td>
<td>تاكسي/تاكسيات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dollar/s</td>
<td>دولار/دولارات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hormone/s</td>
<td>هرمون/هرمونات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>virus/es</td>
<td>فيروس/فيروسات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liter/s</td>
<td>ليتر/ليترات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lord/s</td>
<td>لورد/لوردات</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(7) The tens numbers (twenty through ninety), when referring to decades, such as the “twenties” and “sixties.” Note that the/-aat plural suffix is attached to the genitive/accusative form of the word stem (/iin/, not /uun/).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sixty/sixties</td>
<td>ستين/ستينات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seventy/seventies</td>
<td>سبعين/سبعينات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ninety/nineties</td>
<td>تسعين/تسعينات</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(8) Feminine proper names even if they do not end in taa’ marbuuTa:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zeinab/s</td>
<td>زينب/زينبات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amira/s</td>
<td>أميرة/أميرات</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(9) Names of the letters of the alphabet:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ُalif/s</td>
<td>ألف/ألفات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raa*/s</td>
<td>راء/رآيات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waaw/s</td>
<td>واء/واوات</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21 Some examples of borrowed nouns with Arabic broken plurals are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bank/s</td>
<td>بنك/بنوك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ton/s</td>
<td>طن/طنان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>million/s</td>
<td>مليون/مليونين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mile/s</td>
<td>ميل/ميلان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meter/s</td>
<td>متر/متران</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22 As in majlis-u Huurdaat-i ‘The House of Lords.’
(10) **Names of the months:** There are three sets of names of the months used in Arabic: two sets for the solar calendar (one based on Semitic names and one on borrowed European names) and one for the lunar Muslim calendar.\(^23\) All months make their plural with -aat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Arabic Name</th>
<th>English Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>niisaan</td>
<td>نيسان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>tammuuz</td>
<td>تموز</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramadan</td>
<td>ramaDaan</td>
<td>رمضان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawwal</td>
<td>shawwaal</td>
<td>شوال</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>disambir</td>
<td>دمشق</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(11) **Feminine adjectives that stand on their own as substantives:** for example, the feminine relative or *nisba* adjectives (adjectives ending in -iyya).

- Yemeni         | yamaniyya    | يمنية          |
- Tunisian       | tuunisiyya   | تونسية         |
- Arab           | ‘arabiyya    | عربية         |

(12) **Other:** The sound feminine plural is used on a number of other nouns that do not clearly fall into the above categories. One especially frequent use is with nouns whose final syllable contains a long /-aa/ in the singular.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Arabic Name</th>
<th>English Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>airport</td>
<td>maTaar</td>
<td>مطار</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orbit</td>
<td>madaar</td>
<td>مدار</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>field</td>
<td>majaal</td>
<td>مجال</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animal</td>
<td>Hayawaan</td>
<td>حيوان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activity</td>
<td>nashaaT</td>
<td>نشاط</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decision</td>
<td>qaraar</td>
<td>قرار</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spice</td>
<td>bahaar</td>
<td>بهار</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>security, guarantee</td>
<td>Damaan</td>
<td>حماية/حمامات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bath</td>
<td>Hammaam</td>
<td>حمامات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>current</td>
<td>tayyaar</td>
<td>تيار/تيارات</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^23\) For complete sets of the Arabic names of months in the lunar and solar calendars see Ryding 1990, 409.

\(^24\) Also ‘anstīTa.
3.2.2 The sound masculine plural (jamʿ mudhakkar safāl)

The sound masculine plural is much more restricted in occurrence than the sound feminine plural because, almost without exception, it only occurs on nouns and adjectives referring to male human beings or mixed groups of male and female human beings.25

3.2.2.1 Inflection of the sound masculine plural: This type of plural takes the form of a suffix that attaches to the singular noun (or adjective): -uuna (nominative) or -iina (genitive/accusative).

(1) Case: The sound masculine plural shows overtly only two case inflections instead of three. Note that the long vowel in the suffix (-uu- or -ii-) is the case marker, and is what changes when the case changes.26 The short vowel ending (fatHa) (-a) remains the same in both the nominative and the genitive/accusative. This fatHa is not a case ending, but rather part of the spelling of the suffix. In pause form it is not pronounced. Examples:

- observers (nom.) murāqīb-uuna مراقبون
- observers (gen./acc.) murāqīb-iina مراقبين
- surgeons (nom.) jarraḥi-uuna جراحون
- surgeons (gen./acc.) jarraḥi-iina جراحين

(2) Definiteness: One of the features of the sound masculine plural suffix is that, like the dual suffix, there is no distinction between definite and indefinite:

- assistants musāʿi-d-uuna مساعدون
- the assistants al-musāʿi-d-uuna المساعدون
- with assistants maʿa musaaʿi-d-iina مع مساعدون
- with the assistants maʿa l-musaaʿi-d-iina مع المساعدين

---

25 Exceptions are very few and include, for example, ’arḍ/ ’araD-uuna أرض/ أرضون. The noun ’ard has a more common plural, however: ’araD-in أراضي.

26 Arab grammarians consider the long vowel of the sound masculine plural as the inflectional vowel, the one that indicates case.
3.2.2.2 **Nuun-deletion:**

(1) **As first term of `iDaafa:** A distinctive feature of the sound masculine plural suffix, like the dual suffix, is that because its final consonant is a *nuun*, the *nuun* and its vowel, *fatHa*, are deleted if the noun is the first term of an `iDaafa` (annexation structure). The long vowel of the suffix (-*uu* or -*ii*) is then left as the final element of the word.

- FilisTiiniyy-*uu l-xaarij-*i من متقريجي الجامعة
- Palestiniyans abroad من *mutaxarrij-*ii l-*jaami`at-*i
- Modoro *s¨a¨ area the Muslims of North Africa
- MuwaatTin-*uu `uurubbaa l-gharbiyyat-*i
- The citizens of Western Europe bi-*muslim-*ii shimaal-*i` ifriiqiyaa
- Li-mudiir-*ii l-*munaZZamaat-*i
- For the administrators muHibb-*uu l-*ilm-*i
- Min *mudir-*ii l-*muHibb-*uu l-*la?
- For their nominees li-*murashshaH-*ii-him
- Our delegates manduub-*uu-naa
- Its publishers naashir-*uu-haa
- Our sons ban-*uu-naa

(2) **With a pronoun suffix:** Likewise, when a noun with the sound masculine plural is suffixed with a possessive pronoun, the *nuun* and short vowel /-a/ of the suffix are deleted:

- From its supporters min *mu`ayyid-*ii-hi من مؤيديه
- For their nominees li-*murashshaH-*ii-him لمرشحيهم
- Our delegates manduub-*uu-naa مندوبونا
- Its publishers naashir-*uu-haa ناشروها
- Our sons ban-*uu-naa بنونا

3.2.2.3 **WHERE THE SOUND MASCULINE PLURAL IS USED:** The following categories show the types of nouns which form their plural using the sound masculine suffix. Some categories are general, like number 1, and some are specific, like 3 and 4. This is not an exhaustive list, but covers major categories.

---

27 See note 12 in this chapter.
(1) **Participles as nouns:** Participles acting as substantives (nouns) often take the sound masculine plural when referring to human males or mixed groups of male and female.

(1.1) **Form I:** Some Form I participle nouns take the sound masculine plural, but most take a broken plural (see section 3.2.3.1, subsection (1.2)) when referring to male human beings or mixed male/female groups. Some examples of the sound masculine plural are:

- **official/s** I PP: mas’uul/mas’uul-uuna
- **researcher/s** I AP: baaHith/baaHith-uuna
- **speaker/s** I AP: naaTiq/naaTiq-uuna

(1.2) **Forms II–X:** Derived form (II–X) triliteral and quadriliteral active and passive participles that refer to human males take the sound masculine plural:

**Form II:**
- **nominee/s** II PP: murashshaH/murashshaH-uuna
- **actor/s** II AP: mumaththil/mumaththil-uuna

**Form III:**
- **reporter/s** III AP: muraasil/muraasil-uuna
- **citizen/s** III AP: muwaaTin/muwaaTin-uuna
- **observer/s** III AP: muraaqib/muraaqib-uuna

**Form IV:**
- **Muslim/s** IV AP: muslim/muslim-uuna
- **attaché/s** IV PP: mulHaq/mulHaq-uuna
- **manager/s** IV AP: mudiir/mudiir-uuna
- **guide/s** IV AP: murshid/murshid-uuna

**Form V:**
- **narrator/s** V AP: mutakallim/mutakallim-uuna
- **extremist/s** V AP: mutaTarrif/mutaTarrif-uuna
- **volunteer/s** V AP: mutaTawwi‘/mutaTawwi‘-uuna
- **rebel/s** V AP: mutamarrid/mutamarrid-uuna

**Form VI:**
- **optimist/s** VI AP: mutafaa‘il/mutafaa‘il-uuna
- **pessimist/s** VI AP: mutashaa‘im/mutashaa‘im-uuna
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

Form VII: rare

Form VIII:
- voter/s; elector/s VIII AP: muntaxib/muntaxib-uuna منتخب/منتخبون
- listener/s VIII AP: mustami/mustami-uuna مستمع/مستمعون

Form IX: rare

Form X:
- consumer/s X AP: mustahlik/mustahlik-uuna مستهلك/مستهلكون
- renter/s X AP: musta’jir/musta’jir-uuna مستأجر/مستأجريون

(1.3) Quadriliterals:
- engineer/s QIAP: muhandis/muhandis-uuna مهندس/مهندسوں
- translator/s QIAP: mutarjim/mutarjim-uuna مترجم/مترجمون

(2) Names of professions: Certain nouns in Arabic refer to those who engage in professions or other pursuits. The pattern is CaCCaaC (fa‘eal فعل). The masculine form of these nouns takes the sound masculine plural:
- baker/s xabbaaz/xabbaaz-uuna خباز/خبازوں
- hunter/s Sayyaad/Sayyaad-uuna صياد/صیادوں
- money-changer/s Sarraaf/Sarraaf-uuna صراف/صرافون
- coppersmith/s naHHaas/naHHaas-uuna نحاس/نحاسوں

(3) Alternation with broken plural: Sometimes the sound masculine plural alternates with a broken plural:
- son/s ibn/”abnaa”~ban-uuna ابن/أبناء ~ بنتون
- director/s mudiir/mudaraa”~mudiir-uuna مدير/مديراً ~ مديرون

(4) Noun nisbas: Nisba or relative adjectives may also function as nouns, in which case, if they refer to human males or mixed groups, they are often pluralized with the sound masculine plural:28
- Lebanese lubnaaniyy/lubnaaniyy-uuna لبنانيّ/بنانیوں
- European/s ’uurubbiyy/’uurubbiyy-uunaa أوربيّ/أوربیوں

28 Some exceptions to this include the words for ‘Arab,’ ‘bedouin,’ and ‘foreigner’ which take broken plurals: ’arabiyy/’arab عربي/عرب, badawiyy/badw بدوی/بدو, and ’ajnabiyy/’ajaanib أجنبي/أجانب.
electrician/s kahraba‘iyiyy/kahraba‘iyiyy-uuna
statistician/s ‘iHSaa‘iyiy/iHSaa‘iyiyy-uuna
politician/s siyaasiyy/siyaasiyy-uuna
country dweller/s riifiyy/riifiyy-uuna

(5) **Numbers in tens:** The tens numbers include the sound masculine plural suffix as part of their word structure. It inflects just as the regular sound masculine plural, -uuna for nominative and -iina for genitive/accusative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عشرون</td>
<td>twenty</td>
<td>سبعون</td>
<td>sixty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ثلاثون</td>
<td>thirty</td>
<td>ثمانون</td>
<td>seventy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أربعون</td>
<td>forty</td>
<td>ثمانون</td>
<td>eighty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>خمسون</td>
<td>fifty</td>
<td>نسعون</td>
<td>ninety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ali Baba and the forty thieves in twenty volumes

بمشاركة ثلاثةين باحثاً

3.2.3 The broken plural (jam‘ al-taksiir) (جمع التكسر)

The broken or internal plural is highly characteristic of Arabic nouns and adjectives. It involves a shift of vowel patterns within the word stem itself, as in English “man/men,” “foot/feet” or “mouse/mice.” It may also involve the affixation of an extra consonant (usually hamza or waaw). The relationship between singular nouns and their broken plural forms relates to syllable and stress patterns, so that there is often a characteristic rhythm to the singular/plural doublet when said aloud.

The structure and regularities of the Arabic broken plural system have been the subject of research in morphological theory over the past fifteen years, and considerable progress has been made in developing theories to identify and account for the underlying regularities in the broken plural system, the most
prominent of those theories being templatic morphology and prosodic morphology.\footnote{See, for example, McCarthy and Prince 1990a and 1990b, Paoli 1999, and Ratcliffe 1990. In particular, see Ratcliffe 1998 for an extensive analysis of Arabic broken plurals within comparative Semitic. As he describes it, it is “a historical and comparative study of a portion of the nominal morphology of Arabic and other Semitic languages on the basis of a fresh theoretical approach to non-concatenative or ‘root and pattern’ morphology” (1998, 1). As to the abundance of broken plural forms, Lecomte notes (1968, 72–73): “Le problème des pluriels internes est fort complexe, et rebelle à toute explication décisive. On notera toutefois que la fixation a été opérée par les lexicographes anciens aux Ille et Ille siècles de l’Hégire à la suite de minutieuses enquêtes dans les tribus. Les différences dialectales constituent donc une des clés du problème. Elles expliquent en tout cas pourquoi les dictionnaires peuvent signaler plusieurs pluriels pour un même mot.”}

For nonnative speakers of Arabic, learning which nouns take which plurals can take some time, but if singulars and plurals are learned as doublets and grouped together, sound patterns of vowel–consonant distribution become evident and, at least to some extent, ascertainable. The most common broken plural patterns are listed here under triptote (fully inflected) and diptote (partially inflected) categories. (For the nature of diptote inflection see section 5.4.2.2 in this chapter.) Wherever possible, specific vowel patterns are identified.

Where patterns are more general, consonant–vowel structures are also given, using the convention that the symbol V stands for any vowel and VV for any long vowel. The letter C stands for any consonant.\footnote{For an extensive list and discussion of broken plural patterns, see Wright 1967, I:199–234. For further lists and analysis of broken plurals, see also Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 2: 267–76; Blachère and Gaudrefroy Demombynes 1975, 166–99; Cowan 1964, 23–28 and 200–202; Fleisch 1961, 470–505; MECAS 1965, 245–46; and Ziadeh and Winder 1957, 102.}

### 3.2.3.1 TRIPTOTE PATTERN PLURALS (jam‘ mu‘rab جمع معرَب): These broken plural patterns are fully inflectable. They show all three case markers and can take nunation when indefinite.

1. Broken plural patterns with internal vowel change only:

1.1. Plural: CuCuuC (fu‘ul فعل) from singular: CaCC (fa‘l فعل) or CaCiC (fa‘il فعل)

The CuCuuC plural pattern is a frequent one, especially for plurals of geminate root Form I verbal nouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>right/s</strong></td>
<td>Haqq/Huquq حق/حقوق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>doubt/s</strong></td>
<td>shakk/shukuuk شك/شكوك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>art/s</strong></td>
<td>fann/funuun فن/فنون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>army/ies</strong></td>
<td>jaysh/juyuush جيش/جيوش</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>century/ies</strong></td>
<td>qarn/quruun قرن/قرون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>king/s</strong></td>
<td>malik/muluuk ملك/ملوك</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<td><strong>art/s</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>century/ies</strong></td>
<td>qarn/quruun قرن/قرون</td>
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<td><strong>king/s</strong></td>
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A borrowed word that has taken this plural pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bank</td>
<td>bank/bunuuk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deputy</td>
<td>naa³ ib/ nuwwaab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worker</td>
<td>‘aamil/ ‘ummaal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reader</td>
<td>qaari'/ qurraa'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guard</td>
<td>Haaris/Hurraas~Harasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rider</td>
<td>raakib/rukkaab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>Taalib/Tullaab~Talaba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man</td>
<td>rajul/rijaal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mountain</td>
<td>jabal/jibaal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sand</td>
<td>raml/rimaal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>earthenware jar</td>
<td>jarra/jiraar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basket</td>
<td>salla/silaal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state</td>
<td>dawla/ duwal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>room</td>
<td>ghurfa/ ghuraf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentence</td>
<td>jumla/ jumal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunity</td>
<td>furSa/ furaS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time period</td>
<td>mudda/mudad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>picture</td>
<td>Suura/Suwar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nation</td>
<td>’umma/ ’umam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.2) Plural CuCCaaC (fu‘aal فيل الفعال) from singular: CaaCiC (faa‘il فعال): This plural, used with the Form I active participle (m.), is used only for human beings.31

(1.3) Plural CiCaaC (fi‘aal فيل الفعال) from singular CVCVC or CVCC (fa‘al فعل، fa‘ul فعل، fa‘l فعل) from singular CVCCa (fa‘la، fu‘la، fi‘la فعلة الفعلة)

(1.4) Plural CuCaC (fu‘al فيل plural) from singular CVCCa (fa‘la، fu‘la، fi‘la فعلة الفعلة)

31 For example, the noun ‘aamil in the singular can mean either ‘worker’ or ‘factor.’ When it means ‘worker’ the plural is ‘ummaal; when it means ‘factor,’ the plural is ‘awaamil.'
(1.5) Plural CuCuC (fuʿul فعل) from singular: CVCVC(a) (faʿiil(a) فعل(ة) فعال), CuCuC (فعال (ة فعال)

city/ies madiina/mudun مدينة/مدن
ship/s safiina/ sufun سفينة/سفن
newspaper/s SaHiifa/SuHuf صحيفة/صحف
path/s Tariiq/Turuq طريق/طرق
book/s kitaab/kutub كتاب/كتب
foundation/s ʾasaas/ ʾusus أساس/أسس

(1.6) Plural CiCaC (fiʿal فعل) from singular CiCCa (fiʿlaa فعلة فعلة) or CaCiiC (faʿiil فعل

city/ies madiina/mudun مدينة/مدن
ship/s safiina/ sufun سفينة/سفن
newspaper/s SaHiifa/SuHuf صحيفة/صحف
path/s Tariiq/Turuq طريق/طرق
book/s kitaab/kutub كتاب/كتب
foundation/s ʾasaas/ ʾusus أساس/أسس

value/s qiima/qiym قيمة/قيم
story/ies qiSSa/qiSaS قصة/قصص
idea/s fikra/fikar فكرة/فكر
charm/s; enchantment/s fitna/fitan فتنة/فتن

(1.7) Plural CaCCaa (faʿlaa فعلى) from singular CaCiiC (faʿiil فعل) or CaCCiC (faʿiil فعل): These plural forms go with certain adjectives that are also used as substantives referring to human beings:

dead mayyiit/mawtaa ميت/موتى
killed qatiiil/qatlaa قتل/قتلى
wounded jariill/jarHaa جريح/جرحى
sick mariiD/marDaa مريض/مرضى

(2) Plurals with vowel change and affixation of consonant:
(2.1) Plural: ʾaCCaaC (ʾafʿaal أفعال) from singular: CVCC (faʿal فعل) or CVCVC (faʿal فعل) or hollow: CVVC (faal فيل, fiuf فيل, fil فيل): This plural involves the prefixing of hamza plus fatHa to the word stem and the shift of vowel pattern to a long /aa/ between the second and third radicals:
dream/s Hulm/ ʾaHlaam حلم/أحلام
tower/s burj/ ʾabraaj برج/ أبراج
profit/s ribH/ ʾarbaaH ربح/ أرباح
section/s qism/ ʾaqsaam قسم/ أقسام
thing/s  shayٍ / ُاشياءٍ١٣٢
thing/s  °ashyaa١٣٢

error/s  َغلط/اغلط١٣٣

foot/feet  ُقَدْم/أَقَدْم١٣٣

market/s  سَوق/أسواق١٣٣

bag/s  ُكِيس/أَكياس١٣٣

holiday/s  ُعَيْد/أَعياد١٣٣

Borrowed words that fit the pattern:

film/s  ُفِلم/أَفلام١٣٤

ton/s  ُطَن/أَطنان١٣٤

mile/s  ُمِيل/أَميال١٣٤

day/s  ُيَاوْم/أَيُام١٣٤

thousand/s  ُأَلف/أَلفات١٣٤

(2.2) Plurals of ‘paucity’: ُقَلْعَة١٣٥ (Af‘aُلُ فَعْل١٣٥) and CiCCa (فَعْلَة١٣٥)

(سَمِعَة١٣٥ القُلْة١٣٥): Certain nouns have an additional plural form which denotes a ‘plural of paucity,’ usually considered to be in the range of three to ten items:

river/s  ُنَهْر/أَنْهَر١٣٥

month/s  ُشَهْر/أَشْهْر١٣٥

youth/s  ُفَتْيَة/أَفْتِيَة١٣٥

(2.2.1) The plural of paucity can be contrasted with ُقَلْعَة١٣٦ al-kathra (جمع الكلمة١٣۶), the
plural that indicates many:

ُنَهْر/أَنْهَر١٣۶

ُشَهْر/أَشْهْر١٣۶

ُفَتْيَة/أَفْتِيَة١٣۶

١٣٢ The plural ُاشياءٍ ‘things’ is diptote despite the fact that the final hamza is part of the root. See section 5.4.2.2 in this chapter for further discussion of diptotes and diptote patterns.

١٣٣ By virtue of phonological rules that prevent the sequence /yw/ in °aywaam, the plural form becomes °aayyaam, with assimilation of the waaw to the yaa’. Likewise, °°ُلَلاَف is realized as °°ُلَااف in order to avoid the sequence /°a/°. Other plurals of this pattern include ‘literature’ ُةَدَاب١٣۶ and ‘vestige’ ُةَثَار١٣۶ and ُةَثَام١٣۶.
(2.3) **Addition of nuun:** Plural: CVCCaan (fa‘laan/ fi‘laan/ fu‘laan فعالان) :

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/ies</th>
<th>Bilaad/Buldaan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor/s</td>
<td>Jaar/Jiiraan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire/s</td>
<td>Naar/Niiraan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worm/s</td>
<td>Duuda/Diidaan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bull/s</td>
<td>Thawr/Thiiraan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2.4) **Addition of taa’ marbuutTa:** Sometimes a taa’ marbuutTa is suffixed as part of a plural pattern. When used with the plural, it does not signify feminine gender.

(2.4.1) **Plural CaCaaCiCa (fa‘aalila فعاللة).** This is often used to pluralize names of groups or professions borrowed from other languages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professor/s</th>
<th>ُعَصَادِهّ / اساتيذة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctor/s</td>
<td>Duktuur/Dakaatira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosopher/s</td>
<td>Faylusuuff/Falaasifa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolshevik/s</td>
<td>Bulshifiyy/Balaashifa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African/s</td>
<td>ُإِفْرِيقِيّ/افْرِيقِيّا~ ُإِفْرِيقِيّ-عُنْا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharaoh/s</td>
<td>فِرْأَنَ فِرْأَا-ينا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop/s</td>
<td>ُعَصْفِ/ اسَاقيفـ/اسَاقيف</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2.4.2) **Plural CaaCa (faala فالة):** Used with nouns derived from hollow verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sir/s</th>
<th>Sayyid/Saada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leader/s</td>
<td>Qaa’ id/Qaada</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2.4.3) **Plural CuCaat (fu’aat فعامة):** Used with active participles of Form I defective verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infantryman/Infantry</th>
<th>Maashin/Mushaat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judge/s</td>
<td>QaaDin/QuDaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciter/s</td>
<td>Raawin/ruwaat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

34 Phonological rules prevent the sequence /-iw/ in the hypothetical form *jiwraan*, and it is realized as *jiiraan*, the /j/ sound assimilating the waaw. The same principle applies to *naar/niiiraan* and others.
marksman/-men  raamin/rumaat  رام/رُمَأ
dilettante/s; fan/s  haawin/huwaat  هاو/هواة

(2.4.4) **Plural CaCaCa (faˈala فعلة) from singular CaaCiC:** This plural often alternates with CuCCaCaC.

student/s  Taalib/Talaba~Tullaab  طالب/طلبة ~ طالب
servant/s  xaadim/xadama~xuddaam  خادم/خدمة ~ خدام
guard/s  Haaris/Harasa~Hurraas  حارس/حرسة ~ حرس

(2.4.5) **Plural ˈaCCiCa (ˈafˈila فعلة) from singular CVCaC (faˈaal فعلالaفعلال):** In this broken plural pattern there is addition of both hamza at the start of the word and taaʾ marbuuṭa at the end of the word:

carpet/s  bisaaT/ˈabsiTa  ~ busuT  بساط/أسطنة ~ بسط
answer/s  jawaab/ˈajwiba  جواب/أجوبة
clothes  libaas/ˈalbisa  لباس/ألبسة
mixture/s  mizaaj/ˈamzija  مزيج/أمزة
brain/s  dimaagh/ˈadmigha  دماغ/أدمغة

(2.4.6) **Plural CaCaayaa (faˈaayaa فعلاءaفعلاء):** This plural is used for certain feminine nouns, especially if they are defective or hamzated. It is invariable, always ending with ˈalif.

gift  hadiyya/hadaayaa  هدية/هدايا
sin  xaTiiiˈa/xaaTayyaat  خطيئة/خطايا
corner  zaawiya/zawaayaa  زاوية/زوايا

3.2.3.2 **Diptote pattern broken plural (mamnuuʻ min al-Sarf مَنْع مِنِ الْسَرْف):** A number of common plural patterns are diptote and belong to conjugation five (see section 5.4.2.2). Among them are the following:

(1) **Plural: CuCaCa ˈfuˈalaʻa فعلالَأفعلالَأ) from singular: CaCiiC (faˈiil فعليل):**
This plural is used only for human beings:

prince/s  ˈamiir/ˈumaraa  أمير/أمراء
president/s  raˈiis/ruˈasaa  رئيس/رؤساء
minister/s  waziir/wuzaraa  وزير/وزراء
leader/s  zaˈiim/zuˈamaa  زعيم/زعماء
expert/s  xabiir/xubaraaً
poor person/s  faqiir/fuqaraaً

(2) Plural 'aCCiCaaً ('af‘îlaaً) from singular CaCiiC (fa‘îil). This broken plural pattern prefixes and suffixes hamza. It is used with humans only:

physician/s  Tabiib/ 'aTibbaaً
friend/s  Sadiiq/ 'aSdiqaaً
relative/s  qariib/’aqribaaً
loved one/s  Habiib/ ‘aHibbaaً

(3) Plural CaCaaCiC (fa‘aalil). This is a frequent plural pattern. It is used primarily with words that have four consonants in the singular, but can also be used for plurals of words with three consonants in the singular. It has a number of variations, as follows:

(3.1) Nouns derived from triliteral roots where the singular has a prefixed miim. For example:

(3.1.1) Nouns of place:
center/s  markaz/ maraakiz
kingdom/s  mamlaka/ mamaalik
restaurant/s  maT‘am/maTaa‘im
mine/s  manjam/manaajim

(3.1.2) Nouns of instrument:
towel/s  minshafa/manaashif
broom/s  miknaas/makaanis
elevator/s  miS‘ad/maSaa‘id

(3.1.3) Participles: (Form IV AP nonhuman):
problem/s  mushkila/ mashaakil

(3.2) Other patterns of triliteral roots with added consonants:
ladder/s  sullam /salaalim
foreigner/s  'ajnabiyy / 'ajaanib

35 Phonological rules prevent the sequence *'aTibbaaً*, so the medial /ii/ shifts and the form becomes 'aTibbaaً.
middle part/s  'awsaT/ 'awaasiT  الأوسط/أواسب
ticket/s  tadhkira/tadhaakir  تذكرة/ذاكير
fingertip/s  'unmula/ 'anaamil  أنملة/أمان

(3.3) Nouns derived from quadriliteral roots:
frog/s  Dafida/ Dafaadi  ضفدع/ضفادع
element/s  'unSur/ 'anaaSir  عنصر/عناصر
hotel/s  funduq/fanaadiq  فندق/فنادق
dagger/s  xanjar/xanaajir  خنجر/خناجر
bomb/s  qunbula/ qanaabil  قنبلة/قنابل
translation/s  tarjama/taraajim  ترجمة/ترجمات

(3.4) Nouns that are borrowed from other languages, but fit the pattern:
consul/s  qunSul/qanaaSil  قنصل/قناصيل

(3.5) Certain quinquiliteral (five-consonant) nouns reduce themselves by one consonant in order to fit this quadriliteral plural pattern:
spider/s  'ankabuut/ 'anaakib (omission of /t/)  عنكبوت/عناكب
program/s  barnaamaj/baraamij (omission of /n/)  برنامج/برامج
index/es  fihrist/fahaaris (omission of /t/)  فهرست/فهارس

(3.6) Variants on fa'ail 
A frequent variant on this plural pattern is the insertion of an extra sound in order to create the pattern: waaw or hamza, typically from singular CV/CVC or CVCV/CVCV:

(3.6.1) Plural CaCaa'iC (fa'aa'il نعائ: medial hamza insertion:
newspaper/s  jariida/ jaraa'id  جريدة/جرائد
minute/s  daqiqa/ daqaa'iq  دقيقة/دقائق
result/s  natiija/ nataa'ij  نتيجة/نتائج
church/es  kaniisa/ kanaa'is  كنيسة/كنائس
garden/s  Hadiiqa/Hadaa'iq  حديقة/ حدائق
ode/s  qaSiida/qaSaaf'id  قصيدة/قصائد

(3.6.2) Plural  'aCaaCiiC (afa'aa'il أفاع: initial hamza insertion:
place/s  makaan/ amaakin  مكان/أماكن
relative/s  qariib/aqaarib  قريب/أقارب
(3.6.3) **Plural CawaaCiC (jawa’il) (فاعل جواب): waaw insertion:**

(3.6.3.1) **Active participles**

Used primarily with Form I active participles (CaaCiC or CaaCiCa) that do not refer to human beings:

- **salary/ies** raatib/rawaatib
- **objection/s** maani° / mawaani°
- **capital/s** ‘aaSimah/‘awaasimah
- **fruit/s** faakiha/fawaakih
- **mosque/s** jaami° / jawaami°
- **street/s** shaari° / shawaari°
- **ring/s** xaatim/xawaatim
- **incident/s** Haadith/Hawaadith
- **last part/s** ‘aaxir/’awaaxir

(3.6.3.2) **Used with a few words that have the Form I active participle pattern and that refer to human beings:**

- **monarch/s** ‘aahil/‘awaahil
- **pregnant (one/s)** Haamil/Hawaamil

(3.6.4) **Plural CaCaaCiC (fa‘aalin) (فعال: defective noun variants):** When the fa‘aalin plural pattern is used with nouns from defective roots, or nouns with defective plural patterns, it ends with two kasras when it is indefinite. These kasras are not regular nunation but substitute for the missing waaw or yaa° from the root. These plural forms are still diptote and therefore do not take regular nunation.

- **coffeehouse/s** maqhan/maqaahin
- **range/s** marman/maraamin
- **night/s** layl/layaalin
- **effort/s** mas‘an/masaa‘in

(4) **Diptote plural: CaCaaCiC (fa‘aalin فعال: defective root).** This is a four-consonant pattern with one short and two long vowels that applies mainly to the following types of singular nouns:

---

36 See section 5.4.3 in this chapter for declensions of these words.
37 A few words, such as layl, are not from defective roots, yet they have a plural form that uses the defective pattern. The words ‘arD/‘araadin (‘earth, land’) and yad/ayaadin (‘hand’) have these plurals as well.
(4.1) **Singular CVCCVC**: Used with words where the singular has an added consonant and there is a long vowel between the second and third root consonants:

(4.1.1) **Prefixed hamza**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>أنبوب/أنباب</td>
<td>pipe/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أسبوع/أسابيع</td>
<td>week/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أسطورة/أساطير</td>
<td>legend/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أسطول/أساطيل</td>
<td>fleet/s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.1.2) **Doubled middle root consonant**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>شباك/شبايك</td>
<td>window/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>سجادة/سجاجيد</td>
<td>prayer rug/s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.1.3) **Prefixed miim**:

(4.1.3.1) **Passive participles**: Form I passive participles serving as substantives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مرسوم/مراسيم</td>
<td>decree/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>موضوع/مواضيع</td>
<td>topic/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مفهوم/مفهوم</td>
<td>concept/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مضمون/مضامين</td>
<td>content/s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.1.3.2) **Some nouns of instrument**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مفتاح/مفاتيح</td>
<td>key/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>منشأ/مناضر</td>
<td>saw/s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.1.4) **Prefixed taa**: Certain Form II verbal nouns as a plural variant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تقرير/تقارير</td>
<td>report/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تدبير/تدير</td>
<td>arrangement/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تفصيل/تفاصيل</td>
<td>detail/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تمثال/تمثال</td>
<td>statue/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تمرين/تمرين</td>
<td>drill/s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.2) **Quadriliteral root nouns** (singular pattern: CVCCVC):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>كروكودل/كروكوديل</td>
<td>crocodile/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>صندوق/صندوق</td>
<td>box/es</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>عنوان/عناوين</td>
<td>title/s; address/es</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.4 Plurals from different or modified roots
A few nouns have plurals with different or slightly variant lexical roots.

| Singular | Plural
|----------|-------------------|
| woman/women | imra’a/nisaa’ ~ niswa ~ niswaan
| horse/es | Hisaan/xayl
| water/s | maa / miyaah
| mouth | fam / ُأفاها

3.2.5 Plural of the plural: *(jam‘ al-jam‘)*
Occasionally a noun will have a plural form that can itself be made plural. It is not clear whether there is a semantic difference between simple plural and plural of plural or if the use is purely stylistic choice. Some instances of plural of plural include:

| Singular | Plural
|----------|-------------------|
| hand/s | yad / ُأيد/أياير
| wound/s | jurH / juruuH / juruuHaat
| path/s | Tariiq / Turuq / Turuqaat
| house/s | bayt / buyuut / buyuutaat
| pyramid/s | haram / ُأهرام / أهرامات
In the following case, the plural of the plural has a semantic implication: the first plural is straightforward, but the plural of the plural implies distinction as well as plurality: ‘distinctive men, men of importance.’

man/men/men of distinction rajul/rijaal/rijaalaat رجل/رجال/رجالات

4 Definiteness and indefiniteness
Arabic substantives may be marked for definiteness or indefiniteness. There is a definite article in Arabic, but it is not an independent word, it is a prefix al-. The indefinite marker (“a” or “an” in English) is not a separate word in Arabic. It is a suffix, -n, referred to technically as “nunation” (from the name of the letter/sound nuun). Thus, in Arabic, the definiteness marker is attached to the beginning of a word and the indefiniteness marker is attached to the end of a word. They are, of course, mutually exclusive.

4.1 Definiteness
Specifying definiteness, or determination, is a way of specifying or restricting the meaning of a noun. Arabic nouns are determined or made definite in three ways:

1. By prefixing the definite article /al-/
2. By using the noun as first term of an ʾiDaafa (annexation structure)
3. By suffixing a possessive pronoun to the noun.

4.1.1 The definite article /al-/: This function word has several important features:

4.1.1.1 It is a prefix: It is not an independent word, it is a prefix, or proclitic particle. It is affixed to the beginning of a word and written as part of it.

   the bread al-xubz الخبز
   the pyramids al-ʾahraam الأهرام
   the joy al-faraH الفرح

4.1.1.2 It is spelled with hamzat al-waSl: Although spelled with ʾalif-laam, and most often transliterated as “al-,” the ʾalif in this word is not a vowel and is therefore not pronounced; rather, it is a seat for a hamza and a short vowel -a (fatHa) which is pronounced when the word is utterance-initial.

   When the definite article is not the first word in an utterance, then the hamza drops out, the /a/ vowel is replaced by the vowel that ends the previous word, and

38 For more on the definite and indefinite articles, see Chapter 2, section 8.
there is no break between the words. There is, instead, a liaison, or smooth transition from one word to the next.\footnote{For further discussion of the definite article and \textit{hamzat al-waSl}, see Chapter 2, section 8.}

- to the city \textit{\'ila\-}l-madi\-\-nat-i \(\rightarrow\) إلى المدينة
- in Arabic \textit{bi-\-}l-arabi\-\-yyat-i \(\rightarrow\) باللغة العربية
- the country’s flag \textit{\'alam\-u} l-balad-i \(\rightarrow\) علم البلد
- The United Nations \textit{al\-}\-\-umam\-\-u \l-muttaHidat-u \(\rightarrow\) الأمم المتّحدة

### 4.1.1.3 Assimilation of \textit{laam}: The nature of the first letter of a noun or adjective determines the pronunciation of /\textit{al}/. The letters of the Arabic alphabet are divided into two sections, one section whose members assimilate the /\textit{l}/ sound and another section whose members allow the full pronunciation of /\textit{l}/ of the definite article. See also Chapter 2, section 8.1.2.

\begin{enumerate}
\item **Sun letters** (\textit{Huruuf shamiyya})\(\rightarrow\) Certain sounds, or letters, when they begin a word, cause the \textit{laam} of the definite article to assimilate or be absorbed into them in pronunciation (but not in writing). When this assimilation happens, it has the effect of doubling the first letter of the word. That letter is then written with a \textit{shadda}, or doubling marker, and is pronounced more strongly. The list is:

- \textit{ta\-}\(\rightarrow\) تاء، ثاء، ثاء، خاء، جيم، حاء، حاء، حاء، حاء، حاء، حاء

\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|}
\hline
                      & Spelling   & Arabic   & Pronunciation   \\
\hline
the leader           & \textit{al-za\-\-iim} & الزعيم   & az-za\-\-iim   \\
the fish             & \textit{al-samak}    & السمك     & as-samak       \\
the honor            & \textit{al-sharaf}   & الشرف     & ash-sharaf     \\
the fox              & \textit{al-tha\-\-lab} & الثعلب   & ath-tha\-\-lab   \\
the wolf             & \textit{al-dhi\-\-b} & الذنب     & adh-dhi\-\-b   \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

\item **Moon letters** (\textit{Huruuf qamariyya})\(\rightarrow\) Moon letters do not absorb or assimilate the /\textit{l}/ of the definite article. They are:

- \textit{yaa\-}, \textit{waa\-}, \textit{mim\-}, \textit{ka\-}, \textit{qa\-}, \textit{fa\-}, \textit{ka\-}, \textit{mi\-}, \textit{ha\-}, \textit{waaw}, \textit{yaa\-}

\end{enumerate}
4.1.2 Uses of the definite article

The definite article is used in the following ways:

4.1.2.1 PREVIOUS SPECIFICATION: To specify a noun or noun phrase previously referred to or understood by the reader or hearer. For example:

المركز الجديد الذي أقيم
al-markaz-u l-jadiid-u lladhii uqiim-a wujid-a fii l-mal‘ab-i.

the new center which has been established
It was found in the playground.

أدرك أنه نسي الكلمة.
'adrak-a 'anna-hu nasiy-a l-kalimat-a.
He realized that he had forgotten the word.

4.1.2.2 GENERIC USE: Here the definite article is used to specify a noun in general terms. In English, the generic use of the noun often omits the definite article, for example, “life is beautiful,” “squirrels like nuts,” “elephants never forget,” “seeing is believing.” Sometimes, also, in English, an indefinite article is used to refer to something in general: “a noun is a part of speech.” In Arabic, the definite article is used when referring to something in general.

لا أحب المفاجآت.
laa 'u-Hibb-u l-mufaaja‘aat-i.
I don’t like surprises.

المنافسة قوية.
al-munaafasat-u qawiyyat-un.
Competition is strong.

أحب التنظيم في العمل.
3u-Hibb-u l-tanZiim-a fii l-‘amal-i.
I like organization at work.

4.1.2.3 PLACE NAMES: Certain place names in Arabic contain the definite article. This includes names of places in the Arab world and elsewhere.

Khartoum al-xarTuum
Riyadh al-riyaaD
Cairo al-qaahiru
Jordan al-‘urdunn
الرياض Iraq al-‘iraaq
القاهرة Kuwait al-kuwayt
الأردن
العراق
الكويت
4.1.2.4 NAMES OF THE DAYS OF THE WEEK: Names of the days of the week are considered definite and include the definite article. If they are modified by an adjective, it also carries the definite article:

الثلاثاء الماضي
al-thulaathaa‘-a l-maaDiya
last Tuesday

بعد ظهر الثلاثاء الجاري
ba‘d-a Zuhri l-thulaathaa‘-i l-jaarii
next Tuesday afternoon

4.1.2.5 TIMES OF THE DAY: Referring to times of the day, the hours are specified with the definite article:

بين السادسة والثامنة من مساء غد
bayn-a l-saadisat-i wa-l-thaaminat-i min masa‘-i ghad-in
between six and eight o’clock (‘the sixth and the eighth’) tomorrow evening

في السابعة والربع
fi l-saabi‘at-i wa-l-rub‘-i
at seven fifteen (‘the seventh and the quarter’)

4.1.2.6 WITH ADJECTIVES: The definite article is used with adjectives when they modify definite nouns. This is described in greater detail in Chapter 10.

الأمين العام
al-‘amin-u l-aaamm-u
the secretary general

الهلال الخصيب
al-hilaal-u l-xaSiib-u
the Fertile Crescent

الحكاية القديمة
al-Hikaayat-u l-qadiimat-u
the old story

البحر المتوسط
al-baHr-u l-mutawassiT-u
the Mediterranean Sea

السفراء العرب
al-sufaraa‘-u l-‘arab-u
the Arab ambassadors

The article is also used on stand-alone adjectives when they serve as substitutes for nouns.

many of us al-kathiir-u min-naa

the greatest al-‘akbar-u

at least ‘ala‘ at-aqall-i
4.1.2.7 With cardinal numbers in definite phrases:

في السنوات الخمس المقبلة
fī l-sanawāt-i l-xams-i l-muqbilat-i
in the next five years

فِي الـ۱۹ غرفة
fī l-ghurāf-i l-tis¢⁻a ‘āsharat-a
in the nineteen rooms

4.1.3 Definiteness through annexation (‘iDaafa إضافة)

A noun can become definite through being added or annexed to another (Arabic: ‘iDaafa ‘addition; annexation’ also called the “genitive construct”). The first term of an annexation structure cannot have the definite article because it is made definite by means of its annexation to another noun. When the annexing noun is definite, or a proper noun, the whole phrase is considered definite.

الذينهمبثلالله
zu‘amaa²-u l-qabaa‘il-i
the leaders of the tribes

الحرب للمشاكل
Hall-u l-mashaakil-i
the solution of the problems

If the annexing noun (the second noun in the phrase) is indefinite, the entire phrase is considered indefinite:40

Handbag-u yad-in
Haqiibat-u yad-in
a handbag

لمبة أسنان
Tabiib-u ‘asnaan-in
a dentist

مرمي حجر
marmaa Hajr-in
a stone’s throw

The ‘iDaafa is a very common syntactic structure in Arabic with a wide range of meanings, reflecting relationships of belonging, identification, and possession. For more detail and examples, see Chapter 8.

4.1.4 Definiteness through pronoun suffix

A third way for a noun to be made definite is to suffix a possessive pronoun. The pronoun is attached to a noun after the case marker. Note that a noun cannot have both the definite article and a pronoun suffix: they are mutually exclusive (just as one would not have “the my house” in English). Because a noun with a

The first noun in the annexation structure looks definite because it does not have nunation, but it is not definite. For example, if it is modified, the adjective is indefinite:

A beautiful handbag
Haqiibat-u yad-in jamiiilat-un

An Egyptian dentist
Tabiib-u ‘asnaan-in miSriyy-un

الحربية جميلة
Haqiibat-u yad-in jamiiilat-un

طبيب أسنان مصري
Tabiib-u ‘asnaan-in miSriyy-un
pronoun suffix is definite, any adjective modifying that noun has the definite article, in agreement with the definiteness of the noun.

طاقتها التكريرية
Taaqat-u-haa l-takriiriyyat-u
its capacity
its refining capacity

بدأ مؤتمره الصحفي
bada’a mu’tamar-a-hu l-Sihaafiyy-a
he began his conference
he began his press conference

في زيارته
fii zyaarat-i-hi l-rasmiyyat-i l-a’xiirat-i
on his visit
on his last official visit

4.2 Indefiniteness

4.2.1 Writing and pronunciation: nunation (tanwiin تنوين)

Indefiniteness as a noun feature is usually marked by a suffixed /-n/ sound, which is written in a special way as a variation of the case-marking short vowel at the end of a word.\(^{41}\) The technical term for this is “nunation” in English, and tanwiin تنوين in Arabic. The suffixed /-n/ sound is not written by using the Arabic letter nuun. Instead, it is signaled by writing the short case-marking vowel twice. Therefore, the names of the nunation markers are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case 161</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dammataani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kasrataani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fatHataani</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whereas the definite article is visible in Arabic script, the indefinite marker normally is not, since it attaches itself to the inflectional short vowel suffixes.\(^{42}\) In general, the nominative (Dammataani) and genitive (kasrataani) forms of nunation are not pronounced in pause form. The accusative (fatHataani), however, is often pronounced, even in pause form, especially in common spoken Arabic adverbial phrases:

always daa’im-an دائماً especially xuSuuS-an خصوصاً
never ʿabad-an أبداً exactly tamaam-an تماماً

\(^{41}\) See also Chapter 2, section 8.2.

\(^{42}\) The exception to this is the accusative indefinite suffix, -an, which is written into the script with an ʿalif and two fatHas. See section 4.2.1.5(2) for further description.
4.2.1.1 **MASCULINE SINGULAR INDEFINITE WORD:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>bayt-un</td>
<td>بيت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>bayt-in</td>
<td>بيت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>bayt-an</td>
<td>بيتا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1.2 **FEMININE SINGULAR INDEFINITE WORD:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>‘aaSifat-un</td>
<td>عاصفة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>‘aaSifat-in</td>
<td>عاصفة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>‘aaSifat-an</td>
<td>عاصفة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1.3 **BROKEN PLURAL INDEFINITE WORD:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>nujuum-un</td>
<td>نجوم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>nujuum-in</td>
<td>نجوم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>nujuum-an</td>
<td>نجوم</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1.4 **SOUND FEMININE PLURAL INDEFINITE WORD:** The sound feminine plural does not take *fatHa* or *fatHataani*; the genitive and accusative forms are identical:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>kalimaat-un</td>
<td>كلمات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>kalimaat-in</td>
<td>كلمات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>kalimaat-in</td>
<td>كلمات</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.1.5 NOTES ABOUT NUNATION: There are several things to note about the writing and pronunciation of nunation:

(1) First, the nominative, Dammataan, is more often written as a Damma with a “tail” or flourish, \[ \text{ذ} \] rather than two separate Dammas \[ \text{ذذ} \].

   a schedule  \( jadwll-un \)  جدول  a colt  \( muhr-un \)  مهر
   a steamship  \( baaxirat-un \)  باخرة  a bell  \( jaras-un \)  جرس

(2) Second, the accusative, fatHataan, is often accompanied by an \( ^{\prime} \text{alif} \). This \( ^{\prime} \text{alif} \) is a spelling convention and is not pronounced. It is considered to be a chair or seat for the two fatHas to perch on. It is visible in Arabic script.

   a rocket  \( Saaruux-an \)  صاروخا  a knife  \( sikkiin-an \)  سكينا
   a rabbit  \( 'arnab-an \)  أرنبًا  a saddle  \( sarj-an \)  سرجًا

(2.1) If a word in the accusative ends with a taa\(^{\prime}\) marbuuTa, or a hamza, or preceded by \( ^{\prime} \text{alif} \), then the \( ^{\prime} \text{alif} \) “chair” is not used and the fatHataan perch right on top of the hamza or taa\(^{\prime}\) marbuuTa:

   an evening  \( masaa'^{\prime}-an \)  مساء  a melon  \( baTTixat-an \)  بطيخة
   a meeting  \( liqaa'^{\prime}-an \)  لقاء  a permit  \( 'ijaazat-an \)  إجازة
   a breeze  \( hawaa'^{\prime}-an \)  هواء  a language  \( lughat-an \)  لغة

Examples:
\[ \text{wa-ktashaf-a } ^{\prime}ayD-an ^{\prime}axTaa'-an. \]  حضروا لقاء هاماً.
\[ \text{HaDar-uu liqaa'^{\prime}-an haamm-an.} \]  They attended an important meeting.

(3) Helping vowel with nunation: Because nunation causes the pronunciation of a word to end with a consonant (/\(-n/-\)), there may be a need for a helping vowel after the nunation if, for instance, the nunated word is followed directly by a noun or adjective with the definite article thus creating a consonant cluster. That helping vowel is pronounced as kasra (/\(-i/-\)), but it is not written. Wright, in discussing this form of helping vowel, gives the example:

   \[ \text{muHammad-un-i l-nabiyy-u}^{43}. \]  محمد النبي

43 Wright 1967, I:22.
Words that do not take nunation: There are some words that do not take nunation when they are indefinite. This includes words that fall into the diptote declension (see section 5.4.2.2. in this chapter), words that end with the sound masculine plural (-uuna or -iina) (see section 5.4.2.1., subsection (2) in this chapter), words that end with the dual suffix (-aani and -ayni) and invariable words (see section 5.4.5. in this chapter).

Diptotes:
- ambassadors sufaraa-u
- better aHsan-u

Sound masculine plural:
- engineers muhandis-uuna
- Egyptians miSriyy-uuna

Dual:
- two states dawlat-aani
- two poets sha‘ir-aani

Invariable nouns:
- chaos fawDaayaa
- issues qaDaayaa

4.2.2 Uses of the indefinite

4.2.2.1 TO EXPRESS NON-DEFINITE STATUS: Nunation is used on Arabic nouns and adjectives to mark indefinite status. An adjective modifying an indefinite noun is also indefinite.

Fi ‘umr-in mubakkir-in ilaa dawlat-in jadiidat-in
at an early age to a new state

Haqqqaq-naa taqaddum-an kaafiy-an.
This book is a pioneering work.

4.2.2.2 MASCULINE PROPER NAMES: A perhaps unusual (to English speakers) function of the indefinite marker is its use on many Arabic masculine given names. They are semantically definite, but morphologically indefinite. This is so because many of these Arabic names are derived from adjectives which describe particular attributes. Nonetheless, given names are considered definite and agreeing words are definite.

Muhammad ‘praised’ muHammad-un
Salim ‘flawless’ saliim-un
Munir ‘radiant’ muniir-un
Ali ‘exalted’ ‘aliyy-un
Examples of agreement:

 محمد الخامس
muHammad-un-i l-xaamis-u
Muhammad the fifth

Nunation is not marked on all masculine names, only those derived from Arabic adjectives or participles. For example, the names ʿalḥmad, ʿibraahiim, sulaymaan, and yuusuf are diptote and do not take nunation.44 Most female names are also diptote and do not take nunation.45

4.2.2.3 ADVERBIAL ACCUSATIVE EXPRESSIONS: Adverbial expressions in Arabic tend to be in the accusative case, and quite often in the indefinite accusative. It is therefore common to see the indefinite accusative marker when reading Arabic texts. Another characteristic of the indefinite accusative marker, especially with adverbs, is that it is pronounced as well as written, whereas the nominative and genitive forms of nunation are not normally pronounced in spoken Arabic.46

The adverbial use of the accusative is described in greater detail in the section on the accusative case, but here are some examples in the indefinite accusative (see also 4.2.1 above):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adverb</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>immediately</td>
<td>fawr-an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a little (bit)</td>
<td>qaliil-an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daily</td>
<td>yawmiyy-an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very</td>
<td>jidd-an</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 Case inflection

Arabic nouns, participles, adjectives and, to some extent, adverbs have word-final (or desinential) inflection. That is, they are marked for case, which indicates the syntactic function of the word and its relationship with other words in the sentence.47 In Arabic, the term for case marking is (iʿraab).48 In respect to case

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44 For the reasons behind this see section 5.4.2.2 on the diptote declension.
45 There are a few exceptions. The feminine name hind-un, for example, may take nunation. But this is exceptional.
46 Pronunciation of nunation at the end of a word is apparently still heard in some rural vernacular forms of Arabic. For the most part, the only form of nunated ending that is regularly pronounced in spoken MSA or in the urban vernaculars is the accusative (/an/).
47 Blake (1994, 1) defines case as follows: “Case is a system of marking dependent nouns for the type of relationship they bear to their heads. Traditionally the term refers to inflectional marking, and, typically, case marks the relationship of a noun to a verb at the clause level or of a noun to a preposition, postposition or another noun at the phrase level.”
48 The Arabic term ʿiʿraab إعراب refers to desinential inflection in general: not only case markers on nouns, adjectives, and adverbs, but also mood markers (indicative, subjunctive, jussive) on verbs. Arab grammarians classify case marking and mood marking together in one category, and give them similar labels. For more on this see Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughli 1990, 53-55, and Ryding 1993.
inflection, Arabic resembles some European languages such as German, Russian, and Latin.

Arabic has three cases: nominative (رقب), genitive (جر), and accusative (نصب). As a general rule, these cases are indicated by short vowel suffixes: -u (Damma) for nominative, -i (kasra) for genitive, and -a (fatHa) for accusative. However, these short vowels are not the only ways to mark case. Words inflected for case fall into several declensions or inflection classes and therefore inflect for these three cases in different ways.

Case marking is placed at the end of a noun or adjective. If a noun or adjective is definite, then the case-marking short vowel is suffixed at the very end of the word. If a noun or adjective is indefinite, the case marker is followed by an indefinite marker (a final /-n/ sound, “nunation” in English and tanwiin in Arabic), indicated in writing by the convention of doubling the short vowel case ending, e.g., "un / ; /in/ ; an / (see above).

Case is one of the most challenging inflectional categories in MSA for several reasons. First of all, it depends on rules of syntax for its implementation, and second, in many ways it is redundant. Moreover, colloquial forms of Arabic do not have case marking, so case is used only in written Arabic. Even for native speakers of Arabic, therefore, the case system is learned through formal instruction.

5.1 Pronunciation and writing conventions
The Arabic case-ending system consists primarily of short, word-final vowels, which are invisible in conventional written Arabic texts. This can hinder clear-cut understanding of case inflections and sentential relations. Furthermore, because the nature of these case marking vowels is dependent on a word’s function in a sentence, they vary from one context to another, and only if one knows the rules of grammatical usage can one ascertain what the noun-final case markers are for any particular sentence.

The Arabic case-marking system, then, remains mostly hidden from view in written texts and is apparent only when the text is read out loud with complete

49 This is true for the colloquial variants of spoken Arabic and even for educated spoken Arabic or formal spoken Arabic. Case does not play a significant role in these forms of the language.

50 Exceptions to this general rule include case marking that occurs as long vowels in, for example, the dual suffixes (-aani/-ayni), the sound masculine plural suffixes (-uuna/-iina) and the “five nouns” that inflect, under certain conditions, with long vowels (see section 5.4.1.c.). Another partial exception is the word-final ‘alif that appears in written Arabic script on many words as a seat for fathataan, the indefinite accusative marker (e.g., ‘axtiran (‘finally’), أخيرا ‘alhyaan-an (‘sometimes’). This particular form of case ending (the indefinite accusative ending in -an) is often pronounced, even in pause form.
pronunciation of all vowels (i.e., in “full” form). The ability to use and pronounce accurate case marking in written or literary Arabic is not an automatic skill but a rigorous task, even for educated native speakers. It is also therefore the mark of a well-educated or learned individual. The case-marking rules are used and understood primarily by scholars and specialists in Arabic grammar, linguistics, scripture, and literature. Learners of Arabic as a foreign language need to know the basic rules of word order, inflection, agreement, and governance in order to make sense of Arabic texts. The degree to which they need knowledge of explicit case marking rules depends on the structure and goals of particular academic programs, and on the goals of individual learners.

In this book the case-marking system is described in some detail, but not exhaustively. For those who wish to delve more deeply into Arabic morphosyntax, Wright (1967) is recommended as are Hasan (1987) especially volumes II and IV; Fleisch (1961, 268–82), Beeston (1970, 51–55), and Cowan (1958). For a recent theoretical study of case in general, a good reference is Blake 1994.

5.2 Case marking and declensions
Arabic case marking takes place either as a short vowel suffix or as a modification of a long vowel suffix. Cases are marked on nouns, adjectives, and certain adverbs. The categories described below show the most common instances of particular case functions in MSA. It has not been traditional to designate Arabic nouns as belonging to particular declensions or inflectional classes, except to refer to them as “triptote” (showing three different inflectional markers, one for each case) or “diptote” (showing only two different inflectional markers when indefinite, nominative, and genitive/accusative). However, for reference purposes here, each inflectional type is classified into a separate, numbered declension.

51 In reading written Arabic aloud, some narrators read most of the words in pause form, omitting desinential inflections. News broadcasters, for example, vary in their formality and in the degree to which they use case-marking in narrating news items. Some seldom use it; others use it partially, and some use it more consistently. Officials giving formal speeches also vary in the degree to which they pronounce case marking. Only in formal academic and religious contexts is pronunciation of full desinential inflection considered necessary or appropriate.

52 Holes (1995, 142) states: “As a means of syntactic disambiguation in modern written Arabic, case plays almost no role (inevitably so, since in most cases it is carried by short vowel distinctions which are unmarked), and, despite the importance which the indigenous tradition of grammatical description and language pedagogy attaches to it, it is clear, when one examines ancient textual material, that the functional load of the case endings was no higher in the Classical period than it is now.”

53 See, for example, the article by Khaldieh (2001) titled: “The relationship between knowledge of i`rab, lexical knowledge, and reading comprehension of nonnative readers of Arabic.”

54 It should be understood that these declensional identifications are not standardized; they are named as such in this book to facilitate description and reference.
5.2.1 Shift of declension
In Indo-European languages a noun usually belongs to a particular inflectional class or declension in both the singular and the plural. However, in Arabic, the number suffixes (duals and sound plurals) and even the internal broken plural pattern, can shift a noun into a different inflectional class. The criteria for identifying declensions depend on the nature of the noun stem and also whether or not it includes a dual or plural number inflection.

5.3 Case categories and their functions
The type of case marking on a noun or adjective depends on its form and function. That is, it is determined by the inflectional class (declension) of the word involved and the role of the word within a specific sentence or clause (which case is appropriate under the circumstances). For example, in a sentence such as:

عقد المدير اجتماعاً مع الموظفين.
‘aqad-a l-mudiir-u jtimaa‘-an ma‘-a l-muwaZZaf-iina.
The director held a meeting with the employees.

There are three nouns in this sentence: al-mudiir-u ‘director, manager,’ jtimaa‘-an ‘meeting,’ and al-muwaZZaf-iina ‘the employees.’ Each noun is marked for its case role in the sentence.

The first noun, mudiir, belongs to the triptote declension or declension one and is marked for definiteness by means of the definite article. These facts provide information about the nature of the word itself. Its function in this particular sentence is as the subject of the verb ‘aqad-a ‘held,’ so this provides information about its syntactic role. Putting these pieces of information together, it is then possible to know that the case marker in this particular situation is Damma, which is the nominative marker for definite triptotes.

The second noun, jtimaa‘-an, also belongs to the triptote declension or declension one, and is marked for indefiniteness by nunation affixed at the end of the word. The noun functions in this sentence as direct object of the verb ‘aqad-a ‘held,’ so this provides information about its syntactic role. Putting these pieces of information together, it is then possible to know that the case marker in this particular situation is fatHataani, accusative.

The third noun is al-muwaZZaf-iina. It is plural and definite, and it follows the semi-preposition ma‘-a. It is therefore in the genitive case. It has a sound masculine plural suffix, which places it in a declension that shows the case inflection by means of the long vowel before the nuun of the plural suffix (the -ii of -iina).

Therefore, case as a system is both morphological (word-related) and syntactic (sentence-related) and is a hybrid “morphosyntactic” category. Each of the three Arabic cases is presented here with its typical functions. These lists are by no means exhaustive, but they cover the majority of occurrences of these cases in MSA.
5.3.1 Nominative case (الرفوع, al-marfu'ū, الرفع)
The nominative inflection (typically -u or -un, -uuna in the sound masculine plural suffix, or -aani in the dual suffix) has five key functions. It marks the subject of a verbal sentence, the subject and predicate of equational sentences, certain locative adverbs, the vocative, and citation forms.

5.3.1.1 THE SUBJECT (الفاعل, al-faa'il) OF A VERBAL SENTENCE (جملة الفعلية, jumla fi'liyya): The subject of the verb is nominative because it forms, along with the verb, a structural unit, termed jumla جملة. This unit can stand independently of any other units and conveys a predication.

\[ \text{ittafaq-a l-wузaraa'-u 'alaa ta'ziiz-i l-ta'aawun-i.} \]
The ministers agreed to strengthen cooperation.

\[ \text{'aqad-a l-jaanib-aani mubaalHathaat-in rasmiyyat-an.} \]
The two sides held official discussions.

\[ \text{الملعمة بالمسلمون وراءهم.} \]
The Muslims left it behind them.

\[ \text{wulid-a l-nabiyy-u muHammad-un fii makkat-a.} \]
The Prophet Muhammad was born in Mecca.

5.3.1.2 THE SUBJECT (المبتدأ, al-mubtada') AND PREDICATE (الخبر, al-xabar) OF AN EQUATIONAL SENTENCE (جملة اسمية, jumla 'ismiya): The term for “subject” of an Arabic sentence differs depending on whether or not the sentence contains a verb. The subject of a verbal sentence (الفاعل, al-faa'il) is seen as the agent or doer of the action; the subject of an equational sentence (المبتدأ, al-mubtada') is the topic of a verbless predication. For more on equational sentence structure, see Chapter 4, section 2.1ff.

-al-maaluumaat-u xaatTi’at-un. qaSt-u l-malik-i Daxm-un.
The information is wrong. The palace of the king [is] huge.

---

55 In addition, the nominative case marking for defective nouns and adjectives fuses with the genitive (/-in/ for indefinite, /-il/ for definite); for indeclinable nouns and adjectives it is realized as /-an/ or /-aa/, and for invariable nouns and adjectives, the nominative appears the same as all other cases; /-aa/. See the paradigms for declensions six, seven, and eight, 5.4.3–5.4.5.

56 The subject of an Arabic sentence with a passive verb, such as this one, is referred to as the naa‘ib al-faa’il ‘the deputy subject.’ See Chapter 38 for the use of the passive.

57 The term for “subject” of an Arabic sentence differs depending on whether or not the sentence contains a verb. The subject of a verbal sentence (الفاعل, al-faa’il) is seen as the agent or doer of the action; the subject of an equational sentence (المبتدأ, al-mubtada’) is the topic of a verbless predication. For more on equational sentence structure, see Chapter 4, section 2.1ff.
Payment [is] in advance. The important thing [is] to return.

5.3.1.3 CERTAIN ADVERBS: A few adverbs retain a Damma (non-nunated) in many syntactic functions, even when they are preceded by a preposition. It has been hypothesized that this adverbial marker is a fossilized remnant of a locative case in previous stages of language development.\textsuperscript{58} Certain function words, like \textit{mundh-}\textit{u} and \textit{Hayth-}\textit{u} have Damma consistently. Other words, such as \textit{qabla-}\textit{u} and \textit{ba’}\textit{d-}\textit{u} have the Damma ending when they are used as independent adverbs, but not when used as prepositions followed by a noun or a pronoun (where they normally have fatHa).

\begin{itemize}
\item since; ago \textit{mundh-}\textit{u} ﻣﺪـٓﻨْـ
\item where; whereas \textit{Hayth-}\textit{u} ﻫﯿﺚْ~
\item at all \textit{qay\textsuperscript{a}}-\textit{t-}\textit{u} ﺤﻘْ~
\end{itemize}

The Americans widened the margin [of points] from the beginning.

5.3.1.4 THE VOCATIVE (\textit{al-nidaa}, \textit{النداء}), where someone or some entity is addressed directly by the speaker. The nominative (without nunation) is used on the vocative noun unless that noun is the first term of an \textit{\textit{iDaafa}} construction, in which case it shifts to accusative.\textsuperscript{59}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{yaa rashiid-}\textit{u} ﻲـلرـيـذـ، \textit{O Rashid!}
\item \textit{’aayyaha l-sayyidaat-}\textit{u} ﻷـيـّـاـهـا ﺑـلــســيـدـٓـاـتـ، \textit{Ladies and gentlemen!}
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{58} See Fleisch 1961, I:280 and 1979, II:465-66 about the Semitic “adverbial case” with /-u/ suffix. For more on this see Chapter 11, section 4.1.3.

\textsuperscript{59} See section 5.3.3.12 subsection (3) of this chapter for examples of the first terms of \textit{\textit{iDaafa}} in the accusative after the vocative particle.

\textsuperscript{60} If the vocative particle \textit{yaa} (‘O’) is used, the following word has Damma, but not nunation or the definite article. If the vocative particle is \textit{’aayu-hua} (m.) or \textit{’aayatu-haa} (f.), the following word or words have the definite article.
Certain exclamations fall into this category:\textsuperscript{61}

\begin{itemize}
  \item O goodness! (‘O peace!’) \textit{yaa salaam-u!}
  \item What a loss! What a pity! \textit{yaa xasaarat-u!}
\end{itemize}

\subsection*{5.3.1.5 The Citation Form}

of nouns and adjectives in lists or lexicons, although they may also be cited without desinence, in “bare” form. This function of the nominative — as the default case marker for substantives in isolation, is in line with usage in other languages.\textsuperscript{62} For example, a list of vocabulary words out of context:

\begin{tabular}{ll}
monarch & 'aahil-un \\
forbidden & mamnuu'-un \\
treaty & mu‘aahadat-un \\
The Sudan & al-suudaan-u \\
The Fertile Crescent & al-hilaal-u l-xaSiib-u
\end{tabular}

\subsection*{5.3.2 Genitive Case (\textit{al-jarr} الجر، \textit{al-majruur} المجرور; \textit{al-xafD} الخفّض):}

The genitive inflection (-\textit{i} or -\textit{in}, -\textit{a} [in diptote declensions], -\textit{iina} [for the sound masculine plural] or -\textit{ayni} [in the dual]) has three chief functions. It marks:

\subsection*{5.3.2.1 The Object of a Preposition:}

Prepositions are followed by nouns or noun phrases in the genitive case.

\begin{itemize}
  \item in the shade \textit{fii l-Zalaam-i} \textit{3ilha l-yamiin-i} to the right
  \item from Beirut \textit{min bayruut-a} \textit{ka-fisr-in HaDaariyy-in} as a cultural bridge
  \item from the Egyptian Mamelukes \textit{min-a l-mamaaliik-i l-miSriyy-iina} \textit{fii haadh-ayni l-kitaab-ayni} in these two books
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{61} Note that exclamations with \textit{yaa} may also use the preposition \textit{li} ‘for’ + a definite noun in the genitive case:

\begin{itemize}
  \item O the poor man! \textit{yaa li-l-maskiin-i!}
  \item How unfortunate! \textit{yaa li-l-’asaf-i!}
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{62} Blake notes (1994, 31) that in Greek (and other languages as well) the nominative “is the case used outside constructions, the case used in isolation, the case used in naming.” He further states the proposition that (1994, 32) “the nominative simply delineates an entity not a relation between an entity and a predicate.” See, for example, the Arabic vocabulary lists in Abboud and McCarus 1983.
5.3.2.2 THE OBJECT OF A LOCATIVE ADVERB (Zarf makaan wa-Zarf zamaan): Arabic locative adverbs function very much like prepositions. They are different from true prepositions in that they are derived from triliteral lexical roots and can also themselves be objects of prepositions. See section 5.3.3.2 following, and Chapter 16, section 3 on “semi-prepositions.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A few days ago</th>
<th>under the sunlight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>qabl-a 'ayyaam-in</td>
<td>taHt-a nuur-i l-shams-i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.2.3 THE SECOND TERM OF AN `iDaafa CONSTRUCTION: The second term of the annexation structure or `iDaafa construction is normally a noun in the genitive case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A bag of nuts</th>
<th>the chamber of commerce</th>
<th>the language of cultivated people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kiis-u fustuq-in</td>
<td>ghurfat-u l-tijaarat-i</td>
<td>lughat-u l-muthaqqaf-iina</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The director of the establishment</th>
<th>The city of Baghdad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mudiir-u l-mu`assasat-i</td>
<td>madiinat-u baghdaad-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.3 Accusative case (al-naSb; al-manSuub): The accusative inflection (-a, -an, -i, -iina [in the sound masculine plural] or -ayni [in the dual]) has the most functions in Arabic because it not only marks nouns, adjectives, and noun phrases in a wide range of constructions, but it also marks adverbial expressions. In MSA, it frequently occurs in the following constructions:

5.3.3.1 THE OBJECT OF A TRANSITIVE VERB (al-maf’uu bi-hi): A transitive verb is one which, in addition to having a subject or agent which accomplishes the action, also has an object or entity that is affected by the action. The object of the verb in Arabic is in the accusative case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>They attended the meeting.</th>
<th>Don’t ignite a fire.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HaDar-uu l-liqaa’t-a.</td>
<td>laa tu-sh‘il maar-an.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

63 See Wright 1967, 2:45–129 for further discussion of the accusative in Classical Arabic.
64 Blake, in his discussion of case roles in general, states (1994, 134): “The accusative is the case that encodes the direct object of a verb.”
He learned a limited number of words only.

### 5.3.3.2 Locative Adverbs of Both Time and Place (Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan): These adverbs are usually in the accusative but may be made genitive if they follow a preposition. They function in ways similar to prepositions, describing location or direction, and are followed by a noun in the genitive case. For that reason they are referred to in this work as semi-prepositions. For a more extensive description and examples of prepositions and semi-prepositions see Chapter 16 section 3.

- قبل سنة \( qabl-a \) sanat-in: a year ago
- عبر قارتيّن \( 'abr-a \) qaarat-ayni: across two continents
- داخل الدولة الإسلامية \( 'daaxil-a \) l-dawlat-i l-\( √ \)islaamiyyat-i: inside the Islamic state
- عند إلقاء القبض \( 'ind-a \) ʕilqaa'-i l-qabD-i: at the time of arrest

### 5.3.3.3 Adverbial Expressions of Time, Place, and Manner (al-maf\( fi \)uul fii-\( hi \) al-mu'\( f \)uul fe\( b \)): The accusative case functions extensively in MSA to indicate the circumstances under which an action takes place. In this function, the accusative can be used on nouns or adjectives. If the noun or adjective is by itself, it is normally in the indefinite accusative; if it is the first term of an \( i\)Daafa', it does not have nunation.

- تستمر يوماً واحداً \( ta-stamirr-u \) yawm-an waaHid-an: It lasts one day.
- جاءوا فجر يوم الاقتراع \( jaa'-uu \) fajr-a yawm-i l-\( qa't\)iraa-'i: They came at dawn on the day of balloting.
- حصلت حديثاً على الجنسية \( HaSal-tu \ Hadiith-an \ ʕalaa l-jinsiyyat-i: I recently obtained citizenship.
- اللجنة ستعقد اجتماعين سنوييّاً \( al-lajnat-u sa-ta-'qud-u jtimaa'-ayni sanawiyy-an: The committee will hold two meetings annually.

---

65 They seem to fall into the category of “relator nouns” described by Blake: “Relator nouns are a specialised subclass of nouns that behave like adpositions (prepositions)” (1994, 205).

66 Wright states: “Many words, which are obviously substantives in the accusative of place . . . may be conveniently regarded in a certain sense as prepositions” (1967, II:178).

67 Blake (1994, 182) notes that in a number of languages, “it is common for nouns in oblique cases to be reinterpreted as adverbs, particularly adverbs of place, time and manner.”
He will return to Baghdad soon. [for] a period of eight hours on Thursday night.

5.3.3.4 THE INTERNAL OBJECT OR COGNATE ACCUSATIVE STRUCTURE (al-maf‘uul al-mu’Taqt). In this structure, the action denoted is intensified through use of a verbal noun cognate with the verb (i.e., derived from the same root; usually from the same derivational form (I–X)). Often the verbal noun is modified by an adjective, also in the accusative:

Hall-at-i l-mawDuu’a Hall-an jidhriyy-an.
It solved the issue fundamentally.

Amman realizes it fully.

saaham-aa musaahamat-an fa‘aalat-an.
They (two) participated effectively.

5.3.3.5 THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL ACCUSATIVE (al-Haal). Expressing a condition or circumstance that occurs concurrent with or ongoing at the time of the action of the main verb, a participle is often used to describe that condition (al-Haal). The participle agrees with the noun it modifies in number and gender, but is in the accusative case and usually indefinite. The active participle is widely used in this function, but occasionally the passive participle or a verbal noun is used. For more on this topic see Chapter 11, section 2.3.1.

(1) Using active participles:

He entered the classroom late. He raised his hand objecting.

They are leaving Cairo today heading for Paris.
The minister gave a speech transmitting the greetings of the president.

(2) Using passive participles:

قَفَزَتْ مَذَعْرَةً

qafaz-at madh‘uurat-an.

She jumped, frightened.

(3) Using a verbal noun:

وَقَالَ رَدًا عَلَى سُؤَال…

wa-qaal-a radd-an ‘alaa su‘aal-in…

(And) he said, replying to a question…

5.3.3.6 THE ACCUSATIVE OF PURPOSE (الفاعل لأجله) in order to show the motive, purpose, or reason for an action. It is usually used with an indefinite verbal noun.

القوَاتُ تَشْحَتُ حُمَلَةً بَحْتاً عَن أَسْلَحةً

al-quwwa-at ta-shunn-u Hamlat-an baHth-an ‘an ‘asliHat-in.

The forces are launching a campaign searching for weapons.

خلَالَ حُفْلَةِ اسْتِقبَالِ أَقَامُوهَا تَكْرِيماً لَهُ

xilaal-a Haflat-i stiqbaal-in ‘aqaam-uu-haa takriim-an la-hu
during a reception they gave in his honor

شهدَ مَخْلَفُ الْمَدَنِ إِضْرَابًا وَاسِعًا تَضَامَنًا مَعَ العَمَالِ

shahad-at muxtalif-u l-mudun-i ‘iDraab-an waasi‘-an taDaamun-an ma‘-a

l‘ummaaHa-th-i.

Various cities witnessed a widespread strike in solidarity with the workers.

5.3.3.7 THE ACCUSATIVE OF SPECIFICATION (التمييز). This accusative is used on nouns in order to delimit and specify the application of a statement. It usually answers the question, “In what way?” It includes comparative and superlative expressions as well as counted nouns between 11 and 99, which are accusative and singular.

نَعْلُنَّ ذَاكَ قُولاً وَفَعَلاً

nu‘lin-u dhaaka qawl-an wa-fi‘l-an.

We announce that in speech and in action.
It was the greatest capital in fame and splendor.

It seemed more cautious and diplomatic ('greater in caution and diplomacy').

Bi-mushaarakat-i thalaathiina baaHith-an with the participation of thirty researchers

5.3.3.8 THE nawaasix: CONVERTERS TO ACCUSATIVE. Arabic grammar has a special category for words (verbs and particles) that shift one or more elements of a clause into the accusative case. There are three groups of these, each of which is composed of a typical word and what are termed its "sisters": kaan-a and its sisters, inna and its sisters, and Zann-a and its sisters.

(1) kaan-a and its "sisters" (kaan-a wa-'axawaat-u-haa) This set of verbs has the effect of shifting the predicate (xabar) of an equational sentence from the nominative case to the accusative case. According to Hasan (1987, I:545) there are thirteen of these verbs, the most common in MSA are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lays-a</td>
<td>to not be</td>
<td>ليسَ صارَ باتَ أصبحَ ظلَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saara</td>
<td>to become</td>
<td>صارَ باتَ أصبحَ ظلَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baat-a</td>
<td>to become</td>
<td>صارَ باتَ أصبحَ ظلَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'aSbaH-a</td>
<td>to become</td>
<td>أصبحَ ظلَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zall-a</td>
<td>to remain</td>
<td>ظلَ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

68 See Chapter 15 for further discussion of numerals and counting.
69 "The al-nawaasikh group of words in Arabic is defined by the Arab grammarians according to formal criteria; specifically, the role played by these words in inflection. Thus, words classified as belonging to the al-nawaasikh category have the effect of inducing one or two elements of the nuclear sentence to 'fall' from the nominative to the accusative case" (Anghelescu 1999, 131).
70 Hasan 1987, I:543ff. and 630ff. has thorough descriptions of the nawaasix category in Arabic.
71 See also Chapter 36 in this book.
72 In addition to the verb lays-a there are certain negative particles that have similar meanings and effects, including maa and laa. See Hasan 1987 I:593ff. for more on these particles.
These verbs all denote existential states of being (or not being), becoming, and remaining. They take accusative complements. That is, the predicate of the underlying equational predication is accusative.

\[
\begin{align*}
  \text{baqiy-} & \quad \text{to remain, to stay} \\
  \text{daama and maa daama} & \quad \text{to continue to be} \\
  \text{maa zaaal-} & \quad \text{to continue to be; to still be; to not cease to be} \\
  \text{amsaa} & \quad \text{to become}
\end{align*}
\]

These particles are subordinating conjunctions which require that the subject of the subordinate clause (also called the complement clause) be in the accusative case.\(^\text{73}\)

\(^{73}\) For more on `inna and her sisters, see Chapter 19 on subordinating conjunctions.
It said that no one could stop them.

أَنَّ الْزَّرَاعَةَ لِغَةَ عَالِمِيَّةَ
‘َانَّا أَل-ْزِيْرَا ‘اَتِ-ْا لَغْحَت-ْا ‘اَالهَامِيْيَت-ْا
that agriculture is a world language

لكن قليلين من الباحثين
لاَكِينَةُ ‘الْبَحْث-ْا ‘اَنَّا صِرْعَ ‘اَتِ-ْا
but few of the researchers

لَكُنَّ السَّنَةِنَّ اَلْأَخِرِيْتِينَ كَانَتَا مِنْ أَفْضَلِ السَّنَاتِ
لِ‘َانَّا سَانَات-ْا ‘اَنَّا أَخِيْرَت-ْا ‘اَنَّا أَخِيْرَت-ْا
because the last two years were among the best years

(3) Zann-a and her sisters (Zanna wa-‘axawaat-u-haa): The verb Zann-a ‘to suppose, believe’ is another one of the nawaasix. It has the effect of making both the subject and the predicate of an equational clause accusative.74 This category includes verbs of “certainty and doubt” (Anghelescu 1999, 132). Hasan breaks this category down into two parts: ‘اف’اعْلَ ‘الْقُلُوبِ’ or ‘اف’اَالْقَلْبِيْيَا (verbs of perception or cognition) and ‘اف’اَالْتَحْوِيْل (verbs of transformation).76 Hasan gives complete lists; here are some examples.77

(3.1) Verbs of perception:

to suppose, believe Zann-a ‘ظلَّ
أَظْلَّ زِيْداً ذَاخِيِّا.
‘اَزِنَ–ْا زَيْد-ْا ‘اَذَاخِيِّا.
I believe Zayd [is] going.78

to consider, deem ‘أَدْدَ ‘عدَّ to perceive, deem, see ra’aa رأى
‘أَذَد-ْا ‘اَذَاخِيِّا ‘اَذَاخِيِّا.
I believe Zayd [is] going.78

to find, deem wajad-a ‘وَجَدَ to consider i‘tabara’ اعتُبِر

74 One of these accusatives may take the form of an object pronoun suffix on the verb.
75 Which Hasan explains as having to do with psychological perceptions: in particular, emotions and intellect (1987, II:4, note 4).
76 As explained by Hasan, verbs that have to do with transformation of something from one state to another (Ibid., note 5).
77 See especially Hasan’s chart of Zann-a and her sisters (1987, II:10). Note also the discussion in Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughli 1990, 34–36.
78 Example from Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughli 1990, 34.
79 The verb i‘tabara ‘to consider’ is not included in older lists of ‘اف’اعْلَ ‘الْقُلُوبِ, but that is likely due to the fact that its usage is more modern and recent rather than traditional. Its meaning and its effect on the sentence components show that it is certainly a member of this category. I thank my colleague Amin Bonnah for this insight.
They considered this step a great historical accomplishment.

We consider the library of the center important.

What some see as positives others see as negatives.

(3.2) Verbs of transformation: These verbs signify changing a thing into something else, changing its state or appearance, or designating one thing as something else.

to convert: Sayyar-a صير to take, adopt (as) ittaxadh-a اتخاذ
to make: ja’al-a جعل to leave: tarak-a ترك

They took the river [as] borders of the region.

He left the door open.

5.3.3.9 THE NOUN FOLLOWING THE laa OF ABSOLUTE OR CATEGORICAL NEGATION (lāa l-naafiyat-u lil-jins-i). In this construction the noun is devoid of the definite article or nunation. It carries only the accusative marker fatHa.

lāa shukr-a ‘alaa waajib-in. Don’t mention it. (‘There is no thanking for a duty.’)

lāa mubarrir-a li-z-ilghaa-i-ḥaa. There is no excuse for its elimination.

lāa maani‘a min daf ‘-i ba‘D-i l-ziyaadat-i. There’s no objection to paying a bit more.

See also Chapter 37, section 2.1.6.
من دونهم لا استقرار ولا سلام في المنطقة.

\textit{min duun-i-him laa stiqraar-a wa laa salaam-a fii l-minTaqat-i.}

Without them there is no stability and no peace in the region.

5.3.3.10 **The Teens Numbers**, both cardinal and ordinal, including eleven.\(^{81}\) No matter what their function in a sentence, these compound numbers always have both parts marked with fat\(Ha:\)

\textit{thaman-u-hu xamsat-a ʽashar-a dirham-an. fii l-ghuraf-i l-tis\(^{e}\)-a ʽasharat-a}

Its cost is \textit{fifteen} dirhams.

\textit{ya-blugh-u Tuul-u-hu thalaathat-a ʽashar-a mitr-an.}

Its length reaches \textit{thirteen} meters.

5.3.3.11 **As the Complement of Verbs of “Seeming”**: Verbs that denote appearing or seeming also take accusative complements.

\textit{kaan-a ya-bduu shaxsiyyat-an baarizat-an fii mujtama\(^{e}\)-i-hi.}

He had seemed [like] a prominent personality in his society.

\textit{ta-bduu ʽaSghar-a bi-kathiir-in min ʽumr-i-ha. ya-bduu ʽatiq-an jidd-an.}

She appears much younger than her age. It looks very ancient.

5.3.3.12 **Less Frequent Accusatives**: Further instances of the use of the accusative case in MSA are noted in most teaching texts and traditional grammars, but few or none appeared in the corpus of text studied for this book. Some of the most important include:

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{kam + accusative singular noun}: A singular accusative, indefinite noun is used after the question word \textit{kam} ‘how much, how many?’

\begin{align*}
\textit{kam faSl-an qara\(^{e}\)-ti?} & \quad \textit{kam ghurfat-an fii l-funduq-i?} \\
\text{How many chapters did you (f.) read?} & \quad \text{How many rooms [are there] in the hotel?}
\end{align*}
\end{enumerate}

\(^{81}\) The only exception to this is the cardinal numeral “twelve” which occurs in both the nominative and the genitive/accusative cases. See Chapter 15 on numerals and numerical expressions.
2) Exclamation of astonishment: *maa ‘af’al-a!* (ما أفعل! مَا التَّعْجُبُ) (maa l-ta‘ajjub): The accusative is used in the ‘adjectival verb’ construction on the noun following the exclamation of wonder, astonishment or surprise *maa ‘af’al-a!* In this expression, the word *maa* is followed by “an elative in the accusative of exclamation,” (Cantarino, 1974, II:210), and then a noun in the accusative case. Note that this form of the elative is identical with a Form IV verb, and that it is described this way in some texts and called *fi‘l al-ta‘ajjub.*

\[ \text{ما أجمل المنظرَ} \]

*maa ‘ajmal-a l-manZar-a!*

How lovely the view is!

The noun may be replaced by a pronoun suffix:

\[ \text{ما أجملهُ} \]

*maa ‘ajmal-a-hu!*

How lovely it is!

3) Vocative first term of construct: The accusative case is used with the vocative particles *yaa* or ‘*ayy-u-haa* if the addressee is the first term of an *‘iDaafa* or noun construct, or if the noun has a pronoun suffix:

\[ \text{يا عبد الله!} \]

*yaa ‘*abd-a llaah-i!*

O Abdallah! (lit: ‘servant of God’)

\[ \text{يا أرض بلادي!} \]

*yaa ‘arD-a bilaad-ii!*

O, earth of my country!

\[ \text{يا طلاب الجامعة وآساتذتها!} \]

*yaa Tullaab-a l-jaami‘at-i wa-asaatidhat-a-haa!*

O students and professors of the university!

Even without the vocative particle, a noun in construct or with a pronoun suffix, understood as the addressee, is put into the accusative:

\[ \text{أبنانا الذي في السموات} \]

‘*ab-aa-naa iladhii fil l-samawaat-i . . .\]

Our Father who [art] in heaven . . .

4) Nouns following exceptive expressions (*al-istithnaaُ astonished*) in non-negative clauses: In clauses using an exceptive expression such as *maa ‘*adaa,* or

---

82 See Abboud and McCarus 1976, Part 2:272. See also Cowan 1964, 177. In this book, see Chapter 25 on the Form IV verb, section 9.
83 For more examples see Cantarino 1974, II, 210–13.
"illaa, the noun following the exceptive is in the accusative case if the clause
does not contain a negative.

حضرَ الجميع إلاُ رشيداً
HadDar-a l-jamii‘u’ illaa rashiid-an.
Everyone came except Rashid.

تكلمَ مع كل الطالبات إلاُ ياسمينَ
takallam-tu ma‘a kull-i l-Taalibaat-i ‘illaa yaasamiin-a.
I spoke with all the [female] students except Yasmine.

This is the case in particular with time-telling, where the word ‘illaa is used to
express how many minutes are lacking until a particular hour, e.g.:

الساعةِ الخامسةُ إلاَّ ربعًا
al-saa‘at-u l-xaamisat-u ‘illaa rub‘-an.
It is 4:45 (‘five [o’clock] less a quarter [of an hour’]).

الساعةِ السابعةُ إلاَّ ثلثًا
It is 6:40 (‘seven [o’clock] less a third [of an hour’]).

5.3.3.13 OTHER ACCUSATIVES: The accusative case is used in other constructions
besides the ones mentioned, but these are infrequent in MSA. For more extensive
discussion and listings, especially for literary and classical syntax, see Cantarino

5.4 Arabic declensions
Following the practice of Wright (1967, I:234 ff.) and Cowan (1964, 29ff.), this book
refers to the various inflectional classes of substantives as “declensions.” A
decension is a class of substantives (nouns or adjectives) that exhibits similar
inflectional markings for case and definiteness. Arabic nouns and adjectives fall
into eight declensions:84

1 three-way inflection (called “triptote” in many Arabic grammars)
2 dual

84 Note that Wright refers to declensions of “undefined” or “defined” nouns, referring to triptote
nouns as the first declension (236) and diptote nouns as the second declension (239). He does not
list other inflectional classes as declensions. Cowan (29) states that “there are three declensions in
Arabic” allotting the first declension to triptotes, the second declension to diptotes and the third
to the uninflectable and undeclinable substantives (32).

For ease of reference in this book, I have allotted declensional status not only to singular and
broken plural noun stems, but also to words that incorporate suffixes denoting dual and plural
number, since they inflect for case and definiteness in different ways.
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case  183

3 sound feminine plural
4 sound masculine plural
5 diptote
6 defective
7 uninflectable (for case, but they show inflection for definiteness), and
8 invariable.

5.4.1 Three-way inflection: Triptote (mu’rab معرب)
The triptote is the base category or declension one for Arabic nouns and adjectives.85 The term “triptote” refers to words (nouns and adjectives) that take all three short vowel case endings, each one differentiating a particular case (Damma, kasra and fatHa). The triptote declension also allows nouns and adjectives to be marked for indefiniteness with nunation.86 This is considered the base or complete declension because it shows the full range of inflectional markers for all three cases.87

5.4.1.1 THE CASE MARKERS:

(1) Nominative: The nominative suffix in the triptote declension is Damma by itself (-u) for definite words or two Damma/Damma with a tail or (-u-n) for indefinite words. Examples:

(1.1) Noun in the nominative case:
the honor/an honor al-sharaf-u/sharaf-un
the secret/a secret al-sirr-u/sirr-un
the ship/a ship al-safiinat-u/safiinat-un

(1.2) Adjective in the nominative case:
short (def.)/short (indef.) al-qaSiir-u/qaSiir-un
new (def.)/new (indef.) al-jadiid-u/jadiid-un

(2) Genitive: The genitive marker in the triptote declension is kasra by itself (-i) for definite words or two kasras (-i-n) for indefinite words. Note that when kasra is written together with shadda, it may be written either below the consonant or below the shadda.

85 The term mu’rab means ‘fully inflectable.’
86 For more on nunation, see section 4.2 in this chapter.
87 Certain linguists have designated these cases differently in English. Beeston (1970, 51), for example, refers to the cases as “independent status (nominative),” “dependent status (genitive),” and “subordinate status (accusative).” See his Chapter 7 (“Syntactic markers of nouns”) for a brief but comprehensive description of Arabic case marking.
(2.1) **Noun in the genitive case:**

the honor/an honor  
al-sharaf-i/sharaf-in  
الشرف/شرف

the secret/a secret  
al-sirr-i/sirr-in  
السر/سر

the ship/a ship  
al-safiinat-i/safiinat-in  
السفينة/سفينة

(2.2) **Adjective in the genitive case:**

short (def.)/short (indef.)  
al-qaSiir-i/qaSiir-in  
القصير/قصير

new (def.)/new (indef.)  
al-jadiid-i/jadiid-in  
الجديد/جديد

(3) **Accusative:** The accusative marker in the triptote declension is fatHa by itself (a-) for definite words or two fatHas to signal nunation (-a-n) for indefinite words. With the accusative form of nunation, a supporting ’alif is used, except with words ending in taa’ marbuuTa or in a hamza preceded by ’alif. This support ’alif is visible in writing, but it is not pronounced; it is only a seat for the two fatHas.

(3.1) **Noun in the accusative case:**

the honor/an honor  
al-sharaf-a/sharaf-an  
الشرف/شرف

the secret/a secret  
al-sirr-a/sirr-an  
السر/سر

the ship/a ship  
al-safiinat-a/safiinat-an  
السفينة/سفينة

the winter/a winter  
al-shitaa’-a/shitaa’-an  
الشتاء/شتاء

(3.2) **Adjective in the accusative case:**

short (def.)/short (indef.)  
al-qaSiir-a/qaSiir-an  
القصير/قصير

new (def.)/new (indef.)  
al-jadiid-a/jadiid-an  
الجديد/جديد

5.4.1.2 DECLENSION ONE PARADIGMS:

(1) **Singular masculine noun:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun form</th>
<th>Definite</th>
<th>Indefinite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-bayt-u</td>
<td>البيت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-bayt-i</td>
<td>البيت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-bayt-a</td>
<td>البيت</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Plural noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Definite</th>
<th>Indefinite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'houses' buyuut</td>
<td>al-buyuut-u</td>
<td>buyuut-u-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-buyuut-i</td>
<td>buyuut-i-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-buyuut-a</td>
<td>buyuut-a-n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Feminine singular noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Definite</th>
<th>Indefinite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'ship' safiina</td>
<td>al-safiinat-u</td>
<td>safiinat-u-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-safiinat-i</td>
<td>safiinat-i-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-safiinat-a</td>
<td>safiinat-a-n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Plural noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Definite</th>
<th>Indefinite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'ships' sufun</td>
<td>al-sufun-u</td>
<td>sufun-u-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-sufun-i</td>
<td>sufun-i-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-sufun-a</td>
<td>sufun-a-n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Masculine singular adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Definite</th>
<th>Indefinite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'short' qaSiir</td>
<td>al-qaSiir-u</td>
<td>qaSiir-un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-qaSiir-i</td>
<td>qaSiir-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-qaSiir-a</td>
<td>qaSiir-an</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4.1.3 THE FIVE NOUNS (al-'asmaa' al-xamsa): Within the triptote declension there is a subset of Arabic nouns from biliteral or even monoliteral roots which show triptote case inflection in two ways: as a short vowel and as a long vowel. The long vowel is used when the word is used as the first term of a genitive construct (i'daafa) or when it has a pronoun suffix.

The five nouns are:

father: ُاب
mouth: مم
brother: ُأخ
possessor: ذو
father-in-law: حم

(1) The five-noun paradigms: ‘father’ ُاب
(1.1) As an independent word:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Definite:</th>
<th>Indefinite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>ُاب-u</td>
<td>ُاب-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>ُاب-i</td>
<td>ُاب-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>ُاب-a</td>
<td>ُاب-an</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.2) With pronoun suffix: -haa ‘her father’:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>ُاب-uu-haa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>ُاب-ii-haa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>ُاب-aa-haa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(1.3) As first part of ‘iDaafa: ‘the father of Hasan’:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>‘ab-uu Hasan-in</th>
<th>أبو حسن</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>‘ab-ii Hasan-in</td>
<td>أبو حسن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>‘ab-aa Hasan-in</td>
<td>أبو حسن</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

- أصبَحَ أباً: αυλούσφ από
  ُبُأبَٰب ُبَبَبَإَبَب
- ‘aSbaH-a ‘ab-an.  
  He became a father.
  Father Joseph
- دَهَبَت إِلَى بِيْتِ أبِيْهَا.
  She went to her father’s house.
  I asked his brother.

5.4.2 Two-way inflection: declensions two, three, four, and five

Certain Arabic noun declensions exhibit only two different case markers, or two-way inflection. These declensions have a specific nominative inflectional marker but they merge the genitive and accusative into just one other inflectional marker.\(^{88}\) Technically, these nouns are considered to exhibit all three cases; it is just that the genitive and accusative have exactly the same form.\(^{89}\)

The declensions that have two-way inflection fall into two major categories, the suffix declensions and the diptote declension. The suffix declensions are determined by number suffixes and include the dual, the sound masculine plural, and the sound feminine plural, whereas the diptote declension includes words that fall into particular semantic and morphological categories, as described below.

5.4.2.1 SUFFIX DECLENSIONS: THE DUAL (DECLENSION TWO), THE SOUND MASULINE PLURAL (DECLENSION THREE) AND THE SOUND FEMININE PLURAL (DECLENSION FOUR). Three sets of two-way inflections are based on dual and plural suffixes rather than word stems. That is, once the suffix is attached to a word, it is the suffix itself that determines how the word will be marked for case. These number-marking suffixes in Arabic are all restricted to two case markings rather

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\(^{88}\) Sometimes, in this latter category, the combined genitive/accusative inflection is referred to as the “oblique” or essentially, non-nominative case marker.

\(^{89}\) Traditional Arabic grammatical theory evolved the concept that all nouns are marked for every case, but that in some of them the case marker is “virtual” or “implied” (muqaddar) rather than overt (Zaahir).
than three. These suffixes carry two kinds of information: number (dual or plural) and case (nominative or genitive/accusative).

(1) **Declension two: The dual (al-muthannaَّ)** As described in section 3.1 Arabic uses a suffix on the singular stem to mark the noun as being two in number, or in the dual. The dual suffix has two case forms, and is not inflected for definiteness.

- **-aani (nominative)**
- **-ayni (genitive/accusative)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Genitive</th>
<th>Accusative</th>
<th>Indefinite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nominative</strong></td>
<td>al-bayt-aani</td>
<td>al-bayt-ayni</td>
<td>al-bayt-ayni</td>
<td>bayt-aani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genitive</strong></td>
<td>al-bayt-aani</td>
<td>al-bayt-ayni</td>
<td>al-bayt-ayni</td>
<td>bayt-ayni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accusative</strong></td>
<td>al-bayt-aani</td>
<td>al-bayt-ayni</td>
<td>al-bayt-ayni</td>
<td>bayt-ayni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.1) **Masculine dual noun:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘two houses’ bayt-aani</th>
<th>بيتان</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Nominative** | al-bayt-aani | البيتان
bayt-aani | بيتان |
| **Genitive** | al-bayt-ayni | البيتين
bayt-ayni | بيتين |
| **Accusative** | al-bayt-ayni | البيتين
bayt-ayni | بيتين |

(1.2) **Feminine dual noun:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘two cities’ madiinat-aani</th>
<th>مدينتان</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Nominative** | al-madiinat-aani | المدينةتان
madiinat-aani | مدينتان |
| **Genitive** | al-madiinat-ayni | المدينةتين
madiinat-ayni | مدينتين |
| **Accusative** | al-madiinat-ayni | المدينةتين
madiinat-ayni | مدينتين |

(1.3) **Masculine dual adjective:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘big’ kabiir-aani</th>
<th>كبيران</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Nominative** | al-kabiir-aani | الكبيران
kabiir-aani | كبيران |
| **Genitive** | al-kabiir-ayni | الكبيرين
kabiir-ayni | كبيرين |
| **Accusative** | al-kabiir-ayni | الكبيرين
kabiir-ayni | كبيرين |
(1.4) Feminine dual adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Definite:</th>
<th>Indefinite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-kabiirat-aani</td>
<td>kabiirat-aani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-kabiirat-ayni</td>
<td>kabiirat-ayni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-kabiirat-ayni</td>
<td>kabiirat-ayni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jaras-aani</td>
<td>ٍjaras-aani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two bells</td>
<td>من مركزين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In two centers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two big storms</td>
<td>في مدينتين كبيرتين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In two big cities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.5) Nuun-deletion with possessive pronouns and as first term of construct:

When a dual noun is the first term of a construct, or if it has a pronoun suffix, the nuun of the dual suffix (and its short vowel kasra) is deleted.90

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bi-yad-ay-hi</td>
<td>مع مرشح حزب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In his two hands</td>
<td>مع مرشح حزب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two nominees of the party</td>
<td>مع مرشح حزب</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two deans of the schools of medicine and engineering attended the meeting.

(2) Declension three: The sound masculine plural (jam³ mudhakkar saalim)

The sound masculine plural has two forms, much like the

---

90 The nuun of the dual can be considered a form of nunation, and since nunation cannot occur on a noun that is the first term of a genitive construct or on a noun with a suffixed possessive pronoun, the nuun of the dual suffix (and the sound masculine plural) is likewise deleted. The dual category is discussed at greater length in Chapter 15. Characteristics of the genitive construct, or idaafa are discussed in Chapter 8.
dual. Note that the long vowel in the suffix (-uu- or -ii-) is what changes when the case changes. The final short vowel (fatHa /-a/) remains the same in both the nominative and the genitive/accusative. This fatHa is not a case ending, but rather part of the spelling of the suffix. In pause form it is not pronounced.

Note: This form of plural is used only to refer to human beings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correspondents (nominative)</th>
<th>muraasil-uuna</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correspondents (genitive/accusative)</td>
<td>muraasil-iina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims (nominative)</td>
<td>muslim-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims (genitive/accusative)</td>
<td>muslim-iina</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2.1) Sound masculine plural noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘citizens’ muwaatTin-uuna مواطنون</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definite:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2.2) Sound masculine plural adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘many’ kathiir-uuna كثيرون</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definite:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>مراقبون رسميون من المثقفين المعتدلين</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>muraaqib-uuna rasmiyy-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official observers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a number of Egyptian and Lebanese researchers and intellectuals

(2.3) Nuun-deletion with possessive pronouns and as first term of construct: When a noun pluralized with the sound masculine plural suffix functions as the first term of a construct, or if it has a pronoun suffix, the nuun (and its short vowel fatha) of the suffix is deleted (similar to what occurs with the dual suffix above 5.4.2.1(1.5)). The long case-marking vowels /-uu/ or /-ii/ are then left as the remaining part of the suffix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>مراقبو الوفد</th>
<th>من مُتَخَّرِيجِي الجامعة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>muraaqib-uu l-wafd-i</td>
<td>min mutaxarrij-ii l-jaami’at-i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

companions of the delegation from the graduates of the university

It will ask its electors to vote.

(3) Declension four: The sound feminine plural (jam‘ mu’annath saalim جمع مَوْئِنَت سَالِم). The sound feminine plural is also restricted to two case markers. Unlike the dual and sound masculine plural, where the case marking shows up on the long vowel of the suffix, the case marking for the sound feminine plural occurs at the end of the suffix, just as normal triptote short vowel case marking would occur. However, the sound feminine plural is restricted to only two of the short vowels: Damma and kasra. It cannot take fatHa. The genitive/accusative form takes kasra or kasrataan.

(3.1) Sound feminine plural noun:

| ‘elections’ intixaabaat انتخابات |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Nominative      | al-intixaabaat-u | الانتخابات | intixaabaat-u-n | انتخابات |
| Genitive        | al-intixaabaat-i | الانتخابات | intixaabaat-i-n | انتخابات |
| Accusative      | al-intixaabaat-i | الانتخابات | intixaabaat-i-n | انتخابات |

91 See also Chapter 8, 1.2.1.4.
(3.2) **Sound feminine plural adjective:** This form of the adjective is used only to refer to groups of female human beings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'Egyptian' miSriyyaat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-miSriyyaat-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-miSriyyaat-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-miSriyyaat-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indefinite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miSriyyaat-u-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miSriyyaat-i-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miSriyyaat-i-n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of feminine plural accusative/genitive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>أجري محادثات.</th>
<th>لست نمليت.</th>
<th>يفتتح مجالات واسعة.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7ajraa muHaadathaat-in</td>
<td>las-naa yamaniyyaat-in.</td>
<td>ya-ftaH-u majaalaat-in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He held **talks**. We are not **Yemeni** (f.pl.).

It opens wide **fields**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>يجري اتصالات مع جميع الأطراف.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yu-jrii ttiSaalaat-in ma'a jamii'i 1-t'aTraaaf-i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He is in contact with (‘implementing **contacts**’) with all sides.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>دخلن الصف منأخرات.</th>
<th>رابطة النساء العربيّات.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>daxal-na l-Saffa muta’axxiraat-in.</td>
<td>raabiTat-u l-nisaay-i l-arabiyyaat-i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They (f.) entered the classroom **late**. the **Arab** women’s **club**

5.4.2.2 **DECLENSION FIVE: DIPTOTE (al-mamnuu min-a l-Sarf):** The term “diptote” refers to an inflectional category or declension of Arabic nouns and adjectives that are formally restricted **when they are indefinite**:

- They do not take nunation.
- They do not take kasra (the genitive marker).

Diptotes therefore, when indefinite, only exhibit two case-markers: final -u (Damma) for nominative case and final -a (fatHa) for both genitive and accusative. They look identical in the indefinite genitive and accusative cases.

---

92 Note that the adjective agreeing with majaalaat-in shows the accusative as fatHataan because it is triptote and belongs to declension one. Both majaalaat and waasi‘a are in the accusative, but they are marked differently because they fall into two different declensions.
(1) Paradigms

(1.1) Singular diptote noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'desert' SaHraa’</th>
<th>صحراء</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definite:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Indefinite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-SaHraa^3-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-SaHraa^3-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-SaHraa^3-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.2) Plural diptote noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'presidents' ru’asaa’</th>
<th>روساء</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definite:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Indefinite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-ru’asaa^3-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-ru’asaa^3-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-ru’saa^3-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.3) Singular masculine adjective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'red' ‘aHmar</th>
<th>أحمر</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definite:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Indefinite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al^2-aHmar-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al^2-aHmar-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al^2-aHmar-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.4) Singular feminine adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'red' Hamraa’</th>
<th>حمراء</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definite:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Indefinite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-Hamraa^3-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-Hamraa^3-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-Hamraa^3-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(1.5) **Plural diptote adjective:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>'foreign' 'ajaanib</th>
<th>'Ajani</th>
<th>Indefinite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nominative</strong></td>
<td>al-‘ajaanib-u</td>
<td>’ajaanib-u</td>
<td>أجانب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genitive</strong></td>
<td>al-‘ajaanib-i</td>
<td>’ajaanib-a</td>
<td>أجانب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accusative</strong></td>
<td>al-‘ajaanib-a</td>
<td>’ajaanib-a</td>
<td>أجانب</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of diptotes in context:

أربعةُ خناجرُ

’sarba’at-u xanaajir-a

four daggers

سلطةُ حضراءُ

salaTat-un xaDraa’-u

a green salad

بيتُ أبيضُ

bayt-un ‘abyaD-u

a white house

إلى مدينةٍ بغدادٍ

3ila a madiinat-i baghdaad-a

to the city of Baghdad

сяبوتُ إلى علاقةٍ أوثقٍ بينهما.

sa-yu-3addii 3ila a alaaqat-in 3awthaq-a bayn-a-humaa.

It will lead to a firmer relationship between the two of them.

(2) **Categories of diptotes:** Diptotes fall into categories based on their word structure. The main ones are: diptote by virtue of pattern (singular patterns and plural patterns) and diptote by nature or origin.93

(2.1) **Diptote by pattern:**

(2.1.1) **Diptote plural patterns:** Certain noun and adjective plural patterns are inherently diptote, including:

(a) ُفُعَلاءُ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns:</th>
<th>Adjectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ministers</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presidents</td>
<td>strange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>princes</td>
<td>honorable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaders</td>
<td>generous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

93 See also section 3.2.3.2. in this chapter.
(b) 

**فَعَّالٌ**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns:</th>
<th>Adjectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>spices; herbs</td>
<td>tawaabil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>restaurants</td>
<td>maTa‘im</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>offices</td>
<td>makaatib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peppers</td>
<td>falaafil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) 

**فَعَّالٌ**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns:</th>
<th>Adjectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>crowds, throngs</td>
<td>jamaahiir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>topics</td>
<td>mawaaDii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legends</td>
<td>ًasaaTiir</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(d) ًafa’ila‘ with variant ًaf’ilaa for geminate roots.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns:</th>
<th>Adjectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>friends</td>
<td>ًaSdiqaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>few</td>
<td>ًaqilla‘</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doctors</td>
<td>ًaTibbaa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2.1.2) **Singular diptote patterns:**

(a) Elative (comparative) adjectives and colors: The diptote pattern is used to indicate the comparative state of the adjective and also for the basic color names.94 Both the masculine and feminine forms of the elative are diptote:

(a.1) **Masculine singular comparative adjective ًaf‘al:**

| Better, preferable | ًafDal | أَفْضِل | ًaxDar | أَخْضَر | green (m.) |
| Happier | ًas‘ad | أَسْعَد | ًazraaq | أَزرَق | blue (m.) |
| Fewer; less | ًaqal | أَقلُ | ًaSfar | أَصْفَر | yellow (m.) |

(a.2) **The feminine singular adjective used for colors and physical traits (fa’ila‘a’ فَعَّالِإ):**

| Red | Hamraa | حمراء | shqraa | شقراء |
| Blue | zarqaa | زرقاء | Tarshaa | طرشاء |

94 For more description of comparative and superlative adjectives, see Chapter 10, section 4.2; for more about color adjectives, see Chapter 10, section 5.1.
(2.1.2.b) Nouns or adjectives that have a suffix -\textit{aa}\textsuperscript{2} after the root consonants. Nouns of the \textit{fa‘laa}\textsuperscript{2} pattern. These words are usually feminine in gender, e.g.,

desert \textit{SaHraa}\textsuperscript{2} صحراء beauty; belle \textit{Hasnaa}\textsuperscript{2} حسانة

(2.2) **Diptote by nature or origin**: Certain categories of words fall into the diptote camp by virtue of their etymology or meaning.

(2.2.1) **Most feminine proper names**, e.g.,

Fatima \textit{faaTima} فاطمة Zayna \textit{zayna} زينة
Aida \textit{‘aa\textsuperscript{2}ida} عائدة Afaf \textit{‘afaaf} عفاف

(2.2.2) **Proper names of non-Arabic origin**: This includes a large number of place names or names of geographical features in the Middle East whose origins are from other Semitic languages or other (non-Semitic) Middle Eastern languages. A salient characteristic of most of these names is that they do not have the definite article.

Damascus \textit{dimashq} دمشق Tunis \textit{tuunis} تونس
Baghdad \textit{baghdaad} بغداد Beirut \textit{bayruut} بيروت
Egypt \textit{miSr} مصر Lebanon \textit{lubnaan} لبنان
Mecca \textit{makka} مكة Tigris \textit{dijla} دجلة

Examples:
from Damascus \textit{min dimashq-a} من دمشق
in Tunis \textit{fii tuunis-a} في تونس
to Egypt \textit{‘ilaa miSr-a} إلى مصر

Also, other non-Arab place names:\textsuperscript{95}

Madrid \textit{madriid} مدريد
Paris \textit{baariis} باريس
Istanbul \textit{istaanbuul} إسطنبول

\textsuperscript{95} In MSA, names of places in other parts of the world, such as \textit{nyuu yuurrk} (New York), \textit{waash-iinTun} (Washington), or \textit{istukhulm} (Stockholm) are usually left uninflected, since they are not readily accommodated into the Arabic inflectional class system.
A helpful rule of thumb with Middle Eastern place names in Arabic is that if they carry the definite article, then they inflect as triptotes, e.g.:

- Rabat 
  - al-ribaaT

- Khartoum 
  - al-xarTuum

- Cairo 
  - al-qaahira

- Kuwait 
  - al-kuwayt

Examples:

- from Cairo: 
  - min-a l-qaahirat-i

- in Khartoum: 
  - fii l-xarTuum-i

- to Kuwait: 
  - 'ilaal l-kuwayt-i

(2.2.3) Certain masculine names: Certain Arabic masculine proper names are diptote. These occur in the following categories:

(2.2.3.a) Derived from other Semitic languages: These include many names mentioned in the Bible and in the Qurʾān.

- Suleiman, Solomon 
  - sulaymaan

- Jonah; Jonas 
  - yuunus

- Jacob; James 
  - ya’quub

- Abraham 
  - ʾibraahiim

(2.2.3.b) Derived from verbs rather than adjectives:

- Ahmad ‘I praise’
  - ʾa-Hmad-u

- Yazid ‘He increases’
  - ya-ziid-u

5.4.3 Declension Six: Defective Nouns and Adjectives (ʾasmaaʾ naaqiSa أسماء ناقصة; al-ism al-manquuS الأسم المنقوص). This inflectional class includes primarily words derived from “defective” roots, that is, lexical roots whose final element is a semivowel rather than a consonant.

It includes masculine singular active participles from all forms (I–X) of defective verbs, verbal nouns from forms V and VI, and a set of noun plurals based primarily on the diptote plural pattern CaCaaCiC. The characteristic feature of this declension is that the final root consonant appears in the form of two kasra kas in the nominative and genitive indefinite. In an ordinary written text, these short vowels are not visible.96

Thus in this declension, the nominative and genitive inflections are identical; the accusative shows inflection for fatHa or fatHataan.

96 The two kasras may be added into a printed text (in a newspaper article, for example) should there be ambiguity about the meaning of the word.
5.4.3.1 SINGULAR DEFECTIVE NOUN:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definite:</th>
<th>Indefinite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-muHaamii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-muHaamii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-muHaamiya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.3.2 DIPTOTE DEFECTIVE PLURAL:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definite:</th>
<th>Indefinite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-maqaahii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-maqaahii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-maqaahiy-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further examples:

**Singular defectives:**
- club  naad-in نار challenge taHadd-in تحد
- judge qaaD-in قاض ضاج challenge taHadd-in تحد

**Plural defectives:**
- songs  ṣaghaan-in أغان nights layaal-in ليال كراس
- lands ṣaraaD-in أراض chairs karaas-in كراس ضواج
- hands ṣayd-in ṣayyad-in أيد أبا ضواج

97 Active participle from Form III defective verb Haamaayy-Haamii, ‘to defend, protect.’
98 Pattern CaCaaGc.
99 In this (‘r-D) and the following three words, the defective ending has been added to a non-defective root (y-d, l-y-l, k-r-s).
5.4.4 Declension seven: indeclinable nouns (al-ism al-maqSuur)
Indeclinable nouns show no variation in case, only definiteness. They are chiefly derived from defective lexical roots and include, in particular, passive participles (m.) from all forms (I–X) and nouns of place from defective verbs. They normally end with ʾalif maqSuura.

5.4.4.1 SINGULAR INDECLINABLE NOUN:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘hospital’ mustashfan</th>
<th>مستشفى المستشفى</th>
<th>مستشفى مستشفى</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-mustashfaa</td>
<td>mustashfan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-mustashfaa</td>
<td>mustashfan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-mustashfaa</td>
<td>mustashfan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.4.2 PLURAL INDECLINABLE NOUN:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘villages’ quran</th>
<th>قري قري</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-quraa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-quraa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-quraa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100 For a detailed explanation of the phonological rules applying to indeclinable nouns and adjectives, see Abboud and McCarus 1983, II:14–19.

101 Singular qarya قريه.
5.4.4.3 FURTHER EXAMPLES:

(1) Nouns of place:
- coffeehouse  
- goal, range

(2) Common nouns:
- stick, cane
- villages

(3) Verbal nouns
- effort
- meaning

(4) Passive participles of derived verb forms (II–X):
- a level
- a crossroad
- a hospital
- required; required requirement

(5) Examples in context:
- He was taken to the hospital of the American University.
- It links three big villages.

5.4.5 Declension eight: Invariable nouns
This noun class consists of a set of nouns which vary neither in case nor in definiteness. They are spelled with final ‘alif maqSuura unless the previous letter is yaa’, in which case, ‘alif Tawiila is used.

---

102 Some passive participles of the derived forms serve also as nouns of place.
103 Abboud and McCarus 1983, II:19–20 provide an informative discussion of this declension. ‘Abd al-Latif et al. 1997, 54–55, describe these nouns as having a suffixed feminine marker, ‘alif maqSuura, and that they are therefore diptote, and do not take nunation.
### 5.4.5.1 INvariable noun ending with ʿalif maqṣūra:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Humanness</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Definiteness</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'complaint' shakwaa</td>
<td>al-shakwaا</td>
<td>الشكوى</td>
<td>shakwaا</td>
<td>الشكوى</td>
<td>shakwaا</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-shakwaا</td>
<td>الشكوى</td>
<td>shakwaا</td>
<td>الشكوى</td>
<td>shakwaا</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-shakwaا</td>
<td>الشكوى</td>
<td>shakwaا</td>
<td>الشكوى</td>
<td>shakwaا</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-shakwaا</td>
<td>الشكوى</td>
<td>shakwaا</td>
<td>الشكوى</td>
<td>shakwaا</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.4.5.2 INvariable noun ending with ʿalif tawīla:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Humanness</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Definiteness</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'gifts' hadayya</td>
<td>al-hadayyaا</td>
<td>الهدايا</td>
<td>hadayyaا</td>
<td>الهدايا</td>
<td>hadayyaا</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-hadayyaا</td>
<td>الهدايا</td>
<td>hadayyaا</td>
<td>الهدايا</td>
<td>hadayyaا</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-hadayyaا</td>
<td>الهدايا</td>
<td>hadayyaا</td>
<td>الهدايا</td>
<td>hadayyaا</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-hadayyaا</td>
<td>الهدايا</td>
<td>hadayyaا</td>
<td>الهدايا</td>
<td>hadayyaا</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.4.5.3 Singular invariable adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Humanness</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Definiteness</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'higher, highest' ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td>al-ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td>الأعلى</td>
<td>ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td>الأعلى</td>
<td>ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td>الأعلى</td>
<td>ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td>الأعلى</td>
<td>ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td>الأعلى</td>
<td>ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td>الأعلى</td>
<td>ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td>الأعلى</td>
<td>ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td>الأعلى</td>
<td>ʿaʿlaa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.4.5.4 Plural invariable adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Humanness</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Definiteness</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'sick' marDaa</td>
<td>al-marDaa</td>
<td>المرضى</td>
<td>marDaa</td>
<td>المرضى</td>
<td>marDaa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-marDaa</td>
<td>المرضى</td>
<td>marDaa</td>
<td>المرضى</td>
<td>marDaa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-marDaa</td>
<td>المرضى</td>
<td>marDaa</td>
<td>المرضى</td>
<td>marDaa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-marDaa</td>
<td>المرضى</td>
<td>marDaa</td>
<td>المرضى</td>
<td>marDaa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4.5.5 TYPES OF DECLENSION EIGHT NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES. This declension or inflectional class includes a number of noun and adjective types:

1. **Singular nouns**: These nouns are feminine in gender, having an 'alif maqṣura suffixed after the root consonants, chiefly with patterns fu‘lāa, fi‘lāa and fa‘lāa:

   - Gift; benefit: jadwaa جدوى
   - Candy, sweet: ḥalwaa حلوى
   - Chaos: fāwDaa فوضى
   - Memorial; dhikraa ذكرى


2. **Singular adjectives**

   1.1. *Fu‘lāa* فَعْلَى: The feminine singular superlative adjective has the form *fu‘lāa*, which puts it into this inflectional class. If the final 'alif is preceded by a yaa', it becomes 'alif Tawilla.

   - Finest: Husnaa حسناء (f. of al-‘aHsan)
   - Best: al-‘aHsan
   - Great: kubraa كبرى (f. of ‘a’laa)
   - Greatest: ‘akbar (f. of ‘a’laa)

   - SHAHAD-DINA JAMIILAT-AN. شاهد الدنيا جميلةً
   - He saw the world [as] beautiful.
   - It is one of the most important establishments.

And this [is] in addition to the rest of the problems.

wa-haadhaa bi-l-iDaafat-i ‘ilaa baqaayaa l-mashaakil-i. إحدى ‘الهَاذِهَا-الهُمْمَاء

This is in addition to the rest of the problems, one of the two of them.

He saw the world [as] beautiful. It is one of the most important establishments.

*Asmaa‘u llaah-i l-Husnaa l-tis‘at-u wa-l-tis‘uuna* اسماء الله الحسنى التسعة والتسعون

the ninety-nine attributes ('the finest names') of God

yu-maththil-u xuTwat-an kubraa ‘ilaa l-‘amaam-i. يممل خطوة كبرى إلى الأمام

It represents a great step forward.

*xilaal-a l-‘uSuur-i l-wusTaa* خلال العصور الوسطى
during the Middle Ages
(2.2) 'af‘aa: The comparative/superlative adjective from defective roots has the form 'af‘aa, which puts it also into this category.

الشرق الأدنى
min duun-i Hadd-in 'adnaa
without a lower limit (minimum)
the Near East

(2.3) The feminine form of ‘first’ 'uulaa: This is a feminine adjective; it usually follows a feminine noun.

للمرة الأولى
li-l-marrat-i l-'uulaa
for the first time
the first sentence

(2.4) The feminine form of ‘other’ 'uxraa

في دول أخرى
fii duwal-in 'uxraa
in other countries
another time; one more time

(3) Invariable plurals: Included in this set of words are a number of noun and adjective plurals, such as the following:

Nouns:

Halaawaa pl. of Halwaa ‘sweet, candy’
zawaayaa pl. of zaawiya ‘corner’
qaDaayaa pl. of qaDiyya ‘issue, problem’
baqaayaa pl. of baqiyya ‘rest, remainder’

Adjectives:

kaslaa pl. of kaslaan ‘lazy’
ghaDaaba pl. of ghadaaan ‘angry’
naSaaraa pl. of naSraaniyy ‘Christian’
qatlaa pl. of qatiiil ‘killed (person), casualty’
mardDaa pl. of mariiD ‘sick (person)’
jarHlaa pl. of jarriiH ‘wounded (person)’

عدد ضحايا الزلزال
‘adad-u DaHaayaa l-zilzaal-i
the number of victims of the earthquake
(4) **Foreign nouns:** These nouns are not traditionally considered part of this class because they are not of Arabic origin. However, foreign proper names and borrowed words ending in /-aa/ are also invariable in their inflection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>كندا</td>
<td>cinema</td>
<td>سنما</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>فرنسا</td>
<td>potato</td>
<td>بطاطا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>كوريا</td>
<td>music</td>
<td>موسيقى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>camera</td>
<td>كاميرا</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Canada, faransaa, potato, and bataaTaa are invariable in their inflection.

For example:

- Invariable in the modern cinema: 
  - فی Ziyaarat-in li-faransaa
  - fii januub-i isbaaniyaa
  - في زيارة لفرنسا
  - في جنوب إسبانيا
  - On a visit to France in southern Spain

- Invariable in the rivers of Africa: 
  - al-siinamaa l-Hadiithat-u
  - fii 'anhaar-i 'ifriqiyyaa
  - في أنهار إفريقيا
  - في أنهار إفريقيا
  - In the rivers of Africa
Construct phrases and nouns in apposition

1 The construct phrase or ʾiDaafa

In Arabic, two nouns may be linked together in a relationship where the second noun determines the first by identifying, limiting, or defining it, and thus the two nouns function as one phrase or syntactic unit. Traditionally, in English descriptions of Arabic grammar, this unit is called the “genitive construct,” the “construct phrase,” or “annexation structure.” In Arabic it is referred to as the ʾiDaafa (‘annexation; addition’). As Beeston explains, “The link between a noun and an entity which amplifies it is termed by the Arab grammarians ʾiDaafa ‘annexation’, and the noun amplified is said to be muDaaf ‘annexed’” (1970, 45).

Similar constructions in English, where two nouns occur together with one defining the other, might be, for example, “coffee cup,” “university library,” or (as one word) “eggshell.” In fact, English often juxtaposes nouns to create new hybrid terms: “airbag,” “seat belt,” or “keyboard.” Another English equivalent to the Arabic construct phrase is a possessive phrase using “of” (“the Queen of Sweden,” “a bottle of wine”) or the possessive suffix /-’s/ on the possessing noun (“Cairo’s cafés”, “the newspaper’s editorial”).

The noun-noun genitive construct is one of the most basic structures in the Arabic language and occurs with high frequency. The first noun, the muDaaf (‘the added’), has neither the definite article nor nunation because it is in an “annexed” state, determined by the second noun. But, as the head noun of the phrase, the first noun can be in any case: nominative, genitive, or accusative, depending on the function of the ʾiDaafa unit in a sentence structure. The second, or annexing noun, is called the muDaaf ʾilay-hi. It is marked either for definiteness or indefiniteness, and is always in the genitive case.

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1 “In Arabic it is the amplifying term whose definitional status yields the definitional status of the whole phrase: consequently, an annexed substantive will not itself have the article” (Beeston 1970, 46).

2 Literally, the noun ‘added to.’ For an extensive discussion (in English) of ʾiDaafa constructions in literary Arabic, see Cantarino 1970, II: 92-119. See also Wright 1967, II:198-234 for a summary of the rules for Classical Arabic “Status constructus and the genitive.” Hasan 1987, III:1-180 has a thorough analysis of the genitive construct (in Arabic).
In terms of semantic relationships between the nouns in an Arabic construct phrase, they are very wide-ranging. Here they are classified in relatively discrete groups, but clear boundaries cannot always be established between the groups and sometimes membership blurs or overlaps. Eleven general categories are listed here.

1.1 Types of *iDaafa*

1.1.1 Identity relationship
In this broad category, the second term specifies, defines, limits, or explains the particular identity of the first:

**Definite:**
- the city of Jerusalem: *madiinat-u l-quds-i* 
- the minister of justice: *waziir-u l-'adl-i* 
- starfish: *najmat-u l-baHr-i*

**Indefinite:**
- a police officer: *DaabiT-u shurTat-in* 
- a handbag: *Haqiibat-u yad-in* 
- love letters: *rasaa’il-u Hubb-in*

1.1.2 Possessive relationship
In this kind of annexation structure, the first term can be interpreted as belonging (in the very broadest sense) to the second term. In certain respects, it is very close to the next category, the partitive relationship, and it is sometimes difficult to draw a line between the two.

- Beirut airport: *maTaar-u bayruut-a* 
- the father of Hasan: *’ab-uu Hasan-in* 
- the leaders of the tribes: *zu’amaa’-u l-qabaa’-i1*

1.1.3 Partitive relationship
Here the annexed term (the first term) serves as a determiner to describe a part or quantity of the annexing term. This includes the use of nouns that are quantifiers (“some,” “all,” “most”), certain numbers and fractions, and superlative constructions.

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3 Beeston refers to the “semantic polyvalency of the annexation structure” (1970, 46).
4 Holes 1995, 166-67 (after Beeston 1970, 45-47) identifies six categories of constructs, including the adjective *iDaafa* or “unreal” *iDaafa* (*iDaafa* ghayr *Haqiqiyya*).
5 Also called the epexegetical genitive, or genitive of explanation.
6 Although the second noun, *Hasan*, has nunation, it is considered definite because it is a proper name.
Definite:

some of the films \( ba\d-\text{D-u} l\d-\text{aflaam-i} \)
most of the seats \( mu\d-Zam-u l\d-maqa\text{a}id-i \)
the first part of the month \( ma\text{Tla}\d-u l-shahr-i \)
the best conditions \( {\text{^2aFDal-u}} shuru\text{uT-in} \)
the end of the line \( {\text{^2aaxir-u}} lTaabuur\d-i \)
two-thirds of the members \( \text{thul\text{tha}}a l\d-\text{a\d-Daa}2\d-i \)

Indefinite:

every day \( \text{kull-a yawm-in} \)
a quarter of a riyal \( \text{rub\d-u} \text{riyaal-in} \)
any attempt \( {\text{^2ayy-u}} \text{muHaawa}l-at-in} \)
four daggers \( {\text{^2arba\d-at-u}} xanaajir-a \)
a thousand pages \( {\text{^2alf\d-u}} \text{sa}fH\text{at-in} \)

For further discussion and examples of these categories, see sections on quantifiers, numerals, and superlative adjectives.

1.1.4 Agent relationship

In this type of construct, the second term is the agent or doer of the action and the first term is a verbal noun (ma\text{Sdar}), the name of an action:

the crowing of the rooster \( \text{SiyaalH-u l-diik-i} \)
the squeaking of the door \( \text{Sariir-u l-baab\d-i} \)
the departure of the minister \( \text{mu\text{g}h\text{aada}darat-u} l-waziir\d-i \)
the arrival of the queen \( \text{wuSuul-u} l-malikat\d-i \)

1.1.4.1 \text{A}CTION, \text{A}GENT, \text{O}BJECT: In this variant of the agent-relationship \( ^{2\text{DiDa}}fa \), where the object of the verbal action is mentioned in addition to the doer of the action, then the object follows the \( ^{2\text{DiDa}}fa \) construction, and is in the accusative case (as object of the underlying transitive verb):

\text{mu\text{g}h\text{aada}darat-u l-waziir\d-i l\d-\text{aaSimat-a} }
the minister’s leaving the capital
1.1.5 Object relationship
In this type of construct, the second term is the object of an action, and the first term is either the name of the action (masdar), or an active participle (ism-u l-faa’il) referring to the doer of the action.

1.1.5.1 FIRST TERM VERBAL NOUN: In this type, the first term is a verbal noun referring to the action itself:

Definite:
- the raising of the flag: raf’s-u l’alam-i
- the protection of infants: Himayat-u l’aTfaal-i
- the solution of the problems: Hall-u l-mashaakil-i
- the regaining of the initiative: isti’aadat-u l-mubaadarat-i
- entering the church: duxuul-u l-kaniisat-i
- criticizing Orientalism: naqd-u l-istishraaq-i
- riding horses: rukuub-u l-xayl-i

Indefinite:
- playing a role: lu’b-u dawr-in
- establishing a state: qiyaam-u dawlat-in
- opening fire: ’iTlaaq-u naar-in

1.1.5.2 FIRST TERM ACTIVE PARTICIPLE: In the second type of object-relationship ’iDaafa, the first term is an active participle denoting the doer of an action:

Definite:
- the decision-makers: Saani’-uu l-qaraar-i
- companions of the delegation: muraafiq-uu l-wafd-i
- the two leaders of the campaign: qaa’id-aa l-Hamlat-i
Indefinite:

an assistant minister; musaa‘id-u waziir-in مساعد وزیر
undersecretary Saani‘-u ’aHdhiyat-in صناع أحدیة
a shoemaker Aakil-u naml-in أکل نمَل
an anteater

1.1.6 Compositional relationship
In this structure, the second noun of the construct expresses the nature or com-
position of the first:

Definite:

the railway (‘road of iron’) sikkat-u l-Hadiid-i سكة الحديد
bouquets of flowers baaqaat-u l-zuhuur-i باقات الزهور

Indefinite:

a chain of mountains silsilat-u jibaal-in سلسلة جبال
lentil soup shuurbat-u ’adas-in شوربة عدس
a bunch of grapes unquud-u inab-in عنقود عنب
a kindergarten (‘garden of children’) rawDat-u ’aTfaal-in روضة أطفال

1.1.7 Measurement relationship
Where the first noun expresses the nature of the measurement and the second
(and third) the extent or the measurement itself. These occur mainly in indefinite
*iDaafas.

a stone’s throw marmaa Hajr-in مرمى حجر
[for] a period of two days muddat-a yawm-ayni مدة يومين
to a distance of ten meters ’ilaa masaafat-i إلى مسافة عشرة أمتار
’ashrat-i ’amtaar-in
a kilo of bananas kiiluu mawz-in كيلو موز

1.1.8 Contents relationship
Where the first term denotes a container and the second or annexing term the
contents of the container:

Definite:

boxes of gold Sanaadiiq-u l-dhahab-i صناديق الذهب
Indefinite:
- a cup of coffee: finjaan-u qahwat-in
- a pack of gum: ʿulbat-u ʿilkat-in
- a bag of nuts: kiis-u fustuq-in

1.1.9 Purpose relationship
Here the second term explains or defines the particular purpose or use of the first term:
- a marble quarry: maqla-u ruxaam-in
- a rescue plane: Taaʿ irat-u ʿinqaadh-in
- greeting cards: baTaaqaat-u tahniʿat-in

1.1.10 Quotation or title relationship
Here the second term is a title or a quotation. When this is the case, the words of the title or quotation in quotation marks are considered to be set off from the case-marking requirements of the second term of the ʿiDaafa, and are inflected independently, not necessarily in the genitive.
- لفظ «الجهاد»: lajZ-u “al-jihaad-u”
- the expression “jihad”
- the book “The Thousand and One Nights”
- محاشرة بعنوان «الشرق الأوسط وتحدياته»: muHaaDarat-un bi-ʿunwaan-i “al-sharq-u l-awsaT-u wa-taHdiyyaat-u-hu”
- a lecture entitled “The Middle East and Its Challenges”
- فلم «لحن السعادة»: film-u “laHn-u l-saʿaadat-i”
- the film “The Sound of Music” (‘the tune of happiness’)

1.1.11 Clause relationship
A clause in its entirety may occasionally form the second term of an ʿiDaafa. For purposes of clarity, the boundary between first term and second term is indicated by a plus sign (+) in the Arabic transliteration:
- في حالة استمر الوضع على ما هو عليه: fii Haal-i + stamarr-a l-waD-u ʿalaa maa huwa ʿalay-hi
  in case the situation remains as it is
- في وقت كان كل شيء معدا لتحقيق تقدم: fii waqt-i + kaan-a kull-u shay-in muʿadd-an li-taHqiiq-i taqaddum-in
  at a time [when] everything was prepared for achieving [some] progress
fī waqt-i tu-drik-u l-Haqīqat-a 'idraak-an kulliyy-an

at a time [when] it fully realizes the truth

1.2 Rules of the noun construct (‘iDaafa إضافة):

1.2.1 The first term of the construct

The first term of a construct phrase has neither the definite article nor nunation

because it is defined through the second term, which determines the definiteness

or indefiniteness of the entire phrase. The first term of a construct phrase cannot

have a possessive pronoun suffix.

The first term carries a case marker which is determined by the syntactic role

of the phrase in the sentence or clause. Examples:

1.2.1.1 FIRST TERM OF CONSTRUCT IS NOMINATIVE:

mushkilat-u l-sharq-i l-awsaT-i muʿaqqadat-un.
The problem of the Middle East is complex.

1.2.1.2 FIRST TERM OF CONSTRUCT IS ACCUSATIVE:

HaDar-a Haflat-a waD il-Hajr-i l-asaas-i.
He attended the party for the laying of the cornerstone.

1.2.1.3 FIRST TERM OF CONSTRUCT IS GENITIVE:

She is ready to play an active role (‘for playing an active role’).

1.2.1.4 THE RESTRICTION ON NUNATION

on the first term of the construct applies

not only to the nunation which marks indefiniteness, but also to the final nuuns

of the dual and the sound masculine plural. These nuuns are deleted on the first

term of a construct phrase.

wazīr-aa l-‘adl-i wa l-‘laam-i

the two ministers of justice and

information

muharrīb-uu l-mukhaddiraat-i

drug smugglers (‘smugglers of drugs’)
لوزيري الخارجيه

لمدير المنظمات

li-waziir-ay'i l-xaarijiyyat-i

li-mudir-ii l-munaZZamaat-i
to the two foreign ministers to the directors of the organizations

رياضمو كوبا

مزرعو الزيتون

riyaadDiyy-uu kuubaa

muzaari'-uu l-zaytuun-i

the athletes of Cuba olive growers (‘growers of olives’)

1.2.1.5 PAUSE FORM PRONUNCIATION OF taa’ marbuuTa AS FIRST TERM OF CONSTRUCT

When a word ending in taa’ marbuuTa is the first word of a construct phrase, the taa’ is pronounced, even in pause form. For more on this see Chapter 2, section 3.4.3.2.

1.2.2 The second or final term of the construct

The second or final term is in the genitive case (whether or not it is overtly marked); it may be either definite or indefinite; may be a noun or a demonstrative pronoun. It may have a possessive pronoun suffix.

1.2.2.1 SECOND TERM = NOUN:

Definite:

the engineers’ quarter Hayy-u l-muhandis-iina

the kings of India muluuk-u l-hind-i

Indefinite:

a lunch banquet ma’dabat-u ghadaa’- in

a beauty queen malikat-u jamaal-in

six schools sitt-u madaaris-a

1.2.2.2 SECOND TERM = DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN:

A demonstrative pronoun may serve as the second term of a construct phrase, but as an invariable word, it does not inflect for case.

the meaning of this ma’nnaa haadhaa

all (of) this kull-u haadhaa

the result of that natiijat-u dhaalika

بَيْرَوَت

ضَيْقَةَ جُبَال

تَلَاطَعَاءُونَ

اَلْعَلَمَاءِاءَاتِوَنَةَ

بَيْرَوَت

جَبَالُ تِلاَثَةَ

المضيحي

لايان أيام
1.2.2.3 SECOND TERM HAS PRONOUN SUFFIX:

his birthplace masqaT-u ra’s-i-hi
marketing their (f.) production taswiq-u ‘intaaj-i-hinna
bearing their responsibilities taHammul-u mas’uliyyaat-i-haa
raising his level raf ‘-u mustawaa-hu
the withdrawal of its units saHb-u waHdaat-i-hi

1.2.2.4 MORE THAN ONE NOUN MAY BE CONJOINED AS THE SECOND TERM OF THE
CONSTRUCT:

في سياستي الدفاع والتجارة
fii siyaasatay-i l-difaa ‘-i wa-l-tijaarat-i
in the two policies of defense and trade

جراح الأذن والأنف والحنجرة
jarraH-u l-‘anf-i wa-l-‘udhn-i wa-l-Hanjarat-i
nose, ear, and throat surgeon (‘surgeon of nose, (and’) ear and throat’)

1.3 Modifiers of the construct

1.3.1 Modifying the first term
A construct phrase cannot be interrupted by modifiers for the first term. Any
adjectives or other modifiers applying to the first term of the ‘iDaafa must fol-
low the entire ‘iDaafa. Modifiers for the first term agree with it in gender, num-
ber, case, and definiteness.

أشعة الشمس الدافئة
‘ashi “at-u l-shams-i l-daafi ‘at-u
the warm rays of the sun

طبب أسنان جيد
Tabiib-u ‘asnaan-in jayyid-un
a good dentist (‘doctor of teeth’)

منظمة التحرير الفلسطينية
munaZZamat-u l-taHriri l-filisTiimiyyat-u
the Palestinian Liberation Organization

أركان الإسلام الخمسة
‘arkaan-u l-‘islaam-i l-xamsat-u
the five pillars of Islam

إلى مطار أبو ظبي الدولي
‘ilaa maTaar-i ‘abuu Zabiyy-i l-duwaliyy-i7
to the Abu Dhabi international airport

jawaaz-u l-safiir-i l-masruuq-u
the stolen passport

7 Technically this should be ‘ilaa maTaar-i ‘abii Zabiyy-i l-duwaliyy-i, with inflection of ‘ab in the geni-
tive, but in newspaper Arabic the name of the emirate is often treated as a lexical unit and not
inflected.
1.3.2 Modifying the second term
The second term of the construct may be modified by adjectives directly following it and agreeing with it in definiteness, gender, number, and case.

في منطقة الشرق الأوسط
fii mintaqät-i l-sharq-i l-sa waTaT-i
in the region of the Middle East
mulHaq-u l-shu‘uun-i l-thaqafa fiyyat-i
cultural affairs officer (‘attaché’)

إسعاف الدفاع المدني
‘is‘aafu l-difaa’-i l-madaniyy-i
civil defense ambulance
li-binaa’-i ‘usus-in jadiidat-in
to build secure new foundations

في افتتاح المعرض الدولي
fii fittaah-H-i l-ma‘riDaT-i l-duwaliyy-i
at the opening of the international exhibit

1.3.3 Modification of both terms of the construct
When a construct or ‘iDaafa needs modifiers for both terms, the general order is to put the modifiers for the last term closest to the ‘iDaafa, and then modifiers for the first term(s), in ascending order. Each modifier agrees with its noun in case, gender, number, and definiteness.

مجموع اللغة العربية الأردني
majma‘-u l-lughat-i l-arabiyyat-i l-urduniyy-u
the Jordanian Arabic Language Academy
(literally: ‘academy (of) the-language the-Arabic the-Jordanian’)

رئيس مجمع اللغة العربية الأردني السابق
ra‘ ‘is-u majma‘-i l-lughat-i l-arabiyyat-i l-urduniyy-i l-saabiq-u
the former president of the Jordanian Arabic Language Academy
(literally: ‘president (of the) academy (of) the-language the-Arabic the-Jordanian the-former’)

1.4 Demonstrative pronouns in construct phrases

1.4.1 Demonstrative with first term of construct
Normally, when a noun is modified by a demonstrative pronoun, that pronoun precedes the noun and the noun also has the definite article (for example, haa- dühaa l-qarn-u ‘this century’). However, when a noun as first term of a construct is modified by a demonstrative pronoun, that pronoun follows the entire

For further discussion of demonstrative pronouns, see Chapter 13.
"iDaafa structure" because of the restriction that prevents the presence of the definite article on the first term of a construct. The pronoun agrees with the first term in gender and number.

1.4.2 Demonstrative with second term of construct
The second term of a construct or "iDaafa may be preceded directly by a demonstrative pronoun plus definite article because the second term can be marked for definiteness:

1.5 Complex or multi-noun construct
A construct phrase may consist of more than two nouns related to each other through the use of the genitive case. When this happens, the second and all subsequent nouns are in the genitive case and only the last noun in the entire construct phrase is marked for either definiteness or indefiniteness. Thus, the medial nouns, the ones which are neither first nor last, are all in the genitive, and none of them have nunation or the definite article. That is, the medial nouns combine certain features of being the first term of an "iDaafa (no definite article or nunation) with one feature of being the second term of an "iDaafa (marked for genitive case).

1.5.1 Construct with three nouns

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1.5.2 Construct with four nouns

احتفالٍ زرع شجرة أرز
iḥtiifaal-u zar-i shajarat-i ‘arz-in
celebration of the planting of a cedar tree

بمناسبة ذكرى استقلال بلاده
bi-munaasabat-i dhikraa stiqlaal-i bilaad-i-hi
on the occasion of the commemoration of his country’s independence

لمعالجة مشكلة إدمان المخدرات
li-mu‘aalajat-i muskhilat-i ‘idmaan-i l-mukhaddiraat-i
for handling the problem of drug addiction

تحت سماء جنوب فرنسا
taHat-a samaa‘-i januub-i faransaa
under the skies of southern (‘the south of’) France

في دول جنوب شرق آسيا
fii duwal-i januub-i sharq-i ‘aasiyaa
in the countries of Southeast Asia

1.5.3 Construct with five nouns

تطبيقَ جميع قرارات مجلس الأمن
taTbiiq-u jamii‘-i qaraaraat-i majlis-i l-‘amn-i
the application of all of the resolutions of the Security Council

سرقة جواز سفر أحد اللاعبين
sarqat-u jawaaz-i safar-i ‘aHad-i l-‘a‘ib-ina
the theft of the passport of one of the athletes

وزراء نفط دول مجلس التعاون
wuzaraa‘-u nifT-i duwal-i majlis-i l-ta‘aawun-i
the oil ministers of the states of the [Gulf] Cooperation Council
1.6 Joint annexation

Traditional Arabic style requires that the first term of the 'i\(\text{Daafa}\) or annexation structure be restricted to one item. It cannot be two or more items joined with wa-‘and.’ If more than one noun is to be included in the expression then they follow the 'i\(\text{Daafa}\) and refer back to it by means of a resumptive pronoun suffix.

وِرَى فِي الصَّفُ الثانِي مَرَاحِقُ الْوَفَدِ ومُعاَنوُونَهُ
wa-yuraa fii l-Saff-i l-thaanii muraafiq-uu l-waf-i wa-mu‘aawin-uu-hu.

Seen in the second row are the companions and assistants of the delegation (‘the companions of the delegation and its assistants’).

بالنسبة إلى أساتذة التاريخ وطلابه
bi-l-nisbat-i 'ila ilaa 'asaatidhat-i l-taariix-i wa-Tullaab-i-hi

in relation to the professors and students of history (‘the professors of history and its students’)

وسط حماسة أعضاء المؤتمر ومقاوماتهم
wa$t-a Hamaasat-i 'a'Daar-ii mu'tamar-i wa-hutaafaat-i-him

amidst the enthusiasm and cheers of the members of the conference (‘the enthusiasm of the conference members and their cheers’)

يضم أبرز الفنانين وأعظمهم.
ya-Dumm-u 'abraz-a l-fannaan-iina wa-a'Zam-a-hum.

It brings together the most prominent and greatest artists (‘most prominent artists and the greatest of them’).

This rule is widely observed. However, it is also regularly broken, and “joint annexation is rapidly gaining ground” (Beeston 1970, 48), as the following examples show:

مساجد وقصور المدينة
masaajid-u wa-quSuur-u l-madiinat-i
the mosques and castles of the city

في بحيرات وأنهار إفريقيا
fii buHayraat-i wa-'anhaar-i 'ifriiqiyaa
in the lakes and rivers of Africa

نمو وتطور اللغة العربية
numuww-u wa-taTawwur-u l-ughat-i l-arabiyyat-i
the growth and development of the Arabic language

احترام قيم وعادات الحضارات الأخرى
iHtiraam-u qiyam-i wa-'adaat-i l-HaDaaraat-i l-uxraa
respecting the values and customs of other cultures
The biggest and best plants

in the name of the people and the government of the kingdom

These examples and others show that joint annexation is an area of modern Arabic syntax where the traditional rules are still in use but routinely violated. This particular area of Arabic grammatical structure is in a state of flux, with the newer structure being widely used in everyday language.

1.7 Special cases of constructs

1.7.1 The use of ‘adam and ‘i‘aada

Two verbal nouns, ‘adam ‘lack of’ and ‘i‘aada ‘repetition, resumption’ are frequently used in lexicalizing functions, as the first term of ‘iDaafas to create compound lexical items.

1.7.1.1 ‘adam + NOUN: The noun ‘adam is a privative term that expresses negative concepts or “lack of”: it is used with verbal nouns to create compound Arabic expressions conveying concepts expressed in English by prefixes such as “non-,” “in-,” or “dis-,” or to express what would be a negative infinitive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impermissibility</td>
<td>‘adam-u jawaaz-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonexistence</td>
<td>‘adam-u wujuud-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instability</td>
<td>‘adam-u stiqraar-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insincerity</td>
<td>‘adam-u jiddiyyat-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discomfort</td>
<td>‘adam-u rtiyaaH-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displeasure</td>
<td>‘adam-u riDaa-back-in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

من مهمّ عدم تقديم الكثير من التنازلات.

min-a l-muhimm-i ‘adam-u taqdiim-i l-kathiir-i min-a l-tanaazulaat-i.

It is important **not to offer** too many concessions.

---

9 See also Chapter 37, section 2.2.5 in this book and Holes 1995, 266–67.
the uneasiness of both sides

1.7.1.2 ‘i’aada + NOUN ‘RE-’: The noun ‘i’aada used as the first term of a construct with a verbal noun, expresses concepts of repetition or renewal.10

1.7.2 Official titles as constructs
Many official titles of dignitaries and royalty consist of genitive constructs, for example:

His Highness the Prince  sumuww-u l-’amiir-i
His Highness the Crown Prince  sumuww-u waliy-i l-’ahd-i
His Majesty the King  jalaalat-u l-malik-i
His Majesty the Sultan  jalaalat-u l-SulTaan-i
His Royal Highness  SaaHib-u l-sumuww-i l-malikiyy-i
His Eminence  SaaHib-u l-samaaHat-i
His Excellency the Minister  ma’aalii l-waziir-i

1.7.3 Use of nafs ‘same’ as first term
A frequent genitive construct is the use of the noun nafs ‘self’ or ‘same’ as the first term in order to express the concept of “the same ________.”11

10 The noun ‘i’aada is a verbal noun from the Form IV verb ‘a’aad-a /yu’-iid-u ‘to renew, repeat, restore, re-do.’
11 See also section 2.3.
They all work the same way.

1.7.4 Coalescence of the construct

Certain frequently used constructs have come to function as solid units and are even occasionally written together as one word. This fusing of terms is rare in Arabic, but does happen occasionally:

1.7.4.1 FIXED EXPRESSIONS:

- capital (financial resources)  
  رأس المال  
  رأس المال
- administrative officer  
  قائم مقام  
  قائم مقام
- (of a town or village)  
  qaa’imaqam

1.7.4.2 THREE TO NINE HUNDRED: Although optionally written as one word, the first term still inflects for case. For example:

- five hundred  
  خمس مئة  
  خمس مئة
- nine hundred  
  تسعة مئة  
  تسعة مئة

1.8 Avoiding the construct phrase or ‘iDaafa

Sometimes an ‘iDaafa is avoided by means of linking two nouns with a preposition, usually min or li-. This happens especially if the first noun is modified by an adjective or a phrase that would otherwise have to be placed after the ‘iDaafa construction. It is a stylistic option.

القسم الأخير من الكتاب  
في النصف الثاني من القرن العشرين
al-qism-u l-‘axiir-u min-a l-kitaab-i  
fii l-niSfi l-thaanii min-a l-qarn-i l-’ishriina
the last part of the book  
in the second half of the twentieth century

خسوف جزئي للقمر  
المفوض العام لمكتب المقاطعة
xusuuf-un juz’iyy-un li-l-qamar-i  
al-muqawwaDaD-u l-caam-u li-maktab-i
a partial eclipse of the moon  
the general commissioner of the boycott office
The new issue of the magazine appeared.

They attended a horse race (‘a race of horses’).

1.9 Adjectives in construct phrases
Adjectives or participles functioning as adjectives may occur in construct phrases either as the first or second term, in the following types of constructions.

1.9.1 Modifier as first term of construct
Sometimes an adjective or a participle with adjectival meaning will appear as the first term of a construct phrase instead of following the noun as a modifier. In these phrases the adjective remains in the masculine gender, but it may be singular or plural. These expressions are often set phrases and tend to be used with particular adjectives, as follows.

 modifier as first term of construct

1.9.2 The adjective or “false” ʿiDaafa (ʿiDaafa ghayr Haqiqiya)
The “false” or “unreal” ʿiDaafa, also called the “adjective” ʿiDaafa, is a special case of the construct phrase where an adjective serves as the first term and acts as a modifier of a noun. Not only can an adjective serve as the first item in this structure, but, contrary to the general rules for the ʿiDaafa structure, this adjective may take the definite article if the phrase modifies a definite noun. Since this type of construct violates the rule against the first term of a construct phrase taking a definite article, it is termed “unreal” or “false.”

This construction is a way of expressing a quality of a particular component of an item, often equivalent to hyphenated expressions in English such as: long-term,
hard-nosed, or cold-blooded. It is generally used to express qualities of “inalienable possession,” that is, qualities that are “naturally attributable” to their owners.12

The adjective ‘iDaafa is quite frequent in MSA because it is a construction that can be used to express recently coined, complex modifying terms such as “multilateral,” or “long-range.”

In this construction, the adjective agrees with the noun it modifies in case, number, and gender. The second term of the adjective ‘iDaafa is a definite noun in the genitive case and refers to a particular property of the modified noun.

### 1.9.2.1 ADJECTIVE ‘iDaafa AS NOUN MODIFIER:

1. **Modifying a definite noun:** When modifying a definite noun, the first term of the adjective ‘iDaafa agrees with the noun in gender, number, and case, and it also has the definite article:

   الرجل المثقف الطويل القامة
   al-raحul-u l-muthaqaf-u l-Tawiil-u l-qaamat-i
   the cultured, tall (‘tall of height’) man

   وقد أرسلت الأللة الأمريكية الصنع من العاصمة.
   wa-qad ʿursil-at-i l-ʿaalat-u l-ʿamrikiyyat-u l-Sanʿi l-min-a l-ʿaaSimat-i.
   The American-made instrument was sent from the capital.

   في هذه القضية المتعددة الجوانب
   fii haadhihi l-qadiyyat-u l-mutahfi fi addidat-i l-jawaab-i
   in this multi-sided issue

2. **Modifying an indefinite noun:** When modifying an indefinite noun, the first term of the adjective ‘iDaafa does not have the definite article. However, neither does it have nunciation, because this is prevented by its being the first term of an ‘iDaafa. It agrees with the noun it modifies in gender, number, and case:

   هو أول مسؤول أمريكي رفيع المستوى يزور البحرين.
   He is the first high-level American official to visit Bahrain.13

   تسمى أشجاراً دائمة الخضرة.
   tu-sammaa ʿashjaar-an daaʿimat-a l-xaDrat-i.
   They are called evergreen trees.

---

12 Killean 1970, 11. Killean’s article “The false construct in Modern Literary Arabic” is one of the few that deal with the syntactic and semantic analysis of this structure from the point of view of generative syntax.

13 Although the English equivalent of this sentence uses the definite article to refer to the “American official,” the Arabic structure using the term ‘awwal ‘first’ is followed by an indefinite noun.
a woman with crossed arms

that was right after a high-level intervention

1.9.2.2 ADJECTIVE 'iDaafa AS PREDICATE OF EQUATIONAL SENTENCE: When serving as the predicate of an equational sentence, the first term of the adjective 'iDaafa does not have the definite article, in keeping with the rules for predicate adjectives. It agrees with the noun it refers to in gender, number, and case.

The Egyptian dialect is widespread.

The earth is circular in shape.

The descriptive construct with ghayr plus adjective

In this unique construction, an adjective serves as the second term of a construct phrase. The noun ghayr 'non-; un-, in-, other than' is used as the first term of the construct in order to express negative or privative concepts denoting absence of a quality or attribute. As the first term of a construct, ghayr carries the same case as the noun it modifies. As a noun which is the first term of an 'iDaafa, it cannot have the definite article. The second term of the 'iDaafa construction is an adjective or participle in the genitive case which agrees with the noun being modified in gender, number, and definiteness. Here are some examples:

unsuitable ghayr-u munaasib-in
indirect ghayr-u mubaashir-in
untrue ghayr-u SaHiiH-in
insufficient ghayr-u kaaf-in
non-Arab ghayr-u ‘arabiyy-in
undesirable ghayr-u marghuub-in fii-hi

unscupulous (‘non-noble’) ways

بأساليب غير شريفة

 unexpected difficulties
Hasab-arqaam-in ghayr rasmiyyat-in
according to unofficial figures

2 Nouns in apposition (badal بدل)
Nouns or noun phrases are said to be in apposition with one another when they are juxtaposed and both refer to the same entity, but in different ways. Phrases such as “my cat, Blondie,” “Queen Victoria,” “President Bush,” or “King Hussein” consist of nouns in apposition. As a general rule, the nouns agree in case, number, gender, and definiteness, but one subset of appositional specifiers requires the accusative case.

2.1 Straight apposition
In straight apposition, the noun in apposition takes the same case as the noun with which it is in apposition.

2.1.1 Names and titles
The title (normally with the definite article) is followed directly by the name of the person:

King Fahd  al-malik-un fahd-un
The Emperor Constantine  al-imbiraaTurq qusTanTii
The Prophet Muhammad  al-nabiyy-un muHammad-un
Queen Nur  al-malikat-un nuur-un
Father Joseph  al-`ab-u Yuusuf-un
Professor Faris  al-`ustaadh-un faaris-un
Colonel Qadhdhaafi  al-`aqiid-un l-qadhdhaafiyy-un

2.1.2 Reduced relative clauses
In this form of apposition, the specifying noun is equivalent to a relative noun phrase:

The term badal (literally, ‘substitution; exchange’) is used in traditional Arabic grammar to describe more than the noun-noun appositional relationship. It also covers the use of the demonstrative pronoun in demonstrative phrases, and modifying adjectives. In this section of the reference grammar, however, the discussion of badal is restricted to appositional structures that include nouns and personal pronouns. For a detailed discussion of apposition see Wright 1967, II: 272ff. Cachia (1973) gives the terms tab- or tab`iyyu for ‘apposition,’ and Hasan (1987) refers to nouns in apposition as tawaabi” (literally: ‘followers’).
between two deputies [who are] members of the national party

among deputies [who are] members of the national party

It will demand the member states sever these relations.

2.1.3 Apposition for specification

In more general terms, the noun or nouns in apposition further specify the head noun:

- from the mother company: \( \text{min-a l-sharikat-i l'-umm-i} \)
- in the sister [country] Jordan: \( \text{fii l'-urdunn-i l-shaqiiq-i} \)
- my friend, Amira: \( \text{Sadiiqat-ii 'amiirat-u} \)
- the creator god: \( \text{al-rabb-u l-xaaliq-u} \)
- She carried her brother Samir: \( \text{Hamal-at 'ax-aa-haa samiiir-an} \)
- today, Sunday: \( \text{al-yawm-a l'-aHad-a} \)
- the guest minister: \( \text{al-waziir-u l-Dayf-u} \)

2.2 Accusative Apposition

A noun in apposition to a pronoun is put into the accusative case because it specifies that noun in a particular way and is considered a form of tamyiiz or accusative of specification.

When an independent pronoun (often the first person plural) is further specified, the specifying noun is in the accusative case as the object of an understood verb such as ‘a’nii ‘I mean,’ or ‘axuSS-u ‘I specify.’

- we, the Arabs: \( \text{nahHnu l-'arab-a} \)
- we, the people of the Gulf: \( \text{nahHnu l-xaliijiyy-iina} \)
- we, the Americans: \( \text{nahHnu l-'amriikiyy-iina} \)
2.3 Appositive specification of quantity or identity

Arabic nouns may be further specified by other nouns in terms of quantity or identity. In most of these cases, the specifying noun agrees in case with the head noun and carries a personal pronoun suffix referring back to the head noun. The pronoun agrees with the head noun in number and gender. Quantity nouns such as kull, jamii, ba’D, and fractions, as well as identity nouns such as nafs ‘same; self’ are used in these expressions.¹⁵

الشعب كله
DaHik-a l-Tullaab-u jamii-u-hum
all the students laughed
(‘the students, all of them’)

في الوقت نفسه
‘alaa duwal-i l-minTaqt-i kull-i-haa
on all the states of the region
(‘the states of the region, all of them’)

بالأسلوب نفسه
bi-l-’usluub-i nafs-i-hi
in the same way

نافس واحدة
bi-l-sur‘at-i nafs-i-haa
at the same speed

بين العرب أنفسهم كليسين ويمنيين
bayn-a l-arab-i ’anfus-i-him ka-qaysiyy-iina wa-yamaniyy-iina
among the Arabs themselves like the Qays and the Yamanis

2.3.1 Quantifier noun ‘idda (عَدَّة)

The noun ‘idda ‘several’ is often used in apposition with a head noun. It does not carry a pronoun suffix. It agrees with the noun in case.

in several cities fii mudun-in ‘iddat-in
in several regions fii manaaTiq-a ‘iddat-in
in several languages bi-lughaat-in ‘iddat-in
several years ago mundhu sanawaat-in ‘iddat-in

وهناك سيّدات عَدَّة برزن في هذا المجال.
wa-hunaaka sayyidaat-un ‘iddat-un baraz-na fii haadhaa l-majaal-i.
There are several women who have become eminent in this field.

¹⁵ This is an alternative structure to using the quantifying nouns as the first term of an ‘iDaafa, e.g.,
kull-u l-wuzaraa’i ‘all the ministers’ versus al-wuzaraa-u kull-u-hum, or nafs-u l-fikrat-i ‘the same idea’ versus al-fikrat-u nafs-u-haa.
2.4 Relative pronoun *maa* in apposition

The indefinite relative pronoun *maa* can be used in apposition with a noun to indicate ‘a certain,’ or ‘some.’

- in a certain place: *fiī makaan-in maa* 
  - ماكان ما
- some day: *yawm-an maa* 
  - يوما ما
- somewhat; to a certain extent: *naw‘-an maa* 
  - نوعا ما

Why do you like a certain writer?

- لماذا تحب كاتبا ما؟ *li-maadhaa tu-Hibb-u kaatib-an maa?*
- بعد فتح بلد ما *ba‘d-a fatH-i balad-in maa*

Why after conquering a certain country

- لماذا بعد فتح بلد ما *ba‘d-a fatH-i balad-in maa*
Noun specifiers and quantifiers

Certain Arabic nouns act primarily as specifiers or determiners for other nouns. They may be used as first terms of construct phrases, in apposition with nouns, with pronouns, or independently. Many of these nouns express quantities; some express other kinds of specification.

Here are five major classes of specifiers and quantifiers in MSA.

1 Expressions of totality

1.1 *kull* كل ‘all; every; the whole’

1.1.1 “Each, every”
When used as the first term of a construct phrase with a singular, indefinite noun, *kull* has the meaning of ‘each’ or ‘every.’¹

- *everything* kull-u shay’-in كل شيء
- *every one* kull-u waaHid-in كل واحد
- *every day* kull-a yawm-in كل يوم

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Used with</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>li-kull-i mustaxdim-in</em></td>
<td>for every user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>kull-u riyal-in min daxl-i-naa</em></td>
<td>every riyal of our income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>li-kull-i fannaan-in</em></td>
<td>for every Arab artist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.1.2 “all, the whole”
When used with a definite singular noun or a pronoun, *kull* has the meaning of ‘all of,’ ‘the whole,’ or ‘all.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Used with</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>kull-u l-musaa’adat-i l-mumkinat-i</em></td>
<td>all possible aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>kull-u haadhaa</em></td>
<td>all of this/that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ LeTourneau (1995, 30) refers to constructs with quantifiers as the first term as a “quantified construct state.”
1.1.3 “all”
When used with a definite plural noun, kull means ‘all.’

في كل الظروف
fii kull-i l-Zuruuf-i
in all circumstances
ma’a kull-i qaDaayaa l-sharq-i l-’awsaT-i
with all the problems of the Middle East

يهدف حل كل المشاكل
bi-hadaf-i Hall-i kull-i l-mashaakil-i
with the aim of solving all the problems

1.1.4 kull-un min ‘each; both; every one of’
The noun kull may be used as an indefinite noun with nunation, followed by the preposition min ‘of’ to convey the meaning of totality. When there are only two items, the phrase kull min functions as the equivalent of ‘both.’

في كل من واشنطن وعمان بالتناوب
fii kull-in min waashinTun wa-’ammaan-a bi-l-tanaawub-i
in both Washington and Amman, alternately

في كل من الحلقات قصة جديدة.
fii kull-in min-a l-Halaqaat-i qiSSat-un
jadiidat-un.
In each installment is a new story.

1.1.5 kull-un ‘الكل’; al-kull ‘everyone’
The noun kull may be used alone to express the idea of ‘everyone.’ It may occur with or without the definite article. Agreement is masculine singular.

كل يريد أن يلتقط صورا هناك.
kull-un yu-riid-u ‘an ya-ltaqiT-a Suwar-an hunaaka.
Everyone wants to take pictures there.

1.2 jamii ‘all’
The word jamii is used with a following genitive noun (usually plural) to mean ‘all,’ or ‘the totality of.’

تطبيق جميع قرارات مجلس الأمن
taTbiiq-u jamii-i qaraaraat-i majlis-i l-’amn-i
the application of all the decisions of the security council

طوابع جميع أوجه المعرفة
Taawal-at jamii-i ‘awjih-i l-ma’rifat-i
it rivaled all aspects of knowledge

إلى جميع إخوانهم
‘ila jamii-i ‘ixwaan-i-him
to all their brothers
1.3 kilaa~kilay/ kiltaa~kiltay ‘both; both of (m. & f.)’
The specialized dual quantifiers kilaa/kilay (m.) and kiltaa/kiltay (f.) are used to express the idea of ‘both.’ They are followed by a definite dual noun in the genitive or by a dual pronoun suffix. These two words inflect as does the dual suffix when it is the first term of a construct, but they do not inflect for case when followed by a noun; only when followed by a pronoun.

1.3.1 Masculine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>both of the delegations</th>
<th>kilaa l-wafd-ayni</th>
<th>كلا الوفدين</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in both worlds</td>
<td>fii kilaa l-‘aalam-ayni</td>
<td>في كلا العالمين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with both of them (m.)</td>
<td>ma‘-a kilay-himaa</td>
<td>مع كليهما</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3.2 Feminine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>during both of the periods</th>
<th>fii kiltaa l-fatrat-ayni</th>
<th>في كلتا الفترتين</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in both cases</td>
<td>fii kiltaa l-Haalat-ayni</td>
<td>في كلتا الحالتين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with both his hands</td>
<td>bi-kiltaa yad-ay-hi</td>
<td>بكلتا يديه</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both of them (f.) are affixes.</td>
<td>kiltaa-humaa zaa‘idat-aani.</td>
<td>كلاهما زادتانا.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by both of them (f.)</td>
<td>bi-kiltay-himaa</td>
<td>بكلتاهما</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4 kaaffa كافّة ‘totality; all’
The noun kaaffa is used as the first term of a construct phrase to express totality:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Каффة خدماتها</th>
<th>كافّة شؤون الوزارة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kaaffat-u ttijaahaat-i-haa</td>
<td>kaaffat-u shu‘uun-i l-wizaarat-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all of its inclinations</td>
<td>all the affairs of the ministry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He directed congratulations to all the members of the delegation.

2 Expressions of limited number, non-specific number, or partiality
There are several ways to express partial inclusion in Arabic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>تتوفر كافة الخدمات الأساسية</th>
<th>توفر كافة الخدمات الأساسية</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ta-tawaffar-u kaaffat-u l-xidamaat-i l-‘asaasiyyat-i</td>
<td>All the basic services are provided.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1 ba‘D بعض ‘some,’ ‘some of’
The masculine singular noun ba‘D is followed by a singular or plural noun in the
genitive or by a pronoun suffix. It may also be used independently.

2.1.1 As first term of a construct
The quantifier ba‘D is usually followed by a definite noun in the genitive case.
Note that adjectives that follow the construct normally agree in gender and num-
ber with the second term, the noun being quantified.

بعض الجمعيات الخيرية
ba‘D-u l-jam‘iyyat-i l-xayriyyat-i
some of the charitable associations

إعادة إخراج بعض الأفلام
‘i‘aadat-u ‘ixraaj-i ba‘D-i l-‘aflaam-i
the re-release of some films

نجحوا بعض الشيء.
najaH-u ba‘D-a l-shay‘-i.
They succeeded somewhat.

2.1.2 With pronoun suffix
The noun ba‘D may also take a pronoun suffix.

يرى بعضهم في ذلك خطاً.
yara ba‘D-u-hum fii dhaalika xaTa‘-an.
Some of them see in that a mistake.

2.1.3 Reciprocal: Double use of ba‘D
The concept of “each other” or “together” may be expressed with the use of ba‘D
as a reciprocal pronoun. The first ba‘D has a pronoun suffix; the second has either
the definite article or nunation.

هم يسألون بعضهم البعض.
They are asking each other.

يشيش مع بعضها البعض.
ta‘ish-u ma‘-a ba‘D-i-haa l-ba‘D-u.
They live all together.

وقوف اللاعبين بعضهم فوق البعض
wuquuf-u l-la‘a‘ib-iina ba‘D-u-hum fawq-a l-ba‘D-i
the acrobats standing on top of each other

وعلى المواطنين أن يعرفوا بعضهما بعضًا معرفة جيدة.
It is necessary for citizens to know each other well.

أتتَقد أنهما منفصلان كثيرًا عن بعضهما بعضًا.
I think that they (two) are very separate from each other.
2.2 biD biD and biD'a بضعة 'a few,' 'several'
This term is used in the masculine with feminine nouns and in the feminine with masculine nouns, reflecting gender polarity similar to that of the numeral system. The following noun is in the genitive plural. The nouns specified by biD and biD'a are often numerals or terms of measurement:

2.2.1 With masculine noun

يتطلب بضعة أسابيع. 
ya-taTallab-u biD‘at-a ‘asaabii‘. 
It requires several weeks.

بعد بضعة أيام 
ba‘d-a biD‘at-i ‘ayyaam-in 
after a few days

2.2.2 With feminine noun

أكثر من بضع منات الأثلة 
‘akthar-u min biD‘-i mi’aat-i l-‘amthilat-i 
more than several hundred examples 
in a few minutes

على بضع منات الأصوات. 
yu‘alliq-u ‘ala’ biD‘-i mi’aat-i l-‘aSwaat-i. 
It hangs on several hundred votes.

أكثر من بضع ثوان. 
‘akthar-u min biD‘-i thawaan-in 
more than a few seconds

2.3 ‘idda ‘عدة 'several'
This noun is used in two ways: either as the first part of a construct phrase or as a noun in apposition with the noun it specifies.

2.3.1 As first term of construct

امتنى أهل المدينة عدة مهن. 
imtahan-a ‘ahl-u l-madiinat-i ‘iddat-a mihan-in. 
The people of the city practiced several trades.

وجاء هؤلاء المربون من عدة دول عربية. 
jaa‘-a haa‘ulaa’ i l-murabb-uuna min ‘iddat-i duwal-in ‘arabiyyat-in. 
These educators came from several Arab countries.

2.3.2 In apposition with a noun
When ‘idda is in apposition with a noun, it carries the same case as the noun.

في مدن عدة 
fii mudun-in ‘iddat-in 
in various cities

في مناطق عدة 
fii manaaTiq-a ‘iddat-in 
in several regions
There are several stories about what happened.

2.4 *shattaa*  
*‘various, diverse; all kinds of’*

This word, the plural of *shatiit* ‘scattered; dispersed,’ is used as the first term of an *'iDaafa*.

في شتى أنحاء الأرض
*fii shattaa anHaa-i l'arD-i*
in various parts of the earth

2.5 *muxtalif*  
*‘various; several’*

This active participle of Form VIII (literally ‘differing’) is often used as the first term of an *'iDaafa* to mean ‘various’ or ‘different.’

من مختلف أنحاء الدولة
*min muxtalif-i anHaa-i l-wilaayat-i*
from various parts of the state

في مختلف المدن
*fii muxtalif-i l-mudun-i*
in various cities

2.6 *'adad-un min*  
*‘a number of’*

This is a widely used expression to denote a non-specific but significant number. Unlike other quantifiers, it is an indefinite noun followed by a preposition, so the noun that follows is the object of the preposition *min* ‘of.’

دعوة عدد من الأساتذة والمتصدرين العرب
*da'wat-u 'adad-in min-a l-'asaatiidhat-i wa-l-murabbiina l-'arab-i*
the invitation of a number of Arab professors and educators

حضور الاجتماع عدد من الباحثين والمفكرين.
*HaDar-a l-ijtimaa-'a 'adad-un min-a l-baaHithiina wa-l-mufakkiriina.*
A number of researchers and intellectuals attended the conference.

2.7 *kathiir-un min*  
*‘many’*

To indicate a large but indefinite number, these phrases are used.

يتذكر كثير من الناس.
*yatadhakkar-u kathiir-un min-a l-naas-i.*
Many (‘of the’) people remember.

أمامنا الكثير من الفرص والكثير من التحديات.
*amaam-a-naa l-kathiiir-u min-a l-furaS-i wa-l-kathiiir-u min-a l-taHaddiyaat-i.*
Before us are many opportunities and many challenges.
3 Expressions of “more,” “most,” and “majority”

Arabic uses several expressions to convey concepts of “more,” “most of,” or “the majority of.”

3.1 “More”

When discussing the concept of “more,” there are two sides to it: a quality can be greater in intensity, which is expressed by the comparative (or “elative”) form of the adjective (e.g., more important, more famous); this is discussed in Chapter 10, sections 4.2.1–4.2.3.

However, there is also another use of “more” to mean “more of something,” “a greater quantity/amount of something” where the “more” expression is followed by a noun or noun phrase. In contemporary Arabic the phrase \textit{al-maziid min} المزيئ من (literally ‘the increase of’) is often used to express this concept of “more of.”

\textit{li-l-maziid-i min-a l-’araadi l-ziraat iyyat-i}
for more agricultural lands

\textit{li-taHiq-i l-maziid-i min-a l-3 injaazaat-i fii jamiit-i l-qiTaate-i}
to realize more production in all sectors

\textit{ta’ahhad-at bi-taqdiim-i l-maziid-i min-a l-3 amwaal-i li-l-bunuuk-i.}
It pledged support for more money for banks.

3.2 ‘Most of’: \textit{mu’Zam} معظم and \textit{akthar} أكثر

3.2.1 \textit{mu’Zam}

The expression ‘most of’ is often accomplished with the word \textit{mu’Zam} as the first term of an \textit{iDaafa}:

\textit{mu’Zam-u l-sifaaraat-i ‘arabiyyat-i}
most of the Arab embassies

\textit{HaSal-a ‘alaa mu’Zam-i l-maqaal’id-i.}
It obtained most of the seats.

\textit{fii mu’Zam-i l-qism-i l-thaanii min-a l-kitaab-i}
in most of the second part of the book

3.2.2 \textit{akthar} أكثر ‘more; most’

The elative adjective \textit{akthar} ‘more; most’ may also be used to express ‘most’ as first term of an \textit{iDaafa}. The following noun is definite, may be singular or plural, and is in the genitive case.
3.3 Expression of “majority”

The Arabic superlative adjective ُaghlab, the derived noun ُaghlabiya, or the active participle ghhaalib are all used to express the concept of “majority.”

 أغلبهم ليس مورخا.

ُaghlab-u-hum lays-a mu’arrix-an.

The majority of them are not historians.

4 Scope of quantifier agreement

The scope of agreement or concord refers to agreement patterns that apply to “quantified construct states.” Agreement or concord is normally shown through adjectives and/or verbs.

Patterns of agreement with quantified construct states can vary in MSA and the phenomenon has been studied by both Parkinson and LeTourneau. As LeTourneau remarks (1995, 30), “a verb may agree in number and gender with either the quantifier (invariantly masculine singular) or with its complement.”

Parkinson’s findings (as paraphrased by LeTourneau 1995, 31) reveal that “certain grammatical features on the second term in the QCS [quantified construct state] license only one agreement option. Thus, if the second term to kull is either an indefinite feminine singular or a definite plural, the verb must agree with the second term (logical agreement, in traditional terms); if baٌD has a pronominal suffix and the verb follows, agreement with the quantifier (grammatical agreement) is mandatory (Parkinson 1975, 66).”

4.1 Agreement with quantifier

In conformity with the above-stated rule, the agreement is with the quantifier when it has a pronoun suffix (such as baٌD or ُaghlab).

أغلبهم ليس مورخا.

ُaghlab-u-hum lays-a mu’arrix-an.

The majority of them are not historians (‘is not a historian’).

4.2 Agreement with specified noun

The agreement may be with the noun that is the second term of the ُiDaafa. This occurs especially with adjectives that immediately follow the noun.

---

2 LeTourneau, 1995, 30. In this article, “Internal and external agreement in quantified construct states,” LeTourneau provides detailed analysis on this topic. See also Parkinson 1975 on the agreement of baٌD and kull.
it concerns every Arab residing in the country

They are carrying all the requested documents.

some of the Arab cultured elite

They are carrying all the requested documents.

All probabilities are possible.

Every party tries to obtain the best conditions.

some American critics believe (m. pl.) that . . .

In practice, the verb may optionally agree with the second term of the construct (nuqqaad):³

some American critics believe (m. pl.) that . . .

5 Non-quantitative specifiers

5.1 Expression of identity or reflexivity

5.1.1 nafs ‘same; self’

To express the concept of “the same” Arabic uses the word nafs (pl. َانفوس َانفوس), either as the first term of an ُإيُدأفا, or in apposition with the modified

³ As my colleague Amin Bonnah states, the usage here depends on “a mix of grammar, style, logic, and meaning” (personal communication).
noun. Note that this word has several meanings: ‘self,’ ‘same,’ ‘spirit~soul,’ and ‘breath.’ See also its use as an appositive specifier in chapter 8, section 2.3.

5.1.1.1 IN 'iDaafa

They all work the same way.

5.1.1.2 IN APPOSITION

He repeats the same expression.

5.1.2 dẖaṭiy̱y  ‘self’

In certain expressions the term dẖaṭiy̱y is used to delineate the concept of self, e.g.,

النقد الذاتي
al-naqḍ-u l-dhaṭiy̱y-y-u

self-criticism

5.2 Expression of ‘any; whichever’ 'ayy / 'ayya / أيّة + noun

The noun 'ayy is used as the first term of an 'iDaafa to express the concept of “any” or “whichever.” If the noun following 'ayy is feminine, 'ayy may shift to 'ayya أيّة, but this does not always happen. The noun following 'ayy is indefinite and in the genitive case. It is normally singular, but is sometimes plural.

5.2.1 Masculine form of 'ayy + noun

5.2.1.1 'ayy + MASCULINE SINGULAR NOUN

they oppose any intervention

I have the ability to do anything.

like any other people

from almost any place

4 For more on the pronoun dẖaat and its usage, see Chapter 12, section 4.
5.2.1.2 ‘ayy + FEMININE SINGULAR NOUN:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Expression</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>لَايَ مَحَافِلَةَ</td>
<td>for any state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لَايَ دِوَّاَلَةَ</td>
<td>for any attempt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

fī حَالَّةَ أَيَّ شِكْوَى
in case of any complaint

Ask about the meaning of any word.

5.2.2 Feminine ‘ayya + noun

When the noun being specified is feminine, the feminine form, ‘ayya آيَةَ may be used:

fī آيَةَ قَائِمَةَ لأَكَابِرِ عَلَمَاءِ الْدُنْيَا
on any list of the greatest scholars in the world

لَنْ يَجِدُوا آيَةَ مَشَأَكِلَ
They will not find any problems.

5.2.3 ‘ayy as independent noun

The noun ‘ayy may be used independently to mean ‘anything,’ ‘whatever,’ or ‘anyone.’ When used with a dual noun, it indicates ‘either one of’; it is normally indefinite and takes nunation.

أَايَّ عَنْ كَانَ لَوْنَهَا
whatever its color is

أَايَّ عَنْ مِنْ الْمُرْشِحِينَ
either one of the (two) candidates

5.2.3.1 ‘ayy WITH NEGATIVE AS ‘NONE’:

With a negative verb, ‘ayy carries the sense of ‘none’:

لَمْ يَسْتَطِعَ أَيَّ مِنْهَا.
None of them could.
This chapter is in two parts. The first part deals with function: adjectives in context and issues such as agreement, word order, and inflection, including inflection for comparative and superlative. The second part focuses on the derivational morphology or word structure of adjectives.

Part one: Function

1 Attributive adjectives

An attributive adjective is part of a noun phrase and follows the noun directly, agreeing with it in gender, number, case, and definiteness:

البحر الأحمر
al-baHr-u l-‘aHmar-u
the Red Sea

القومية العربية
al-qawmiyyat-u l-‘arabiyyat-u
Arab nationalism

الرياضيون العرب
al-riyaaDiyy-uuna l-‘arab-u
Arab athletes

الهلال الخصيب
al-hilaal-u l-xaSiib-u
the Fertile Crescent

فوز سهل
fawz-un sahl-un
an easy win

in a political role

1.1 Attributive adjective modifying noun + pronoun suffix

A noun with a pronoun suffix is considered definite; therefore, an adjective that modifies that noun carries the definite article, in addition to agreeing in gender, case, and number with the noun:

في بيئاتها الطبيعية
fii biit’i-haa l-‘aHwaBiiyyat-i
in their natural environments

هويته الثقافيَة
huwaBiiyyat-u-hu l-thaqaabiyyat-u
its cultural identity
2 Predicate adjectives

A predicate adjective is used in an equational (verbless) sentence to provide information about the subject of the sentence, thus completing the clause. In an Arabic equational sentence, there is usually no overt copula, or present tense form of the verb “to be,” linking the subject and predicate. When acting as a predicate, the adjective agrees with the noun or pronoun subject in gender and number. It is usually in the nominative case. However, it does not normally take the definite article because it is predicating a quality or attribute to the subject.

الحصاد وفٌفير.

al-HiSaad-u wafiir-un.
The harvest is abundant (‘is an abundant one’).

القائمة طويلة.

al-qaa‘imat-u Tawiilat-un.
The list is long (‘is a long one’).

القصة طويلة.

al-qISSat-u Zariifat-un.
The story is charming.

أنا محظوظة.

‘anaa maHZuuZat-un.
I am fortunate.

3 Adjectives as substantives

Adjectives may serve as substantives or noun substitutes, just as they sometimes do in English:

حيث القديم يختلط مع الجديد.

Hayth-u l-qadiim-u ya-xtalit-u ma‘a l-jadiid-i.
Where the old mixes with the new.

نزل الكبار والصغار إلى الشوارع.

nazal-a l-kibaar-u wa-l-Sighaar-u ‘ilhaa l-shawaari‘-i.
The adults and children (‘the big and the little’) descended into the streets.
4 Arabic adjective inflection

Adjectives in Arabic inflect for four morphological categories: gender, number, case, and definiteness. Many of them also inflect for a fifth category: degree (comparative and superlative).

As far as the first four categories are concerned, adjectives mirror the inflectional categories of the nouns that they modify, that is, they agree or are in concord with those nouns. In most cases the agreement or concord is direct or “strict,” meaning that the adjective reflects exactly the categories of the noun.¹

As noted above, Arabic adjectives normally follow the nouns they modify.

4.1 Inflectional categories: gender, number, case, definiteness

Much like nouns, Arabic adjectives have a base form, which is the singular masculine, and an inflected (marked) form for the feminine, usually marked by taa³ marbūtuṭa. They also inflect for dual, and for plural. In the plural, they take broken or sound plural forms, or both.

In terms of case inflection, adjectives fall into the same declensions as nouns, depending on their morphological form (their lexical root and pattern structure).

4.1.1 Masculine singular adjectives

Masculine singular adjectives modify masculine singular nouns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>نجوى nutritive</th>
<th>فتى boy</th>
<th>متى time</th>
<th>ماء water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bi-l-nisbat-i ʻila l-kathiir-iina</td>
<td>naal-a l-fiDiyat-a.</td>
<td>He won (‘obtained’) the silver [medal].</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>قليلون من الباحثين</td>
<td>اجتماع كبير المسؤولين</td>
<td>the meeting of senior officials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qaliil-uuna min-a l-baakhir-iina</td>
<td>ijtimā‘-u kibār-i l-mas‘uul-iina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Adjectives in general are referred to in morphological theory as “targets” rather than “controllers.” That is, they are targets of the agreement requirements of nouns. As Carstairs-McCarthy (1994, 769) states: “Adjectives are gender targets, i.e., they must agree with nouns in gender as well as number and case.”
البحر الأبيض المتوسط
al-baHr-u l-‘abyAD-u l-mutawassiT-u
the Mediterranean Sea (‘the middle white sea’)

السلك الدبلوماسي العربي والأجنبي
al-silk-u l-dibluumaasiyy-u l-‘arabiyy-u wa-l-ajnabiyy-u
the Arab and foreign diplomatic corps

4.1.2 Masculine dual adjectives
Masculine dual adjectives modify masculine dual nouns.

في مجلدين كبيرين
fit mujallad-ayni kabiir-ayni
in two large volumes

بين البلدين العربيين
bayn-a l-balad-ayni l-‘arabiyy-ayni
between the two Arab countries

4.1.3 Masculine plural adjectives
Masculine plural adjectives modify masculine plural nouns only if the nouns refer to human beings.

الممالك المصريون
al-mamaaliik-u l-miSriyy-uuna
the Egyptian Mamelukes

روؤار رسميون
zuwwaa-r-un rasmiyy-uuna
official visitors

خبيراء نفطيون
xubraraa‘-u nifTiyy-uuna
oil experts

من الفنانين اليونانيين
min-a l-fannaan-iina l-yyunaaniyy-iina
from the Greek artists

الأمراء الروس الآخرون
al-‘umaraa‘-u l-ruus-u l-‘aaxar-uuna
the other Russian princes

تسعة أشخاص جدد
jis‘at-u jashxaas-in judud-in
nine new persons

4.1.4 Feminine singular adjectives
The feminine singular adjective is used to modify feminine singular nouns and also for nonhuman plural nouns. The use of the feminine singular to modify nonhuman plural nouns is referred to as “deflected” agreement rather than “strict” agreement.

2 Note that when numerals are used for counting over ten, the counted noun is grammatically singular and any agreeing adjective is also singular, although the meaning is plural. For example:

عشرون مهندساً جديداً
‘ishruuna muhandis-an jadiid-an
twenty new engineers
4.1.4.1 WITH FEMININE SINGULAR NOUNS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Phrase</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-Hikaayat-u l-qadiimat-u</td>
<td>the old story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-marrat-a l-qaadimat-a</td>
<td>the next time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.4.2 WITH NONHUMAN PLURAL NOUNS: “DELECTED” AGREEMENT

Nonhuman plural nouns require feminine singular agreement. Case and definiteness are in strict agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Phrase</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-umum-u l-muttaHidat-u</td>
<td>the United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nataa’ij-u ªawwaliyyat-un</td>
<td>preliminary results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-taqaaalitid-u l-masiiHiyyat-u</td>
<td>the Christian traditions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.5 Feminine dual adjectives

Feminine dual nouns are modified by feminine dual adjectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Phrase</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>safiinat-aani kabiirat-aani</td>
<td>two big ships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-madiiinat-aani l-’uxray-aani</td>
<td>the other two cities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.6 Feminine plural adjectives

Feminine plural adjectives modify feminine plural nouns only if the nouns refer to human beings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Phrase</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xilaal-a l-sanat-ayni l-maaDiyat-ayni</td>
<td>during the last two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-dawlat-aani l-‘uZmaay-aani</td>
<td>the two super powers (‘states’)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

3 See the article by Belnap and Shabeneh 1992 for discussion of the history and nature of deflected agreement in Arabic.
Non-gendered adjectives

There are a limited number of adjectives in MSA that do not inflect for gender. They remain in the masculine singular base form.4

4.1.4.1 THE ADJECTIVE xaam ‘RAW’:

ماء غاً خام

maaaddat-un xaam-un

raw material

4.1.4.2 THE ADJECTIVE maHD ‘PURE’ (WITH EXCEPTIONS):5

لغة عربية محض

lughat-un ‘arabiyyat-un maHD-un

pure Arabic language

4.1.4.3 CERTAIN ADJECTIVES THAT APPLY STRICTLY TO FEMALE ANATOMY, SUCH AS “PREGNANT”:

آمرأة حامل

imra’aat-un Haamil-un

a pregnant woman

4.2 Adjective inflection for comparative and superlative (ism al-tafDil اسم التفضيل)
The comparative and superlative forms of adjectives in Arabic are sometimes referred to together in grammatical descriptions of Arabic as “elative” forms

---

4 For an interesting discussion of discrepancies in gender agreement in the Qur’an, see Gaballa 1999.

5 Wehr (1979, 1050) describes the adjective maHD as “invariable for gender and number,” but I found it at least once in the feminine, in Hasan (1987, III:1) in his description of the types of ‘iDaafi as maHDat-un wa-ghayru maHDat-in ‘pure and non-pure.’
because they signify a more intense degree of the quality described by the adjective. The Arabic term ism al-tafDiil signifies that these are terms of preference, preeminence, or preferment. In this text, the more standard terms “comparative” and “superlative” are used to refer to these forms of adjectives.

Just as English has sequences such as large, larger, largest, or nice, nicer, nicest, to indicate increasing degrees of intensity, Arabic has equivalent sequences consisting of base form, comparative, and superlative forms.

4.2.1 Comparative adjective: أفعل

Arabic adjectives derived from Form I triliteral roots inflect form the comparative through a pattern shift. No matter what the original or base pattern of the adjective, the comparative pattern shifts to 'aCCaC (أفعل), and it is dip-tote. That is, it does not take nunation or kasra in its indefinite form. Note also that the initial hamza of this pattern is hamzat al-qaT, that is, it does not elide. It is stable.

4.2.1.1 REGULAR TRILITERAL ROOTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>التعداد</th>
<th>الألفاظ</th>
<th>التفاعل</th>
<th>اللفظ</th>
<th>النشاط</th>
<th>النشاط</th>
<th>النشاط</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>صغير</td>
<td>أصغر</td>
<td>بعيد</td>
<td>أبعد</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saghiir</td>
<td>'aSghar</td>
<td>ba'iid</td>
<td>'ab'ad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small</td>
<td>smaller</td>
<td>far</td>
<td>farther</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كثير</td>
<td>أكثر</td>
<td>حسن</td>
<td>أحسن</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kathiir</td>
<td>'akthar</td>
<td>Hasan</td>
<td>'aHsan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>many</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>better</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كبير</td>
<td>أكبر</td>
<td>ثقيل</td>
<td>أنقل</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kabir</td>
<td>'akbar</td>
<td>thaqil</td>
<td>'athqal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big</td>
<td>bigger</td>
<td>heavy</td>
<td>heavier</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1.2 HOLLOW ROOTS: Comparative adjectives from hollow roots, where the middle radical is either waaw or yaa, behave as though the waaw or yaa is a regular consonant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>التعداد</th>
<th>الألفاظ</th>
<th>التفاعل</th>
<th>اللفظ</th>
<th>النشاط</th>
<th>النشاط</th>
<th>النشاط</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طويل</td>
<td>أطول</td>
<td>جيد</td>
<td>أجيد</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tawiil</td>
<td>'aTwal</td>
<td>jayyid</td>
<td>'ajwad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tall; long</td>
<td>taller; longer</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>better</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 See, for example, Abboud and McCarus 1983, part 1:340–45. Also Blachère and Gaudefroy-Demombynes 1975, 97 “L’élatif est un aspet de l’adjectif qui en exprime une valeur supérieure, complète, en une nuance souvent délicate à exprimer en français.”

7 For more on the diptote declension see Chapter 7, section 5.4.2.2.
4.2.1.3 ASSIMILATED ROOTS: Comparative adjectives from assimilated roots, where the initial root consonant is waaw or yaa, keep that consonant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تَأَيَّب</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aتَيَب</td>
<td>better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>سَيِّىء</td>
<td>bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اسْوَأَ</td>
<td>worse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1.4 GEMINATE ROOTS: Comparative adjectives from geminate roots (where the second and third root consonants are the same) have a variant comparative form due to a rule which prevents a short vowel from occurring between two identical consonants. Thus instead of افَال, the form is افَالل, and the two identical consonants are together, spelled with a shadda:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>قَلِّيَّل</td>
<td>little; few</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>قَالِلَ</td>
<td>less; fewer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>هَامٌ</td>
<td>important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ضَرِّيَّهُ</td>
<td>more important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أَحْرَرُ</td>
<td>hot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1.5 DEFECTIVE ROOTS: Comparative adjectives from defective roots have the form افَأَا. The final root consonant (whether waaw or yaa) becomes آلِف مَعَسِّرَة:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عَالِمٍ</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أَعْلَى</td>
<td>higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غَنِيٌّ</td>
<td>rich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أَغْنِى</td>
<td>richer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>قَوِيٌّ</td>
<td>strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أَقوَى</td>
<td>stronger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دَكَيْكُ</td>
<td>sweet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ذَكَيْكَ</td>
<td>sweeter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>آذَكَا</td>
<td>smart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أَذَكِّيَّ</td>
<td>smarter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2 Inflection and use of comparative

Note that the Arabic comparative adjective does not show difference in gender. In fact, comparative adjectives do not inflect for gender or number or definiteness. They inflect only for case. When comparing two things and contrasting them, the preposition من is used the way ‘than’ is used in English.
4.2.2.1 CASE INFLECTION FOR COMPARATIVE ADJECTIVES: The comparative adjective falls into the diptote category and therefore shows only two different case markers in the indefinite form: Damma and fatHa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>'aHsan</th>
<th>'better'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>'aHsan-u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>'aHsan-a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>'aHsan-a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2.2 EXAMPLES OF COMPARATIVE ADJECTIVE IN CONTEXT:

She appears younger than her age.

أكثر من خمس مئة دراسة علمية

more than 500 scientific studies

أكثر من نصف الأنواع المعروفة

more than half the known species

أهم مما سبقه

more important than what preceded it

This is less than we need.

4.2.2.3 COMPARATIVE WITHOUT min: Sometimes the comparative is used without reference to what it is compared to, so there is no need for the preposition min:

It contains more than 700 scenes.
She started to take a greater role.

It will lead to a firmer relationship between the two of them.

4.2.2.4 COMPARATIVE IN FORM ONLY: An adjective may occasionally have the comparative form, although its meaning is not comparative. In this case, it inflects for number, gender, and definiteness, as well as case:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adjective</th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>f. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>empty</td>
<td>أجوّف</td>
<td>جوفّاء</td>
<td>جوفّ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silly, stupid</td>
<td>أحقّق</td>
<td>حمحقّ</td>
<td>حمحقّ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

It seems [like] a silly idea. an empty bag

(1) ‘Other’: 'aaxar أخر and 'uxraa أخرين

A special form of adjective is the word for ‘other.’ It has a unique inflectional paradigm that combines comparative and superlative patterns, but does not have comparative or superlative meaning. It inflects for number, gender, case, and definiteness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adjective</th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>f. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
<th>f. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>other; another</td>
<td>أخر</td>
<td>أخرين</td>
<td>أخر</td>
<td>أخرين</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

like any other people
4.2.3 The periphrastic or phrasal comparative

Certain qualities, attributes, or descriptors do not fit into the pattern-change paradigm for comparative and superlative meanings. For example, *nisba* adjectives and the active and passive participles functioning as adjectives from the derived verb forms (II–X) have extra consonants or vowels as part of their essential word structure, so they cannot shift into the ‘*af*al pattern without losing some of their identity and meaning. Moreover, certain colors are already of the ‘*af*al pattern, so how does one express a quality such as “blacker,” or “whiter”?

Arabic handles this using a strategy similar to using “more” in English. Intensity words such as “more” plus the adjective are used, or words such as “stronger” plus a color word in order to form a descriptive comparative phrase.

The most common intensifying words used for forming the periphrastic comparative are:

- أَكْثَرُ `akthar
- أَشْدَدُ `ashadd
- أَقَلُ `aqall
- مُؤَكَّرٌ more
- أَوَّلٌ strongest
- أَمَنَّ أَقَلُّ less
- ثَانِينَ less

This intensifying word is then joined with a noun in the *indefinite accusative case*, a structure called *tamyiiz* or ‘accusative of specification.’

He was more favorably disposed toward the Arabs.

*يمكن أن يجعله أكثر تفاهمًا للموقف.*

It might make him more understanding of the situation.

*هي أكثر مسؤولية منك.*

She is more responsible than you.

---

8 See Chapter 11, section 6 for more on the *tamyiiz* construction.
Salaam-un `awsa'-u wa-'akthar-u shumuuliyyat-an
a wider and more inclusive peace

Muharrak-un 'akthar-u kafaat-an wa-'akthar-u 'timaaadiyyat-an
a more capable and more dependable motor

Huwa 'akthar-u dahaa'-an min Husayn-in. qad ta-kuun-u 'akthar-a 'ahammiiyyat-an.
He is more shrewd than Hussein. They might be of more importance.

Kaan-a 'akthar-a'udwaaniyyat-an wa-'aqall-a samaaHat-an.
It was more aggressive and less permissive.

4.2.4 The superlative
The form of the Arabic superlative adjective, which indicates the highest degree of comparison, resembles the comparative form `af'al. There are differences, however. The superlative form is always definite, defined by the definite article, a pronoun suffix, or by being the first term of an `iDaafa. Moreover, it has a feminine form as well: fu`l̨a. Because the feminine form ends with `alif maqSuura, it does not inflect for case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples:</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>biggest; oldest; greatest</td>
<td>`akbar</td>
<td>al-kubraa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smallest</td>
<td>`aSghar</td>
<td>al-Sughraa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greatest</td>
<td><code>a</code>Zam</td>
<td>al-`uZmaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highest; supreme</td>
<td><code>a</code>laa</td>
<td>al-`ulyaa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some instances a dual form or plural form of the superlative may be used. The plural form of the masculine superlative is either the sound masculine plural `af`aluuna, or CaCaCaC (fa`aall), a diptote plural pattern. The plural of the feminine superlative is CuCCayaat (fu`layaat).
in the two super powers

on any list of the greatest scholars in the world

4.2.4.1 SUPERLATIVES IN CONTEXT: WORD ORDER: Superlative adjectives may follow a noun directly, may be used as the first term of an ‘iDaafa with a noun, or may have a pronoun suffix. In certain expressions, they occur alone, with the definite article.

(1) Following a definite noun: The superlative adjective may, like the ordinary adjective, follow the noun. In that case, it agrees with the noun in gender, number, definiteness, and case:

المجلس الأعلى
al-majlis-u l-‘a’laa
the supreme council

الحدث الأبرز
al-Hadath-u l-‘abraz-u
the most prominent event

السؤال الأصعب
al-su’aal-u l-‘aS’ab-u
the hardest question

بعد أزمة الثلاثينات الكبرى
ba’d-a ‘azmat-i l-thalaathiinaat-i l-kubraa
after the major crisis of the thirties

(1.1) Fixed expressions with the superlative: Sometimes, especially in set phrases, Arabic uses a superlative expression where English would use an ordinary adjective:

الشرق الأدنى
al-sharq-u l-‘adnaa
the Near (‘nearest’) East

الحرب الكبرى
al-Harb-u l-kubraa
the Great (‘greatest’) War (WWI)
(1) As the first term of an 'iDaafa with a singular, indefinite noun: The superlative adjective is often used as the first term of an 'iDaafa with a singular, indefinite noun as the second term. In this structure, the adjective does not inflect for gender; it remains masculine singular no matter what the gender of the noun.

- أصغر سمكة في العالم 'aSghar-u samakat-in fii l-aalam-i
  - the smallest fish in the world

- هو أكبر مطار في كندا. huwa 'akbar-u maTaar-in fii kanadaa.
  - It is the biggest airport in Canada.

- على أبعد تقدير 'alaa ’ab’ad-i taqdiir-in
  - at the furthest estimate

- حصل على لقب أفضل لاعب عربي. HaSal-a ’alaa laqabi-i ’afDal-u
  - laa ’ib-in ‘arabiyy-in.
  - He obtained the title of 'best Arab player.'

(2) As first term of an 'iDaafa with a plural noun: When a superlative adjective is used as the first term of an 'iDaafa with a plural noun, the noun is normally definite, but may not always be. Normally the superlative adjective is in the masculine form, although the feminine may also occur.

- أجمل سنوات صبياي 'ajmal-u sanawaat-i Sibaaya
  - the most beautiful years of my childhood

- أقوى لاعبين في العالم 'aqwaal laa ’ib-iina fii l-aalam-i
  - the strongest players in the world

(3) As first term of an 'iDaafa with a plural noun: When a superlative adjective is used as the first term of an 'iDaafa with a plural noun, the noun is normally definite, but may not always be. Normally the superlative adjective is in the masculine form, although the feminine may also occur.

- أصغر سمكة في العالم 'aSghar-u samakat-in fii l-aalam-i
  - the smallest fish in the world

- هو أكبر مطار في كندا. huwa 'akbar-u maTaar-in fii kanadaa.
  - It is the biggest airport in Canada.

- على أبعد تقدير 'alaa ’ab’ad-i taqdiir-in
  - at the furthest estimate

- حصل على لقب أفضل لاعب عربي. HaSal-a ’alaa laqabi-i ’afDal-u
  - laa ’ib-in ‘arabiyy-in.
  - He obtained the title of 'best Arab player.'

- أصغر سمكة في العالم 'aSghar-u samakat-in fii l-aalam-i
  - the smallest fish in the world

- هو أكبر مطار في كندا. huwa 'akbar-u maTaar-in fii kanadaa.
  - It is the biggest airport in Canada.

- على أبعد تقدير 'alaa ’ab’ad-i taqdiir-in
  - at the furthest estimate

- حصل على لقب أفضل لاعب عربي. HaSal-a ’alaa laqabi-i ’afDal-u
  - laa ’ib-in ‘arabiyy-in.
  - He obtained the title of 'best Arab player.'
Adjectives: function and form

4. With pronoun suffix: A superlative adjective may occur with a pronoun suffix.

> فَأَعْلَبَهُمْ مِنَ الدِّكَارِينَ المسلمين.
> 
> 
> Most of them are Muslim emigrants.

5. With indefinite pronoun *maa* and following clause: The superlative adjective may be the first term of an ‘*iDaafa* whose second term is a phrase starting with an indefinite pronoun.

> أَغْرَبُ مَا فِي الْأَمْرِ
> ُّاَخْتَارَ مَا فِي الْأَمْرِ
> the most dangerous [thing] in the affair
> the strangest [thing] in this affair

6. With definite article by itself: In certain expressions, the superlative adjective occurs alone, with the definite article.

> خَمْسَةُ أَشْخَاصٍ عَلَى الأَقْلِ
> لِفَتْرَةٍ وَجِيزةٍ عَلَى الأَقْلِ
> five people at least
> for a brief period at least

5 The adjective ‘*iDaafa*, the “false” ‘*iDaafa* (‘*iDaafa ghayr Haqiiqiyya* إضافة غير حقيقيَّة)

The “adjective” ‘*iDaafa* is a particular use of the adjective as the first term of an ‘*iDaafa* or annexation structure. The adjective may take the definite article if it modifies a definite noun. Since this type of construct violates the general rules (by allowing the first term of the ‘*iDaafa* to take a definite article), it is called “unreal” or “false.”
This kind of phrase is used to describe a distinctive quality of an item, equivalent to hyphenated expressions in English such as fair-haired, long-legged, many-sided.

In this kind of ‘iDaafa, the adjective agrees with the noun it modifies in case, number, and gender. The second term of the adjective ‘iDaafa is a definite noun in the genitive case and refers to a particular property of the modified noun.9

5.1 Definite agreement
Here the adjective takes the definite article, agreeing with the noun it modifies.

اللجنة البرلمانية الواسعة النفوذ
al-hajnat-u l-barlamaaniyyat-u l-waasi‘at-u l-nafuudh-i
the widely influential parliamentary committee (‘wide of influence’)

هذا الفيلسوف العميق التفكير
haadha l-faylusuf-u l-‘amiiq-u l-tafkiir-i
this profound (‘deep of thought’) philosopher

5.2 Indefinite agreement
Here the adjective ‘iDaafa modifies an indefinite noun. The adjective does not therefore take a definite article but does not take nunation, either, because it is the first term of an ‘iDaafa.

في ظروف بالغة الأهمية
fii Zuruf-in baalighat-i l-‘ahammiyyat-i
in circumstances of extreme importance

قدر متوسط الحجم
qidr-un mutawassiT-u l-Hajm-i
a medium-sized pot

على نار متوسطة الحرارة
‘alaa naar-in mutawassiiTat-i l-Haraarat-i
on a medium-hot fire

5.3 Adjective ‘iDaafa as predicate
When acting as a predicate adjective in an equational sentence, the adjective in the adjective ‘iDaafa lacks the definite article. For example:

هو هولندي الأصل.
huwa huulandiiyy-u l-‘aSl-i.
He is of Dutch origin.

Part two: Adjective derivation: the structure of Arabic adjectives
Arabic adjectives are structured in two ways: through derivation from a lexical root by means of the root-and-pattern system, or by means of attaching the nisba

9 For further discussion and examples of the adjective ‘iDaafa, see Chapter 8, section 1.9.2.
suffix -iyy (m.) or -iya (f.) to create an adjective from another word (usually a noun). Very rarely, an adjective will exist on its own, without relation to a lexical root.

In traditional Arabic grammar, adjectives and nouns both fall under the syntactic category, *ism* ‘noun.’ The particular designations for the *nomen adjectivum* (Wright 1967, I:105) in Arabic include *al-waṣf*, *al-Sifa*، *al-naṭ*, referring to qualities, attributes, and epithets.¹⁰ These types of words function in ways that very closely parallel what would be termed “adjectives” in English, and many pedagogical texts refer to them simply as adjectives.

Active and passive participles may function either as adjectives or as nouns. When they function as adjectives, they follow the same inflectional and syntactic rules as adjectives, agreeing with the noun they modify in case, gender, number, and definiteness.

1 Derivation patterns from Form I triliteral roots
These adjective forms are based on particular morphological patterns derived from the base form of the verb, Form I. In some cases, an identical pattern may be used for nouns as well.¹¹ Some of the more commonly occurring adjectival patterns include the following.¹² Whereas the masculine plural patterns vary widely, the feminine plural, when used, is usually the sound feminine plural.

1.1 The CaCiiC or faʿiil فعَّيل pattern
This is one of the most common adjective patterns. The plural forms, used only for human beings, may be several, including sometimes both sound plurals and broken plurals. The masculine plural applies to human males and to mixed groups of males and females. The much more predictable feminine plural forms (ending in /-aat/) apply to groups of female human beings. Some of the more frequently occurring adjectives are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>far, distant</td>
<td>بعيد</td>
<td>بعيداء بعيدون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>baʿiīd</td>
<td>baʿiīd-uuna~ buʿadaaʿ~ biʿaad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large, big</td>
<td>كبير</td>
<td>كبيرون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kabiir</td>
<td>kabiir-uuna~ kibaar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹⁰ Beeston states: “One cannot establish for Arabic a word class of adjectives, syntactic considerations being the only identificatory criterion of an adjective” (1970, 44).

¹¹ For example, from the faʿiil pattern come nouns such as wazīr ‘minister,’ jaliid ‘ice,’ and safīr ‘ambassador.’

¹² Wright 1967, I:131–40 gives an extensive description of these adjective patterns and uses. He refers to them all as “verbal adjectives,” since he considers them derived from Form I verbs. However, I prefer to reserve the term “verbal adjectives” for active and passive particles, rather than adjectives in general.
1.1.1 With passive meaning
When derived from a transitive verb root, the fa‘iil pattern may carry the same meaning as a passive participle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>small</td>
<td>صغير</td>
<td>صغار صغار</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saghhiir</td>
<td>Sighaar~Sugharaa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nice; pleasant</td>
<td>لطيف</td>
<td>لطفاء لطاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>laTiif</td>
<td>lIlaaf~ luTafaa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>great</td>
<td>عظيم عظماء عظام</td>
<td>‘aZiim ‘uZamaa’~ ‘aZaa’im</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generous</td>
<td>كريم</td>
<td>كرام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poor</td>
<td>فقير</td>
<td>فقراء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weak</td>
<td>ضعيف</td>
<td>ضعفاء ضعفاء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Da‘iif</td>
<td>Da‘afa‘a~ Da‘afa~ Di‘afa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little; few</td>
<td>قليل</td>
<td>قلائل قليلون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>qaliil</td>
<td>qaliil-uuna~ qala‘il~ qalillaa~ qilaal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new</td>
<td>جديد</td>
<td>جدد</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 The CaCCiC or fa‘iil فعل فعل pattern
Adjectives of this pattern, if applied to human beings, usually use the sound plurals. This pattern appears frequently with hollow roots.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wounded</td>
<td>جريح</td>
<td>جريح</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jariiH (PP: majruuH)</td>
<td>jarHaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>killed</td>
<td>قتيل</td>
<td>قتلى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>qatiil (PP: maqtuul)</td>
<td>qatlaa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

bad    good    valuable    okay; fine
1.3 The CaKiC or fa’il فعل pattern
Adjectives of this pattern also, if applied to human beings, usually use the sound plurals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>جشع</th>
<th>تلعب</th>
<th>وسع</th>
<th>خشن</th>
<th>عطر</th>
<th>مرن</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jashi</td>
<td>ta’ib</td>
<td>wasix</td>
<td>xashin</td>
<td>‘aTir</td>
<td>marin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

سياسي جشع سياسة مرن
siyuasiyy-un jashi-un siyaasat-un marinat-un
a greedy politician a flexible policy

1.4 The CaCC / CuCC or fa’il / fu’ilفعل pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hefty, huge</td>
<td>ضخم, ضخم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Daxm, Dixaam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>free</td>
<td>حر, حرائر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hurr, Haraa’ir, ‘aHraar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not usually used to refer to humans:

صلب، سهل
jamm sahl Sulb
plentiful easy hard, firm

1.5 The CaCaC or fa’al فعل pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>حسن, حسن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hasan, Hisaan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle, medial</td>
<td>وسط</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wasaT, ‘awsaat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.6 The CaCCaan or fa’laan فعلان pattern
This pattern is for the most part, diptote in the masculine singular.\(^\text{13}\) It can have rather complex plural and feminine patterns, although none of these occurred in

---

\(^{13}\) The MECAS grammar (1965, 44) states for instance, that kaslaan is diptote, but it is not noted as such in Wehr (1979, 969), although Wehr notes za’laan, ghaba’aan, and ‘aTshaan as diptote. Wright (1967, 1:133) gives both alternatives; Haywood and Nahmad (1962, 86) state that this pattern is “without nunation”; and Cowan (1964, 40) puts it in the diptote declension.
the data gathered for this book. Cowan states (1964, 40) “In Modern Arabic the pattern fa‘laan-u usually takes the sound endings in the feminine and the plural.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>f. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sleepy</td>
<td>نعسان</td>
<td>نعسانة</td>
<td>نعسانون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>na‘saan</td>
<td>na‘saana</td>
<td>na‘saan-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tired</td>
<td>تعبان</td>
<td>تعبانة</td>
<td>تعبانون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ta‘baan</td>
<td>ta‘baana</td>
<td>ta‘baan-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lazy</td>
<td>كسلان</td>
<td>كسلانا</td>
<td>كسلانون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kasaan</td>
<td>kasaana</td>
<td>kasaan-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>angry</td>
<td>زعلان</td>
<td>زعلانا</td>
<td>زعلانون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>za‘laan</td>
<td>za‘laana</td>
<td>za‘laan-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>angry</td>
<td>غضبان</td>
<td>غضبانة</td>
<td>غضبانون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ghaDaan</td>
<td>ghaDaana</td>
<td>ghaDaan-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hungry</td>
<td>جعاون</td>
<td>جعاونا</td>
<td>جعانون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jaw‘aan</td>
<td>jaw‘aana</td>
<td>jaw‘aan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thirsty</td>
<td>عطشان</td>
<td>عطشانة</td>
<td>عطشانون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘aTshaan</td>
<td>‘aTshaa</td>
<td>‘aTshaa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.7 The CaCCaaC or fa‘aal فعال pattern
This pattern denotes intensity of a quality and takes sound plurals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>جذاب</th>
<th>مجِّان</th>
<th>رحَال</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fa‘aal</td>
<td>jadhhaab</td>
<td>majjaan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
effective, attractive, free of charge, roving, roaming

2 Quadriliteral root adjective patterns
The CaCCuuC or fa‘luul pattern from quadriliteral roots:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>بحبوح</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>baHbuuuH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
merry

3 Participles functioning as adjectives
Active and passive participles are verbal adjectives, that is, descriptive terms derived from a particular Form (I–X) of a verbal root. The active participle
describes the doer of an action and the passive participle describes the entity that receives the action, or has the action done to it. They therefore describe or refer to entities involved in an activity, either as noun modifiers (adjectives) or as substantives (nouns) themselves. Here we are dealing with them as adjectives.14

3.1 Active participles as adjectives

Active participles as adjectives describe the doer of an action. In context, they agree with the modified noun in gender, number, definiteness, and case. When used as adjectives modifying nouns referring to human beings in the plural, the sound feminine or the sound masculine plural is used.15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP I:</th>
<th>زائر</th>
<th>AP I:</th>
<th>هام</th>
<th>AP I:</th>
<th>عالٌ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zaa‘ir</td>
<td>visiting</td>
<td>haamm</td>
<td>important</td>
<td>‘aal-in</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP II:</th>
<th>مبكر</th>
<th>AP III:</th>
<th>مماثل</th>
<th>AP III:</th>
<th>مناوب</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mukabbir</td>
<td>magnifying</td>
<td>mumaathil</td>
<td>similar</td>
<td>munaawib</td>
<td>on duty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP IV:</th>
<th>مشمس</th>
<th>AP IV:</th>
<th>مطر</th>
<th>AP IV:</th>
<th>ممل</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mushmis</td>
<td>sunny</td>
<td>mumTir</td>
<td>rainy</td>
<td>mumill</td>
<td>boring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP V:</th>
<th>متوفر</th>
<th>AP V:</th>
<th>متاخر</th>
<th>AP VI:</th>
<th>متزايد</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mutawaffir</td>
<td>abundant</td>
<td>muta‘axxir</td>
<td>late</td>
<td>mutazaayid</td>
<td>increasing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP VI:</th>
<th>متقاعد</th>
<th>AP VII:</th>
<th>منعزل</th>
<th>AP VII:</th>
<th>منكمش</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mutaqaa‘id</td>
<td>retired</td>
<td>mun’azil</td>
<td>isolated</td>
<td>munkamish</td>
<td>introverted; shrunk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP VIII:</th>
<th>مختلف</th>
<th>AP VIII:</th>
<th>محترم</th>
<th>AP X:</th>
<th>مستمر</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mustalif</td>
<td>different</td>
<td>muHtarim</td>
<td>respectful</td>
<td>mustamirr</td>
<td>continuous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP X:</th>
<th>مستحيل</th>
<th>Quad.</th>
<th>AP IV:</th>
<th>مكنهر</th>
<th>Quad.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mustaHtil</td>
<td>impossible</td>
<td>Quad.</td>
<td>mukfahirr</td>
<td>dusky, gloomy</td>
<td>muTma‘inn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14 See also Wright 1967, I:143–45.
15 Form I participles may take a broken or sound plural, but usually the sound plural is used when the participle functions as an adjective. Derived participles from the Forms II–X take sound plurals.
Examples:

**Form I:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-marrat-a l-qaadimat-a</td>
<td>the next time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-wathab-u l-‘aali</td>
<td>the high jump</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

مهمة شاقة  
*mihnat-un shaaqqat-un*  
a demanding profession  
the previous Minister of the Economy

**Form IV:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-nasaa‘ im-u l-mun‘isbat-u</td>
<td>the refreshing breezes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-lajnat-u l-mushrifat-u</td>
<td>the supervisory committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PP I:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ma‘ruuf</td>
<td>known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mabruuk</td>
<td>blessed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PP II:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>muSawwar</td>
<td>illustrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mufaDDal</td>
<td>preferred; favorite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PP IV:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mudmaj</td>
<td>compacted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muraad</td>
<td>desired</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PP VIII:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>muHtall</td>
<td>occupied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mustawrad</td>
<td>imported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quad.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mufarTaH</td>
<td>flattened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muzarkash</td>
<td>embellished</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 Passive participles as adjectives

These participles usually take sound plurals when referring to human beings.
Examples:

Form II:
السلمون المدخن
al-salmun-u l-mudaxxan-u
smoked salmon

Form II:
bi-mawaaqit-ka l-mufaddalat-i
in your favorite places

Form IV:
Form VIII:
qur-s-un mudmaj-un
al-araadii l-muhtallat-u
compact disk
the occupied lands

Form X:
أسماء مستعارة
asmaa'-un musta'aarat-un
pseudonyms (‘borrowed names’)
4.1.1 taa’ marbuutTa deletion
If the base noun ends in taa’ marbuutTa, the taa’ marbuutTa is deleted before suffixing the nisba ending:

political سياسيَّ
siyaas-iyy (from siyaasa، سياسة ‘politics, policy’)

artificial صناعيَّ
Sinaa‘-iyy (from Sinaa‘a صناعة ‘craft; industry’)

cultural ثقافيَّ
thaqaaf-iyy (from thaqaafa ثقافة ‘culture’)

4.1.2 waaw insertion
If the noun ends in a suffix consisting of ‘alif, or ‘alif-hamza, the hamza may be deleted and a waaw may be inserted as a buffer:

desert; desert-like صحراويَّ
SaHraa-w-iyy (from SaHraa‘ صحارة ‘desert’ root: s-H-r)

مناخ صحراويَّ
munaax-un SaHraaw-iyy-un
a desert climate

semantic معناويَّ
ma‘na-w-iyy (from ma‘nan معنى ‘meaning’ root: ‘-n-y)

4.1.3 Root hamza retention
If the hamza is part of the lexical root, it cannot be deleted. Thus,

equatorial استوائيَّ
istiwaan‘-iyy (from istiwaan‘ استواء ‘equator’ root: s-w-‘)

final نهائيَّ
nihaa‘-iyy (from nihaa‘ ‘end’ root: n-h-y)
4.1.4 Stem reduction

Sometimes the form of the base noun is reduced:

ecclesiastical, church-related

kanas-iyy (from kaniisa كنيسة ‘church’)

Civic, civil

madan-iyy (from madiina مدينة ‘city’)

al-Tayaraan-u l-madan-iyy-u
civil aviation

4.2 Nisba from a plural noun

A plural form of the noun may occasionally be used as the stem for the nisba suffix. This is especially true if the singular ends in taa’ marbuuTa:

tax-related ضرائبي دولي
Daraa’ib-iyy (singular Dariiba ضريبة) duwal-iyy (singular dawla دولة)

journalistic صحفي
SuHuf-iyy (singular SaHiifa صحيفة) nisaa’-iyy/nisaw-iyy (singular ‘imra’a إمرأة)

documentary وثائقي
ehuquq-iyy (singular Haqq حق)
wathaa’ iq-iyy (singular wathiiqa وثيقة)

Examples:

fii film-in wathaa’ iq-iyy-in fii ftitaaHiyyat-in
in a documentary film in a newspaper editorial

al-diraasaat-u l-nisawiyyat-u shabkat-un ma’luumaatiyyat-un
women’s studies information network

4.3 Nisba from a participle or adjective

Musawi
mawsuu’-iyy أوالى
comprehensive awaken-16
preliminary

16 A variant on the nisba adjective based on the stem 16 Nawwal ‘first’ is the additional form ضرورة أوالى 16 Daruurat-un Nawwalawiyyat-un ‘a primary necessity.’
4.4 Nisba from place names

A place name is usually stripped down to its barest, simplest stem form before the nisba suffix is added. Definite articles, final long vowels, and final taa’ marbu’ut are generally eliminated. It is here that one can see the origin of English adjectival terms ending in /-i/ such as ‘Yemeni’ and ‘Iraqi,’ which are modeled on the Arabic nisba.

4.4.1 Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Nisba</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-‘urdunn</td>
<td>‘urdunn-iyy</td>
<td>Jordanian</td>
<td>Sudanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Jordanian</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Sudanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-kuwayt</td>
<td>kuwayt-iyy</td>
<td>Kuwaiti</td>
<td>Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>Kuwaiti</td>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Siin</td>
<td>Siin-iyy</td>
<td>Tunis</td>
<td>Tunisian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>Tunisian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faransa</td>
<td>farans-iyy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>French</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.2 Cities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Nisba</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-qaahira</td>
<td>qaahir-iyy</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>Baghdadi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>Cairene</td>
<td>Baghdad</td>
<td>Baghdadi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bayruut</td>
<td>bayruut-iyy</td>
<td>Beirut</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beirut</td>
<td>Beiruti</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.3 Geographical areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Nisba</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>najd-iyy</td>
<td>Hijaaaz-iyy</td>
<td>from Nejd</td>
<td>from Hijaz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xalij-iyy</td>
<td>from the (Arabian) Gulf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.4 Exceptions

With a few place names, a final ‘alif is retained in the nisba, in which case a waaw or nuun is inserted between the ‘alif and the nisba suffix:
4.5 Names of nationalities or ethnic groups

Certain terms, especially those referring to Middle Eastern groups, have non-nisba masculine plurals, but revert to the nisba form in the feminine plural. See also section 4.15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
<th>f. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>عراقي</td>
<td>عرب</td>
<td>عربيات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'arab-iyy</td>
<td>'arab</td>
<td>'arabiyy-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurdish</td>
<td>كردي</td>
<td>أكراد</td>
<td>كردیات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kurd-iyy</td>
<td>'akraad</td>
<td>kurdiyy-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>تركي</td>
<td>ترك</td>
<td>تركیات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>turk-iyy</td>
<td>turk ~ 'atraak</td>
<td>turkiyy-aat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6 *Nisba* from biliteral nouns

Nouns with only two root consonants usually insert a *waaw* before the affixation of the *nisba* suffix. The *waaw* is preceded by *fatHa*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>اسم</th>
<th>أخوي</th>
<th>أبو</th>
<th>يدوي</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'axa-w-iyy</td>
<td>'aba-w-iyy</td>
<td>yada-w-iyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fraternal</td>
<td>paternal</td>
<td>manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the biliteral noun has a *taa' marbuuTa* suffix, that is deleted when the *waaw* is added:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>اسم</th>
<th>منوي</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sana-w-iyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>annual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>اسم</th>
<th>التشاور وال الحوار الأخوی</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>شعور أبوی</td>
<td>al-tashaawur-wa-l-Hiwaar-u l-'axawiyy-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paternal feeling</td>
<td>consultation and fraternal conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مئة قنبلة دودیة</td>
<td>al-nisbat-u l-mi'aawiyat-u li-l-muslimiina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a hundred hand grenades</td>
<td>the <em>percentage</em> of Muslims</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.7 *Nisbas* from quadriliteral nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>جمهوري</th>
<th>كهربائي</th>
<th>قرمزي</th>
<th>عسكري</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jumhuur-iyy</td>
<td>kahraba‘-iyy</td>
<td>qirmiz-iyy</td>
<td>‘askar-iyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>republican</td>
<td>electrical</td>
<td>crimson red</td>
<td>military</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.8 *Nisbas* from quinquiliteral nouns

بنفسجي

*banafsaj-iyy*

violet; purple

4.9 *Nisbas* from borrowed nouns

Derivation of an adjective from a borrowed noun is accomplished in several ways. For example, the English word “diplomatic” is rendered in Arabic as *diibu-umaasiyy*

هو عميد السلك الديبلوماسي.

*huwa ‘amiid-u l-silk-i l-diibluumaasiyy-i.*

He is the dean of the diplomatic corps.

4.9.1 Nouns ending in -aa or -aa’

If the borrowed noun ends in -aa or -aa’, the final vowel may be deleted, or the *hamza* deleted and the -aa buffered by a *waaw*:

كيمياويَ

*kiimyaa-w-iyy* (from *kiimyaa* كيمياء ‘chemistry’)

موسيقيَ

*muusiiq-iyy* (from *muusiiqaa* موسيقى ‘music’)

4.9.2 *Hamza insertion*

The foreign noun ending in -aa may get an additional *hamza* as a buffer between the stem and the suffix:

سينمائيَ

*siinamaa‘-iyy* (from *siinamaa* سينما ‘movies, cinema’)

4.9.3 Intact stem

The foreign noun stem may be left intact and suffixed with -iyy:

أرشيفيَ

*‘arshiif-iyy*

برميليَ

*barmil-iyy*

كرينفاليَ

*karnifaal-iyy*

ارشيفيَ

*barmil-iyy*

كرينفاليَ

*karnifaal-iyy*

archival | barrel-like | carnival-like
4.10 Nisbas from borrowed adjectives
In the following words, an English adjective ending in “-ic” or a French adjective ending in “-ique” has been borrowed and used as a stem. The *nisba* suffix is attached to it in order to convert it into an Arabic adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dynamic</td>
<td>ديناميكيَّة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>automatic</td>
<td>أتوماتيكيَّة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>classic</td>
<td>كلاسيكيَّة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.10.1 Nisba ending as replacive suffix
In the following instances, the adjective stem is borrowed but the “-ic” or “-ical” suffix is replaced by the Arabic *nisba* suffix:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strategic</td>
<td>استراتيجيَّة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>academic</td>
<td>إكاديميَّة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>psychological</td>
<td>سكولوغيَّة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.11 Nisbas from particles and pronouns
Prepositions, adverbs and other particles may also have a *nisba* suffix:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>inter-</td>
<td>مَعَ (في الورق)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quantitative</td>
<td>كمية</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualitative</td>
<td>كيفية (مقدمة)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rear; hind</td>
<td>خلفيَّة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-</td>
<td>ذاتيَّة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

*They (f.) sit in the front seats.*

They (f.) sit in the *front* seats.

*They sit in the front seats.*

Qadam-aani xalf-iyyat-aani

Two hind feet

4.12 Nisbas from set phrases or fixed expressions
Technically, in traditional Arabic grammar, a *nisba* adjective cannot be formed from a phrase, only from a single word. Sometimes, however, a certain phrase is used so often that it becomes a fixed expression, behaving semantically and
syntactically as a morphological unit or compound noun. The following phrases and compound words with *nisba* suffixes occurred in data gathered for this study.

‘Middle Eastern’  
شَرَقٌ أُوسَطٍ  
*sharq* *awlasiT-iyy* (from *al-sharq-un l-awlasiT-u* ‘the Middle East’)

Examples:

النظام الشرق الأوسط  
*al-nizam-un l-sharq-un l-awlasiT-iyy-un*  
the Middle Eastern system
d('+lala l-awlasiT-iyyat-i
'to Middle Eastern markets'

‘never-ending; everlasting’
لا نهائِي  
*lala nihaa-iyy* (from *lala nihaa-a* ‘there is no end’)

عبر تغييراته اللا نهائية  
*‘abru taghayyuraat-i-hi l-lala nihaa-iyyat-i
through its never-ending transformations

4.13 *Nisbas* from compound words

Compounding has traditionally been a very minor component of Arabic derivational morphology, but it is resorted to more often in MSA, especially when there is a requirement for coining technical terms. Relative adjectives are sometimes created from these compound stems:17

capitalistic  
رأَسْ مَالِيَّ  
*ra’s-smaal-iyy* (from *ra’s maal* ‘capital’)

amphibian  
برمائي  
*barmaa-iyy* (through compounding from the words *barr* ‘land’ and *maa* ‘water’)

Recently coined technical terms sometimes make use of the shortened forms of *qabl-a* (*qab*) ‘before’ and *fawq-a* (*faw*) ‘above’ to express the concepts of “pre-” and “super-.” Sometimes these are combined with Arabic stems and sometimes with stems from other languages, suffixed with -iyy:

قَبْلِيَّ  
*qab-millaad-iyy*
Before Christ (BC)

قَبْتَارِيْخِيَّ  
*qab-taariix-iyy*
prehistoric

قِبْكَمِرِيَّ  
*qab-kambr-iyy*
Precambrian

فُوْصِوْتِيَّ  
*faw-Sawt-iyy*
supersonic

4.14 Special use of *nisba*

Where in English one noun may be used to describe or modify another noun, in Arabic such a phrase often uses a *nisba* adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tullaab-un jaami‘iyy-ununa</th>
<th>xubaraa‘-u nifTiyy-ununa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>university students</td>
<td>oil experts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘iZaam-un Hayawaaniyyat-un</th>
<th>manaaTiq-u zamaniyyat-un</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>animal bones</td>
<td>time zones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.15 *Nisba* plurals

The preponderance of *nisba* plurals are sound, using the sound masculine or sound feminine plurals when referring to human beings. However, a few *nisbas* take broken or truncated plurals, especially when referring to ethnic or religious groups.

4.15.1 Truncated *nisba* plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>‘arab</td>
<td>‘arabiyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bedouin</td>
<td>badw</td>
<td>badawiyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>yahuud</td>
<td>yahuudiyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berber</td>
<td>barbar</td>
<td>barbariyy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.15.2 Broken *nisba* plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>foreign</td>
<td>‘ajaanib</td>
<td>اجانب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>naSaaraa</td>
<td>نصارى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurdish</td>
<td>‘akraad</td>
<td>أكراد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>‘atraak/turk</td>
<td>ترک، أتراک</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 Color adjectives
Color adjectives are of three types in Arabic: pattern-derived, nisba, and borrowed.

5.1 Pattern-derived color adjectives
The essential colors of the spectrum have a special pattern or form ‘aCCaC or ‘af’al في الفعل بناءً على الأفعال في المضارع، CaCCaa or fa‘laa في الفعل التام، and CuCC or fu‘l في الفعل. Here is a list of the most commonly occurring derived color adjectives. It includes black and white and brown as well as the primary colors: red, blue and yellow. It also includes green, but not orange or purple.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>f. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
<th>f. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>black</td>
<td>أسود</td>
<td>سوداء</td>
<td>سود</td>
<td>سوداوات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blue</td>
<td>أزرق</td>
<td>زرقاء</td>
<td>زرق</td>
<td>زرقاءوات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brown</td>
<td>أصفر</td>
<td>صفراء</td>
<td>صفر</td>
<td>صفراوات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>green</td>
<td>أخضر</td>
<td>حمراء</td>
<td>حمرا</td>
<td>حمراوات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red</td>
<td>أحمر</td>
<td>حمراء</td>
<td>حمرا</td>
<td>حمراوات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>أبيض</td>
<td>بيضاء</td>
<td>بيض</td>
<td>بيضاوات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yellow</td>
<td>أصفر</td>
<td>صفراء</td>
<td>صفر</td>
<td>صفراوات</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are three things to note and remember about these color adjectives. First, the masculine singular pattern ‘af’al is diptote and is identical in form to the comparative adjective pattern (for example, ‘akbar ‘bigger’ or ‘aTwal ‘longer’), which is also diptote. Second, the feminine singular pattern fa‘laa في الفعل التام is also diptote. Third, the plural form is primarily used to refer to human beings, since the feminine singular would be used for modifying a nonhuman noun plural, in keeping with rules of gender and humanness agreement.18 Examples include:

18 One instance of the plural form of the adjective used with a nonhuman plural noun appeared in the corpus of data used for this text:
بطاقات أميركان إكسبرس الخضر
bitaaqaat-u  "اميركان إكسبرس" 1-xuDr-u
green American Express cards
5.1.1 Masculine phrases

الحوت الأزرق
al-Huut-u l-ʿazraq-u
the blue whale

البحر الأحمر
al-ḥaʾyar-u l-ʿaHmar-u
the Red Sea

5.1.2 Feminine phrases

جبنة بيضاء
jubnāt-un bayDaː-u
white cheese

سلطة خضراء
salaTāt-un xaDrāː-u
green salad

5.1.3 Plural phrases

المسلمون السودان
al-muṣlim-uuna l-suud-u
black Muslims

القبعات الزرق
al-qubbāʿaṭ-u l-zaɾqū-19
the blue berets (UN troops)

5.2 Physical feature adjectives

The ʿafʿal pattern is used to denote not only color but also certain physical characteristics:

19 Although the word qubbaʿaṭ ‘berets’ is technically nonhuman, the reference is to human beings.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item name</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ashes</td>
<td>ramaad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ramaad-iyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orange</td>
<td>burtuqaal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>burtuqaal-iyy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 *Nisba* color adjectives

Another process for deriving names of colors in Arabic is to identify the color of a naturally occurring substance, such as ashes, roses, oranges, or coffee beans, and then to affix the *nisba* ending -‘iyy onto that noun. Sometimes the base noun is of Arabic origin, and sometimes it is of foreign derivation.
Inflection of these *nisba* adjectives follows the general rules for *nisbas*: adding a *taaʾ marbuʿuṭa* for feminine agreement (including nonhuman plurals), and adding the sound masculine or sound feminine plural for plural (human) agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item name</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rose</td>
<td>وردة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coffee beans</td>
<td>بن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>violet</td>
<td>بنفسج</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bronze</td>
<td>برونز</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4 Borrowed color adjectives

In recent times, the practice has been to borrow directly names of certain colors or particular shades of colors that do not already exist in Arabic. These come mainly from European languages and do not inflect for number, gender, or case:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item name</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rose</td>
<td>محمد محل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coffee beans</td>
<td>بن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>violet</td>
<td>بنفسج</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bronze</td>
<td>برونز</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 Non-derived adjectives

Rarely, an Arabic adjective is non-derived and simply exists on its own, without relation to a productive lexical root:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item name</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'amaaliqa/ 'imlaaq</td>
<td>ترکواز</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>giant; super</td>
<td>unique, extraordinary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples:

الزواحف العملاقة
al-zawaaHif-u l-‘imlaaqat-u
the giant reptiles

نموزج فذ
namuudhaj-un fadhhdh-un

Examples:

الزواحف العملاقة
al-zawaaHif-u l-‘imlaaqat-u
the giant reptiles

7 Compound adjectives

In order to express complex new concepts, compound (two-word) adjectival expressions are sometimes used in MSA. They occur primarily as adjective ‘iDaafa’s, or, for negative concepts, as adjectives in construct with the noun ghayr.

7.1 The active participle muta‘addid متعدّد ‘numerous’

To express the concept of “multi-” as the first component of an Arabic compound, the AP muta‘addid is normally used.

Examples:

لبرنامج المساعدات المتعبدة الجنسيات
li-barnaamaj-i l-musaa‘adaat-i l-muta‘addidat-i l-jinsiyyaat-i
for the program of multinational assistance

تتخذ الشركات المتعبدة الجنسيات خطوات.
ta-ttaxidh-u l-sharikaat-u l-muta‘addidat-u l-jinsiyyaat-i xutuwaat-in.
The multi-national companies are taking steps.

في هذه القضية المتعبدة الجنسيات
fil haadhihi l-qaanibat-i l-muta‘addid-i l-jawiib-i
in this multi-sided issue

7.2 The noun ghayr ‘non-; un-, in-, other than’

To express negative or privative concepts denoting absence of a quality or attribute, the noun ghayr is used.

The noun ghayr ‘other than’ becomes the first term of a construct phrase modifying the noun and carries the same case ending as the noun being modified. It does not, as the first term of the ‘iDaafa, ever have the definite article. The second
Adjectives: function and form

term of the construct is an adjective or participle in the genitive case which agrees with the noun being modified in gender, number, and definiteness. See also Chapter 8, section 1.9.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>غير مناسب</td>
<td>unsuitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ghayr-u munaasib-in</td>
<td>indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غير لبق</td>
<td>tactless</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

المواد الخام غير المنتجدة

*al-mawaadd-u l-xaam-u ghayr-u l-mutajaddidat-i*

non-renewable raw materials

بطريقة غير قانونية

*bi-turuq-in ghayr-i qaanuniyyat-in*

by illegal means

الدفعات غير المشروعة كالرشاوي مثلا

*al-dafa‘aat-u ghayr-u l-mashru‘at-i ka-l-rashaawii mathal-an*

illegal payments such as bribes, for example

اتفاقيات غير مقدسة

*ittifaaqiyyat-un ghayr-u muqaddasat-in*

an unholy agreement

غير قابلة للتزوير

*ghayr-u qaabilat-in li-l-tazwiir-i*

non-counterfeitable
A good general definition of adverbs is found in Hurford (1994, 10): “The most typical adverbs add specific information about time, manner, or place to the meanings of verbs or whole clauses.” Adverbs may also add information to adjectives (“very easy”) or even other adverbs (“late yesterday”). An essential characteristic of adverbs is that they are additive; that is, they are external to the core proposition in a clause or sentence. They are, as Stubbs has noted, “an optional element in clause structure” (1983, 70).

Arabic refers to this optional status as faDla ‘extra’ or ‘surplus’ parts of a sentence rather than part of the kernel or core predication. This optionality has meant that adverbs have traditionally received less attention from linguistic research than the major form classes (nouns and verbs), despite the fact that they are very common in both spoken and written discourse.¹

This class of words and phrases is also very heterogeneous in terms of its composition. Adverbial modification may be accomplished with single words (daa’im-an ‘always,’ jidd-an ‘very’) or with phrases (‘ila Hadd-in ma ‘to a certain extent,’ ‘ajil-an ‘soon’). Arab adverbials also include grammatical structures such as the cognate accusative (al-maf’uul al-muTlaq) and Haal (‘circumstantial’) phrases.

In Arabic, few words are adverbs in and of themselves; but there are some (such as faqaT ‘only’ or hunaa ‘here’).² Most words that function as Arabic adverbs are adjectives or nouns in the accusative case (e.g., ‘alHyaan-an ‘sometimes,’

¹ Stubbs notes that adverbs are one of three areas which have resisted traditional treatment in grammar (in addition to coordinating conjunctions and “particles”) and that none of these areas “fit neatly into the syntactic and semantic categories of contemporary linguistics” (1983, 70). Furthermore, he states (1983, 77): “Adverbs then, and certain items in particular, provide problems for sentence based grammars but are of great interest in a study of discourse sequences, since their functions are largely to do with the organization of connected discourse, and with the interpretation of functional categories of speech acts.”

² Cowan (1964, 63) starts his section on adverbs with the observation that “the Arabic language is exceedingly poor in adverbs,” referring to the fact that few Arabic words are inherently and solely adverbs. Haywood and Nahmad (1962, 426) open their chapter on “adverbial usage” with the statement: “Arabic has no Adverbs, properly speaking” (emphasis in original). They go on to explain that “this lack is hardly felt owing to the inherent flexibility and expressiveness of the language.”
Adverbs and adverbial expressions

ghadan ‘tomorrow,’ al-yawm ‘today’; some adverbials occur with a Damma ending (e.g., ba‘d-u ‘yet’) and at least one ends consistently in kasra (‘ams-i ‘yesterday’). Still other adverbial expressions are compound words consisting of a noun and a demonstrative suffix, e.g., yawm-adhaak ‘that day.’

Placement of adverbs within an Arabic sentence is flexible to a certain extent, but sometimes particular adverbs have preferred positions. Several adverbs or adverbial expressions may occur in the same sentence. In the following one, for example, are four adverbs:

هناك اليوم مثلا خلافات حول الموضوع.

hunaaka l-yawm-a mathal-an xilaafaat-un Hawl-a l-mawDu‘i.

There [are] today, for example, disagreements about the subject.

The first adverb is the locative hunaaka ‘there is/are’; the second is the time adverbial l-yawm ‘today’; the third is mathal ‘for example’; and the fourth is the locative adverb Hawl ‘about.’

Most Arabic adverbials can be divided into four major groups according to their semantic function: degree, manner, place, and time. There are also some important categories that do not fall within these four groups, but which have key functions in Arabic, such as adverbial accusatives of cause or reason (maf‘uul li-aqil-i-hi or maf‘uul la-hu) and the accusative of specification (tamyiiz). Within each of these categories there are several kinds of adverbial components. Given the heterogeneous and multifunctional nature of this class of expressions, the examples provided here are by no means exhaustive; but they represent a broad sample of occurrences in modern written Arabic.

1 Adverbs of degree

Adverbs of degree describe and quantify concepts such as intensity (“very,” “considerably,” “particularly”), measurement (“one by one”), or amount (“a little,” “a great deal,” “completely”). In some respects, they are a subcategory of manner adverbials, but they constitute a substantial group of their own.

1.1 Basic adverbs of degree

1.1.1 faqat ‘only, solely’

This adverb of degree is a commonly used expression of limitation. It is invariable in form and ends with sukun. In terms of its placement in a sentence, it

---

3 In discussing the Arabic morphological category of adverb, Wright (1967, I:282) notes that “there are three sorts of adverbs. The first class consists of particles of various origins, partly inseparable, partly separable; the second class of indeclinable nouns ending in u; the third class of nouns in the accusative” (emphasis in original). He includes an exhaustive list of particles, including interrogatives, negatives, and tense markers in his first category. In this book these particles are discussed according to their separate functions.
tends to occur at the end of the phrase or clause it modifies, but this is not absolute.

He only learned a [limited] number of words. It was not only documentation.

The trip from Geneva to Tunis takes only two hours.

Their marriage lasted only two years.

The role was written into three scenes only.

Despite their only winning the silver medal

1.2 Degree nouns and adjectives in the accusative

Adverbial modification is often managed in Arabic using nouns or adjectives in the accusative case. Certain accusative adverbials are used so frequently that they have become idiomatic. This is especially true of degree adverbials. Note that most of them occur in the indefinite accusative.

1.2.1 jidd-an ‘very’

This adverbial expression is of frequent occurrence in written Arabic. It follows the phrase that it modifies.

It is very natural that we love it.

1.2.2 kathiir-an ‘much; a lot; greatly’

This is much more important than what preceded it.
Adverbs and adverbial expressions

1.2.3 *muTlaq-an* مطلقاً ‘absolutely’

لا أستطيع التكلم مطلقاً.

I absolutely cannot speak.

1.2.4 *qaliil-an* قليلاً ‘a little bit; a little’

أفهم قليلاً.

I understand a little.

1.2.5 *tamaam-an* تمامًا ‘exactly; completely’

يجب عليها أن تدعم الاتفاق تمامًا.

It must support the agreement completely.

1.2.6 *xuSuS-an* خصوصاً ‘especially’

خصوصاً في ما يتعلق بالموئز

especially in what relates to bananas

1.2.7 *ajma-a* أجمع ‘all; entirely; all together’

This adverbial accusative of degree is a comparative adjective. It is not nunated because the word *ajma* is diptote.

في أنحاء العالم أجمع

in all parts of the world

1.2.8 Repeated noun of measurement

In these expressions, a noun in the accusative is repeated in order to indicate gradual sequencing.

---

4 ‘Abd al-Latif et al. (1997, 340) refer to this structure as *al-Haal al-jaamida*، 'solid Haal' or 'inflexible Haal.'
He kissed (‘undertook kissing’) them one by one (‘individual by individual’).

That it could gradually (‘thing by thing’) deteriorate

1.3 Adverbial phrases of degree
There are many of these types of phrases consisting of two or more words. These examples show some of the most frequently occurring ones.

1.3.1 bi-l-DabT ‘exactly, precisely’

What is the aim of it precisely?

That is exactly what I mean.

1.3.2 bi-kathiir-in ‘by a great amount; much’

She seems much (‘by a great amount’) younger than her age.

1.3.3 laa siyyamaa ‘especially; particularly’

especially on sunny days

especially since I do not belong to any [particular] group

1.3.4 li-l-ghaayat-i ‘extremely; to the utmost’

The situation was extremely bad.

5 This expression is often pronounced ‘bi-l-ZabT,’ as though it were spelled with a Zaa’ instead of a Daad.

6 See also Cantarino 1976, III:195-96.
1.3.5 *ilaa Hadd-in maa* إِلَى حُدّ مَا ‘to a certain extent; kind of; sort of’
*ilaa Hadd-in kabiir-in* إِلَى حُدّ كَبِير ‘to a great extent’

It will help to a great extent.

1.3.6 *ba‘D-a l-shay‘-i* بِعَضُ الشَّيْء ‘somewhat’

They succeeded somewhat.

1.3.7 *akthar-a min-a l-laazim* أَكْثَارُ مِنْ الْلَازِم ‘too; over-; too much; more than necessary’

Perhaps I was overconfident.

1.3.8 *‘alaq l-aqall-i* عَلَى الأَقْل ‘at least’

Perhaps five persons were killed at this stage, at least.

1.3.9 *wa-Hasb-u* وَحَسْبُ ‘only; that’s all’

It is not limited to the borders of Qatar only.

2 Adverbs of manner

Manner adverbials provide a wide range of options for describing the state, condition, circumstances, manner, or way in which something is accomplished or happens.

2.1 Basic adverbs of manner

The members of this group are related to demonstrative pronouns.
2.1.1 *haakadhaa* مُكَثَّا ‘thus; and so; in such a way’
This adverb of manner indicates both comparison and consequence.

هُكَّا كانت تتناقل بين مراكز الشام واليمن.

*haakadhaa* kaan-at ta-tanaqqal-u bayn-a maraakiz-i l-shaam-i wa-l-yaman-i.

Thus it moved between the centers of Syria and Yemen.

هُكَّا حرف الأروبيون لفظ ‘الجهاد’ ويترجمونه خطأً.

*haakadhaa* yu-Harrif-u l-’uurubbiyy-uuna lafZ-a ‘l-jihaad-u’

wa-yu-tarjim-uuna-hu xaTT-an.

Thus do the Europeans distort the expression “jihad” and translate it literally.

2.1.2 *ka-dhaalika* كَذِلْكَ ‘likewise; as well; also’

وَكَذِلْكَ المَقْشَاتُ الَّتِي مَا زَالَتْ مَسْتَعَمْلَةٌ

*wa-ka-dhaalika* l-miqashshaat-u llatii maa zaal-at musta‘malat-an
and likewise the brooms which are still used

يَسْتَعِدُ كَذِلْكَ لِتَصَوِّرُ فِيلْمٍ.

yu-‘idd-u *ka-dhaalika* li-taSwiir-fiilm-in.

He is also preparing to film a motion picture.

2.2 Nouns and adjectives in the accusative

Many nouns and adjectives are used in the accusative case to amplify a statement adverbially. Adverbs of manner are the most frequent, but many accusative adverbials do not fit that category precisely. In most cases, the indefinite accusative is used on the singular base form of the noun or adjective.

لن ننسى أبداً.

lan na-nsaa *abad-an.*

We will never forget.

wa-hunaaka *ayD-an* mawDu ‘u l-‘maal-i.

And there is also the subject of money.

أَذْكُرُها بِصِرْبِيَّ.

*a-dhkur-u-haa* baSriyy-an.

I remember it visually.

sa-‘u-‘saafir-u fawr-an.

I will depart at once.

عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَدْفَعَ مَنْةُ دِينَارٍ إِضَافَةً.

*‘alay-hi ‘an ya-dfa‘-a mi’at-a diinaa-a ‘Daafat-an.*

He has to pay 100 dinars in addition/additionally.

إِنَّا جُمِيعًا نَعْمَلُ مِنْ أَجْلِ السَّلَامِ

*‘anna-naa jamii‘-an na‘mal-u min ‘ajl-i l-salaam-i*

that we are working together for peace
Adverbs and adverbial expressions

They know that well. He thought seriously.

2.3 Manner adverbial phrases

There are four general ways to express manner adverbials in phrases: using the Haal structures, the cognate accusative, other accusative phrases, and prepositional phrases.

2.3.1 The circumstantial construction: al-Haal

The Haal (literally ‘state’ or ‘condition’) or circumstantial accusative structure is a way of expressing the circumstances under which an action takes place. It is often structured using an active participle in the indefinite accusative to modify or describe the circumstances of the action. The participle agrees with the doer of the action in number and gender.

- He asked him, whispering.
- He left the office quickly/in a hurry.
- He committed this crime on his own/alone (‘individually’).

2.3.1.1 If the Haal active participle is from a transitive verb, it may take a noun object in the accusative case:

- He opened the conference representing the president of the republic.
- He writes accusing some officials.

2.3.1.2 Occasionally, a passive participle is used in the Haal structure:

- She jumped, frightened.

---

2.3.1.3 An adjective may also be used in the circumstantial accusative structure.

فاقدت أمي صغيراً.
faqad-tu 'umm-ii Saghir-an.
I lost my mother [when I was] young.

2.3.1.4 The circumstantial accusative is occasionally expressed with a verbal noun in the accusative.\(^8\)

ألقي كلمة نيابة عن السفير.
'alqaa kalimat-an niyaabat-an 'an-i l-safiiri.
He gave a speech in place of ('substituting for') the ambassador.

... وقال ردًا على سؤال... وتعليقاً على الحادث...
wa-qaal-a radd-an 'alaa su'aa-in ... wa-ta'liq-an 'alaa l-Haadith-i ...
he said, responding to a question... commenting on the incident...

وكان قد أغتيل... سيراً على القدمين...
wa-kaan-a qad ughtiil-a... sayr-an 'alaa l-qadam-ayni ...
He had been assassinated [while] walking ('on two feet')...

2.3.1.5 Haal EXPRESSING CAPACITY OR FUNCTION: A noun or participle may be used in the accusative to express the idea of "in the capacity of" or "as":

يعمل محررًا أدبيًا.
yu-'mal-u muHarrir-an 'adabiyy-an.
He works as a literary editor.

2.3.1.6 Haal CLAUSE WITH waaw واو (waaw al-Haal): Another way of expressing the circumstances under which an action takes place is to use the connecting particle wa- followed by a pronoun and a clause describing the circumstances.

ووجّه... وهو يقطع الحطب.
wa-fuuji-a wa-huwa ya-qTa-'u l-HaTab-a.
He was surprised while he was cutting wood.

دخلما وهو يرتديان زيًا إسلاميًا.
daxal-aa wa-humaa ya-rtadiy-aani ziy-an 'islaamiyy-an.
The two of them entered wearing Islamic garb.

\(^8\) Cantarino (1975, II:193-96) lists five form classes that may be used with the circumstantial accusative: adjectives, active participles, passive participles, substantives, or "infinitives" (i.e., maSdar; verbal nouns).
A tree fell on him while he was trying to open a road.

2.3.1.7 Haal WITH PAST TENSE: If the circumstances referred to by the Haal structure precede the action noted by the main verb, and especially if they form a background for the main verb, the waaw al-Haal is used with qad and a past tense verb. Abboud and McCarus state that “this construction indicates a completed action whose results are still in effect” (1985, Part I:537).

Yesterday the second conference ended . . . having been organized by the Arabic club (‘the Arabic club having organized it’).

2.3.1.8 Haal CLAUSES WITHOUT waaw: In yet another form of Haal, a main verb may be followed directly by another verb that gives a further description of either the agent or the object of the main verb. Most often, the main verb is past tense and the following verb in the present tense, but not always.

He went on, saying . . . She saw him spattering paint.

It does not leave you waiting.

2.3.2 The cognate accusative: al-maf‘uu1 al-muTlaq المفعول المطلق

The cognate accusative is an elegant way of emphasizing or enhancing a previous statement by deriving a verbal noun from the main verb or predicate (which may also be in the form of a participle or verbal noun) and modifying the derived verbal noun with an adjective that intensifies the effect of the statement. The verbal noun and its modifying adjective are usually in the indefinite accusative.

2.3.2.1 VERBAL NOUN + ADJECTIVE:

It realizes that fully.
2.3.3.2 VERBAL NOUN IN ‘iDaafa’: The cognate accusative structure may also have the verbal noun as the second term of an ‘iDaafa construction whose first term is a qualifier or quantifier in the accusative case:

\[\text{yu-xtalif-u kull-a l-ixtilaaf-i.}\]

It differs completely.

\[\text{‘a-shkur-u-ka ‘amiq-a l-shukr-i ‘alaa maa qaddam-ta.}\]

I thank you deeply for what you have offered.

2.3.4 Other phrasal manner adverbials

Phrases that function adverbially are of two sorts: accusative adverbials or prepositional phrases.

2.3.4.1 \(\text{waHd-a وَحْدَة} + \text{PRONOUN SUFFIX ‘ALONE, BY ONE’S SELF’}\): The adverbial expression \(\text{waHd-a}\) plus pronoun suffix is used in apposition with a noun to indicate or specify the meaning of ‘alone,’ ‘on one’s own,’ or ‘by one’s self.’ It is invariably in the accusative case, no matter what case its head noun is in, and is suffixed with a personal pronoun that refers back to the head noun.

\[\text{li-l’amiiri l’abbaasiyy-i waHd-a-hu huwa waHd-a-hu l-marji’-u l-SaaliH-u.}\]

for the Abbasid amir alone He alone is the competent authority.
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2.3.4.2 PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES: A prepositional phrase may function as manner adverbial.

1) \textit{bi-} or \textit{fii}: The preposition \textit{bi-} is often used with a noun to modify a verb phrase by describing the manner in which an action takes place.

\begin{align*}
\text{He loved her \textit{madly}.} & \quad \text{He looks at her \textit{in silence/silently}.} \\
\text{It refused the plan \textit{forcefully}.} & \quad \text{Come \textit{quickly}!}
\end{align*}

When indicating manner, \textit{bi-} or \textit{fii} are sometimes prefixed to a noun such as \textit{Suura} ‘manner,’ \textit{Tariiqa} ‘way,’ or \textit{shakl} ‘form’ followed by a modifier that provides the exact description of the manner:

\begin{align*}
\text{\textit{bi-haadhaa l-shakl-i l-waasi-i} in this extensive way} & \quad \text{\textit{fii shakl-i asaasiyy-in} in a fundamental way} \\
\text{\textit{fii shakl-i jidhriyy-in} in a radical way} & \quad \text{\textit{bi-Suurat-in aammat-in} generally} \\
\text{\textit{bi-Suurat-in Hamaasiyyat-in} enthusiastically} & \quad \text{\textit{bi-Suurat-in fawriyyat-in} immediately} \\
\text{\textit{bi-Tariiqat-in ghayri mubaashirat-in} indirectly} & \quad \text{\textit{bi-Turuq-in ghayri qaanuuniyyat-in in illegal ways}}
\end{align*}

2) Other prepositions may also occur in manner adverbial phrases:

\begin{align*}
\text{\textit{al-qaraar-u sa-yu-ttaxadh-u} \textit{fii kull-i qaDiyyat-in} \textit{alaa nfiiraad-in}.} & \quad \text{Decision will be made on each issue \textit{individually}.} \\
\text{\textit{ta-drus-u} \textit{fii l-maktabat-i ka-l-\textit{aadat}-i}.} & \quad \text{She is studying in the library, \textit{as usual}.}
\end{align*}
3 Place adverbials

3.1 One-word adverbs of place

3.1.1 hunaa هُنَا and hunaaka هُنَااَك ‘here’ and ‘there’

These two adverbs are deictic locatives, that is, they indicate proximity or remoteness from the speaker. They are also considered locative pronouns. In addition to indicating relative distance, the adverb hunaaka هُنَااَك ‘there’ is used figuratively for existential predications to indicate the concept “there is” or “there are.” These adverbs are invariable; they always end with fatHa. A variant of hunaaka هُنَااَك indicating slightly greater distance is hunaalika هُنَااَكاَل ‘(over) there.’

3.1.1.1 hunaa هُنَا ‘HERE’

عندما جننا إلى هُنا
when we came here

hunaa ya-bda’t-u l-Hulm-u.

Here begins the dream.

أعيش هنا مع أسرتي.

I live here with my family.

3.1.1.2 hunaaka هُنَااَك ‘THERE’ (SPATIAL LOCATIVE)

لن تظل هنااَك إلى الأبد.

It won’t stay there forever.

yu-riid-u ‘an ya-S’ad-a tila (hunaaka)

He wants to go up there.

lan ta-Zall-a hunaaka tila l’abadi

3.1.1.3 hunaaka هُنَااَك ‘THERE IS; THERE ARE’ (EXISTENTIAL LOCATIVE)

هنااَك أربعة مكاتب سياحية.

There are four tourist offices.

hunaaka ‘arba’at-u makaatib-a siyaalHiyyat-in

hunaaka man ya-quul-u . . .

There are [those] who say . . .

fehnaa a’tifaq al Jizreeli

There is a Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

yu-nbaghii ‘an ta-kwan-u hunaaka ‘alaaqat-u Husn-i jiwaar-in

There ought to be a good neighbor relationship.

3.1.1.4 hunaalika هُنَااَكاَل: This variant of hunaaka is very similar in meaning although sometimes it indicates a more remote distance (actual or figurative).

kaan-at hunaalika fikrat-un li-duxul-l majlis-l sha’bi

There was (remotely) an idea of entering the house of representatives.
### 3.1.2 *thammat-a* ‘there is; there are’

The word *thammat-a* has *fatHa* as an invariable ending and predicates existence in much the same way as *hunaaka*.

For there are different values and there are scholars who believe that...

ليس في الأمر قمة صغيرة أو حمائم. 

There are neither hawks nor doves in the matter.

**hal thammat-a ʿiDaafat-un ʿilaa dhaalika?**

Are there additions to that?

### 3.1.3 *Hayth-u* ‘where’

The connective adverb *Hayth-u* denotes the concept of ‘where’ or ‘in which’ and connects one clause with another. It has an invariable *Damma* suffix.

Where the old mixes with the new

### 3.2 Accusative adverbial of place

A noun may be marked with the indefinite accusative in order to indicate direction or location.

**hal sir-ta yamiin-an ʿaw shimal-an?**

Did you go right or left?

### 3.3 Locative adverbs or semi-prepositions (*Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan* 用途的方位和用途的時間)

These adverbs are actually nouns of location marked with the accusative case, functioning as the first term of an *ʿiDaafa*, with a following noun in the genitive, or with a pronoun suffix. The location may be spatial or temporal. Although close

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9 Note that the question word “where?” is different: ʿ*ayna* (see Chapter 17, section 1); see also Chapter 18, section 6.1.
to prepositions in both meaning and function, these words are of substantive (usually triliteral root) origin and may inflect for genitive case if they are preceded by a true preposition.\(^\text{10}\)

\[
\text{بعد أربعة أشهر} \\
b\acute{a}d-d\-a \, \text{‘arba‘at-i} \, \text{‘ashhur-in}
\]

\[
\text{after four months}
\]

\[
\text{تعيش تحت الماء.} \\
ta-‘iish-u \, \text{taHt-a} \, l-maa\-2-i.
\]

\[
\text{They live under water.}
\]

3.4 Phrasal adverbs of place
Adverbial expressions of place often occur in the form of prepositional phrases.

\[
\text{بدأ اجتماعاته في القدس المحتلة} \\
b\acute{a}d-a \, jtimaa‘aat-i-hi \, fii l-quds-i l-muHtallat-i.
\]

\[
\text{He began his meetings in occupied Jerusalem.}
\]

\[
\text{في مقهى على الرصيف} \\
fii maqhan \, \text{‘alaa l-raSiif-i}
\]

\[
\text{at a café on the sidewalk}
\]

4 Time adverbials
Adverbial expressions of time fall into four categories: basic adverbs, single nouns and adjectives in the accusative, compound time demonstratives, and phrases.

4.1 Basic adverbs of time
These words denote particular points in time and tend to remain in one form without inflecting for case or definiteness.

4.1.1 ‘\text{ams-i}’ أمس ‘yesterday’
The invariable adverb ‘\text{ams-i}’ is unusual in that it ends in kasra. It does not take nuna-
tion even when it lacks the definite article. According to Wright, the kasra is not a case ending, but an anaptyctic vowel, added to ease pronunciation.\(^\text{11}\) In terms of placement within a sentence, it is flexible because it is a short word and it is often inserted prior to a longer phrase; the only place it does not occur is in initial position.

\(^{10}\) See also Chapter 16 on prepositions and semi-prepositions, section 3.

\(^{11}\) “The kesra is not the mark of the genitive but merely a light vowel, added to render the pronunciation easy” Wright 1967, l:290. Note that if the definite article is attached to ‘\text{ams}, it becomes fully inflectable.
Adverbs and adverbial expressions

He returned to Cairo yesterday. The two presidents arrived in Muscat yesterday.

4.1.1.1 Occasionally, ‘ams is used with the definite article.

4.1.1.2 Because it is used adverbially, ‘ams-i is considered to be a “virtual” accusative (despite the presence of kasra), so that when it has a modifier, or noun in apposition, that modifier or noun is in the accusative case:

فِي غَارَةٍ نَفْدَحَا أمْسَ الأُولَى
fii ghaarat-in naffadh-a-haa ‘ams-i l-‘awwal-a
in a raid it carried out the day before yesterday

4.1.2 al-‘aan-a

The expression al-‘aan-a is invariable as an adverb, remaining in the accusative even after a preposition:

إِفْتَحِ الْآنَ!
iftaH-i l-‘aan-a!
Open now!
yu-riid-aani l-‘aan-a jadwal-a ‘a‘maal-in
mushtarik-an.
They (two) now want a shared agenda.

وَظَهَرَ حَتَى الْآنَ خَمْسَةَ وُخْمِسَ عُدَدًا مِنِ المِجْلَةِ
wa-Zahar-a Hattaa l-‘aan-a xamsat-un wa-xamsuuna “adad-an min-a l-majallat-i.
Up to now 55 issues of the magazine have appeared.

4.1.3 ba‘d-u

The word ba‘d-u, with the Damma inflection and no nunation, acts as an adverb in negative clauses to mean ‘not . . . yet,’ ‘still . . . not.’ When inflected with the Damma, it cannot be the first term of a genitive construct.12

12 The Damma is not thought to represent the nominative case here but is rather an archaic form of Semitic locative “un ancien cas adverbial en -u qui n’est pas le nominatif” (Lecomte 1968, 90). Similar forms such as qabı-u ‘before,’ fawq-u ‘above,’ and talft-u ‘beneath’ also exist, with the restriction that they may not occur as the first term of an ‘iDafā. On this topic see also Fleisch 1961, I:280, and Chapter 16, section 3.4.3.
Their identities have not yet been revealed.

Its date has not yet been set.

It has still reached very few Egyptian households. (It still hasn’t reached but a few Egyptian households.)

4.1.3.1 *fii-maa ba’d-u* ‘LATER’: The idiomatic expression *fii-maa ba’d-u* means ‘later; later on.’

Then put it later in your book.

4.1.4 *thumm-a* 'then; after that; subsequently'

Both of these expressions denote sequential action. Note that *thumm-a* invariably ends with *fatHa*.

After that he transferred to work in the university.

4.2 Time nouns and adjectives in the accusative

Specific times or time nouns are marked for the accusative. They may be definite or indefinite.

4.2.1 Indefinite accusative time nouns

Shall we interfere or never interfere?

And finally she came to Cairo.
The President inspects work sites tomorrow.

The committee will hold two meetings yearly.

The seminar lasts one day.

His book set off a wave of interest at that time.

He said at that time that they were on the verge of arriving at the agreement.

The incident ended that day.

The committee will hold two meetings yearly.

The seminar lasts one day.

\[
\text{The President} \text{ inspects work sites tomorrow.}
\]

\[
\text{The committee will hold two meetings yearly.}
\]

\[
\text{The seminar lasts one day.}
\]

\[
\text{His book set off a wave of interest at that time.}
\]

\[
\text{He said at that time that they were on the verge of arriving at the agreement.}
\]

\[
\text{The incident ended that day.}
\]
4.3.1.3 sanat-a-dhaaka ستَّانَاتَ الْحَدَث ‘THAT YEAR’

The discovery of America that year was the great event.

Haqqaq-at ‘aam-a-dhaaka sab’at-an wa-‘ishriina bilyuun-duulaarin.
It realized that year 27 billion dollars.

4.3.2 -’idhin تَذَاوُرَ expressions
These are more common in literary Arabic than in day-to-day journalistic prose.

ba’d-a-’idhin ‘after that’

And after that he moved to Mahir’s house.

4.4 Adverbial time phrases
A noun denoting either a point in time or a period of time may occur in the
accusative to denote that it is functioning adverbially. The nouns may be indefi-
nite or definite, depending on the structure. For an expression of time in general,
the indefinite accusative is used:

ysu liyla walnaha.
yu-s’a layl-an wa-nahaar-an.
He hurries night and day.

For specific expressions of time the accusative may be used with demonstrative
pronouns, the definite article, as first term of an ’iDaafa, or in a prepositional
phrase.

najaH-a haadthi l-sanat-a fii tawqii’-i mithl-i haadhaa l-ittifaaq-i.
It succeeded this year in signing such an agreement.

jaa’-uu fajr-a yawm-i liqtira’a’-i.
They came at dawn on the day of balloting.

al-yawm-uh aHaad-a l-saa’at-a l-Haadiyat-a ‘ashrat-a SabaaH-an
today, Sunday, at 11:00 in the morning
Adverbs and adverbial expressions

5 Numerical adverbials
For the expression of points in sequence, as in an outline, the ordinal numbers are used in the accusative indefinite. For example:

\[ \text{‘firstly’} \]

\[ \text{‘secondly’} \]

\[ \text{‘thirdly’} \]

\[ \text{‘at first; the first thing’} \]

6 Adverbial accusative of specification (al-tamyiz التمييز)
This form of adverbial accusative is used to label, identify, or specify something previously referred to in the sentence.\(^{13}\) It specifies the nature of what has been mentioned by answering the question “in what way?” Often an equivalent English structure might include the terms “as” or “in terms of.”

\[ \text{this good country [in terms of] land, people, and culture} \]

\[ \text{He transported its queen to Rome [as] a prisoner.} \]

\[ \text{the dominance of the west economically and militarily} \]

\[ \text{The result of that is a more efficient motor.} \]

---

\(^{13}\) See also Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.7.
6.1 Other uses of *tamyiiz*

The accusative of specification is also used with the following quantifying expressions:

6.1.1 The interrogative quantifier *kam* 'how much, how many'

The noun following *kam* is in the accusative singular.

\[
\text{كم طالبًا في صفك؟} \quad \text{كم فلما شاهدتم؟}
\]

\[
kam \ Taa\-li\-b\-a\-n fî Saff\-i\-ka? \quad kam \ fi\l\-m\-a\-n \ shaa\h\-a\-d\-t\-u\-m?
\]

How many students are in your class? How many films did you (‘all’) see?

6.1.2 The counted singular noun after numerals 11-99

For more examples and discussion of this topic, see Chapter 15.14

\[
\text{عن سبعة عشر نائباً} \quad \text{عشرون قرشًا}
\]

\[
\text{‘an \ sab’at-a} \quad \text{‘ashar-a \ naa‘ib-an}
\]

\[
\text{from seventeen representatives} \quad \text{twenty piasters}
\]

\[
\text{أكثرمن خمسة وخمسين فيلماً}
\]

\[
\text{‘akthar-u \ min \ xamsat-in \ wa-xam\-siina \ fi\l\-m-an}
\]

\[
\text{more than fifty-five films}
\]

6.1.3 The periphrastic comparative

The expression of comparative or superlative quality with the comparative adjective ‘*akthar* allows comparison of qualities that do not fit into the comparative adjective (‘af ‘al) form.15

\[
\text{قد تكون أكثر أهمية.} \quad \text{هو أكثر دهاء بكثير.}
\]

\[
\text{qad \ ta-kuun-u} \quad \text{huwa} \quad \text{‘akthar-u \ dhaa\-a\-n bi-kathiir-in.}
\]

\[
\text{‘ahammiyyat-an.} \quad \text{He is more shrewd by far.}
\]

It might be more important.

(‘greater in terms of importance’)

\[
\text{من أجل شرق أوسط أكثر استقراراً}
\]

\[
\text{min} \quad \text{‘ajl-i\-sharq-in} \quad \text{‘awsaT-a} \quad \text{‘akthar-a \ sti\-qaar-an}
\]

\[
\text{for the sake of a more stable Middle East}
\]

7 Adverbial accusative of cause or reason (*al-maf‘uul li-‘ajl-i-hi*, المفعول لأجله، المفعول له)

In this adverbial structure, a verbal noun in the indefinite accusative is used to indicate the motive, reason, or purpose of the mentioned action. If the verbal

---

14 See also Chapter 15, sections 1.4, 1.5, 1.6. For an analysis of this function of the accusative and its treatment in traditional Arabic grammar, see Carter 1972.

15 See also Chapter 10, section 4.2.3.
noun has a preposition associated with it, that preposition remains as part of the structure.

\[
\text{نتيجة للعجز الذي سيطر على الحكومة}
\]

\[
\text{بِدَاً عمْلِيَّة التمشيط بِحُثَاً عَن رجاَل المقاومة.}
\]

\[
\text{بِحُث تطوير العلاقات خِدْمَةً لِمُصَلَّحَتِهِم المشترِكة.}
\]

\[
\text{8 Adverbs as speech acts}
\]

A few Arabic adverbs are used both in speech and in writing to function as performatives, that is, to accomplish acts such as thanking, welcoming, pardoning, and so forth. A number of these are words and phrases in the indefinite accusative. These include:

- ‘thank you’  
  \( \text{shukr-an} \)  
  شكراً

- ‘pardon; you’re welcome’  
  \( \text{afw-an} \)  
  عفواً

- ‘welcome’  
  \( \text{ahl-an wa-sahl-an} \)  
  أهلاً وسَهَلاً

- ‘hello’  
  \( \text{marHab-an} \)  
  مرحباً

\[
\text{تقديرًا لجهوده}
\]

\[
\text{taqdiir-an li-juhuud-i-hi}
\]

\[
\text{تمهيِداً لإِحَالَتِهِم}
\]

\[
\text{tamhiid-an li-’iHaalat-i-him . . .}
\]

\[
\text{in appreciation of his efforts}
\]

\[
\text{in preparation for their transfer}
\]
1 Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns refer to persons or entities and stand on their own as substitutes for nouns or noun phrases. This word class fills a wide range of roles in Arabic and consists of three groups: subject, object, and possessive pronouns. The first group, subject pronouns, are independent, separate words; the other two groups both take the form of suffixes.

The personal pronouns show differences in gender (masculine and feminine), number (singular, dual, plural), and person (first, second, and third). However, the number of categories of personal pronouns in Arabic is larger than in English (12 as opposed to 8) because it includes both masculine and feminine forms of the second and third person, and it also includes the dual pronouns.

1 Independent personal pronouns (Damaa‘ir munfaSila ضمائر منفصلة)

The independent pronouns are also referred to as subject pronouns since they can serve as the subjects of verbs or of equational sentences and they correspond to the set of English subject pronouns. They are as follows:\(^1\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>'ana</td>
<td>'anaa</td>
<td>'nnu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>'antaa</td>
<td>'antumaa</td>
<td>'antum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>'you' 'anta</td>
<td>'you two' 'antumaa</td>
<td>'you' 'antum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>'you' 'anti</td>
<td></td>
<td>'you' 'antunna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) There is no neutral pronoun “it,” since there is no neutral gender in Arabic. Everything is referred to as either masculine or feminine. Note that the third person feminine singular pronoun, in keeping with the agreement rules of Arabic, is used to refer to nonhuman plurals.
The masculine plural pronouns \( \text{\sffamily 'antum} \) and \( \text{\sffamily 'hum} \) end with \( \text{sukuun} \), which means that they require a helping vowel if they are followed directly by a cluster of two or more consonants (often the case with a following word that starts with the definite article). That helping vowel is \( \text{Damma} \), based on a principle of vowel harmony with the previous vowel.

They are the Muslims.

They are the inventors of chess.

1.1 Independent personal pronouns: functions

This form of the pronoun is used in a number of different ways, sometimes as an essential part of a clause and sometimes as a nonessential part.

1.1.1 To emphasize the subject of a verb

Because Arabic verbs incorporate the subject into their inflections, the independent personal pronoun is not necessary to mark the subject of a verb phrase. However, the pronoun may be used along with the verb in order to fortify or emphasize the subject. In the following sentences, the independent pronoun could be omitted and the sentence would still be grammatically correct; however, the emphasis on the subject would be reduced.

He does not seem optimistic.

It will be the magic key.

I cannot.

\( \text{\sffamily 'anaa} \) laa \( \text{\sffamily 'a-qdar-u} \).

Kaant \( \text{\sffamily hiya} \) nuq Tat-a l-taHwal-i

\( \text{wa-hwa} \) laa ya-bduu mutafaa\( \text{\textasciitilde 'il-an} \).

Saa-ya-kuun-u \( \text{\sffamily huwa} \) l-miftaah-a l-siHriyy-a.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third person Masculine</td>
<td>هُوَ \text{'he huwa}</td>
<td>هُمْ \text{'they two humaa}</td>
<td>هُمْ \text{'they hum}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>هِيَ \text{'she hiya}</td>
<td></td>
<td>هِنَّ \text{'they hunna}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Arabic is a “pro-drop” language; i.e., it is a language that allows a separate pronominal subject to be left unexpressed. This feature results in the verb inflectional paradigm distinguishing all persons uniquely. See Chapter 21 on verb inflection, esp. note 1.

3 When preceded by the conjuctions \( \text{wa-} \) or \( \text{fa-} \), the third person singular pronouns \( \text{\sffamily huwa} \) and \( \text{\sffamily hiya} \) may lose their first vowel, thus becoming \( \text{\sffamily wa-hwa} \) and \( \text{\sffamily wa-hya} \).
أحاول أنا أن أدافع عنها.
I try to defend it.

1.1.2 Subject of an equational sentence
Equational or verbless sentences do not have an overt verb, but they may show a subject through use of a pronoun. Used in this way, the pronoun is usually the first element in the sentence.

هو خبير في شؤون الشرق الأوسط.
uhuwa xabiir-un fii shu‘uun-i l-sharq-i l-awsaT-i.
He is an expert in Middle Eastern affairs.

1.1.3 Predicate of an equational sentence
Less common is the use of a subject pronoun as the predicate of an equational sentence; for example,

هذا هو.
haadhaa huwa.
This is he.

أنت هي.
‘anti hiyya.
You are she.

1.1.4 As a copula
In order to clarify the relationship between the subject and predicate of an equational sentence, especially when the predicate is a definite noun or noun phrase, a third person subject pronoun may be inserted between the subject and predicate as a way of linking these two parts of the sentence, and as a substitute for the verb “to be.” When functioning in this manner, it is said to be a copula.4

الشيء الوحيد المزعج هو الأسعار.
al-shay‘-u l-waHhid-u l-muz‘ij-u
huwa l-caas‘aaru.
The one disturbing thing is the prices.

The important [thing] is to return.

4 As Hurford puts it, “In English, a copula is any form of the verb be used as a ‘link’ or ‘coupling’ between its subject and a following phrase. The link either expresses identity or describes some property or attribute of the subject (Copula is Latin for link)” 1994, 51. Because the verb “to be” in Arabic is not expressed overtly in present tense indicative sentences, an independent pronoun sometimes serves that purpose. For an excellent analysis of the Arabic pronoun copula, see Eid 1991.
Personal pronouns

The Muslim is the Turk. These are the atmospheres prevailing in the party.

2 Suffix personal pronouns (Damaa’ir muttaSilah)

There are two sets of suffix pronouns, one set indicates possession (possessive pronouns) and is suffixed to nouns, and the other set indicates the object of a verb or object of a preposition (object pronouns).

Although the two sets are different in their distribution and in their meanings, in form they are almost exactly alike. The only formal difference between them is in the first person singular pronoun (‘my’ or ‘me’), which when it indicates possession and is suffixed to a noun, is /ii/, but when it indicates the object of a verb is -nii غى. غى.

2.1 Possessive pronoun suffixes

These suffixes are attached to nouns to show possession. They agree with the gender and number of the possessor (as in English), not the thing possessed (as in French).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>'my' -ii</td>
<td></td>
<td>'our' -naa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>'your' -ka</td>
<td>'your' -kumaa</td>
<td>'your' -kum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>'your' -ka</td>
<td>'your' -kumaa</td>
<td>'your' -kum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>'your' -ki</td>
<td>'your' -kunna</td>
<td>'your' -kunna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td>'his' -hu ~ -hi</td>
<td>'their' -humaa ~ -hima</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>'his' -hu ~ -hi</td>
<td>'their' -humaa ~ -hima</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>'her' -haa</td>
<td>'their' -hunna ~ -honna</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These suffixes are attached at the end of a noun, after the case-marking vowel, except for the suffix /ii/ ‘my’ which supercedes any inflectional vowel.5 A noun with a pronoun suffix is considered definite, the suffix acting like the second term of an annexation structure to define the noun. When a personal pronoun suffix is used, the noun cannot have the definite article (it is definite by virtue of

5 Note that all the pronoun suffixes except /ii/ start with a consonant; that is why they can follow directly after a vowel. Since /ii/ consists of a long vowel only, it cannot follow or combine with another vowel. Instead, it replaces any short inflectional vowel.
the suffix) and it does not have nunation (because it is definite rather than indefinite).

Note that words ending in taa-marbuuta and pronounced with a final /a/ in pause form shift their spelling to a regular taa when they are suffixed with a personal pronoun, since the taa is no longer final.

هاfterوا على نظافة دينتمكم!
*Haafiz-uu 'ala naZaafat-i madiinat-i-kum!*
Keep your *(m. pl.)* city clean *(‘preserve the cleanliness of your city’)*!

عن إذنك
*‘an ʿidhn-ki*
*with your (f.) permission*

من فضلك
*min faDl-i-ka*
*please *(‘of your kindness’)*
*(when requesting something)*

في محفظتك
*fii miIlfaZat-i-ka*
*in your (m. sg.) wallet*

أضمن صوتي إلى صوتك
*‘a-Dumm-u Sawt-ii ʿila Sawt-i-ka.*
*I add my voice to yours (your voice).*

من شمالك إلى جنوبها
*min shimaal-i-ḥaa ʿila jumuub-i-ḥaa*
*from its north to its south*

في بينائتها الطبيعية
*fii biiʿaat-i-ḥaa ʿTabiiʿiyyat-i*
*in their natural environments*

كل ريال من دخلنا
*kull-u riyaal-in min daxl-i-naa*
*every riyal of our income*

علماؤه وجنوده
*ʿulamaʿ-ʿu-hu wa-junuud-u-hu*
*its scholars and its soldiers*

2.1.1 Vowel shift pronouns

The third person suffix pronouns that include the sequence -hu (-hu, -humaa, -hum, -hunna) are affected by any front vowel (-i or -ii) or yaa that precedes them. Their -u vowel shifts to /i/ in vowel harmony with the preceding sound. Other vowels (-a or -u) do not affect these suffixes:

في مذكراته
*fii mudhakkiraat-i-ḥi*
*in his notes/diary*

على كتفيَه
*‘alaak katf-ay-ḥi*
*on his [two] shoulders*

بكسياراتهم
*bi-sayyaaraat-i-ḥim*
*in their cars*

أكرما والديهما
*ʿakram-aa waalid-ay-himaa*
*They [two] honored their [two] parents.*
**2.1.2 Plural pronoun suffix helping vowel**

The masculine plural pronoun suffixes, -kum and -hum/him, end with a sukuun, which means that they need a helping vowel if followed directly by a cluster of two or more consonants. That vowel is Damma, based on a principle of vowel harmony with the previous vowel. If the third person plural suffix pronoun shifts from -hum to -him, the helping vowel may be either Damma or kasra.6

\[
\text{ta-tanaawal-u 'aflaam-a-hum-u l-‘axiirat-a.} \quad \text{min siyaasat-i-him-i l-‘xaariyyat-i} \\
\text{It deals with their latest films.} \quad \text{from their foreign policy}
\]

أساتذة بلباسهم التقليديَّ
\[
\text{’asaatidhat-un bi-libaas-i-him-i l-taqliidiyy-i} \\
\text{professors with (wearing) their traditional regalia (‘clothes’)}
\]

**2.1.3 Noun + pronoun suffix + adjective**

When a noun plus pronoun suffix is modified by an attributive adjective, that adjective is definite and carries the definite article because the noun is considered definite. The adjective also agrees in number, gender, and case with the modified noun.

\[
\text{bada ’a mu’tamar-a-hu l-SiHaafiyyy-a.} \quad \text{fii ‘aalam-i-naa l-‘arabiyy-i} \\
\text{He began his news conference.} \quad \text{in our Arab world}
\]

في فيلمه الجديد
\[
\text{fii film-i-hi l-jadiid-i} \\
\text{in his new film}
\]

في زيارته الرسمية الأخيرة
\[
\text{fii ziyaarat-i-hi l-rasmiyyat-i l-‘axiirat-i} \\
\text{on his last official visit}
\]

في محاولته الأولى
\[
\text{fii muHaawalat-i-hi l-‘uulaa} \\
\text{on his first try}
\]

في جيبك الداخلي
\[
\text{fii jayb-i-ka l-daaxiliyy-i} \\
\text{in your inside pocket}
\]

---

6 In this text, the principle of vowel harmony is observed.
2.1.4 Pronoun suffixes on dual and sound masculine plural nouns

Nouns with the dual suffix (-aani/-ayni) or with the sound masculine plural suffix (-uuna/-iina) drop the nuun when a pronoun suffix is attached:

| نونانها | ستُطِب مَن نَاحِبِه التصوِيتُ. |
| ‘unwaan-aa-humaa | sa-ya-Tlub-u min naaxib-ii-hi l-taSwiit-i. |
| their two titles | It will request its electors to vote. |

| بِيدها | كان ملَجاً لِمَتّعبينَا |
| bi-yad-ay-haa | kaan-a malja‘-an li-mut‘ab-ii-naa. |
| with her two hands | It was a refuge for our weary. |

| أحد مستشاريه | من أصوات مؤيديه |
| ‘aHad-u mustashaar-ii-hi | min ‘aSwaat-i mu‘ayyid-ii-hi |
| one of his advisors | from the votes of its supporters |

2.1.4.1 SOUND MASCULINE PLURAL SUFFIX PLUS /-ii/ ‘MY’: The sound masculine plural (-uuna or -iina), as noted above, drops the nuun when a suffix pronoun is attached, leaving a long vowel -uu/ or -ii/. Because of restrictions on vowel combinations, adding the pronoun -ii causes a shift in these endings. They are shortened and combined into one, with a short vowel kasra (i) followed by a double yaa’ with fatHa: -iyya. Note that when (-ii) ‘my’ is suffixed to sound masculine plural nouns it overrides the case distinction and the plural is reduced to only one form.7

| معلمِي | مَعَ مَعِيُمي |
| mu‘allim-iyya | mu‘allim-iyya miSriyy-uuna. |
| my teachers (nominative and genitive/accusative) | dhahab-tu ma‘a mu‘allim-iyya. |
| | My teachers are Egyptian. |
| | I went with my teachers. |

2.1.4.2 DUAL SUFFIX PLUS /-ii/: The dual suffix (-aani or -ayni) drops the nuun when a suffix pronoun is attached, leaving a long vowel -aa or the diphthong -ay. Owing to restrictions on the combination of two long vowels in Arabic, the long vowel suffix /-ii/ is shifted to /-ya/ in both cases: nominative -aaya and genitive/accusative -aaya. 

7 This is due to incompatibility between the vowels /uu/ and /ii/, which do not combine in MSA.
2.1.5 The five nouns plus /-ii/: ‘ab, ‘ax, fuu, Ham, dhuu)

These five nouns are a special subset of semantically primitive nouns that inflect for case with long vowels instead of short vowels whenever they have pronoun suffixes or when they are used as the first term of an ‘iDaafa (see Chapter 5, section 10.1.3). Except for dhuu, which does not take pronoun suffixes, when used with the possessive suffix /-ii/ ‘my,’ all three cases are neutralized into one form, with omission of the inflectional vowel, e.g.,

- my father: ابی ‘ab-ii
- my brother: اخی ‘ax-ii
- my father-in-law: حمی ‘Ham-ii
- my mouth: فمی ‘fiyya⁸

2.2 Object pronoun suffixes

Object pronouns are suffixes almost identical in form with the possessive pronoun suffixes. They serve as objects of transitive verbs and of prepositions and therefore are affixed to those word classes.

2.2.1 Pronoun objects of transitive verbs

This set of pronouns is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>مَنَّي ‘me’ -nii</td>
<td></td>
<td>نَا ‘us’ -naa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>كَ ‘you’-ka</td>
<td></td>
<td>كَمَا ‘you’-kumaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td></td>
<td>كَم ‘you’-kum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁸ Alternates with the variant word stem for ‘mouth,’ fam, as fam-ii.
These suffixes are attached at the end of a verb, after the verb inflection for person, number, gender, tense, and mood. Just as with possessive pronoun suffixes, the third person suffix pronouns that include the sequence -hu- (hum, mumaa, hum) are affected by any front vowel (i or ii) or yaa that precedes them. Their -u vowel shifts to i in vowel harmony with the preceding sound. Other vowels (-a or -u) do not affect these suffixes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Masculine</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'him'</td>
<td>'him'</td>
<td>'him'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-hu</td>
<td>-hu</td>
<td>-hu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feminine</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'her'</td>
<td>'her'</td>
<td>'her'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-haa</td>
<td>-haa</td>
<td>-haa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.1.1 SECOND PERSON PLURAL HELPING VOWEL: Whenever a pronoun suffix is attached to the second person masculine plural form of a past tense verb (ending in -tum), a long helping vowel -uu is inserted between the verb suffix and the pronoun object suffix.

| أشكرك | نعتبرهم نجوما. | وجدتها. |
| 'a-shkur-u-ka. | na-'tabir-u-hum nujuum-an. | wajad-tu-haa! |
| I thank you. | We consider them stars. | I found it! |
| اختيارني | اعتذرنى | لا تستخدمها! |
| ixtaar-a-nii. | i-'dhir-nii. | laa ta-staxdim-ii-hi! |
| He chose me. | Forgive me/excuse me. | Don’t (f. sg.) use it! |
| انتظرناه | أريد أن أساعدكما. | |
| intaZar-naa-hu. | 'u-riid-u 'an u-saa'id-a-kumaa | |
| We have waited for it. | I want to help you two. | |

2.2.1.2 WORD ORDER: Because of the pronoun object attaching directly to the verb, and the verb-initial word order in Arabic sentences, sometimes the object of a verb in Arabic comes before the mention of the subject.

| هل هذا ما تعلمتوه في المدرسة؟ | تركتمونا! |
| hal haadhaa maa ta'allam-tum-u-uu-hu fii l-madrasat-i? | tarak-tum-uu-naa! |
| Is this what you (pl.) learned (‘it’) in school? | You (pl.) left us! |
Three million tourists visit it every year.

UNESCO announced it. Your friend took it.

2.2.1.3 WORD = SENTENCE: If both subject and object are in pronoun form, the verb, its subject and object can create one word which constitutes a complete predication or sentence by itself:

(1) Past tense:
- We met them.
- They persuaded her.
- I heard it.
- We loved him.

(2) Present tense:
- He is carrying it.
- They venerate it.

2.2.1.4 NOTE ABOUT WORD STRESS: Because suffix pronouns are attached to the ends of words, and because word stress is calculated by syllables from the end of a word, the suffixing of a personal pronoun lengthens a word and may cause a shift in stress when the words are spoken or pronounced out loud. (See stress rules in Chapter 2, section 7.) For example (stressed syllable is boldface):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Full form + pronoun suffix</th>
<th>Pause form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>policy</td>
<td>سياسة سياستهم</td>
<td>siyaasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>problem</td>
<td>مشكلة مشكلته</td>
<td>mushkila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>world</td>
<td>عالم عالمنا</td>
<td>‘aalam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conference</td>
<td>مؤتمر مؤتمره</td>
<td>mu’tamar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we waited</td>
<td>انتظارنا انتظارنا</td>
<td>intaZar-naa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.2 Object pronoun carrier: 

Rarely, in MSA, a pronoun object of a verb will occur and not be attached to the verb. This may happen if the verb is one that takes a double object (direct and indirect) and both of the objects are pronouns, or it may occur as a stylistic choice. For these cases, there is a word that acts as a pronoun-carrier, ˈiyyaa-, and object pronouns can be attached to it.⁹

2.2.2.1 VERB THAT TAKES DOUBLE ACCUSATIVE:

‘ahdā-nii ˈiyyaa-ˈhaa ˈahl-ˈu Ṣadiiq-ii.  
My friend’s family presented it to me

ˈaˈTii-nii ˈiyyaa-ˈhu.  
Give (f.) it [to] me (‘give me it’).

2.2.2.2 STYLISTIC CHOICE: In the following example, the writer could have said ‘tahaddath-ˈa maˈ-a-hu,’ but he chose a more classical turn of phrase, using the expression wa-ˈiyyaa-ˈhu instead. In this case, wa- is a connector which takes the accusative case (waaw al-maˈiyya) on a following noun, signifying concomitance or accompaniment.¹⁰ Since a pronoun object is needed here, wa- is followed by ɔˈiyyaa-ˈhu.

taHaddath-ˈa wa-ˈiyyaa-ˈhu muTawwil-an.  
He talked with him for a long time.

2.3 Pronoun objects of prepositions and semi-prepositions

Prepositions may take pronoun objects. The form of the object pronouns of prepositions is almost exactly identical to the pronoun objects of verbs.¹¹

As objects of prepositions, the suffix pronouns attach directly onto the preposition itself. Sometimes a spelling change is required, however.

This subset of pronouns is as follows:

⁹ See Wright 1967, I:103–104 for more on the use of ˈiyyaa-. Note also that in Classical Arabic it was possible to have both direct and indirect objects as suffixes on the verb. Lecomte states (1968, 106): "La langue ancienne, surtout poétique, admettait l’agglutination des pronoms dans l’ordre des personnes 1+2+3: ‘aˈTii-ta-kas-ˈu je t’ai donné; depuis l’époque classique, le second pronom s’affixe toujours à une particule-outil ˈiyyaa.-”

¹⁰ For more on waaw al-maˈiyya see Baalbaki 1986 and Wright 1967, II:83–84.

¹¹ Note, however that the prepositions ˈHattaa, ˈka-, and ˈmundh- do not take pronoun objects.
2.3.1 One-letter prepositions: *bi* and *li*:

### 2.3.1.1 *bi* + PRONOUN SUFFIX:

Pronoun suffixes with *bi* ‘with, at, to, in’ are regular, except for the third person ‘vowel-shift’ pronouns (see 2.1.1), which are affected by the kasra of *bi* and shift their -u vowel to -i:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First person</strong></td>
<td><strong>Second person</strong></td>
<td><strong>Third person</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>عَلَىٰ</td>
<td>فِی</td>
<td>‘me’ -ii ~ -ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Masculine</strong></td>
<td><strong>Feminine</strong></td>
<td><strong>Masculine</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘you’ -ka</td>
<td>‘you’ -ki</td>
<td>‘him’ -hu ~ -hi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feminine</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘you two’ -kumaa</td>
<td></td>
<td>[the two of] them’ -humaa ~ -him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘you’ -kum</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘them’ -hum ~ -him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘you’ -kunna</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘them’ -hunna ~ -hinna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Welcome to you. our confidence in them not bad

(‘there is no harm in it’)

### 2.3.1.2 *li* ——-> *la* PLUS PRONOUN SUFFIX:

The preposition *li* ‘to, for’ shifts its vowel to -a whenever it has a pronoun suffix, except for the long vowel suffix -ii ‘me,’ which supercedes any short vowel:

الْحَرَّفُ لِنَا. َلْكَ سَعْرُ خاصّ. ُهَنِينَا لَكْمُ. 
al-sharaf-u la-naa  la-ka si⁰ run xaaSS-un.  hanii’-an la-kum. 

The honor is ours (‘to us’). For you, a special price. Congratulations to you (pl).

لا مَعْنِی لَهُ.  أرسِلوا لي طردا. 

laa ma’nnaa la-hu.  ‘arsal-u li Tard-an. 

It is meaningless (‘there is no meaning to it’). They sent [to] me a package.

لا يَکُن لَهُم أَي اتصال. 

lam ya-kun la-hum  ‘ayy-u ittiSaal-in. 

They did not have any contact (‘there was not to them any contact’).
2.3.2 Two-letter prepositions: *fii, min, ‘an*

### 2.3.2.1 *fii* + PRONOUN SUFFIX:
The preposition *fii* ‘in, at, into,’ because it ends in a long vowel -ii, undergoes a slight change when suffixed with the first person object pronoun -ii; the two long vowels merge into each other and become a *yaa* with a *shadda* on it, followed by the short vowel *fatHa*.*fiyya* في. In writing it is sometimes hard to tell the difference between *fii* and *fiyya*, but there is often a marked *shadda* added to the *yaa* when *fiyya* is intended.

Otherwise, pronouns simply follow the long -ii, with the “vowel shift pronouns” changing their -u vowel to -i:

*أذاب الحزن في.*

فيه شمس جبلية.

*‘adhaab-a l-huzn-a *fiyya*.

*fiyya* s’ ¿õ◊G ÜGPCG.

It dissolved the sorrow in me.

There’s a mountain sun there (‘in it’).

### 2.3.2.2 *min* + PRONOUN SUFFIX:
The preposition *min* ‘of; from; than’ is fairly regular in its shape when pronoun suffixes are attached, except that when suffixed with the pronoun -ii ‘me,’ the *nuun* in *min* doubles, so that instead of *min-ii*, the phrase ‘from me’ or ‘than me’ becomes *min-nii*.

*أحسن مَنَّي.*

*ahsan-u* *min-nii* kathii-r-uuna *min-hum*

better than I many of them

*هي أكثر مسؤولية منْه.*

hiya *’akthar-u mas’uuliyyat-an min-hu*

*min-haa*

She is more responsible than he is. two of them

### 2.3.2.3 ‘an* + PRONOUN SUFFIX:
Like *min*, the preposition ‘an ‘away from; from; about; of ’ maintains its shape when pronoun suffixes are attached, except that when suffixed with the pronoun -ii ‘me,’ the *nuun* in ‘an doubles, so that instead of ‘‘an-ii, the phrase ‘from me’ or ‘away from me’ becomes ‘an-nii.

*هل سأَلَتَكْ عنِيَ؟*

*hal sa’al-tum ‘an-nii?* al-‘i’laan-u ‘an-hu.

Did you (pl.) ask about me? the announcing of it

*ما قيل وما سيقال عنْه.*

*maa qil-a wa-maa sa-yu-qal-u ‘an-hum* what has been said and what will be said about them
2.3.3 Defective three-letter prepositions: ‘ilaa, ‘alaa and semi-preposition ladaa

These three words are put in one category because they all have a final ‘alif maq-Suura, and all of them shift this ‘alif to a yaa preceded by fatHa whenever they receive pronoun suffixes. Thus the attachable stem for ‘ilaa is ‘ilay-; for ‘alaa it is ‘alay- and for ladaa, laday-.

The shift to yaa has an effect on certain pronoun suffixes. The “vowel-shift” pronouns change their -u vowel to -i, and the first person singular suffix -ii ‘me’ merges with the yaa of the preposition stem, creating a double yaa, which is followed by fatHa. A model paradigm using ‘alaa is presented here.

2.3.3.1 ‘alaa + PRONOUN SUFFIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>عَلَيْهِ ْاَلَايْ-ْيَا</td>
<td>عَلَيْهَا ْاَلَايْ-ْيَااَنَا</td>
<td>عَلِينَا ْاَلَايْ-ْيَااَنَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>عَلِيْكَ ْاَلَايْ-ْكَا</td>
<td>عَلِيْكَ ْاَلَايْ-ْكَااَنَا</td>
<td>عَلِيْكَااَنَا ْاَلَايْ-ْكَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>عَلِيْكَ ْاَلَايْ-ْكَا</td>
<td>عَلِيْكَ ْاَلَايْ-ْكَااَنَا</td>
<td>عَلِيْكَااَنَا ْاَلَايْ-ْكَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td>عَلِيْهِ ْاَلَايْ-ْهَااَنَا</td>
<td>عَلِيْهَااَنَا ْاَلَايْ-ْهَا</td>
<td>عَلِيْهَااَنَا ْاَلَايْ-ْهَا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

كان عليُّ بعض.  
kaan-a ‘alay-ya.  
it was [incumbent] on me.  
Peace [be] upon you.

The conditions were better than what they are (‘on it’) now.

2.3.3.2 ‘ilaa + PRONOUN SUFFIX

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He looks at her.</td>
<td>يَا نَصِيرُ ْاَلَايْ-ْهَااَنَا</td>
<td>ْاَنَااَ شَتَقَّ-u ‘اَلَايْ-ْهَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I miss him (‘I yearn for him’).</td>
<td>يَا نَصِيرُ ْاَلَايْ-ْهَااَنَا</td>
<td>ْاَنَااَ شَتَقَّ-u ‘اَلَايْ-ْهَا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

كان الله عليكم.  
al-salaam-u ‘alay-kum.  
He looks at her.  
ya-nZuru ‘ilay-haa.  
I miss him (‘I yearn for him’).  
ya-nZuru ‘ilay-haa.  
He looks at her.
2.3.3.3 ladaa + PRONOUN SUFFIX

لا مستقبل لدي. laa mustaqbal-a laday-ya.
I have no future (‘there is no future for me’).

لديه المستندات الرسمية. laday-hi l-mustanadaat-u l-rasmiyyat-u.
He has the official documents.

2.3.4 Semi-prepositions + pronoun suffixes
The locative adverbs or semi-prepositions may also take pronoun suffixes.

أثار حملة من الانتقادات ضدَّه. ’athaar-a Hamlat-an min-a l-intiqadaat-i Didd-a-hu.
It aroused a campaign of criticisms against him.

على الأرض وفوقها ‘alaa l-arD-i wa-fawq-a-haa
on the earth and over it

عندى مشكلة. ‘ind-i mushkilat-un.
I have (‘at-me’) a problem.

3 Reflexive expressions with nafs plus pronouns
Reflexive expressions in Arabic often use the noun nafs ‘self; same’ plus a pronoun suffix, the pronoun referring back to the subject of the verb.

يجد نفسه. yu-jaddid-u nafs-a-hu.
It renews itself.

بإمكانون أن يفرضوا أنفسهم على المستوى العالمي. ya-staTi’-i-una ‘an ya-frID-uu ‘anfus-a-hum ‘alaa l-mustawaa l‘aalamiyy-i.
They can impose themselves on the world level.

4 Independent possessive pronoun: dhuu + noun
This pronoun refers to the possessor or owner of something and is used for expressing descriptive concepts where English would use the word “of” plus a noun, such as “of importance” “of means.” It is also used for descriptive terms such as “bald-headed” or “two-humped” when describing creatures in terms of their distinctive features. It is used chiefly in conjunction with a noun, as first term of an ’iDaafa with that noun. Occasionally it is followed by a pronoun suffix. The masculine form, dhuu, is inflected as one of the “five nouns” whose final vowel is also their inflectional vowel.12 The feminine form, dhaat, inflects separately. Both paradigms are presented here.13

12 See Chapter 7, section 5.4.1.c.
13 There are several variants of this pronoun, but only the most commonly used forms in contemporary Arabic are presented here. See Wright 1967, I:265–66 for greater detail on the Classical Arabic forms of this pronoun.
### Table: Personal Pronouns (masculine)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>دُخُوٌ</td>
<td>دَهْوَاءٌ</td>
<td>دُخُوٍ ذُووٍ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>ذِيٌ</td>
<td>ذِيٌ</td>
<td>ذِيٌ ذُووٍ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>ذَا</td>
<td>ذَا</td>
<td>ذَا ذُووٍ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table: Personal Pronouns (feminine)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>ذِتٌْ</td>
<td>ذاثَا ذوُوا</td>
<td>ذِتٌْ ذُووٍ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>ذِتٌْ</td>
<td>ذاثَا ذوُوا</td>
<td>ذِتٌْ ذُووٍ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>ذِتٌْ</td>
<td>ذاثَا ذوُوا</td>
<td>ذِتٌْ ذُووٍ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.1 Masculine

النُّسَر ذَوُو الرَّأس الأَبْيَض

*al-nasr-u* دَهْوٍ لَ-ِالرَّأْسِ َلاً-ِآيَدَيْذِلٍ

the bald-headed eagle (‘white-headed’)

لَذوُي الدَّخْل المَحدود

*li-dhawii l-daxi-l maHduud-i*

for those [people] of limited incomes

الجَمِل ذَوُو السَّنَامِين

*al-jamal-u* دَهْوٍ لَ-ِسَنَاامْ-اِنْدَيْنَ

the two-humped camel

سَافَر بعِيدًا عَن ذُووٍهُ

*saafar-a ba‘iid-an ‘an dhawii-hi.*

He traveled far from his kin (‘those of his’).

### 4.2 Feminine

The feminine singular possessive pronoun (*dhaat*) is of frequent occurrence because of its use with nonhuman plurals.\(^{14}\)

---

\(^{14}\) Note that this instance of *dhaat* is not the same as the demonstrative use of *dhaat* (e.g., *dhaat-a yawm-in* ‘one day’) (see Chapter 13, section 4.2) or the substantive *dhaat* used to express “self” or “same” (e.g., *madH-u l-dhaat-i* ‘self-praise’) (see Chapter 9, section 5.1.2).
وصف المحادثات بأنها ذات قيمة.

\[\text{waSaf-a l-muHaadathaat-i bi-\text{\'anna-haa dhaat-u qiimat-in}.}\]

He described the talks as worthwhile (‘of worth’).

مصادر ذات علاقة بالموضوع

\[\text{maSaadir-u dhaat-u \text{\`alaaqat-in bi-l-mawDuu\text{\textsuperscript{-i}}}}\]
sources that have a relationship with the subject

قال إن النتائج ستكون ذات أهمية.

\[\text{qaal-a \text{\textsuperscript{3} inna l-nataa\text{\textsuperscript{ij-a sa-ta-kuun-u dhaat-a \text{\textsuperscript{\text{\textsuperscript{4}ahammiyyat-in}}.}}}}}\]

He said that the results will be of importance.
Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns (‘asmaa’ al-‘ishaara أسماء الإشارة) are determiners used with nouns or instead of nouns to show either distance from or proximity to the speaker, like “this” and “that” in English. English has four demonstrative pronouns: “this,” “that,” “these,” and “those.” Arabic has a richer variety of demonstratives. In fact, Classical Arabic has a complex system of sets and subsets of demonstratives, but in Modern Standard Arabic, the most commonly used ones are described as follows.

1 Demonstrative of proximity: ‘this; these’ هذا haadhaa

The demonstrative pronoun meaning ‘this’ or ‘these’ shows differences in gender and number, as well as inflection for case in the dual:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>هذا haadhaa</td>
<td>هَذَه haadhihi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dual</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>هذان haadh-aani</td>
<td>هَذَا نَان هaat-aani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive/accusative</td>
<td>هذين haadh-ayni</td>
<td>هَذَا يَن هaat-ayni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plural</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>هؤلاء haaa’ulaa’i</td>
<td>هؤلاء haaa’ulaa’i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the plural demonstrative has no gender distinction and is used only when referring to human beings. For referring to nonhuman plurals, the feminine singular demonstrative is used.

1 More extensive paradigms of demonstrative variants are provided in Wright 1967, I:264-70; Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 80-81; Thatcher 1942, 53-55; Blachère and Gaudefroy-Demombynes 1975, 200–203.
2 Demonstrative of distance: ‘that; those’ 

The demonstrative of distance “that” and “those” inflects for gender and number but is rarely used in the dual in MSA. These forms of the demonstrative are invariable and do not inflect for case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>ذلك</td>
<td>تلك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dhaalika</td>
<td>tilka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>أولئك</td>
<td>أولئك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘uulaa’ika</td>
<td>‘uulaa’ika</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Functions of demonstratives
The demonstrative pronouns can be used independently, in phrases, or in clauses.

3.1 Independent use
A demonstrative can stand by itself as a noun substitute:

هَدَّى فِي ذَلِكَ
najaH-a fii dhaalika.
He succeeded in that.

حَدَّثَ عَنْ ذَلِكَ كُلَّهُ
Haddath-a ‘an dhaalika kull-i-hi.
He spoke about all that.

مَعْنَى هَذَا
ma’naa haadhaa
the meaning of this

عَلَى رَغْمِ ذَلِكَ
‘alaa raghm-i dhaalika
despite that

لَكَنْ هَذَا لَا يَكْفِي
laaakin-n-a haadhaa laa ya-kfii.
But this is not enough.

أَقُولُ هَذَا عَنْ خِبَرَةٍ عَمَلِيَّةٍ
‘a-quul-u haadhaa ‘an xibrat-in ‘amaliyyat-in.
I say this from practical experience.

3.2 Demonstrative phrases
In a demonstrative phrase, the demonstrative pronoun forms a syntactic unit with a definite noun in order to convey the concept of particular proximity or distance. These pronouns are considered determiners of nouns (in some ways like the definite article).

In Arabic, the demonstrative phrase consists of a demonstrative pronoun + definite article + noun, as follows:

**Haadhaa + l- + lAWN-u** = **Haadhaa l-Lawn-u**

‘this-the-color’ = this color
Unlike English, then, the demonstrative phrase includes the definite article with the noun. If there is a modifying adjective, it follows the noun and agrees with it in gender, number, case and definiteness.

3.3 Demonstrative with second term of *iDaafa
The bond between the demonstrative pronoun and its noun is so tight that a demonstrative phrase is allowed to be used as the second term of an *iDaafa.²

3.4 Demonstrative with first term of *iDaafa
If a demonstrative is needed for the first term of an *iDaafa, it must follow the whole *iDaafa. It cannot attach itself to the first term of the *iDaafa because it must be followed by a noun with the definite article, whereas the first term of

² Normally, an *iDaafa cannot be interrupted by any word between the two nouns joined in the annexation structure.
an ‘iDaafa is stripped of the definite article and defined through the second term.

وجهة النظر هذه
wujhat-u l-naZar-i haadhihi
this point of view

مرحلة الجمود هذه
marHalat-u l-jumuud-i haadhihi
this stage of solidity

3.5 Demonstrative with possessed noun
A noun made definite by means of a suffixed possessive pronoun cannot be preceded by a demonstrative pronoun because in order to precede the noun, the demonstrative must be followed by the definite article. Since a noun with a possessive pronoun cannot have the definite article (it is definite by virtue of the suffix), the demonstrative follows:

في كتابه هذا
fii kitaab-i-hi haadhaa
in this book of his

تجربتي الأولى هذه
tajribat-ii l’uulaa haadhihi
this first experience of mine

في منشوراتها هذه
fii manshuuraat-i-haa haadhihi
in these publications of hers

أهمية الاكتشافات الحديثة هذه
’ahammiyyat-u l-iktishaafaat-i l-Hadiithat-i haadhihi
the importance of these new discoveries

3.6 Demonstratives with proper names
Proper names are considered definite even though many of them do not have a definite article. When referring to someone’s name with a demonstrative, it follows the name:

كنت أشارت إلى خالد هذا
kun-tu ’ashar-tu ’ilaal xaalid-in haadhaa.
I had referred to this ‘Khalid.’

3.7 Demonstrative clauses
In a demonstrative clause, the demonstrative pronoun serves as the subject of the clause, followed by a complement or predicate. There is therefore a syntactic boundary between the demonstrative and the rest of the clause.

هذا قطبي
haadhaa qiTT-ii.
This [is] my cat.

وهذا اختلاف عام
wa-haadhaa xtilaaf-un haamm-un.
(‘And’) this [is] an important difference.

هذا رأي يناقض الحقائق.
This [is] an opinion that contradicts the facts.
Most often, the predicate of a sentence or clause with a demonstrative as the subject is indefinite, or a definite noun with a pronoun suffix.

A noun with a definite article may serve as the predicate of an equational sentence, but if preceded by a demonstrative pronoun, there normally needs to be a copula or pronoun of separation between the demonstrative and the definite noun to show that there is a syntactic boundary between them, and that they do not form a phrase (see below).

3.8 Demonstrative clause with pronoun of separation (copula)
Here the predicate of the equational sentence is a noun with a definite article. In order to show clearly that there is a separation between a demonstrative pronoun subject and the definite noun, a personal pronoun is inserted at the boundary between subject and predicate to act as a copula or substitute for a verb of being.

3.8.1 Omission of copula
Occasionally, the copula pronoun or pronoun of separation is omitted in the demonstrative clause, and the separation has to be deduced from the context.

4 Other demonstratives
4.1 dhaaka
The demonstrative dhaaka is a variant of dhalika and sometimes may be used to contrast with it.
4.1.1 As an independent word

تلك الشوفينية وذلك التبعص وذلك الانغلاق
tilka l-shuuffiniyyat-u wa-dhaalaka l-ta’aSub-u wa-dhaaka l-inghilaaq-u
that chauvinism, that tribalism, and that obscurity

كان ذلك بالأمس.
kaan-a dhaaka bi-l-’ams-i.
That was yesterday.

4.1.2 As a suffix

As a suffix on an accusative noun denoting ‘time when’:

انتهى الحدث يومذاك.
intahaa l-Hadath-u yawm-a-dhaaka.
The event ended that day.

واطلاق كتابه آنذاك تياراً من الاهتمام.
wa-‘aTlaq-a kitaab-u-hu ‘aan-a-dhaaka tayyar-an min-a l-ihtimaam-i.
His book evoked a current of interest at that time.

اكتشف أمريكا سننذاك كان الحدث الكبير.
iktishaaf-u ‘amriikaa sanat-a-dhaaka kaan-a l-Hadath-a l-kabiir-a.
The discovery of America that year was the great event.

4.2 Demonstrative dhaat-a

This demonstrative indicates an indefinite distance in time or space and is used as the first term of an ’iDaafa with an indefinite noun:

قبل أن تعرف ذات يوم أنها وارثة
qabl-a ’an ta-‘rif-a dhaat-a yawn-in ‘ann-a-haa waarithat-un
before she found out one day that she was an heiress

4.3 Use of haa ها ‘this’

The word haa is sometimes used as a shortened form of haadhaa. It implies an immediate perception, something like English “behold.”

ها هي دولكم.
haa hiya dawlat-u-kum.
This is your country/ Here is your country.

4.4 Locative demonstrative pronouns: hunaa هنَا, hunaaka هناك and hunaalika هناك هنالك ‘here’, ‘there’ and ‘(over) there’

These words are considered both adverbs and locative demonstrative pronouns, since they denote a place close to, distant from, or very distant from the speaker.
They are used widely in both written and spoken Arabic. Some examples are found in Chapter 11 on adverbs. Here are some others:

4.4.1 Locative **hunaa** هانا ‘here’

Here in the city

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hunaa fī l-madiindat-i</td>
<td>here, in the city</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did you take the key from here?

mustaHiil-un 'an na-jid-a ʿalHad-an hunaa.

[It is] impossible to find (‘that we find’) anyone here.

4.4.2 Locative **hunaaka** هناك ‘there’

The plane is [over] there.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-Taaʾir-u hunaaaka</td>
<td>the plane is [over] there</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have to be there in five minutes.

4.4.3 Existential **hunaa** هناك and **hunaalika** هنالك: ‘there is, there are’

To convey the idea of existence Arabic uses the pronoun/adverb hunaa ‘there’ paralleling the English use of “there is, there are.” Occasionally the variant hunaaalika is also used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fa-hunaaaka ʿawwalawiyat-un ʿahamm-u.</td>
<td>There [are] more important priorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hunaalika mathal-an-i l-quSuur-u.</td>
<td>There [are], for example, castles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are several stories about what happened to the queen.
Relative pronouns relate an element in a subordinate relative clause (in Arabic, الصلة) to a noun or noun phrase in the main clause of a sentence. The Arabic relative pronoun (الاسم الموصول) may be definite or indefinite. MSA uses nine forms of definite relative pronoun. Only the dual form of the definite relative pronoun shows difference in case. All, however, are marked for number and gender.

Relative clauses in Arabic are either definite or indefinite; definite clauses are introduced by a relative pronoun; indefinite relative clauses do not include a relative pronoun.

### 1 Definite relative pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>الذَّي</td>
<td>الذِّي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive/Accusative</td>
<td>الّذَان</td>
<td>الّذَان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alladhii</td>
<td>alladhaani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alladhayn</td>
<td>allataani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>alatayni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dual</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>الّذِي</td>
<td>الّذِي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive/Accusative</td>
<td>الّذَان</td>
<td>الّذَان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alladhii</td>
<td>alladhiina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>alladhiina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plural</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>الّذَين</td>
<td>الّذَين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alladhina</td>
<td>allaatii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>allaatii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from the above paradigm the definite relative pronouns have a component that resembles the definite article, /al-/ /ال-. They refer only to definite nouns and noun phrases. The initial /al-/ of the relative pronoun starts with hamzat al-waSl.
2 Definite relative clauses

A relative clause referring back to a definite antecedent uses the definite relative pronouns. The relative pronoun agrees with its antecedent in number and gender.

2.1 Singular relative pronoun

هي التي أرسلت الدكتورة.
hiya llatii ‘arsal-at-i l-duktuur-a.
She is the one who sent the doctor.

والذي وضع المسمار الأخير.
wa-huwa lladhii waDa‘-a l-mismaar-a l-‘axiira.
And he is the one who put [in] the last nail.

المركز الجديد الذي أقيم في المدينة
al-markaz-u l-jadiid-u lladhii ‘uqiim-a fii l-madiinat-i
the new center which has been established in the city

2.2 Dual relative pronoun

البرجان اللذان لا يزالان قائمين
al-burj-aani lladhaani laa ya-zaal-aani qaa‘im-ayni
the two towers which remain standing

للزوجين اللذين ينتظرا حديثا سعيدا
li-l-zawj-ayni lladh-ayni ya-ntaZir-ayni Hadath-an sa‘iid-an
for the couple who are awaiting a happy event

في الجلستين اللتين انتقدتا أمس
fii l-jalsat-ayni llatatni n‘aqad-ataa ‘ams-i
in the two sessions that were held yesterday

2.3 Plural relative pronoun

The plural relative pronoun is used only when referring to human beings.

السياح الذين يصلون كل يوم
al-siyyaaH-u lladhiina ya-Sil-uuna kull-a yawm-in
the tourists who arrive every day

النسوة اللواتي ارغمن على الإخلاء بالقوة
al-niswat-u llawaatii ‘urghim-na ‘alaa l-‘ixla‘-i bi l-quwwat-i
the women who were compelled to evacuate by force
3 Indefinite relative clauses

A relative clause may refer to an indefinite noun or noun phrase in the main clause, in which case the relative pronoun is omitted. The indefinite relative clause follows the main clause without any relative pronoun linking them. They are like two independent sentences implicitly linked because the second refers back to the first.

في زيارة لدمشق تستغرق أسبوعاً

\[ \text{fii ziyaarat-in li-dimashq-u ta-staghriq-u 'usbuu'-an} \]
on a visit to Damascus [which] lasts a week

عثرت على هيكل عمazı فقد رأسه

\[ \text{'arthar-at 'alaa haykal-in 'aZmiyy-in faqad-a ra's-a-hu.} \]
She came upon a skeleton [which] had lost its head.

أخيراً يظهر كرجل يمتلك الشجاعة.

\[ \text{wa-'axhir-an ya-Zhur-u ka-rajul-in ya-mtalik-u l-shujaa'at-a.} \]
Finally, he appears as a man [who] possesses courage.

عن مصدر فلسطيني رفض الكشف عن اسمه

\[ \text{'an maSdar-in filisTiiniyy-in rafaD-a l-kashf-a 'an-i sm-i-hi} \]
from a Palestinian source [who] refused to disclose his name

4 Resumptive pronouns in relative clauses

When a relative clause in Arabic refers back to a noun or noun phrase in the main clause which is the object of a verb or a preposition (e.g., “the book that we read,” “the house that I lived in”), a pronoun must be inserted in the relative clause to serve as the object of the verb or preposition, referring back to the object noun in the main phrase (“the book that we read (it)”, \[ \text{al-kitaab-u lladhii qara-naa-hu} \])

“the school I studied at (it)” \[ \text{al-madrasat-u llatii daras-tu fii-haa} \]

This substitute pronoun is called in Arabic the ‘\text{‘aa'id عائد or raaji راجع \text{‘returner}’ and in English it is referred to as a resumptive pronoun. It occurs in definite and indefinite relative clauses that contain transitive verbs or prepositions referring back to an object in the main clause.

4.1 Resumptive pronoun in definite relative clauses

المكان الذي تقصده هنا.

\[ \text{al-makaan-u lladhii ta-qSid-u-hu hunaa.} \]
The place which you seek (it) is here.
This is the house of the man whom we are searching for (him).

They kept the manuscripts which they had authenticated (them).

in most of the precincts in which the results were final

at the place where the rocket fell (into it)

Indefinite relative clauses do not include relative pronouns, but they must include a resumptive pronoun if the clause refers back to a noun or noun phrase that is the object of a preposition or a verb.

he said in a press conference [which] he held (it) yesterday

in a closed meeting [which] the two leaders of the parties held (it)

These pronouns refer to non-specified entities.

The pronoun man is used to refer to unspecified individuals. It may denote one person or a group but is usually treated grammatically as masculine singular.

من

ما

ما ~ ما

~ maadhaa

من

man

whoever; he/she who; one who

whatever; what; that which
5.2 Use of *maa*: ‘whatever; that which’

The relative pronoun *maa* functions in a wide variety of contexts.\(^1\) Note that this use of *maa* is distinct from its use as an interrogative or negative particle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ما بين النهرينَ</td>
<td>between the rivers’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ب ما يتعلق بالزراعةَ</td>
<td>in agriculture related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ما لا نهايةَ</td>
<td>that which has no end’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>وقال ما يليَ</td>
<td>(And) he said the following . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘الث لتي نحئاتا’</td>
<td>‘that which follows’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ما حدث في الشام’</td>
<td>‘what happened in Syria’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ما قبل وما سيقال عنه’</td>
<td>‘what was said and what will be said about it’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 *maa* and *man* + resumptive pronoun

The indefinite pronouns *maa* and *man*, if they refer to the object of a verb or a preposition, are usually followed by a resumptive pronoun in the relative clause.\(^2\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>هذا ما أقصده بالضبطَ</td>
<td>‘what’ I mean (it)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شكرا على ما قدمهَ</td>
<td>‘what’ he offered (it)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1. Wehr lists nine different uses of *maa* (1979, 1042) and Abboud et al. (1997, 47–49) list examples of all nine uses: negative *maa*, interrogative *maa*, relative *maa*, nominalizing *maa*, durative *maa*, exclamatory *maa*, indefinite *maa*, conditional *maa*, and redundant *maa*.
2. Technically, a resumptive pronoun is not necessary after an indefinite pronoun that refers to an object of a verb, but it was used consistently in the data gathered for this book. See Abboud and McCarus 1983, part 1:588; MECAS 1965, 97.
They get what they need (it).

5.4 *maadhaa* as relative pronoun

Sometimes the particle *maadhaa* ‘what’ is used instead of *maa*, especially when the use of *maa* (which also functions as a negative particle) may be confusing:

> *ya-‘rif-u maadhaa yu-riid-u Haqq-an.*
> He really knows what he wants.

5.5 Use of *maa* for approximation

Used with numbers, amounts, and times, *maa* serves as a pronoun that can link a prepositional or verbal phrase to a previous statement by indicating approximation:

> *yastaghriq-u maa bayn-a shahr-ayni wa-thalaathat-in.*
> It will last (what is approximately) between two and three months.

> *qad ya-Sil-u ‘ilaa maa bayn-a thalaath-i-mi’at-i wa-‘arba’-i-mi’at-i ‘alf-i shaxS-in.*
> It might reach (what is approximately) between 300 and 400 thousand people.

> *ya-staTii-u l-jamal-u ‘an ya-shrab-a maa Hajam-a-hu min-a l-maa’-i.*
> The camel can drink his weight (what approximately his weight is) in water.

> *ya-tawajjab-u l-intiZaar-u ‘ilaa maa ba’-d-a yawm-i l-sabt-i.*
> It is necessary to wait until (approximately what is) after Saturday.

5.6 *maa* ‘a certain; some, one’

The relative pronoun *maa* is also used following a noun to emphasize its indefiniteness or non-particularity, as in the following expressions:

> *ghayyar-at mawqif-a-haa ‘ilaa Hadd-in maa.*
> She changed her position to a certain extent.

> *sa-ya-rji‘-u yawm-an maa.*
> He will come back one day.

Why do you like a certain artist?
5.7 mimmaa

The contracted phrase mimmaa (min + maa) may be used instead of the simple maa when referring to a preceding situation or condition:

مَمَأَ أَمَّنَ لَهُ اِحْتِصَالُ دَائِمًا
mimmaa 'amman-a la-hu ttiSaal-an daa' im-an which guaranteed him a permanent connection

مَا يُوْدِي إِلَى إِعْطَاءِ المِجْلَةِ طَابِعًا أَدِبيًّا
mimmaa yu'-addii 'ilaa 'Ta'aa'i l-majallat-i Taabi'-an 'adabiyy-an which leads to giving the journal a literary character

مَا يَعْمَلُ أَنَّ كَلفَةِ المَشْرَع
mimmaa ya-'nii 'anna kalfat-a l-mashruu'i which means that the cost of the project

5.8 bi-maa fii

This common idiomatic expression includes the indefinite pronoun maa:

يَجْرُى اِحْتِصَالُاتُ مَعَ جَمِيعِ الْأَطْرَافِ بِمَا فِي هَا حُكُومَةِ إِسْرَائِيلِ
yu-jrii ttiSaalaat-in ma'a jami'i-l-'aTraaf-i bi-maa fii-haa Hukuumat-i 'israa'ili-l-a. He is in communication (‘conducting contacts’) with all the parties including the government of Israel.
The Arabic numeral system has been described as “somewhat complicated” (Cowan 1964, 182), “assez complexe (‘rather complex’)” (Kouloughli 1994, 121), “one of the trickiest features of written Arabic” (Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 301), as having “a special difficulty” (Cantarino 1975, II:361), and it has been said that the numerals “do not readily lend themselves to inductive analysis” (Ziadeh and Winder 1957, 148). These observations provide an indication of the complexity of a system which is important to understand but also challenging in the diversity of its categories and rules.

Provided here is an outline of the general structure of the morphology and syntax of MSA numerals, with examples taken from various contemporary contexts. The rules and examples are presented in numerical order, cardinal numerals first and then ordinal numerals.

1 Cardinal numerals (al-‘a‘daad) (الأعداد)
The Arabic numerals “zero” through “ten” are listed as follows. To some extent there is resemblance with what are termed “Arabic” numbers in English, but the system is adapted from the Hindi numeral system and has significant differences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeral</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zero</td>
<td>Sifr</td>
<td>صفر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>waaHid</td>
<td>واحد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two</td>
<td>ithnaan</td>
<td>اثنان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three</td>
<td>thalaatha</td>
<td>ثلاثة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four</td>
<td>ʼarba’a</td>
<td>أربعة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five</td>
<td>xamsa</td>
<td>خمسة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1 I am grateful to my colleague, Dr. Muhsin Esseesy, for reading, correcting, and commenting on this chapter. See also Esseesy 2000.


3 Cognate with English ‘cipher.’
The numerals “one” and “two” have special features. “One” has two forms: an
adjectival (waaHid) and a noun (or pronoun) form (‘aHad), used in different ways. 

The numeral “two” is special because of the independent and extensive nature of 
the dual category in Arabic morphology. The numerals three to ten, on the other 
hand, are all nouns.

1.1 The numeral “one”

1.1.1 waaHid واحد and waaHida واحدة

The numeral ‘one’ waaHid has the morphological pattern of an active participle of
Form I (faa‘il). It behaves syntactically as an adjective, following the counted
noun, and agreeing with it in case and gender.

The entire region is one of the lowest-populated in Algeria.

إحدى ‘أحد’ أحمد and ‘إحدى’ أحمد

This form of “one” is usually used when expressing the notion “one of.”
It is a noun that forms the first term of an ‘iDaafa or genitive construct, with the

However, waaHid min is also occasionally found for the expression of “one of”:

المنطقة كلها واحدة من أقل مناطق الجزائر سكاناً.

The entire region is one of the lowest-populated in Algeria.

أحد من أهم الفنون المعاصرة

to one of the most important contemporary arts.
following noun in the genitive dual or plural, or pronoun, which is dual or plural. The masculine form, ‘aHad, is triptote; the feminine form, ‘iHdaa, is invariable.

1.1.2.1 ‘aHad أُحَد:
في أحد مستشفيات جدة
‘aHad-i mustashfayaat-i jiddat-a
in one of the hospitals of Jidda
‘aHad-u l-nuwwaab-i l-mustaqill-iina
one of the independent deputies
أحدهم أصيب.
‘aHad-u ‘uSiib-a.
One of them was hit.
قدّم أحد أعضاء المؤتمر اقتراحًا.
One of the members of the conference offered a proposal.

1.1.2.2 ‘iHdaa إِحْدَى: The feminine numeral ‘iHdaa is invariable in case:
في إحدى هذه المحاولات
‘iHdaa mudun-i l-minTaqat-i
one of the cities of the region
‘iHdaa haadhihi l-muHaawalaat-i
in one of these attempts
إحدى مهام هذه اللجنة
‘iHdaa mahaamm-i haadhihi l-lajnat-i
one of the tasks of this committee

1.1.2.3 ‘NO ONE, NOBODY; NEITHER ONE’: Used with a negative verb, ‘aHad is equivalent to ‘no one’ or ‘nobody’:
قالت إنَ أُحَدًا لا يستطيع أن يوقفهم.
qaal-at ‘inna ‘aHad-an laa ya-staTii‘-u ‘an yu-waqqif-a-hum.
She said that no one could stop them.
لم يكن أحد من الأسرة المالكة في القصر.
lam ya-kun ‘aHad-un min-a l-‘usrat-i l-maalikat-i fii l-qaSr-i.
No one from the royal family was in the castle.
ليس في استطاعة أحدنا أن يعيش من دون الآخر.
lays-a fii stiTa‘at-i ‘aHad-i-naa ‘an ya-‘iish-a min duun-i l-‘aaxar-i.
Neither one of us can live without the other.
1.2 The numeral ‘two’ *ithnaan* and *ithnataan*

The numeral “two” has both feminine and masculine forms and it also inflects for case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Masc.</th>
<th>Fem.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>اثنان</td>
<td>اثنان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>ithnaani</em></td>
<td><em>ithnataani</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>اثنين</td>
<td>اثنين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>ithnayni</em></td>
<td><em>ithnayni</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>اثنين</td>
<td>اثنين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>ithnayni</em></td>
<td><em>ithnayni</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The genitive and accusative forms of inflection are identical, putting the numeral “two” into the two-way inflection category, just like the dual suffix on nouns and adjectives. Note that the initial vowel on *ithnaan* is a hamzat al-*waSl*, not a strong *hamza* (*hamzat al-qaT*).

### 1.2.1 The dual (*al-muthanna* المثنى)

The numeral “two” is rarely used for counting purposes because of the existence of the dual category in the Arabic grammatical system. Two of anything is a separate inflectional class and receives a separate inflectional suffix: -aani (nominative) or -ayni (genitive/accusative). Note that dual agreement (pronouns, verbs, adjectives) follows a dual noun. See Chapter 7, sections 3.1 and 5.4.2.1., subsection (1) for further discussion of dual inflection.

#### 1.2.1.1 MASCULINE DUAL:

The masculine dual is used to refer to masculine nouns or a mix of feminine and masculine.

*دَخِلَ الْمَلَكَانَ.*

*دَخَلَ الْمَلَكَانَ l-malik-aani.*

*The two rulers entered.*

(Here, referring to a king and queen.)

*وَقَدْ وُجِدَ طَابِعَانُ بَنْيَا مِنَ الحِجَارَة.*

*وَقَدْ وُجِدَ طَابِعَانُ Taabaq-aani buniy-aa min-a l-Hijaarat-i.*

*Two floors were found built of stone.*
1.2.1.2 FEMININE DUAL

\[\text{الدولتان العظمیان} \quad \text{al-dawlat-aani l-'uZmay-aani}\]

\[\text{the two super powers}\]

as for the other two cities

خلال السنتين الماضیتين

\[xilaal-a l-sanat-ayni l-maaDiyat-ayni\]

during the past two years

1.2.1.3 DUAL OF DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS: Demonstrative pronouns also have dual forms. When modifying dual nouns, they agree in duality, case, and gender:

\[\text{من هذین الصحافین} \quad \text{min haadh-ayni l-SiHaafiy-ayni}\]

from these two journalists

\[\text{أعضاء هاتین اللجنتین} \quad \text{'a`Daa`-u haat-ayni l-lajnat-ayni}\]

the members of these two committees

1.2.1.4 nuun-DELETION: When a dual noun is the first term of an annexation structure, or if it has a pronoun suffix, the nuun (and its short vowel kasra) of the dual suffix is deleted:

\[\text{عنوانا الكتابین} \quad \text{‘unwaan-aa l-kitaab-aani}\]

the [two] titles of the two books

\[\text{في كتفي الثور} \quad \text{fii kitf-ay-i l-thawr-i}\]

in the two shoulders of the bull

\[\text{في وادي نهري دجلة والفرات} \quad \text{fii waadii nahr-dijlat-a wa-l-furaat-i}\]

in the valley of the two rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates

1.2.1.5 DUAL FOR EMPHASIS AND DISAMBIGUATION: Occasionally the number “two” is used explicitly in order to emphasize, distinguish two among others, or disambiguate.

\[\text{فیئناثین منها تُعتبران معاقلًا للمعارضة} \quad \text{fa-thnataani min-haa tu-‘tabar-aani ma`qil-an li-l-mu’aaraDat-i}.\]

(For) two of them [cities] are considered a stronghold for the opposition.

\[\text{تضم ممثلین اثنین عن كل جانب} \quad \text{ta-Dumm-u mumaththil-ayni thnayni ‘an kull-i jaanib-in}.\]

It includes two representatives from each side.*

*Here, the word thnayn is added to clarify the status of the word mumaththil-ayni because in unvoweled Arabic script it looks identical to the plural, mumaththil-iina ممثلاين.
1.2.1.6 ‘BOTH’ *kilaa* AND *kiltaa* The words *kilaa* (m.) and *kiltaa* (f.) are quantifiers used to express the concept of “both.” These words are related to the noun *kull* ‘all,’ and are not part of the numeral system, but are considered to have numerative meaning. They are specifically dual and followed either by a noun in the dual or by a dual pronoun suffix.

When followed by a noun they do not inflect for case; when followed by a pronoun, they do inflect for case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Used for counting f. nouns</th>
<th>Used for counting m. nouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thalaath</td>
<td>thalaatha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;arba&quot;</td>
<td>arba‘a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xams</td>
<td>xamsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sitt</td>
<td>sitta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sab</td>
<td>sab‘a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thamaanin(^5)</td>
<td>thamaaniya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tis</td>
<td>tis‘a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ashhr</td>
<td>‘ashara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For further discussion of *kilaa* and *kiltaa*, see Chapter 9, section 1.3.

1.3 Numerals three to ten

Arabic numerals three to ten have two distinctive characteristics: first, they are followed by a plural noun in the genitive case, and second, they show gender polarity, or reverse gender agreement with the counted noun. That is, if the singular noun is masculine, the numeral will have the feminine marker *taa‘* marbuu‘Ta, and if the singular noun is feminine, the numeral will be in the masculine form.

The numerals three to ten are as follows:

5 The numeral ‘eight’ thamaanin, is defective in the masculine gender (the feminine form, ending in *taa‘* marbuu‘Ta, is triptote, or regular in declension). As an indefinite defective noun it declines as follows: nominative and genitive have identical form: *thamaan-in*; accusative has the form *thamaaniy-an*; as a definite noun, the nominative and genitive are also identical: *thamaanii*, and the accusative definite form is *thamaaniy-a*. See the declension for defective nouns in Chapter 7, section 5.4.3
In recitation form, in counting without a counted noun, or in referring to a specific numeral alone, the form with taa’ marbu’Ta is usually used. For example:

\( raqm-u \ sittat-in \ huwa \ raqm-un \ siHriyy-un. \) \( \text{raaqm} \ - \ u \ sittat \ - \ in \ huwa \ raqm\-un \ siHriyy\-un. \)  
The number six is a magic number.  
One, two \textbf{three}!  

1.3.1 Three to ten counted nouns

Counted noun phrases from three to ten have two forms, definite (“the five houses”) and indefinite (“five houses”). If an adjective follows the counted noun (“the five large houses; five large houses”), it agrees with the noun in case, gender, and definiteness. For nonhuman plural nouns, the adjective is feminine singular and for human nouns, the adjective is plural.

1.3.1.1 INDEFINITE COUNTED NOUN: With an indefinite counted item, the numeral shows reverse gender agreement and precedes the counted noun. The case marker on the numeral varies according to its role in the sentence and it is considered definite because it is in an ‘i\(D\)aafa relationship with the noun, so the case ending on the numeral is in definite form (i.e., it does not take nunation). The counted noun itself is plural, indefinite, and in the genitive case.

(1) Feminine noun = masculine numeral form

\[ \text{ثلاث مخطوطات} \]  
\( thalaath-u \ maxTuuTaat-in \) (singular \( maxTuuTa \) مخطوطات)  
three manuscripts

\[ \text{ثلاث قصائد} \]  
\( thalaath-u \ qaSaa\‘id-a \) (singular qaSiida قصيدة)  
three odes

\[ \text{نقرأ ثلاثة مقابلات.} \]  
\( na\-qra\‘-u \ thalaath-a \ muqaabalaat-in. \) (singular muqaabala مقابلة)  
We are reading three interviews.

\[ \text{ثلاث أبار عميقة} \]  
\( thalaath-u \ ‘aabaar-in \ ‘amiiqat-in \) (singular \( bi\‘r \) ينتر)  
three deep wells

\( ^6 \) The singular of “well” (\( bi\‘r \) ) looks masculine but is actually cryptofeminine.
خمس مرات في اليوم
xams-a marraat-in fī l-yawm-i (singular marra مرة)
five times a day

ضمن ست فرق عمل
Dimm-a sitt-i firaq-i ‘amal-in (singular firqa فرقة)
within six working groups

لَمْدة ثمانية ساعات
li-muddat-i thamaanii saa‘aat-in (singular saa‘a ساعة)
for a period of eight hours

سرقوا تسع سيارات
saraq-uu tis‘-a sayyaaraat-in. (singular sayyaara سيارة)
They stole nine cars.

(2) Masculine noun = feminine numeral form
أربعة خناجر
‘arba‘at-u xanaajir-a (singular xanjar خناجر)
four daggers

خمسة دراهم
xamsat-u daraahim-a (singular dirham دراهم)
five dirhams

بسرعة ستة كيلومترات في الثانية
bi-sur‘at-i sittat-i kiiluumitraat-in fī l-thaaniyat-i (singular kiiluumitr كيلومتر)
at the rate of six kilometers per second

وأضاف أن سبعة أشخاص أُعتقلوا.
wa-‘aDaaf-at ‘anna sab‘at-a ‘ashxaas-in u‘tuqil-uu. (singular shaxS شخص)
It added that seven persons were detained.

إلى مسافة عشرة أمتار
‘ilaa masaafat-i ‘asharat-i ‘amtaar-in (singular mitr مترا

to a distance of ten meters

(3) Indefinite counted noun plus adjective:
لِنَا ثلَاثَة احْتِياجٍ أساسيّة
la-naa thalaathat-u Htiyaajaat-in ‘asaasiyyat-in. (singular iHtiyaaj احتياج)
We have three basic needs.
Indefinite with definite meaning: This can occur when a numeral is used with a superlative expression, where the superlative adjective is followed by an indefinite plural noun.7

في أهم أربع مدن
fī 'ahamm-i 'arba-i mudun-in
in the most important four cities

Indefinite noun with following numeral: Rarely, an indefinite counted noun will precede the numeral. The numeral still shows reverse gender, but in this position it is in apposition with the noun and takes the same case as the noun:

من خلال جلسات ثلاث
min xilaal-i jalasaat-in thalaath-in (singular jalsa جلسة)
through three sessions

خلال عقود ثلاثة
xilaal-a 'uqud-in thalaathat-in (singular 'aqd عقد) during three decades

Indefinite numeral followed by min ‘of’: When indicating a specific number of items among a larger number, an indefinite form of the numeral may be used followed by min ‘of’ and a definite noun or noun phrase:

يضم أربعة من وزراء النفط.
yā-Dumm-u 'arba-at-an min wuzaraa-i l-nifti.
It includes four of the petroleum ministers.

---

7 For further discussion of this point, see Chapter 10, section 4.2.4.
1.3.1.2 DEFINITE COUNTED NOUN: In the definite form, the numeral is in apposition with the noun. It follows the noun, it agrees with the noun in case, it has the definite article, and it shows reverse gender agreement.

(1) **Masculine noun**: With a noun that is masculine in the singular, a feminine numeral form is used:

أركان الإسلام الخمسة

\( \text{'arkaan-u l-'islaam-i l-xamsat-u} \) (singular \( \text{rukn} \))

the five pillars of Islam

طورات العقود الثلاثة الأخيرة

\( \text{Tiwaal-a l-uquud-i l-thalaathat-i l-axiirat-i} \) (singular \( \text{عقد} \))

during the last three decades

وزراء النفط السنة

\( \text{wuzaraa'-u l-niifT-i l-sittat-u} \) (singular \( \text{waziir} \))

the six oil ministers

(2) **Feminine noun**: With a noun that is feminine in the singular, the masculine form of the numeral is used:

الجهات الأربع الأصلية

\( \text{al-jihaat-u l-arba'-u l-aSliyyat-u} \) (singular \( \text{jiha} \))

the four cardinal directions

دقات القلب الخمس

\( \text{daqqaat-u l-qalb-i l-xams-u} \) (singular \( \text{daqqa} \))

the five heartbeats

في القارات الخمس

\( \text{fii l-qaarraat-i l-xams-i} \) (singular \( \text{qaarra} \))

on the five continents

بين ممثلي هذه الصحف السبع

\( \text{bayn-a mumaththil-ii haadhihi l-SaHuf-i l-sab'}-i} \) (singular \( \text{SaHiifa} \))

among the representatives of **these seven newspapers**

(3) **Definite counted noun with following adjective**: When a definite counted noun is modified by an adjective, the adjective follows the numeral and agrees with the noun in gender, case, and definiteness. For nonhuman nouns, the plural form of the adjective is feminine singular; for human nouns, the adjective is plural in form.

بين ألوان الطيف السبعة المعروفة

\( \text{bayn-a 'alwaan-i l-Tayf-i l-sab'}-i \) (singular \( \text{lawn} \))

among the **seven known colors** of the spectrum
1.3.2 Plural numerals

The numerals taken in groups, such as “tens” are made plural with the sound feminine plural marker -aat:

٨٢٢٢١ حطموا عشرات الأرقام القياسية.

HaTam-uu ʼasharaat-i l-‘arqaam-i l-qiyaasiyyat-i.

They broke tens of records.

1.4 Numerals eleven and twelve

The numerals eleven and twelve start the teens number series. In this set of numerals, the numeral names are compounds, that is, they are formed of two parts, the first part referring to the first digit and the second part always some form of the word “ten” (ʼashar or ʼashra).

Eleven: The numeral eleven is invariable in case, being accusative at all times. The first component of the compound number is the word ʼaHad (m.) or ʾiHdaa (f.), rather than the word waHid. Both parts of the compound numeral show the same gender.

Twelve: The numeral twelve shows two case inflections, nominative and genitive-accusative, along the lines of the numeral “two” and the dual. Both parts of the compound numeral show the same gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eleven</td>
<td>أَحَد عَشْر</td>
<td>إِحْدَى عَشْرَة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ʼaHad-a</td>
<td>ʾiHdaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ʼashar-a</td>
<td>ʼashrat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twelve nominative</td>
<td>اَثْنَا عَشْر</td>
<td>اِثْنَتا عَشْرَة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ithn-aa</td>
<td>ithnat-aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ʼashar-a</td>
<td>ʼashrat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twelve genitive-accusative</td>
<td>اَثْنَي عَشْر</td>
<td>اِثْنَيَت عَشْرَة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ithn-ay</td>
<td>ithnat-ay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ʼashar-a</td>
<td>ʼashrat-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 In contemporary newspaper Arabic, numerals over ten tend to be in figures rather than spelled out in words. In this chapter the numbers are converted into spelled-out numerals in order to illustrate how they are pronounced and how the numeral system works.
When used in a counted noun phrase, both components of the compound numerals eleven and twelve agree with the counted noun in gender. They do not show gender polarity. They are followed by a noun in the accusative singular. This accusative is a form of tamyiiz, or “accusative of specification.”

1.4.1 Indefinite counted nouns

1.4.1.1 Feminine counted noun = Feminine eleven or twelve:

ثمنها إحدى عشرة ليرة

\( \text{thaman-u-haa } ^{2}\text{iHdaa } \text{`ashrat-a liirat-an.} \) 

Its price is eleven liras/pounds.

سَبْعَتيْنَيْت قبل إحدى عشرة سنة

\( \text{buniy-at qabl-a } ^{2}\text{iHdaa } \text{`ashrat-a sanat-an.} \) 

It was built eleven years ago.

1.4.1.2 Masculine noun = Masculine eleven or twelve:

ثمنها ثمانية عشرة ديناراً

\( \text{thaman-u-haa } ^{2}\text{aHad-a } \text{`ashar-a dirham-an.} \) 

Its price is eleven dirhams.

سَبْعَتيْنَيْت قبل أحد عشرة عاماماً

\( \text{buniy-at qabl-a } ^{2}\text{aHad-a } \text{`ashar-a `aam-an.} \) 

It was built eleven years ago.

1.4.2 Definite counted nouns with eleven and twelve

When the counted noun is definite, the numeral eleven or twelve follows the plural noun and the definite article is affixed to the first part of the numeral only. The case marker of the noun varies depending on the role of the noun in the sentence; the case marker on eleven is always accusative; the case marker on the first part of the numeral twelve varies according to the case of the noun it modifies.

9 For further discussion of the tamyiiz structure see Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.7, and Chapter 11, section 6.
1.4.2.1 MASCULINE DEFINITE PLURAL NOUN:

HaDara l-sufaraa‘u l-‘aHad-a ‘ashar-a.
The eleven ambassadors came.

HaDar-at-i l-‘ustaadhaat-u l-‘iHdaa ‘ashrat-a.
The eleven professors (f.) came.

Ya-staqbil-u l-sufaraa‘a l-‘aHad-a ‘ashar-a.
He is welcoming the eleven ambassadors.

Ya-staqbil-u l-‘ustaadhaat-i l-‘iHdaa ‘ashrat-a.
He is welcoming the eleven professors (f.).

1.4.2.2 FEMININE DEFINITE NOUN:

HaDar-at-i l-‘ustaadhaat-u l-‘iHdaa ‘ashrat-a.
The eleven professors (f.) came.

HaDar-at-i l-‘ustaadhaat-u l-ithnat-aa ‘asharat-a.
The twelve professors (f.) came.

Ya-staqbil-u l-‘ustaadhaat-i l-‘iHdaa ‘ashrat-a.
He is welcoming the eleven professors (f.).

Ya-staqbil-u l-‘ustaadhaat-i l-ithnat-ay ‘ashrat-a.
He is welcoming the twelve professors (f.).

1.5 Numbers thirteen to nineteen

The group of “teens” numerals are similar to the numeral eleven in that they are invariably in the accusative case and are followed by a singular accusative noun. They are unlike eleven and twelve in that the first part of the compound number shows gender polarity with the counted noun, while the second part of the compound number shows direct gender agreement with the counted noun.

That is, the first element, three to nine, behaves in gender like the cardinal numbers three to nine. The second element behaves more like an adjective, agreeing with the counted noun in gender.
With feminine counted noun: | With masculine counted noun:
---|---
thirteen | ثلاث عشر
thalaath-a 'ashrat-a | thalaathat-a 'ashar-a
fourteen | أربع عشر
'arba'a 'ashrat-a | 'arba'at-a 'ashar-a
fifteen | خمس عشر
xams-a 'ashrat-a | xamsat-a 'ashar-a
sixteen | ست عشر
sitt-a 'ashrat-a | sittat-a 'ashar-a
seventeen | سابعا عشر
sab'a 'ashrat-a | sab'at-a 'ashar-a
eighteen | ثامن عشر
thamaaniy-a 'ashrat-a | thamaaniyat-a 'ashar-a
nineteen | تسع عشر
tis'a 'ashrat-a | tis'at-a 'ashar-a

1.5.1 Indefinite counted noun

ببلغ طوله ثلاث عشر متراً
ya-blugh-u Tuul-u-hu thalaathat-a 'ashar-a mitr-an.
Its length reaches thirteen meters.

فازوا بأربع عشرة ميدالية
faaz-uu bi-'arba'at-a 'ashrat-a
'miidaaliyyat-an.
They won fourteen medals.

على مدى خمس عشر عاماً
'alaa madaa xamsat-a 'ashar-a
'aam-an
over a period of fifteen years

ثم الجريدة خمسة عشر ريالاً
thaman-u l-jariidat-i xamsat-a 'ashar-a riyal-an.
The cost of the newspaper is fifteen rials.

لمدة ست عشرة سنة
li-muddat-i sitt-a 'ashrat-a sanat-an
for a period of sixteen years

It contains nineteen apartments.

ypm تسع عشرة شقة
ya-Dumm-u tis'at-a 'ashrat-a shaqqat-an.

They won fourteen medals over a period of fifteen years.
1.5.2 Definite counted noun

A definite counted noun with a teens numeral is in the plural, followed by the teens numeral prefixed with the definite article. The article is on only the first part of the numeral compound, not the second part. Whereas the counted noun in this situation may be in any case that its role in the sentence requires, the teens numeral remains invariably in the accusative case. The first part of the compound number shows gender polarity.

في الغرف التسع عشرة
in the nineteen rooms

الأعضاء الخمسة عشر
the fifteen members

1.5.3 In independent form

When counting or listing the numerals by themselves, the form with the feminine marker on the first element is used, i.e., xamsat-a ‘ashar-a, sittat-a ‘ashar-a, sab’at-a ‘ashar-a ‘fifteen, sixteen, seventeen.’

1.6 Numerals twenty to ninety-nine

The even tens numerals are constructed as a numeral stem joined with a sound masculine plural suffix that inflects two ways for case, -uuna for the nominative and -iina for genitive-accusative. These even tens numerals themselves do not show any gender distinctions or differences.

The numbers twenty to ninety-nine are followed by a singular accusative counted noun, which is a form of tamyiiz, or accusative of specification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeral</th>
<th>Arabic Form</th>
<th>English Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>twenty</td>
<td>‘ishruuna/‘ishriina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thirty</td>
<td>thalaathuuna/thalaathiina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forty</td>
<td>‘arba‘uuna/‘arba‘iina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 Note that the adjective agrees strictly with the counted noun and is singular, although the meaning is plural.

11 In spoken Arabic, the tens numbers are reduced to one case, the genitive-accusative. However, in written Arabic, the case distinction is still maintained if the number is written out.

12 The base form for this number appears to be from the lexical root for “ten,” and it has been theorized that originally, it might have been something like ‘ishraani ‘two-tens’ and that the dual suffix came subsequently to resemble the other tens suffixes by a process of analogy.
1.6.1 Indefinite counted noun

20. With the participation of more than forty publishing houses

21. After the passage of more than sixty years

22. Fifty of the station employees

1.6.2 Plurals of tens

The plural form of the tens numerals is the sound feminine plural, which is suffixed to the genitive-accusative form of the number:

- twenties: ‘ishriinaat
- thirties: thalaathiinaat
- forties: ‘arba‘iinaat
- fifties: xamsiinaat
- sixties: sittiinaat
- seventies: sab‘iinaat
- eighties: thamaaniinaat
- nineties: tis‘iinaat
1.6.3 Compound tens

To construct compound tens numerals, the first part of the compound is an indefinite number joined to the second by the conjunction *wa* ‘and.’ The first digit shows case and gender as follows:

1.6.3.1 THE “ONES” AND “TWOS” The units twenty-one, thirty-one and so forth are constructed with the numeral “one” and then the tens component. The numeral “one” shows straight gender agreement with the noun. It can be either of the form *waaHid/ waaHida* or the form *’aHad/’iHdaa*.

The “twos” units inflect for case as duals and show straight gender agreement with the counted noun.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With masculine counted noun:</th>
<th>With feminine counted noun:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>twenty-one</td>
<td>twenty-one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>واحِدٌ وَعَشْرُونَ</td>
<td>واحِدةَ وَعَشْرُونَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>waaHid-un wa-’ishruuna</em></td>
<td><em>waaHidat-un wa-’ishruuna</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أَحَدٌ وَعَشْرُونَ</td>
<td>إِحْدَى وَعَشْرُونَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>’aHad-un wa-’ishruuna</em></td>
<td><em>’iHdaa wa-’ishruuna</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twenty-two</td>
<td>twenty-two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اثْنَانٌ وَعَشْرُونَ</td>
<td>اثْنَانٌ وَعَشْرُونَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ithnaani wa-’ishruuna</em></td>
<td><em>ithnataani wa-’ishruuna</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اثْنَانٌ وَعَشْرُونَ</td>
<td>اثْنَانٌ وَعَشْرُونَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ithnayni wa-’ishruuna</em></td>
<td><em>ithnayni wa-’ishruuna</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

لِمْدَةَ واحِدٌ وَعَشْرِينَ يوْمَا

*li-muddat-i waaHid-in wa-’ishriina yawm-an*

for a period of twenty-one days

فِی اَثْنَانِ وَعَشْرِينَ صفَحَةَ

*fii thnayni wa-’ishriina SafHat-an*

in twenty-two pages

لِمْدَةَ اِحِدَى وَعَشْرِينَ سَنَةَ

*li-mudddat-i ’iHdaa wa-’ishriina sanat-an*

for a period of twenty-one years

لَائِثْنَانِ وَعَشْرِينَ أَسَبَعًا

*li-thnayni wa-’ishriina ’usbu’-an*

for twenty-two weeks
1.6.3.2 TENS NUMERALS PLUS THREES TO NINES: Numerals such as twenty-four, seventy-six, thirty-five and so on are compounded of the single digit number linked to the tens numeral by means of the conjunction wa-, making combinations such as “four and twenty, six and seventy, five and thirty,” and so forth. Except for the numeral eight, which belongs to the defective declension, the single digits are triptote, they take nunation, and they show reverse gender with the counted noun. The counted noun is singular, indefinite, and accusative. Both parts of the numeral inflect for case.

(1) Indefinite counted noun:

أكثر من خمسة وخمسين فيلماً

بعد أربع وعشرين ساعة

ba’d-a `arba’in wa-`ishriina

saa’at-an

after twenty-four hours

more than fifty-five films

tanafaas-uu fii thamaan-in wa-`ishriina la`bat-an.
They competed in twenty-eight sports.

عمره ثلاثة وستون عاماً

`umru-hu thalaathat-un wa-sittuuna `aam-an.
He is sixty-three years old (‘His age is sixty-three years’).

(2) Definite counted noun: With a definite counted noun from 20 to 99, the numeral comes first and has the definite article, followed by the singular indefinite noun in the accusative case:

علىَ باباً والأربعون لصاً

`aliyy baabaa wa-l-arba‘uuna liSS-an

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

Tiwaal-a l-thalaathiina sanat-an-i

during the past thirty years

أسماء الله الحسنى التسعة وتسعون

`asmaa‘-u llaah-i l-Husnaa l-tis‘at-u wa-tis’uuna

the ninety-nine attributes of God

1.7 The even hundreds
The word for “hundred” in Arabic is mi’a, spelled both as مائة and مائة. It is a feminine noun and remains feminine at all times. When used with a counted noun, it goes into an `iDaafa relationship with the noun and that noun is in the genitive singular. The concept of “two hundred” is expressed by using mi’a in the dual, with the dual suffix. The dual suffix here obeys the law of nuun-drop when it goes into an `iDaafa with a following counted noun:
one hundred

منة

mi’a

two hundred

مئة

(mi’at-aani)

(nominative)

acd

(mi’at-ayni)

(accurative/genitive)

1.7.1 Counting in even one and two hundreds

منة كيلومتر شرق عدن

mi’at-u qunbulat-in yadawiyyat-in mi’at-u kiluumitr-in sharq-a ‘adan-a

100 hand grenades

100 kilometers east of Aden

ألف حجرة

li-muddat-i mi’at-i yawm-in mi’at-aa fils-in bi-mi’at-ay duulaar-in

for a period of 100 days

200 fils (a unit of currency)

for 200 dollars

الدولة

fii jalsaat-i-hi Hawaalii mi’at-u baaHith-in.

In its sessions [are] approximately 100 researchers.

1.7.2 Definite hundreds phrases

In this case, the word mi’a has the definite article, and the counted noun is genitive singular indefinite. In these examples, the hundreds phrase serves as the second term of an ‘iDaafa.

سباق المئة متر

sibaaq-u l-mi’at-i mitr-in

the hundred-meter race

بطل المئة متر

ba’al-u l-mi’at-i mitr-in

the champion of the hundred meters

1.7.2.1 EXPRESSING ‘PERCENT’: To express the concept of percent, the term fii l-mi’at-i or bi-l-mi’at-i is used:

يملكان خمسة عشر في المئة من الشركة.

mi’at-un bi-l-mi’at-i yu-mlik-aani xamsat-a ‘ashar-a fii l-mi’at-i

100 percent

min-a l-sharikat-i.

The two of them own 15 percent of the company.

في نحو تسعين في المئة من البلديات الريفية

fii naHw-i tis’inā fii l-mi’at-i min-a l-baladiyyaat-i l-riifiyyat-i

in approximately 90 percent of the rural municipalities
1.7.3 Three hundred to nine hundred

When the numeral is over two hundred, the hundred noun is counted by a numeral (in the masculine form because mi‘a is feminine) followed by the word mi‘a in the singular genitive form. This compound numeral may be written optionally as one word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One word</th>
<th>Two words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>three hundred</td>
<td>three hundred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four hundred</td>
<td>أربع مئة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five hundred</td>
<td>خمس مئة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>six hundred</td>
<td>ست مئة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seven hundred</td>
<td>سبع مئة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eight hundred</td>
<td>ثمانية مئة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nine hundred</td>
<td>تسعة مئة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following counted noun is genitive, singular, and indefinite:

1.7.3.1 INDEFINITE COUNTED NOUN

107 119
mi‘at-un wa-sabt‘at-un
a hundred and seven

400 millemes from 500 cubic meters

A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
1.8.1 Counting with complex numerals in the hundreds

The second part of the number, being the part directly adjacent to the following noun, is the part that determines the case and number of the counted noun.

1.8.1.1 Last part is 3–10 followed by genitive plural:

يربيت قبل سنة وسبعة أعوام.
buniya-at qabl-a mi’at-in wa-sab’at-i ‘a‘waam-in.

It was built 107 years ago.

1.8.1.2 Last part is 11–99 followed by accusative singular:

جاءوا من سنة وخمسين دولة.
ja‘-uu min mi’at-in wa-xamiina

dawlat-an.

They came from 150 countries.

وصلت سرعة الرياح إلى سنة وسبعين كيلومتراً في الساعة.
waSal-at sur’at-u l-riyaaH-i ‘ila ‘a‘at-in wa-sab’iina kiluumitr-an fi l-saa-at-i.

The wind speed reached 170 kilometers an hour.

1.8.2 Plural “hundreds”: mi’aat

The word mi’a is made plural with the sound feminine plural mi’aat. When used for counting, mi’aat is followed by either a definite noun in the genitive plural or the preposition min to express the “hundreds of” relationship.

أغلقت مئات المدارس.
‘ughliq-at mi’aat-u l-madaaris-i.

Hundreds of schools were closed.

أكثر من بضع مئات من الأمثلة
‘akhtar-u min biD-i mi’aat-i min-a

more than several hundreds of examples

مئات الأطفال اللبنانيين
mi’aat-u l-‘aTfaal-i l-lubnaaniyy-iina

hundreds of Lebanese children

ويجتمع المئات منهم.
wa-yajtimi‘-u l-mi’aat-u min-hum.

Hundreds of them are meeting.
1.9 Thousands
The word for thousand in Arabic is ‘arf, plural ‘aalaaf. It is a masculine noun and is counted as any other masculine noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>‘arf</td>
<td>ألف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>‘alf-aani/‘alfayni</td>
<td>ألفين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>thalaathat-u ‘aalaaf-in</td>
<td>ثلاثة آلاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>‘arba‘at-u ‘aalaaf-in</td>
<td>أربعة آلاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>xamsat-u ‘aalaaf-in</td>
<td>خمسة آلاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>sittat-u ‘aalaaf-in</td>
<td>ستة آلاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>sab‘at-u ‘aalaaf-in</td>
<td>سابعة آلاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>thamaaniyat-u ‘aalaaf-in</td>
<td>ثمانية آلاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>tis‘at-u ‘aalaaf-in</td>
<td>تسعة آلاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>‘asharat-u ‘aalaaf-in</td>
<td>عشرة آلاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>‘aHad-a ‘ashar-a ‘alf-an</td>
<td>أحد عشر ألفاً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>ithnaa ‘ashar-a ‘alf-an</td>
<td>اثنان عشر ألفاً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>xamsat-a ‘ashar-a ‘alf-an</td>
<td>خمسة عشر ألفاً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>‘ishruuna ‘alf-an</td>
<td>عشرون ألفاً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>xamsat-un wa-‘ishruuna ‘alf-an</td>
<td>خمسة وعشرون ألفاً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>mi‘at-u ‘alf-in</td>
<td>مئة ألف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>mi‘at-aa ‘alf-in</td>
<td>مئتا ألف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>475,000</td>
<td>‘arba‘u mi‘at-in wa-xamsat-un wa-sab‘uuna ‘alf-an</td>
<td>أربع مئة وخمسة وسبعون ألفاً</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.9.1 Counting in thousands
When used for counting, the numeral ‘arf / ‘aalaaf goes into an ‘iDaafa relationship with the following noun, which is in the genitive singular. In complex numerals over a thousand (as with mi‘a), it is the final component of the numeral that determines the number (singular or plural) and case of the counted noun.

أما عدد الفنادق فبلغ أربعة آلاف منشأة.
As for the number of hotels, it reaches 4,000 establishments.
More than 11,000 athletes came.

More than 13,000 books

153,000 Kurds

3,432 square kilometers

It has lost approximately 450,000 jobs.

1.9.2 Special cases

For the even thousands plus “one” or “two,” a special construction exists in Classical Arabic, although no instances of it were encountered in the data covered for this project.

1001 nights  ألف ليلة وليلة
   3alf-u laylat-in wa-laylat-un (‘a thousand nights and a night’)

2002 nights  ألفا ليلة وليلتان
   3alf-aa laylat-in wa-laylat-aani (‘two thousand nights and two nights’)

1.10 Reading years in dates

Because Arabic has two words for ‘year,’ 3aam عام / 3a‘waam أعوام (masculine) and 3anaa سنا / sanawaat سنوات (feminine), the numbers in year dates can vary in gender. When reading year dates, the word for ‘year’ (either 3aam or 3anaa) precedes the numeral expression and is in an 3iDaafa with it, so that the date itself is the second term of the 3iDaafa and is in the genitive case.

Because of the reverse gender rule, if the masculine noun 3aam is used, then any 3–10 digit is feminine, and if the feminine noun 3anaa is used, then any 3–10 digit is in the masculine.

In general, either the phrase ‘in the year’ 3fii 3aam-i or 3fii sanat-i is used, or the word 3aam-a or sanat-a is used in the accusative (time adverbial). Sometimes these phrases are understood and not explicitly mentioned.
1.10.1 ‘in the year 711’

1.10.1.1 USING ‘sana’

في سنة سبعة وحاد١ عشرة
\[ fii\ sanat-i\ sab'\-i\ mi'at\-in\ wa\-iHdā\ ‘ashrāt\-a \]

سنة سبعة وحاد١ عشرة
\[ sanat-a\ sab'\-i\ mi'at\-in\ wa\-iHdā\ ‘ashrāt\-a \]

1.10.1.2 USING ‘aam’:

في عام سبعة وحاد١ عشرة
\[ fii\ ‘aam\-i\ sab'\-i\ mi'at\-in\ wa\-aHad\-a\ ‘ashrā\-a \]

عام سبعة وحاد١ عشرة
\[ ‘aam\-a\ sab'\-i\ mi'at\-in\ wa\-aHad\-a\ ‘ashrā\-a \]

1.10.2 ‘in the year 1956’

1.10.2.1 USING ‘sana’

في سنة ألف وتسع منة وست وخمسين
\[ fii\ sanat-i\ ’alf\-in\ wa\-tis'\-i\ mi'at\-in\ wa\-sitt\-in\ wa\-xamsiina \]

سنة ألف وتسع منة وست وخمسين
\[ sanat-a\ ’alf\-in\ wa\-tis'\-i\ mi'at\-in\ wa\-sitt\-in\ wa\-xamsiina \]

1.10.2.2 USING ‘aam’:

في عام ألف وتسع منة وست وخمسين
\[ fii\ ‘aam\-i\ ’alf\-in\ wa\-tis'\-i\ mi'at\-in\ wa\-sitt\-in\ wa\-xamsiina \]

عام ألف وتسع منة وست وخمسين
\[ ‘aam\-a\ ’alf\-in\ wa\-tis'\-i\ mi'at\-in\ wa\-sitt\-in\ wa\-xamsiina \]

1.10.3 ‘in the year 1998’

1.10.3.1 USING ‘sana’

في سنة ألف وتسع منة وثمانون وتسعين
\[ fii\ sanat-i\ ’alf\-in\ wa\-tis'\-i\ mi'at\-in\ wa\-thamaanin\ wa-tis'iina \]

سنة ألف وتسع منة وثمانون وتسعين
\[ sanat-a\ ’alf\-in\ wa\-tis'\-i\ mi'at\-in\ wa\-thamaanin\ wa-tis'iina \]
1.10.3.2 USING ‘aam’:

في عام ألف وتسعة مئة وثمانية وتسعين

\textit{fi} ‘aam-i ’elf-in wa-tis\textsuperscript{-i} mi’at-in wa-thamaaniyat-in wa-tis\textsuperscript{’i}ina

عام ألف وتسعة مئة وثمانية وتسعين

\textit{‘aam-a} ’elf-in wa-tis\textsuperscript{-i} mi’at-in wa-thamaaniyat-in wa-tis\textsuperscript{’i}ina

1.10.4 ‘in the year 2001’

1.10.4.1 USING sana

في سنة ألفين وواحدة

\textit{fi} sanat-i ’alf-ayni wa-waaHidat-in sanat-a ’alf-ayni wa-waaHidat-in

1.10.4.2 USING ‘aam

في عام ألفين وواحد

\textit{fi} ‘aam-i ’alf-ayni wa-waaHid-in ‘aam-a ’alf-ayni wa-waaHid-in

NB: In practice, when saying year dates out loud, short vowel case endings are often omitted.

1.11 Millions and billions

Arabic has borrowed the terms “million” (\textit{milyuun} مليون) and “billion” (\textit{bilyuun} مليار), using them in much the same way as the terms for hundred and thousand. The names of the numerals themselves are masculine and when counting, they form the first term of an \textit{iDaafa} with the following noun, which is genitive singular.

\begin{itemize}
  \item انتاج الولايات المتحدة من النفط يقارب مليون برميل يوميًا.
  \item milyuun-a barmiil-in yawmiyy-an.
\end{itemize}

The oil production of the United States approaches \textit{a million barrels} daily.

عشرون مليون مشترک

\textit{‘ishruuna milyuun-a mushtarik-in} \quad \textit{bi-bilyuun-ay duulaar-in}

twenty million participants \quad for two billion dollars

\begin{itemize}
  \item يتجاوز ثمنها ثلاثة مليارات دولار.
  \item \textit{ya-tajaawaz-u thaman-u-haa thalaathat-a balaayiin-i duulaar-in}.
\end{itemize}

Their cost exceeds \textit{three billion dollars}.

\begin{itemize}
  \item منة مليون دولار ليست مستغربة.
  \item \textit{mi’at-u milyuun-i duulaar-in} lays-at mustaghra\textsuperscript{b}at-an.
\end{itemize}

\textit{A hundred million dollars} is not unusual.
2 Ordinal numerals

Ordinal numerals are essentially adjectives. They usually follow the noun that they modify and agree with it in gender, but sometimes they precede the noun as the first term of an "iDaafa structure. Occasionally they may also be used as independent substantives (i.e., “the fifth of May”; “twenty seconds”).

2.1 ‘First:’ ‘awwal and ‘uulaa

The Arabic words for “first” are ‘awwal (m.) and ‘uulaa (f.). They can either follow the noun they modify or precede it as first term of an "iDaafa.

2.1.1 ‘awwal

The word ‘awwal (plural ‘awaal) may function as the first term of an "iDaafa structure, as an adjective following a noun, or as an independent noun.

2.1.1.1 As first term of an "iDaafa, ‘awwal may be followed by either a masculine or feminine noun.

كان أول رجل في العالم يطبق الفكرة.
He was the first man in the world to apply the idea.

ووفقًا لأول إحساس للسكان
wafq-an li-‘awwal-i ‘iHSaa-‘in li-l-sukkaan-i
in conformity with the first statistics of the population

كان أول من ألقى كلمة.
kaan-a ‘awwal-a man ‘alqaa kalimat-an.
He was the first to give a speech.

بدأ أول زيارة له اليمن.
bada‘-a ‘awwal-a ziyarat-in la-hu li-l-yaman-i.
He started his first trip to Yemen.

وقد كانتا أول رياضيتين من الخليج تشاركان في الألعاب الأولمبية.
They were the first two female athletes from the Gulf to participate in the Olympic Games.

2.1.1.2 ‘THE FIRST’: The word ‘awwal may also be used independently and followed by a preposition to convey the meaning of ‘the first of; first among’:

يعتبر الأول من نوعه.
yu‘tabaru l-‘awwal-a min naw‘-i-hi.
It is considered the first of its kind.
The first of them dealt with the political situation.

The title is the first of ('among') the five titles.

It was among the most prominent Arab countries.

The feminine word ‘uulaa ‘first’ is invariable, i.e., it does not inflect for case. It can occur in either of two structures:

2.1.2.1 AS AN ADJECTIVE FOLLOWING A NOUN:

(one of the first three projects)

The first priority was given to drinking water.

2.1.2.2 AS THE FIRST TERM OF AN ‘iDaafa WITH A FOLLOWING FEMININE WORD: This construction is not frequent, but may occur.

The Saudis won the first of their matches.
2.2 Second through tenth

The words “second” through “tenth” have the pattern of the active participle of a Form I verb: faa‘il or faa‘ila.

### Masculine/Feminine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>second</td>
<td>thaanin</td>
<td>thaaniya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>third</td>
<td>thaalitha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fourth</td>
<td>raabi‘a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fifth</td>
<td>xaamis</td>
<td>xaamisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sixth</td>
<td>saadis</td>
<td>saadisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seventh</td>
<td>saabi‘a</td>
<td>saabi‘a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eighth</td>
<td>thaamin</td>
<td>thaamina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ninth</td>
<td>taasi‘a</td>
<td>taasi‘a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tenth</td>
<td>aashira</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These adjectival forms of the numbers usually follow the noun that they modify, agreeing with the noun in gender, definiteness, and case.

14 The masculine form of the word for ‘second’ thaanin (pl. thawaanin) is a defective adjective and inflects for case and definiteness in declension six. See Chapter 7, section 5.4.3.

15 The adjective saadis ‘sixth’ has a related but different lexical root (s-d-s) from the root for “six” (s-t-t).
2.2.1 Ordinal numeral as first term of 'iDaafa
Occasionally, an ordinal numeral will precede the noun it modifies, as the first term of an 'iDaafa structure. In this case it is usually the masculine form of the number that is used, even if the following noun is feminine:

في ثاني زيارته له
fī thānī ziyaarat īn la-hu
on his second visit

ثالث المشاريع التجريبية مشروع رئي.
The third of the experimental projects is an irrigation project.

يصبح ثالث عداء فقط يحمل اللقب العالمي.
yu-Sbihu thālithu ‘addaa‘-īn fī qaṭ ya-Hmilu l-Haqabu l-a‘alamiyyu.
He becomes only the third runner to hold the world championship.

2.2.2 Ordinals as nouns: thānīn/thānī
The ordinal “second” may be used as a substantive. In its masculine singular form, as a final-weak noun, it is in the defective declension.

في الثاني من أيار
fī l-thānī min ‘ayyaar-ā
on the second of May

As a unit of time measurement, “second” in Arabic is feminine thānīyya ثانية with a broken defective plural, thawānin ثوان.

بسرعة ستة كيلومترات في الثانية
bi-surrah‘at-i sittat-i kilīumitrāt-īn fī l-thānīyat-i
at the rate of six kilometers per second

أحرزت ذهبية مسجلة 75.1 ثوان.
‘ālHraz-at dhahabiyyat-ān musajjilat-ān 10.75 thawānin.
She won a gold [medal] registering [a time of] 10.75 seconds.

2.2.2.1 OTHER FORMS OF ORDINALS AS NOUNS: In addition to “second” as a noun, other ordinals may also be used in this way, especially when referring to days of the month:
### 2.3 Eleventh through nineteenth

These compound adjectives consist of the tens ordinal numeral plus a masculine or feminine form of the word for “ten” ‘ashar-a or ‘ashrat-a. Both parts of the compound adjective agree in gender with the noun they modify. However, both parts of the compound teens ordinal are always in the accusative case, no matter what the case of the noun they are modifying. The definite article goes on the first element of the compound only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eleventh</td>
<td>الحادي عشر</td>
<td>the eleventh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-Haadiy-a ‘ashr-a</td>
<td>al-Haadiyat-a ‘ashrat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twelfth</td>
<td>الثاني عشر</td>
<td>the twelfth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-thaaniy-a ‘ashar-a</td>
<td>al-thaaniyat-a ‘ashrat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thirteenth</td>
<td>الثالث عشر</td>
<td>the thirteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-thaalith-a ‘ashar-a</td>
<td>al-thaalithat-a ‘ashrat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fourteenth</td>
<td>الرابع عشر</td>
<td>the fourteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-raabi’-a ‘ashar-a</td>
<td>al-raabi’at-a ‘ashrat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fifteenth</td>
<td>الخامس عشر</td>
<td>the fifteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-xaamis-a ‘ashar-a</td>
<td>al-xaamisat-a ‘ashrat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sixteenth</td>
<td>السادس عشر</td>
<td>the sixteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-saadis-a ‘ashar-a</td>
<td>al-saadisat-a ‘ashrat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seventeenth</td>
<td>السابع عشر</td>
<td>the seventeenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-saabi’-a ‘ashar-a</td>
<td>al-saabi’at-a ‘ashrat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eighteenth</td>
<td>الثامن عشر</td>
<td>the eighteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-thaamin-a ‘ashar-a</td>
<td>al-thaaminat-a ‘ashrat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nineteenth</td>
<td>التاسع عشر</td>
<td>the nineteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-taasi’-a ‘ashar-a</td>
<td>al-taasi’at-a ‘ashrat-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

في دورتها الخامسة عشرة

في الثامن من شباط

في الخامس من شعبان

on the eighth of October

on the fifth of February

في الحادي عشر من تشرين الأول

في السنة الفجرية

في السنة الثانية من الفجر

في السنة الثالثة من الفجر

في السنة الرابعة من الفجر

في السنة الخامسة من الفجر

في السنة السادسة من الفجر

في السنة السابعة من الفجر

في السنة الثامنة من الفجر

في السنة التاسعة من الفجر

في السنة العاشرة من الفجر

في السنة الحادية عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الثانية عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الثالثة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الرابعة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الخامسة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة السادسة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة السابعة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الثامنة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة التاسعة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة العاشرة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الحادية عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الثانية عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الثالثة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الرابعة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الخامسة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة السادسة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة السابعة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الثامنة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة التاسعة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة العاشرة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الحادية عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الثانية عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الثالثة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الرابعة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الخامسة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة السادسة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة السابعة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة الثامنة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة التاسعة عشرة من شعبان

في السنة العاشرة عشرة من شعبان
Its history goes back to the twelfth century.

... a youth in his fourteenth year (‘the fourteenth [year] of age’)

He opened the sixteenth local competition.

2.4 Twentieth to ninety-ninth

The ordinals for the group of numerals from twenty to ninety-nine are of two types: straight tens (‘twentieth, fortieth, eightieth’) and compound tens (‘twenty-first, forty-fifth, fifty-third’). In both cases the tens component does not vary from its numeral shape. That is, twentieth (‘ishruuna عشرون) and twenty (‘ishruuna) look the same. However, as an adjective, ‘ishruuna may take a definite article, and it agrees in case with the noun it modifies. It remains invariable in gender.

She is celebrating her 50th birthday.

With the compound tens ordinals, the first part of the compound has the ordinal form of the number and agrees with the following noun in gender. Both parts of the tens ordinal agree in case and definiteness with the modified noun. Note that the word Haad-in حادي (def. Haadii حادي) is used to indicate ‘first’ in tens compounds.

She is celebrating her 50th birthday.
The ordinal expression for “hundredth” looks like the word “hundred.” It follows the noun it modifies and agrees in definiteness and case, but not in gender. It remains invariably feminine.

kaan-a tartiib-u-hu l-mi’at-a.
His ranking was hundredth.

3 Other number-based expressions

3.1 Fractions
With the exception of the word for “half” (niSf), fractions are of the pattern fu’l’of’aal, based on the numeral root. In syntax, the fraction word normally acts as the first term of an iDaafa structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fraction</th>
<th>Arabic Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a half</td>
<td>niSf /’anSaaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a third</td>
<td>thulth/’athlaath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a fourth, a quarter</td>
<td>rub’/’arbaa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a fifth</td>
<td>xums/’axmaas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a sixth</td>
<td>suds/’asdaas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a seventh</td>
<td>sub’/’asbaa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an eighth</td>
<td>thumn/’athmaan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a ninth</td>
<td>tus’/’atsaa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a tenth</td>
<td>‘ushr/’a’shaar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

half of the known species
niSf-u l-anwa’-i l-ma’ruufsati

half a century of time
niSf-u qarn-in min-a l-zamaani

quarter of a rial
rub’-u riyaaal-in

a quarter of a century ago
mundh-u rub’-i qarn-in
It requires two-thirds of the members of both houses of Congress.

3.1.1 Fractions as nouns

A fraction may function as a substantive or independent noun:

في النصف الثاني من القرن العشرين

in the second half of the twentieth century

كانت ثقتنا بالنفسنا أقل في الرابع الأول.

Our self-confidence was less in the first quarter.

3.1.2 Special functions of \( \text{nìSf} \):

The term \( \text{nìSf} \) may also function as the equivalent of “semi-” or “hemi-“:

في الاجتماع نصف السنوي

in the semi-annual meeting

ويحيط بالصبيحة

the northern hemisphere

And \( \text{nìSf} \) also indicates the half-hour, as does English “thirty”:

حتى العاشرة والنصف صباحاً

Hatta l’aashirat-i wa-l-nìSf-i SabaaH-an

until ten-thirty in the morning

3.2 Telling time

The ordinal numbers are used for telling time in MSA. The word “hour” (\( \text{saa’} \) ساعة) may or may not be mentioned, but the ordinal numeral is in the feminine form, agreeing with that noun.

في الساعة الثامنة

at eight o’clock (‘at the eighth hour’)

اليوم الأول الساعة الحادية عشرة صباحاً

al-yawm-a l’-aHad-a l-saa’at-a l-Haadiyat-a ‘ashrat-a SabaaH-an

today, Sunday, at 11:00 in the morning

Rather than expressions such as “seven-fifteen” or “seven-twenty” or “seven-thirty,” Arabic usually uses fractions of the hour: \( \text{rub} \), \( \text{thulth} \), and \( \text{nìSf} \):
الساعة الرابعة والربع من مساء غد
fī l-saabi‘at-i wāl-rub‘-i min masā‘-i ghad-in
at seven-fifteen (‘and the quarter’) tomorrow evening

في السابعة إلا ربعا من مساء غد
fī l-saabi‘at-i ‘illā rub‘-an min masā‘-i ghad-in
at 6:45 tomorrow evening (the seventh [hour] less a quarter)

في الخامسة والثلاث hấpس آمس
fī l-xaamisat-i wāl-thulth-an masā‘-a ’ams-i
at 5:20 (‘five and the third’) yesterday evening

في الخامسة إلا ثلثا آمس
fī l-xaamisat-i illā thulth-an masā‘-a ’ams-i
at 4:40 (‘five less a third’) yesterday evening

في العاشرة والنصف مساء اليوم
fī l-‘aashirat-i wāl-niṣf-i masā‘-a l-yawm-i
at ten-thirty (‘ten and the half’) this evening (‘the evening of today’)

The word for minute is daqīqa. In telling time, it is also used with an ordinal numeral:

الساعة الرابعة والدقيقة
al-sa‘at-u l-raabi‘at-u wāl-daqīqat-u l-xaamisat-u
4:05 (‘the fourth hour and the fifth minute’)

3.3 Days of the week
Most of the names of the days of the week are based on the numeral system, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>al-‘aHad</td>
<td>الأحد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>al-ithnayn</td>
<td>الاثنين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>al-thulaathaa‘</td>
<td>الثلاثاء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>al-‘arbi‘aa‘</td>
<td>الأربعاء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>al-xamīs</td>
<td>الخامس</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>al-jum‘a‘</td>
<td>الجمعة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>al-sabt</td>
<td>السبت</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16 The exceptive particle ‘illā (‘less,’ ‘minus,’ ‘except for’) takes the following noun in the accusative case. The following noun may be definite or indefinite.
18 The word for “Friday” is from the root j-m-‘ to gather together.’
19 The root for “Saturday” is cognate with the word “Sabbath.”
When used in syntax, the names of the days may occur independently, with the definite article, or as the second term of an 'iDaafa with the word yawm 'day,' or they may be in apposition with a time word, such as “yesterday,” “tomorrow,” or “today.”

3.3.1 Independent

الثلاثاء الماضي
al-thulaatha?h?-a l-?aaDiy-a
last Tuesday

al-thulaatha?h?-a l-jaariy-a
next Tuesday

3.3.2 In an 'iDaafa with the word yawm or 'ayyam ('day/days')

وما أم الأحاد
yawm-a l-xamiis-i
on Thursday

'ام السبت وحدها
'ayyaam-a l-'aaHaad-i
only on Saturdays

3.3.3 In apposition

في القاهرة صباح غد الاثنين
fii l-qaahirat-i SabaaH-a ghad-in-i l-ithnayn-i
in Cairo, tomorrow morning, Monday

اليوم أحد
al-yawm-a l-'aHad-a
today, Sunday

3.4 Number adjectives

These are adjectival forms of numbers that attribute a numerical quality to the item being described. They fall into two categories: the fu'aaliyy pattern and the mufa' al (PP II) pattern.

3.4.1 thunna?iyy

ثنائي 'bilateral; two-sided'

mu'aaHadaat-un thunna?iyyat-un ma'a-duwal-in 'uxraa
bilateral agreements with other countries

The two sides reviewed the bilateral relations between the two countries.

3.4.2 thulaathiyy

ثلاثي 'tripartite; trilateral'; thulaathiyya 'trilogy'

الفعل ثلاثيان
?af'aal-un thulaathiyyat-un
triliteral (lexical) roots

the tripartite committee in Geneva
al-lajnat-u l-thulaathiyyat-u fii jiniif

Spanish

Cuando se usan en la sintaxis, los nombres de los días pueden aparecer independientemente, con el artículo definido, o como el segundo término de un 'iDaafa con la palabra yawm 'día,' o pueden ser en apposition con una palabra de tiempo, como 'ayer,' 'mañana,' o 'hoy.'

3.3.1 Independiente

الثلاثاء الماضي
al-thulaatha?h?-a l-?aaDiy-a
último lunes

al-thulaatha?h?-a l-jaariy-a
próximo lunes

3.3.2 En un 'iDaafa con la palabra yawm o 'ayyam ('día/días')

وما أم الأحاد
yawm-a l-xamiis-i
en viernes

'ام السبت وحدها
'ayyaam-a l-'aaHaad-i
sólo en viernes

3.3.3 En apposition

في القاهرة صباح غد الاثنين
fii l-qaahirat-i SabaaH-a ghad-in-i l-ithnayn-i
en Caire, mañana mañana, lunes

اليوم أحد
al-yawm-a l-'aHad-a
hoy, domingo

3.4 Adjetivos numerales

Estos son formaciones adjetivales de números que atribuyen una cualidad numérica al objeto a describir. Se dividen en dos categorías: la fu'aaliyya (familiar) y la mufa' al (PP II) pattern.

3.4.1 thunna?iyy

ثنائي 'bilateral; dos-sided'

mu'aaHadaat-un thunna?iyyat-un ma-a-duwal-in 'uxraa
acuerdos bilaterales con otros países

Las dos partes revisaron las relaciones bilaterales entre los dos países.

3.4.2 thulaathiyy

ثلاثي 'tripartite; trilateral'; thulaathiyya 'trilogía'

الفعل ثلاثي
?af'aal-un thulaathiyyat-un
raíces triliterales (vocabulario)

la comisión tripartita en Ginebra
al-lajnat-u l-thulaathiyyat-u fii jiniif
An n. مصّر وقتْت عام ١٩٧٨ اتفاقاً ثلاثٍ.

that Egypt signed in the year 1978 a tripartite/trilaterial agreement

يعمل الآن على إنجاز ثلاثته.

He is working now to complete his trilogy.

3.2.3 rubaa‘iyy 'quadrilateral; four-part'

أفعال رباعية

‘af‘aal-un rubaa‘iyat-un

quadriliteral verb roots

3.2.4 mufa‘al مفعل

This number adjective takes the form of a Form II passive participle and is used to refer to something with a characteristic number of sides or features:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>مثّل</th>
<th>مربع</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>muthallath</td>
<td>murabba‘</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>triangle (n.); threefold (adj.)</td>
<td>square (n. and adj.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ثلاثة آلاف وأربع منة وثلاثون كيلومتراً مربعاً

thalaathat-u ‘alaaf-in wa-arba‘-u mi‘at-in wa-thalaathuauna kiluuumitr-an murabba‘-an

3,430 square kilometers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>مسّدّس</th>
<th>مسّدّس لعبة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>musaddas</td>
<td>musaddas-un lu‘bat-un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>six-shooter, gun, revolver; also: hexagonal</td>
<td>toy gun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Expressions of serial order: “last”

We have already seen the use of expressions for “first” and other numerical rankings. The concept of “last” or “final” is expressed by the terms ‘aaxir or ‘axiir. They are both from the same lexical root but are different in form and distribution.

4.1 ‘aaxir آخر ‘last, final’

The noun ‘aaxir is an active participle in form, signifying the final part or the end part of something. Its plural is ‘awaaxir أواخر if it refers to nonhuman entities, and ‘aaxir-unna أخرون (m. pl.) or ‘aaxir-aat أخرات (f. pl.) if it refers to humans. It is often used as the first term of an ‘iDaafa.
The word ‘*axiir*’ is an adjective meaning ‘final’ or ‘last’ both in the sense of ‘final’ and of ‘past.’ It usually follows the noun and is in concord with it in terms of gender, case, definiteness, and number.

4.2.1 *In the accusative indefinite*, it is used as an adverb meaning “finally”:

And finally she came to Cairo.
1 Overview

In Arabic as in English, prepositions refer to a location (e.g., ‘at, in’ في، بـ) or a direction (e.g., ‘to, from’ إلى، من), and the meanings of prepositions can apply to concepts of space (‘at school’ في المدرسة) or time (‘at five o’clock’ في الساعة الخامسة). Prepositions may also be used in abstract or figurative ways (‘at least’ على فكرة; ‘by the way’ في فكرة). They may occur in conjunction with verbs to convey a particular meaning (e.g., رحب ب‘to welcome’ or احترم ‘to express’). Arabic has a number of these verb-preposition idioms, where the preposition used with the verb is essential for expressing a specific meaning.

1.1 Arabic preposition types

Arabic prepositional expressions fall into two groups, the first group being a relatively small number (ten) of “true” prepositions, and the other group being a more extensive collection of locative expressions.

1.2 Huruf al-jarr حروف الجر

According to Arabic grammatical theory, the non-derived prepositions are the true, fundamental markers of location and direction, and are called Huruf al-jarr حروف الجر ‘particles of attraction’ because they “attract” a substantive (noun or adjective) in the genitive case or a suffix pronoun. These non-derived prepositions are a limited and invariable set of lexical items.

1.3 Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan ظروف مكان وظروف زمان

The derived prepositions, on the other hand, usually come from triliteral lexical roots that are also the source of verbs, nouns, and other parts of speech. They are called locative adverbs, or in Arabic Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan ظروف مكان وظروف زمان ‘adverbs of place and adverbs of time.’ These words denote location in much the same way as prepositions and in this work they are
referred to as semi-prepositions.1 These semi-prepositions may take different case inflections or, in some cases, nunation.

Each of the two preposition types has particular attributes, but the basic rule that applies to both classes is that the noun, noun phrase, or adjective object of the preposition is in the genitive case.2 If the object of the preposition or semi-preposition is a personal pronoun, it takes the form of a pronoun suffix.3

Prepositions and semi-prepositions are crucial elements in Arabic syntax, playing fundamental syntactic and semantic roles. However, their usage can be highly idiomatic and may not necessarily correspond to their English equivalents. Therefore, a wide selection of examples is included here.

2 True prepositions (Huruuf al-jarr حروف الجر)

This small set of lexical items contains the true Arabic prepositions, words that exist strictly as prepositions. There are only ten of them in Modern Standard Arabic, but they are of great frequency and they each have a wide range of meanings. They are: bi-, li-, ka-, fiti, min, ‘an, ‘ilaa, ‘alaa, Hattaa and mundhu. One of the distinctive features of this word class is that a true Arabic preposition (Harf al-jarr حرف الجر) cannot be preceded by another preposition.

Another characteristic is that only this class of prepositions can combine with verbs to create verb-preposition idioms (such as baHath-a fii ‘discuss’ and baHath-a ‘an ‘search for’).

This set of items can be divided on the basis of orthography into one-letter, two-letter, and three-letter word groups. Examples are provided to illustrate both spatiotemporal and abstract uses. In certain cases, frequent idiomatic uses are noted as well.

2.1 One-letter prepositions: bi-; li-; and ka-

The three members of this group consist of one consonant plus a short vowel. This means that they do not exist as independent orthographical items and they need to be prefixed to the noun that follows.

2.1.1 The preposition bi- ‘at, with, in, by; by means of’

The preposition bi- designates contiguity in its broadest sense. It has a wide range of uses including spatiotemporal, instrumental, and manner adverbial.

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1 In his excellent short reference work Grammaire de l’arabe d’aujourd’hui, D. E. Kouloughli refers to this group of words as “quasi-prépositions” (1994, 152), which is also an appropriate label. Abboud et al. 1997, 67–68 refer to these words as “noun-prepositions.”
2 For an in-depth semantic and syntactic analysis of Arabic prepositions see Ryding-Lentzer 1977.
3 When the object of the preposition is an invariable or non-inflected word, such as certain demonstrative pronouns or adverbs (e.g., dhaalika ‘that’ or hunaa ‘here’), it remains invariable, e.g. min hunaa ‘from here,’ or ba’id-a dhaalika ‘after that.’
2.1.1.1 Spatial-temporal location

(1) Space: The use of bi- as a spatial locative (‘in, at, on’)

bi-shaari\'i l-barakat-i
on Baraka Street

al-\'ustaadh-u bi-jaami\'at-i l-qahhirat-i
the professor at the University of Cairo

(2) Personal locative: Used in this sense, bi- may be prefixed to a noun that
denotes a state of being and attributes a condition to or describes the condition
of a person, or it may be prefixed to a noun that denotes an attribute or
temporary state.

kull-a \'aam-in wa-\'antum rijaal-un bi-l-malaabis-i

bi-xayr-in.

Many happy returns.

(3) Time: An occasion or location in time can be marked with bi-:

kaa\-n-a dhaaka bi-l-\'ams-i.
That was yesterday.

bi-munaasabat-i ta\-\'yiin-i l-shaykh-i wazıir-an li-l-difaa\-\'i
on the occasion of the appointment of the sheikh as minister of defense

bi-dhikraa muruur-i thamaanii mi\-\'at-i sanat-in \'alaa wafaat-i SalaaH-i l-diin-i
on the 800th anniversary of the death of Salah al-Din

2.1.1.2 Instrumental bi- (\(baa\) al-\'aala; \(baa\) al-\(ist\)\'\(aana\)): The preposition bi- is used to refer to an instrument (tool, material, body part) with which an action is accomplished. The instrument can be defined as “an object that plays a role in bringing a process about, but which is not the motivating force, the cause or the instigator” (Chafe 1970, 152).
Prepositions and prepositional phrases

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They cannot go in (‘by means of’) their cars.

I began with (‘by means of’) a question.

He pulled the door with both his hands.

(1) bi- for substance: A related use, but not instrumental as such, is bi- meaning ‘with’ in the sense of what constitutes the nature of a filling, a substance or an accompaniment.

ground filled with thorns

the place filled with history

It was not crowned with success.

iced tea with mint

2.1.1.3 ABSTRACT/FIGURATIVE USE: The preposition bi- has a wide range of abstract/figurative uses.

because of /on account of the mystery

with the aim of solving all the problems

with warmest condolences

by themselves.

2.1.1.4 MANNER ADVERBIAL: The preposition bi- can be used with a noun to modify a verb phrase by describing the manner in which an action took place.
When used in this way, the bi- phrase answers the question “how?” and the object of the preposition is usually an abstract noun.

They grow slowly to defend the position with redoubled intensity (‘with slowness’).

When indicating manner, bi- is sometimes prefixed to a noun such as Suura ‘manner,’ Tariiqa ‘way,’ or shakl ‘form’ followed by a modifier that provides the exact description of the manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bi-Suurat-in mustamirrat-in</td>
<td>continuously frightened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi-Turuq-in ghayr-i qaunuuniyyat-in</td>
<td>in illegal ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi-Suurat-in muxayyifat-in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1.1.5 bi- AS PREFIX FOR THE PREDICATE OF A NEGATIVE COPULA (al-xabar al-manfiyy (الخبر المنفي)): A negative verb of being such as lays-a ‘is not’ or lam ya-kun ‘was not’ may be followed by bi- as part of the predicate. This is especially the case when the predicate involves the use of a demonstrative pronoun:

لاكن أحدا منا لم يكن بهذه أهمية.
But none of them was of this importance.

ليس في كل الأحيان بهذا السوء.
It isn’t this bad all the time.

2.1.1.6 bi- ‘PER; [FOR] EVERY’: The concept of ‘per’ meaning ‘for every’ may be expressed with bi-:

seven days a week

It starts at four cents a minute.

4 For more on this topic see Chapter 11 on adverbs and adverbial expressions.
2.1.2 The preposition \textit{li}- ‘to; belonging to; for; for the purpose of’

The preposition \textit{li}- is used to express purpose, direction toward (destination), possession, the indirect object or dative concept of ‘to,’ and the benefactive concept of ‘for’ or ‘on behalf of.’

There are two spelling rules to observe with \textit{li}-.

(1) When attached to a noun with the definite article, the ‘alif of the definite article is deleted and the \textit{laam of \textit{li}- attaches directly to the \textit{laam of the definite article (e.g., \textit{li}-jaami‘at-i al-jamma‘a).}

(2) When \textit{li}- is followed by a pronoun suffix, it changes its short vowel to fatHa and becomes \textit{la-} \textit{(la-ka, la-ki, la-hu, la-haa, la-kumaa, la-humaa, la-naa, la-kum, la-kunna, la-hum, la-hunna)} except with the first person singular pronoun suffix, -\textit{i}, which is suffixed directly to the \textit{laam (l-ii \textit{li} ‘to me, for me’).}

2.1.2.1 PURPOSE, CAUSE, REASON, OR MOTIVATION: ‘IN ORDER TO, FOR THE PURPOSE OF; DUE TO, BECAUSE OF’ (\textit{laam al-ta’liil} لام التعليل): This use of \textit{li}- includes expression of the intention for doing something as well as the reason or motivation for something. “The distinction between intention and reason is made because in English the two are expressed in different terms: the former is introduced by a phrase such as ‘in order to’ or ‘for’ whereas the latter is introduced by a phrase such as ‘because of.’ In Arabic these are both considered to be under the category of \textit{ta’liil}” (Ryding-Lentzner 1977, 132).

(1) Intention:

\begin{align*}
\text{li-radm-i l-huwwat-i} & \quad \text{in order to fill the gap} \\
\text{li-da‘m-i murashshaH-i him-i l-maHalliyy-iina} & \quad \text{in order to support their local candidates}
\end{align*}

(2) Reason:

\begin{align*}
\text{li-‘asbaab-in} & \quad \text{for (‘because of’) technical reasons}
\end{align*}

2.1.2.2 POSSESSION (\textit{laam al-milk} لام الملك): MSA does not normally use a verb equivalent to ‘have.’ The preposition \textit{li}- is usually used instead to predicate the concept of belonging in both concrete and abstract senses. If the predication

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{5} To state ownership explicitly, a verb \textit{malak-a/yamlik-u} is used to mean ‘own’ or ‘possess,’ e.g.,}

\begin{align*}
\text{‘a-mlik-u HiSaan-an raa} & \quad \text{‘I own/possess a splendid horse.’}
\end{align*}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{6} Possession is also expressed by the semi-prepositions \textit{ladaa} and ‘ind-a (q.v.), although ‘ind-a is chiefly used in spoken Arabic.}
is other than present tense, an accompanying verb of being or becoming carries the tense.

(1) Present tense:

You have a package at the mail room. 

Animals have their languages too.

(2) Past tense: A past tense form of the verb "kaan-a" or sometimes another verb of being or becoming ("Saar-a, baat-a") is used to convey the past tense of a possessive prepositional construction.

He did not have any contact with them. 

She had a wonderful house.

Some of them (f.) came to have great fame.

2.1.2.3 ‘FOR’: The concept of ‘for’ can be used in spatial or temporal time extensions. When used with persons it often expresses a benefactive or dative relationship.

We can almost not find a counterpart for him. It was a storehouse for spices.
2.1.2.4 ‘TO’: With the meaning of ‘to,’ li- may be used with persons or places. When used with places, it conveys much the same directional idea as ‘ilaa;’ with persons it may express directionality, proximity, benefactive, or dative relationships.

With the meaning of ‘to,’ li- may be used with persons or places. When used with places, it conveys much the same directional idea as ‘ilaa;’ with persons it may express directionality, proximity, benefactive, or dative relationships.

2.1.2.5 ‘OF’: This is a broad category where li- is used in cases when an ‘iDaafū construction is avoided because of indefiniteness or definiteness of the noun prior to li-. It may not always translate directly into English as ‘of,’ but it often does.

It is a reflection of social reality. He said in closing of his talk

He is sitting on the seat next to her.

He is sitting on the seat next to her.

Praise [be] to God. Congratulations to you. What happened to her?

Praise [be] to God. Congratulations to you. What happened to her?

7 William Wright (1967, II: 147–48) considers li- to be “etymologically connected with ‘ilaa (‘to, toward’) and differs from it only in . . . that ‘ilaa mostly expresses concrete relations, local or temporal, whilst li- generally indicates abstract or ideal relations . . . Its principal use is to show the passing on of the action to a more distant object and hence it corresponds to the Latin or German dative.”
2.1.3 The preposition *ka-* ‘like, as; such as; in the capacity of’

This preposition is used for comparison and expresses similarity. It also designates capacity or function. It is restricted in occurrence because it is not used with personal (suffix) pronouns; however it can be used with demonstrative pronouns (e.g., *ka-dhaalika* كَذَلَكْ ‘like that, thus; likewise.’).

### 2.1.3.1 Designation of Function:

The use of *ka-* in this sense specifies capacity, status or function, equivalent to ‘as.’

- كمِصَر للِماطَاقة. *ka-maSdar-in* li-l-Taaqat-i. As a source of energy.
- كمسِتَشار للعَامِل الأرْدِني. *ka-mustashaar-in* li-l-'aahil-l-l'urdunniyy-i. As a counselor to the Jordanian monarch.

### 2.1.3.2 Similarity:

The preposition *ka-* is used to denote likeness or similarity, equivalent to English ‘like.’

- الأمر ليس كذلك على الإطلاق. *al-'amr lays-a ka-dhaalika ‘aala l-Itlaaq-i*. The situation is not like that at all.

### 2.1.3.3 *ka-maa* as Adverbial ‘as’

By suffixing *-maa*, the preposition *ka-* becomes an adverbial expression meaning ‘as’ or ‘likewise, as well.’ It is normally followed directly by a verb.


- ليس هناك فِنَانة مثلها. *lays-a hunaaka fannaamat-un mithl-l-haa*. There is no artist like her.
2.2 Two-letter prepositions

Prepositions that consist of two letters include: *fii*, *min* and ‘*an*.

2.2.1 *fii* في ‘in; at; on’

The preposition *fii* is an essential locative preposition in Arabic. It can be used to express location in space (*fii l-jaami‘*at-*i* ‘at the university’) or in time (*fii l-SabaaH-*i* ‘in the morning’), as well as figuratively. It may translate as ‘at,’ ‘in,’ or ‘on,’ depending on the context.

2.2.1.1 spatial uses of *fii*:

في المستشفى الملك خالد

*fii* mustashfaa l-malik-*i* xaalid-*i*  
al at the King Khalid Hospital

عَشَت في الطابق العلوي.

‘*ish-*tu fii l-Taabaq-*i* l-*ulwiyy-*i*.
I lived on the *top floor*.

في القدس المحتلة

*fii* l-qua*ds-*i* l-muHtallat-*i*  
in occupied Jerusalem

في مسرح الشوارع

*fii* masraH-*i* l-shawaari‘-*i*  
in the street theater

2.2.1.2 temporal uses: Used in a temporal sense, *fii* can express both punctuality and duration, i.e., points in time and extension over a span of time:

(1) Punctual use of *fii*:

في ختام الفصل الصيفي

*fii* haa*dh*ii l-*munaasabat-*i*  
on this occasion

في الوقت المناسب

*fii* l-waqt-*i* l-munaasib-*i*  
at the right time/proper time

في أول الأمر

*fii* ‘*awwal-*i* l-‘amr-*i*  
at first (‘at the first of the matter’)

في الحرم الجامعي

*fii* l-Haram-*i* l-jaami‘-iyy-*i*  
on the campus (‘the university grounds’)

كلامتم بالمادة

*ka-*maa tu-Hibb-*u*  
as you like

كما فلوا السنة الماضية

*ka-*maa fa‘al-*u* l-sanat-*a* l-maaDiyat-*a*  
like they did last year

كما تعرفون

*ka-*maa ta‘rif-*u*una  
as you (pl.) know
(2) Durative: The durative meaning of ꟑ_results from its use with nouns that indicate a span of time. Used in this sense it may be equivalent to English ‘during.’

- ꟑ + ꟑ + ꟑ: ꟑ haadhaa l-qarn-i ꟑ in (during) this century
- ꟑ + ꟑ: ꟑ l-a`waam-i ꟑ in (during) recent years

2.2.1.3 ABSTRACT/FIGURATIVE USES OF ꟑ: The locative meaning of ꟑ extends to nouns and noun phrases of many types.

- ꟑ + ꟑ: ꟑ Haalat-i ꟑ in case of any complaint
- ꟑ + ꟑ: ꟑ majaal-i ꟑ in the field of agriculture

2.2.1.4 AS A MANNER ADVERBIAL: In this idiomatic use, ꟑ is often followed by the words shakl or Suura ‘way, shape, form.’

- ꟑ + ꟑ: ꟑ shakl-in ꟑ in a basic way
- ꟑ + ꟑ: ꟑ shakl-in ꟑ in a strange way
2.2.1.5 MEANING ‘PER’

The wind velocity reached 170 kilometers an hour per hour.


The wind velocity reached 170 kilometers an hour per hour.

bi-sur‘at-i sittat-i kiiluumitraat-in fii l-thaaniyat-i xams-a marraat-in fii l-yawm-i

at the rate of six kilometers per second five times a day per day

2.2.1.6 SPECIAL FORMS OF PRONOUN SUFFIXES: Because of its long vowel ending, *fii* has special forms for the pronoun suffixes -ii ‘me,’ -hu ‘him,’ -huma ‘them [two],’ -hum, and -hunna ‘them.’ The -ii suffix merges with the -ii of *fii* and changes to -iyya; the vowel-shift suffixes, because they come after an -ii sound, change their -u vowel to -i. 8

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person:</td>
<td>&quot;fii&quot;</td>
<td>fiyya</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fii-naa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>&quot;fii-ka&quot;</td>
<td>fii-kumaa</td>
<td>fii-kunna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>&quot;fii-ki&quot;</td>
<td>fii-kumaa</td>
<td>fii-kunna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person:</td>
<td>&quot;fii-&quot;</td>
<td>fii-hi</td>
<td>fii-him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>&quot;fii-&quot;</td>
<td>fii-him</td>
<td>fii-hinna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>&quot;fii-&quot;</td>
<td>fii-haa</td>
<td>fii-hinna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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لا ريب فيه.

+lā rayb-a fii-hi.

There’s no doubt about it (‘in it’).  

---

8 The vowel-shift suffixes are the personal pronoun suffixes of the third person that normally have Damma after haa: -hu, -huma, -hum, and -hunna. This Damma shifts to kasra when preceded by a front vowel or fronted semivowel (-i- or -ii- or sometimes yaa’). See also chapter 12, 2.1.1.
2.2.2 The preposition *min* من 'of; from; than'

The preposition *min* indicates direction away from, or point of departure when used spatiotemporally. In addition, it is used to denote source, material, or quantity. It also is used in expressions of comparison, with a comparative adjective where English would use the word “than.” It can be used in figurative or abstract ways as well as concrete spatiotemporal ways. Because it ends with a *sukuun*, it sometimes needs a helping vowel. That vowel is /-a/ before the definite article and otherwise, /-i/.

2.2.2.1 *min* AS ‘FROM’: Used as a directional preposition, *min* indicates ‘from’:

من جيرانهم العرب

*min jiiraan-i-him-i l-’arab-i*  
from their Arab neighbors  
It changes from bad to worse.

2.2.2.2 *min* AS ‘OF; ONE OF*': The use of *min* is especially common in expressions of quantity, measure, or constituent parts.

قصص من الحمرا

*qiSaS-un min-a l-Hamraa*-i  
stories of the Alhambra  
They are all of this type.

المادة 125 من القانون

*al-maaddat-u 125 min-a l-qaanun-i*  
article 125 of the law  
They described it as an atmosphere of trust.

2.2.2.3 *min* AS ‘AMONG’

ومن هذه الفنون أيضاً السيرك

*wa-min haadhihi l-funun-i *ayD-an-i l-siirk-u  
and among these arts [is] also the circus

2.2.2.4 *min* AS ‘THROUGH’

دخل من الشباك.

*daxal-a min-a l-shubbaak-i*  
He came through the window.
2.2.2.5 *min* AS ‘THAN’: With comparative expressions, *min* is used as the equivalent of English ‘than.’ For more examples, see Chapter 10 on comparative adjectives.

They are spending more time than expected.

It has published more than 500 scientific studies.

2.2.2.6 THE USE OF *min* WITH LOCATIVE ADVERBS: When *min* occurs before a locative adverb (or semi-preposition), it usually changes the inflectional vowel of the adverb to *kasra* if the adverb is followed by a noun or pronoun suffix.

We find it through his commentaries.

(1) *min qabl-u*: Used with certain adverbs that end in *Damma* (such as *qabl-u*),

*min* has no effect on the final inflectional vowel as long as the adverb is not in an *iDaafa* with a following noun.9

*min qabl-u* ‘[ever] before’

*min Hayth-u* ‘regarding, as to’

2.2.2.7 PLEONASTIC OR “DUMMY” *min*: As a way of introducing a sentence, *min* may be used with a descriptive term such as a participle or adjective expressing an introductory observation, just as in English some sentences start with “It is.” This is a way to avoid mentioning the source of a judgment or evaluation and is especially common usage in media Arabic, where observations may need to be general or unattributed.

It is expected that . . .

It is natural that we undertake a visit.

---

9 See Chapter 11, section 4.1.3, and Chapter 7, section 5.3.1.3.
it is certain that the passage of twenty years . . .

His name was very close to her name.

His name was very close to her name.

It is wrong for imperialism to remain.

2.2.2.8 WITH qariib 'NEAR': An idiomatic use of min occurs with the adjective qariib 'near, close.' English speakers think of “close to” or “near to” when using this adjective, but the correct Arabic preposition to use is min.

His name was very close to her name.

2.2.2.9 SOME SPELLING VARIATIONS: When suffixed with the pronoun -ii ‘me,’ the nuun in min doubles, so that instead of *min-ii, the phrase ‘from me’ or ‘than me’ becomes minnii مَنَّي.

When followed by the pronouns maa ‘what, that, whatever,’ or man ‘whoever,’ the nuun of min is assimilated to the miim of maa, or man’ and doubles, yielding the contractions mimmaa مما ‘of/from that, from what’ and mimman مَمَّن ‘of/from whom.’

He’s older than I.

much more important than what preceded it

2.2.3 The preposition ‘an ‘from, away from; about’

Arabic grammars consider ‘an to be a true preposition, but its syntactic behavior under certain conditions also allows it to be classified as a noun.10 Its original meaning, according to Wright (1967, 2:143), was as a noun meaning ‘side.’11

E.g., when it serves as the object of the preposition min (see below).

Its nominal use survives in the expressions such as min ‘an yamiin-i-ka ‘from your right [side].’ For discussion of this point see Ryding Lentzner 1977, 94.
This preposition has two distinct meanings, one having to do with ‘distance away from,’ and the other with the concept of ‘concerning’ or ‘about.’ As other prepositions, it can have spatiotemporal and abstract uses, as well as idiomatic ones.

In terms of special spelling rules, the helping vowel used with ‘an is [i]. When suffixed to a pronoun starting with miim (maa, man) the nuun of ‘an is assimilated to the miim, and doubles: ‘ammaa، ‘amman عَمَّان. Likewise, when suffixed with the first person singular personal pronoun -i, the nuun doubles: ‘aannii عَنْتِي.

2.2.3.1 ‘an AS ‘ABOUT, REGARDING, OF, CONCERNING’

أصدق تعبير عن الوالد الوطن
’aSdaq-u ta’bir-in ‘an-i l-wila’-i li-l-waTan-i
the most sincere expression of devotion to the homeland

في برنامج عن دور الجامعة في الاختلاف الثقافي
fii barnaamaj-in ‘an dawr-i l-jaami’at-i fii l-ittiSaal-i l-thaqaafiyy-i
in a program about the role of the university in cultural contact

فهناك روايات عدة عما حدث.
fa-hunaaka riwaayaat-un ‘ammaa Hadath-a.
There are several stories about what happened.

2.2.3.2 CERTAIN VERBS REQUIRE ‘an:

الكتاب صدر عن دار العلم
al-kitaab-u Sadar-a ‘an daar-i l-’ilm.
The book was published by (‘issued from’) Dar al-’ilm. She differs from others.

2.2.3.3 ‘ON THE RIGHT; ON THE LEFT’: With directions, ‘an is used as English would use ‘on’:

عن يمينه ... وعن يساره
‘an yamii-n-i-hi ... wa-‘an yasaar-i-hi
on his right ... and on his left

2.3 Three-letter prepositions: ‘alaa على، ‘ilaa إلى، and Hattaa حتَّى

All three of these prepositions end with ‘alif maqSuura. A particular spelling feature of both ‘alaa and ‘ilaa is that the final ‘alif maqSuura converts to yaa’ when a pronoun suffix is added to the word. Owing to the shift of the ‘alif to yaa’, the third person pronoun suffixes -hu, -humaa, -hum, and -hunna shift their vowel from /-u/ to /-i/ and become -hi, -himaa, -him, and -hinna. For a model inflectional chart of ‘alay- and ‘ilay- plus pronoun suffixes see Chapter 12 section 2.3.

Note that Hattaa does not take pronoun suffixes.
2.3.1 The preposition ‘alaa علي ‘on, upon’
This preposition designates the concept of ‘on’ or ‘upon’ in general, whether spatio-temporal or figurative. In the abstract sense, it conveys also a sense of “incumbent upon.”

2.3.1.1 ‘alaa ‘ON; UPON’

(1) Spatial meaning:

He stumbled upon a skeleton.

(2) Temporal meaning: Used with a word denoting extent of time, ‘alaa has a durative sense and may indicate passage of time from a particular point in the past. This can be expressed in English in various ways.

(3) Figurative meaning: Used figuratively, ‘alaa can denote a range of meanings, some a direct reflection of the spatiotemporal concepts; others more abstract. Among those abstract meanings are the sense of ‘according to; as for’ and ‘incumbent upon.’

2.3.1.2 FIGURATIVE MEANING: Used figuratively, ‘alaa can denote a range of meanings, some a direct reflection of the spatiotemporal concepts; others more abstract. Among those abstract meanings are the sense of ‘according to; as for’ and ‘incumbent upon.’

(1) ‘up to; incumbent upon; must; have to’: Used in this sense, ‘alaa denotes a required or expected action. It is therefore followed either by the particle ‘an plus a subjunctive verb, or by a verbal noun.
We have to understand the meaning of sport. We have to begin from zero.

It is up to the state to undertake its role. He has to come here.

2.3.2 The preposition ‘ilaa إلى ‘to, towards’

The general meaning of ‘ilaa is directional towards an object. It is used spatiotemporally and also in abstract and figurative ways. When used in abstract senses it often has the sense of ‘addition to.’

Because its final letter is ‘alif maqSuura, like ‘alaa, its ‘alif converts to yaa’ when pronoun suffixes are added (see Chapter 12, section 2.3).

من هناك إلى اسطنبول
min hunaaka ‘ilaa isTanbuul-a
from there to Istanbul

to a distance of ten meters

2.3.2.1 VERBS OF MOTION PLUS ‘ilaa: Note that with many verbs of motion, it is necessary to use ‘ilaa with the point of destination.

when we came (‘to’) here

I came (‘to’) here because I am confident in my ability.

2.3.2.2 ABSTRACT/FIGURATIVE MEANINGS OF ‘ilaa:

It ended in a devastating failure. He translates into his language.

and so forth

‘from the ‘alif to the yaa’)
2.3.3 The preposition *Hattaa* حَتْيَ ‘until, up to’

*Hattaa*, although it ends with ٰalif maqSuura like ٰilaا and ٰaاa, does not take personal pronoun objects (suffix pronouns) and therefore it does not change its shape or spelling. Its meaning as a preposition is closely related to that of ٰilaا ‘to, towards’ except that it designates direction in time rather than in space.

It is important to note that *Hattaa* has at least two other functions in Arabic syntax other than as a preposition meaning ‘up to’ or ‘until’; it also is an adverb or preposition with the meaning of ‘even’ and a conjunctive particle used with verbs meaning ‘in order to.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Hattaa</em> ghuruub-i l-shams-i</th>
<th><em>Hattaa</em> fajr-i ٰams-i</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>until sunset</td>
<td>until dawn yesterday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Hattaa</em> masaaٰ-i ghad-in</th>
<th><em>Hattaa</em> l-sabٰ-i inaat-i min-a l-qarn-i ٰishriina</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>until tomorrow evening</td>
<td>up to the seventies of the twentieth century</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Hattaa fa*tH*-i-haa ٰalaا yad-i l-muslim-iina
until it was conquered (‘its conquering’) by the Muslims

*Hattaa* l-ٰishriina min ٰumri-hi
until he was twenty years old (‘until the twentieth [year] of his age’)

2.3.4 The preposition *mundhu* منْذَ ‘since; ago; for’

This preposition has the meaning of distance or extent in time and can be translated in several ways, depending on context. Like *Hattaa* and *ka*- it does not take personal pronoun objects.

2.3.4.1 *mundhu* AS ‘FOR; IN’: Used to mean ‘for’ or ‘in,’ it denotes a time span during which something goes on. Its object is usually a noun phrase that refers to a span of time:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>mundhu</em> xams-i sanawaat-in mutawaaSilat-an</th>
<th><em>mundhu</em> rubٰ-i qarn-in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>for five continuous years</td>
<td>for a quarter century</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ya*-ٰmal-u *mundhu* shahr-ayni ka-mutarjim-in.
He has been working for two months as a translator.
2.3.4.2 *mundhu* AS ‘SINCE; FROM’: When *mundhu* means ‘since,’ it specifies a particular point of time in the past where the action began. It can also mean ‘from’ when the beginning of a time period is denoted and an end specified (often used with *Hattaa* ‘until, up to’).

> كانت مخزنة في صناديق منذ الحرب.  
> *kaan-at muxazzanat-an fii Sanaadiiq-a mundhu l-Harb-i.*

They had been stored in boxes since the war.

> منذ الفستينات صارت تأخذ دورا أكبر.  
> *mundhu l-sittiinaat-i Saar-at ta’xudh-u dawr-an ’akbar-a.*

Since the sixties she has assumed a larger role.

> منذ مطلع السبعينات  
> *mundhu maTla’-i l-sab’iinaat-i*

since the beginning of the seventies

> كانوا مصطفئين منذ الصباح الباكر.  
> *kaan-uu muSTaff-iina mundhu l-SabaH-i l-baakir-i.*

They had been lined up since early morning.

2.3.4.3 ‘AGO’: In the sense of ‘ago,’ *mundhu* specifies a time in the past measured from the present time:

> قال منذ أكثر من قرن من الزمن  
> *qaal-a mundhu ’akthar-a min qarn-in min-a l-zamaan-i*

he said more than a century (‘of time’) ago

> كان قد بعث إليه منذ ثلاثة أسابيع رسالة.  
> *kaan-a qad ba’ath-a ’ilay-hi mundhu thalaathat-i ’asaabi’-a bi-risaalat-in.*

He had sent him a letter three weeks ago.

> تقديراً لجهوده ... منذ أكثر من أربعين سنة  
> *taqdiir-an li-juhuud-i-hi ... mundhu ’akthar-a min ’arba’iina sanat-in*

in appreciation of his efforts ... more than forty years ago

2.3.4.4 PRESENT PERFECT MEANING WITH *mundhu*: An action started in the past and continuing into the present is usually rendered by the present tense in Arabic, whereas in English, the present perfect is used. The preposition *mundhu* is used to specify at which point in the past the action started. This structure may occur with verbal predication or with equational predication.

> يعمل في الإدارة منذ شهرين.  
> *ya-mal-u fii l-’idaarat-i mundhu shahr-ayni.*

He has been working in the administration for two months.
I have been living here for five years.

I have loved singing since my childhood.

### 2.4 Summary of true Arabic prepositions (Hurūf al-jarr حروف الجر)

**One-letter prepositions:**

- bi-
- li-
- ka-

**Two-letter prepositions:**

- fī
- min
- ‘an

**Three-letter prepositions:**

- ‘ilāa
- ‘alāa
- Hattaa
- mundhu

### 3 Locative adverbs or semi-prepositions (Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zaman أظروف مكان وظروف زمان)

These words function in many ways as prepositions but are not “true” prepositions because

1. they are derived from triliteral lexical roots and
2. they can be preceded by a true preposition or even another semi-preposition.

Usually they show accusative case marking with fatHa, to indicate their adverbial function. Under certain circumstances, that case marker can change.12 Like true prepositions, they are normally followed by a noun in the genitive case or a pronoun suffix.

Semi-prepositions or locative adverbs are used in concrete and figurative ways, but they do not have the extensive range of abstract meanings that true prepositions have, nor are they normally used in verb-preposition idioms. Included here are examples of some of the most common ones.

### 3.1 ‘amaam-أمام ‘in front of; facing; in the face of; before; to

The word ‘amaam- refers to a position ‘in front’ or ‘before,’ both spatially and figuratively:

12 The fact that the case marker may change is considered an indicator of their close relationship to nouns.
3.1.1 ʿamaam-a as ‘against’ or ‘versus’
Idiomatically, ʿamaam-a is used in the context of sports teams to express the team ‘against’ which another team is playing.

They play another match against the Chinese team.

They won the first of their matches against Syria.

3.1.2 ʿamaam as forward position
Sometimes, ʿamaam is used as a noun referring to a forward position. When used this way it inflects for all three cases.

It represents a great step forward.

3.2 athnaa’-a and fii ‘athnaa’-i ‘during’
The noun ‘athnaa’ may be used in the accusative case to indicate ‘during’ or after the preposition fii (in the genitive case), with the same meaning.

During one of the sessions of the debates during the Gulf Crisis

3.3 bayn-a ‘between; among’

3.3.1 Repetition of bayn-a with pronoun
The semi-preposition bayn-a means ‘between’ two objects and also ‘among’ many objects. It has the peculiarity that when one or both of the objects are pronouns, bayn-a must be repeated.
3.3.2 *bayn-a* plus nouns

If both of the objects of the preposition are nouns, *bayn-a* is used only once and the second noun is conjoined to the first with the conjunction *wa-* ‘and.’ Both nouns are considered objects of the semi-preposition and both are in the genitive case. A dual noun or a plural noun may also follow *bayn-a*.

Between the two countries

He got lost in (among) the crowd.

Between the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund

Between the Palestinian delegation and the Israeli delegation

Exchange of views among the Arab leaders

The best method to create ways of understanding among nations

3.3.3 *bayn-a* after *min*

After the preposition *min*, *bayn-a* becomes *bayn-i*, as object of the preposition:

among them [is] the Lebanese representative
object. In some cases it might be preceded by a true preposition (usually min or ُـِّـِـِّـِـِـُـِـِْـِ〜

3.4.1 Locative ba’d-a
The locative use of ba’d-a includes both time and place.

بعد أربعة قرون
ba’d-a ُـِّـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِ〜

after four centuries

ماذا حدث له بعد ذلك؟
maadhaa Hadath-a la-hu ba’d-a dhaalika?

What happened to him after that?

3.4.2 ba’d after a preposition
Preceded by a true preposition, ba’d inflects in the genitive:

تِلْوَيْنَتْنَا لَكْ فِي مَا بَعْدَřَدٌـُـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِ〜

في بعد الظهر
fii ba’d-i l-Zuhr-i

in the afternoon

3.4.3 ba’d-u بعد
If there is no noun or pronoun following ba’d, it is considered an adverb. In this case, devoid of a noun or pronoun object, ba’d changes its final vowel to Damma.13

In this adverbial role, the final Damma is invariable. The expression ba’d-u is used chiefly as an adverbial of time in negative clauses, meaning '[not] yet.'

لم يحدد موعده بعد.
lam yu-Haddad maw‘id-u-hu ba’d-u.

Its date has not yet been set.

3.4.3.1 THE EXPRESSION fii-maa ba’d-u فِي مَا بَعْدَřَدٌـُ〜

‘LATER’

سَأَتَلْفَنَّكُ لِمَا بَعْدَřَدٌـُـِـِـِـِـِـِـِـِ〜

I will telephone you later.

Do it later.

i‘mal-haa fii-maa ba’d-u.

13 The final Damma on ba’d-u and on certain other semi-prepositions (qabl-u, taHt-u) is considered to be a remnant of an old locative case. This Damma has two characteristics: (1) it is invariable, even after a preposition (e.g., min qabl-u; min taHt-u); (2) it cannot be on the first term of an ‘iDaafa, that is, it cannot be followed by a noun in the genitive case or by a pronoun suffix. See Chapter 11, section 4.1.3, especially note 12.
3.5 *daaxil-a* داخَلَ 'inside, within'
The semi-preposition *daaxil-a* refers to a location inside or on the interior of something:

- داخِلِ الدِّولةِ الإِسلامِيَّةَ
- *daaxil-a l-dawlat-i l-‘islaamiyyat-i*
- inside the Islamic state
- ليَنْغلُقُوا داخِلَ الحُدُودِ
- *li-ya-nghaliq-uu daaxil-a l-Huduu-d-i*
- to be locked inside the borders

### 3.5.1 After a true preposition

After a true preposition, *daaxil-* inflects for the genitive case.

- في داخل الأسفنج
- *fii daaxil-i l-isfanj-i*
  - on the inside of the sponge

3.6 *Didd-a* ضَدَّ 'against; versus'

- يَشِنَّ حَرَباً ضَدَّ الدِّولةِ التركيَّةَ.
- *ya-shunn-u Harb-an Didd-a l-dawlat-i l-turkiyyat-i*
- He is launching a war against the Turkish state.

3.7 *Dimn-a* ضُمنَ 'within; inside; among'

- ضَمنَ قوَّاتٍ العُمَّ المُتَحَدَّة
- *Dimn-a quwwaat-i l-‘umam-i l-muttaHidat-i*
  - within the powers of the United Nations

- أَرَاضٍ كَانَ يَجِبُ أَنْ تَكُونُ ضُمنٍ حَصُصُهُم
- "*araaD-in kaan-a ya-jib-u an ta-kuun-a Dimn-a HiSSat-i-him*
  - lands [which] should have been [included] within their portion

3.8 *duun-a* مَن دونَ 'without'
The word *duun* by itself literally means ‘below, under’ and it can be used by itself marked with a *fatHa* as a semi-preposition meaning ‘without.’ However, it often occurs in combination with *min* or *bi-* as a compound prepositional phrase meaning ‘without.’

### 3.8.1 *duun-a*

- استِخدام بعضها دون بعضها الآخر
- *istixdaam-u ba‘D-i-haa duun-a ba‘D-i-haa l-‘aaxar-i*
  - using some of them without the others
3.8.2 min duun-i

السلام غير ممكن من دون هذا البلد.

Peace is not possible without this country.

3.8.3 bi-duun-i

قهرة بدون كافين

daiccafeinated coffee (‘without caffeine’)

يبقى تعليمها بدون هدف.

Teaching it remains aimless

(‘without a goal’).

3.9 fawq-a ‘above; upon; on top of; over’

يسير على عجلات فوقها.

It goes along on wheels [which are] above it.

ما فوقه وما تحته

what is above it and below it

فوق سطح منزله

on [top of] the roof of his house

3.10 fawr-a ‘immediately upon; immediately after; right after’

نقل إلى مستشفى الجامعة فور إصابته.

He was transported to the university hospital right after being hit.

3.11 Hasab-a ‘according to; in accordance with’

حسب نص القرار

according to the text of the resolution

3.12 Hawl-a ‘about, regarding; around’

This semi-preposition has two distinct meanings, one being ‘about’ in the concrete physical sense of ‘surrounding’ or ‘around’ and the other being ‘about’ in the sense of ‘regarding’ or ‘with regard to.’
التدخل الأمريكي حول العالم

الوضع في الشرق الأوسط

American intervention around the world

حوالى موضوع ذات اهتمام مشترك

about topics of common concern

3.13 Hawaali ‘approximately’
The word Hawaali is not the typical locative adverb or semi-preposition ending in fatHa, yet it serves much the same function, being followed by a noun in the genitive case.

في جلساته حوالي مئة باحث.

In its sessions [were] approximately 100 researchers.

3.14 ‘ibbaan-a ‘during’

إبان الشتاء

‘ibbaan-a l-shitaa‘i during the winter

3.15 ‘ithr-a ‘right after; immediately after’

إثر اجتماعهم

‘ithr-a jtimaa‘i-him right after their meeting

3.16 ‘izaa‘a ‘facing; in the face of’

إزاء القضايا المصرية

izaa‘a l-qaDaayaa l-miSriyyat-i in the face of Egyptian problems

3.17 ladaa ‘at, by; upon; to; having’

This locative adverb denotes possession and proximity. Like ‘ilaan and ‘alaan, it changes its final ‘alif maqSuura to yaa when it has a personal pronoun suffix. See model inflectional chart of ‘alaan + pronoun suffixes, Chapter 12, section 2.3.
3.17.1 *ladaa* showing possession:

They [two] have many things in common.

3.17.2 *ladaa* as ‘to; at; with’

A particular use of *ladaa* is to denote the country to which an ambassador is designated.

3.17.3 *ladaa* as ‘upon; at the time of’

and upon their refusal of that

3.18 *ma*-a ‘with’

The basic meaning of *ma*-a has to do with accompaniment or association and is almost always equivalent to English ‘with.’ Note that it is not used for indicating instrumental concepts; *bi*- is used for that. It is also possible to use *ma*-a to express possession of something concrete that people could “have with” them, such as a wallet or keys. This expression of possession does not indicate permanency or the concept of ‘belonging to.’

3.18.1 Accompaniment or association

with relatives and friends

14 The word *ma*-a may seem like a true preposition because it is a lexical primitive and is sometimes used in verb-preposition expressions (*naaqash-a ma*-a ‘to discuss with,’ *taawawa ma*-a ‘to equate with,’ *ta*aawan-a ma*-a ‘to cooperate with,’ *ijtama*-a ma*-a ‘to meet with’). The eighth-century Arabic grammarian Sibawayhi, however, cites the phrase *dhahab-a min ma*-i-hi ‘he left him,’ showing that *ma*-a can sometimes be the object of another preposition. Sibawayhi 1970, 1:177.
They want to deliberate with the Americans.

With everyone we will progress for the sake of everyone.

I have a problem with that man. Do you have matches?

3.18.2 Possession
A sense of immediate possession (on or near a person) is conveyed by ma‘-a.

She has the treasure inside the box. Do you have matches?

3.18.3 Use of ma‘-an معاً as ‘together’
To convey the meaning of ‘together’ ma‘-a takes an adverbial indefinite accusative ending -an:

living together in Jerusalem

3.19 mithl-a ‘like; as’
The semi-preposition mithl-a indicates similarity. It is close in meaning to the preposition ka- ‘like, as.’ However, it is more flexible than ka- because it can take suffix pronoun objects (see section 2.1.3 above).

like any other people like a strong medicine

3.19.1 mithl + demonstrative + noun ‘such as this/these; such a’
An idiomatic use of mithl occurs with a demonstrative pronoun, meaning ‘such a’ or ‘such as this/these.’
Prepositions and prepositional phrases

This year he succeeded in signing such an agreement.

He cannot work in such an atmosphere.

Things such as these have their resonance.

3.20 naHw-a ‘toward; about; approximately’

This semi-preposition has either a directional meaning of ‘toward’ or a figurative use of ‘approximately, about.’

3.20.1 naHw after a preposition

After a preposition or another semi-preposition, naHw- takes the genitive case:

3.21 Words based on the root q-b-l

The root q-b-l, which denotes anteriority, is used in several forms that signify different degrees or variations on the concept.

3.21.1 qabl-a ‘before; prior to; ago’
3.21.2 **qubayl-a** قبيل ‘a little before, just before’

This is a diminutive form of *qabl-a* that denotes a short period of time.

- قبيل العودة إلى الكويت
  - qubayl-a *l-intiqaal-i* ilaа
  - qubayl-a *l-awadat-i* ilaа *l-kuwayt-i*
  - just before moving to Sidon
  - just before returning to Kuwait

3.21.3 **qubaalat-a** قبالة ‘opposite; facing’

- في مياه المحيط الأطلسي قبالة إيرلندا
  - fii miyaaح-i l-muHiit-i l-‘aTlasiyyy-i
  - qubaalat-a *‘iirlandaa*
  - in the waters of the Atlantic Ocean opposite Ireland

3.21.4 **muqaabil-a** مقابل ‘opposite; in exchange for; opposed to’

-كسبوا بهدفين مقابل هدف واحد
  - kasab-uu bi-hadaf-ayni
  - muqaabil-a hadaf-in waaHid-in.
  - They won by two goals to one (‘as opposed to one’).

3.21.5 **min qibal-i** من قبل ‘on the part of; by’

- تلاقي إقبالاً من قبل المواطنين
  - tulaaqii *‘iqbaal-an* min qibal-i
  - l-muwaaTinaat-i.
  - It meets with acceptance on the part of female citizens.

- من قبل زملائه في الحزب
  - min qibal-i zumalaah‘-hi fii l-Hizb-i
  - on the part of his colleagues

3.22 Words based on the root *q-r-b*

The root *q-r-b* denotes proximity and is used chiefly in two forms.

3.22.1 **quraabat-a** قراءة ‘almost; close to’

- قراءة ثلاثة عشر مليون دولار
  - quraabat-a *thalaathat-a* ‘ashar-a milyuun-a duulaar-in
  - close to thirteen million dollars

3.22.2 **qurb-a** قريب ‘near; close to; in the vicinity of’

- في جنوب تركيا قريب الحدود السورية
  - fii januub-i turkiyaa
  - qurb-a l-Huduuд-i l-suuriyya
  - in southern Turkey near the Syrian border[s]
3.23 *siwaa* سُوِي ‘other than; except’

Used following a negative clause, *siwaa* indicates an exception. This use of *siwaa* after the negative is a common way to phrase restrictive expressions that would normally be expressed in English with ‘only.’

لا يرى سوى سبيل واحد

lā ya-raa *siwaa sabiil-in waaHid-in.*

He sees only one way (‘he does not see but one way’).

ليس معهما سوى مترجمهم.

*lays-a ma‘-a-humaa siwaa mutarjimay-himaa.*

Only their two translators were with them.

3.24 *taHt-a* تحت ‘underneath, under; below’

This semi-preposition refers to a location below, underneath or under something else.

عَرَط عَلَيْهَا تَحْت النَّرَابَ.

‘aθar-a ‘alay-haa *taHt-a l-turaab-i.*

He discovered it under the ground.  

نَحْت إِشْرَافِ الأَمْمِ الْمُتَحَدَّة.

*taHt-a ‘ishraaf-i l-umam-i l-muttaHidat-i* under the supervision of the United Nations

3.25 *Tiwaal-a* طوال ‘during; for’

طَوَالِ السَّنَوَاتِ الْمَاضِيَة

*Tiwaal-a l-sanawaat-i l-maaDiyat-i* during past years; in years past

طَوَال أَكْثَرِ مِنْ أَرْبَعِ عَقُود

*Tiwaal-a ‘akthar-a min ‘arba‘at-i ‘uquud-in* during/for more than four decades

3.26 *tujaah-a* تجاهَ ‘facing, opposite, in front of; towards’

تجُهَ الدُّولِ النَّامِيَة

*tujaah-a l-duwal-i l-naamiyat-i* facing the developing nations

سلُوكَ الدُّوْلَةِ تْجَاهَ الْشَّرْقِ

*suluuk-u l-gharb-i tujaah-a l-sharq-i* the behavior of the West towards the East

3.27 *waraa‘-a* وراءَ ‘behind; in back of’

تركَ الدِّيْمُوْنَ وَراَهِمَ

*tarak-a-hu l-muslim-uuna waraa‘-a-hum.*

The Muslims left it behind (them).

ظَلَّ يَسَعُ وَراَهُ هَدِفُهُ

*Zall-a ya-s‘aa waraa‘-a hadaf-i-hi.* He continued to pursue/run after his goal.
3.28 wasT-a ‘in the middle of; in the midst of; among’

wasT-a l-madiinat-i
in the middle of the city
wasT-a haadhihi l-durub-i
among these alleyways

3.29 xalf-a ‘behind; in back of’

maa ya-kmun-u xalf-a-haa min Haqaa‘iq-a
that which is hidden behind it of truths
huwa mustabi‘-un xalf-a sitaarat-in.
He is hidden behind a curtain.

3.30 xaarij-a ‘outside; outside of’

daaaxil-a ’uubiik wa xaarij-a-hu
inside OPEC and outside of it
’ilaq ’aswaq-in xaarij-a l-mamlakat-i
to markets outside the kingdom

3.31 xilaal-a ‘during’; min xilaal-i

xilaal-a l-fi uSuur-i l-wusTa‘
during the Middle Ages
xilaal-a diraasat-in muTawwalat-in
during an extended study

3.32 ‘abr-a ‘across, over’

wa ya-mtadd-u ‘abr-a qaarrat-ayni.
It extends across two continents.
‘abr-a ‘uquud-in min-a l-zaman-i
across decades of time

3.33 ‘aqib-a ‘right after, immediately after’

‘aqib-a ‘ilaan-i-haa
immediately after her announcement
dhaalika ‘aqib-a tadaxxul-in ‘aali l-mustawaa
that was right after a high-level intervention
3.34 ‘ind-a’ ‘on the part of’; ‘in the opinion of’; ‘near, by, at, upon’; ‘chez’

The semi-preposition ‘ind-a’ denotes location in space or time. It can also denote temporary location at the “place” where someone lives or works (e.g., huwa ‘ind-a l-Tabib-i ‘He’s at the doctor’s’).

In spoken Arabic, ‘ind-a’ plays a fundamental role in the expression of possession, and some of that possession role has crept into MSA, especially in the relating of conversations or interviews where people are quoted directly. The more usual preposition to use for possession in formal MSA is li-, or the semi-preposition ladaa.

3.34.1 ‘ind-a’ ‘on the part of; in the opinion of’

عدم الفهم عند الكثير من قراءي
‘adam-u l-fahm-i ‘ind-a l-kathiir-i min qurraa’-ii
the lack of understanding on the part of many of my readers

الإسلام يتساوي عندهم مع التطرف.
al-’islaam-u ya-tasaawaa ‘ind-a-hum ma’a l-tarruf-i.
Islam for them (in their opinion’) equates with extremism.

3.34.2 Location in time

ندت القبض عليه
‘ind-a ‘ilqaa’-i l-qabD ‘alay-hi
at the time of his arrest

بالقرب من شاطئ البحر عند انحساب المر
bi-l-qurb-i min shaaTi’-i l-bahri

‘ind-a nsiHaab-i l-madd-i
near the seashore at ebb tide

3.34.3 Location in space

يجب التوقف عند
ya-jib-u l-tawaqquf-u ‘ind-a-hu.
It is necessary to stop at his [place].

عندهم آخر الطابور
‘ind-a ‘aaxir-i l-Taabuur-i

3.34.4 Possession

عند مسألة مع هذا الرجل
‘ind-ii mushkilt-un ma’a haadhaa l-rajul-i.
I have a problem with that man.

عندهم أصدقاء
‘ind-a-hum ‘aSdiqaa’-u.
They have friends.

3.34.5 Adverbial of time

‘ind-a may be suffixed with the adverbial markers -maa and -idhin to serve as an adverb denoting ‘time when.’ This expression is usually followed directly by a verb.
3.34.5.1  \textit{'ind-a-maa} ‘WHEN’

كان في العشرين من عمره عندما وصل إلى لندن.
\textit{kaan-a fii l-\textasciitilde{i}shriina min 'umr-i-hi \textit{'ind-a-maa waSal-a \textasciitilde{ilaa landan}.}

He was twenty years of age when he arrived in London.

\textit{\textasciitilde{ilaa landan}.}

3.34.5.2  \textit{'ind-a-idhin} ‘AT THAT POINT IN TIME; THEN’

بدأت عندما انخفض مستوى البحر.
\textit{\textasciitilde{ilaa shari\textasciitilde{i}}-\textasciitilde{i}}

She began at that point to make some drawings.

4 Prepositions with clause objects

Prepositions may take entire clauses as their objects, in which case they may be followed by the subordinating conjunctions \textit{'an} or \textit{'anna}. For more on subordinate clauses, see Chapter 19. Here are two examples:

\textit{\textasciitilde{ilaa l-thiqat-i}}

as though you were eating fish

They described it as an atmosphere of trust.
Questions and question words

Question formation and the use of question words in Arabic are not complex. In general, the interrogative word is placed at the beginning of a sentence. There is no inversion of word order, usually just the insertion of the question word.

The most common question words in Arabic include:

- ْبِيْنَ (‘a yn-a) ‘where’
- ْأَيَّ (‘ayy) ‘which; what’
- كَمْ (kam) ‘how much; how many’
- كِيْفْ (kayf-a) ‘how’
- لَمَذَا (li-maadhaa) ‘why’
- مَا (maa) ‘what’
- مَاذَا (maadhaa) ‘what’
- مَنْ (man) ‘who/whom’
- مَتِى (mataa) ‘when’
- ْهَلْ (hal) introduces yes/no question
- ْأَ (‘a-) introduces yes/no question

1 ْبِيْنَ (‘a yn-a) ‘where’

The question word ْبِيْنَ (‘a yn-a) is invariable, even after a preposition. It always ends with فَتْحِا.\(^1\)

- إلى ْبِيْنَ يا سيدي؟ (ilaa ْبِيْنَ, yaa siidii?)
- من ْبِيْنَ أنتم؟ (min ْبِيْنَ ْانتَا?)
- ْبِيْنَ هي اللجنة الوزارية؟ (‘a yn-a hiya l-lajnat-u l-wizaariyyat-u?)

Where to, Sir? Where are you from? Where is it, the ministerial committee?

\(^1\) Note that the question word ْبِيْنَ (‘a yn-a) is not used as the locative adverb ‘where.’ To express an idea such as “at a university where he teaches,” the adverb حَيْثْ is used for ’where’: fi jami’at-in Hayth-u yu-darris-u. See Chapter 11, section 3.1.3 for more on Hayth-u.
1.1 ‘ayn-a-maa ‘‘wherever’
With the addition of the function word maa, interrogative ‘ayna becomes a conditional particle with the meaning of ‘wherever.’

‘ayn-a-maa kunt-a
wherever you are

2 ‘ayy-un ‘‘which; what’
As a question word, ‘ayy- can be an indefinite noun, meaning ‘which one?’ or as the first part of a construct phrase, it specifies ‘which + noun.’ It may alternatively be followed by a pronoun suffix (e.g., ‘ayy-u-hum? ‘which of them?’). It takes the full set of three case endings, depending on its function and placement in the sentence.2

li-‘ayy-i dawlat-in ta-dhab-u? ‘ayy-un min-a l-murashshaH-ayni?
To which country are you going? Which one of the (two) candidates?

‘ayy-u ‘arnab-in?
Which rabbit?/What rabbit?

3 kam ‘‘how much; how many’
This question word is usually followed by a singular indefinite noun in the accusative case.3

kam naw-an min-a l-asmaak-i ta-rif-iina-hu? kam dars-an ‘akmal-tum?
How many kinds of fish do you (f.) know? How many lessons have you (m. pl.) completed?

3.1 kam ‘‘kam + nominative
When the interrogative word kam has the meaning of ‘how much [is],’ it is followed by a definite noun (either with the definite article or with a pronoun suffix) in the nominative case.4

2 The word ‘ayy- also has a non-interrogative use as a determiner meaning ‘any.’ For more on this see Chapter 9, section 5.2.
3 The accusative case after kam is considered to be a form of tamyiz, or accusative of specification. For more on tamyiz, see Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.7 and Chapter 11, section 6.
4 In this use of kam, it is actually a fronted predicate of an equational sentence; the noun is in the nominative as the subject/topic of an equational sentence.
What time is it? (‘How much is the hour?’) How old is he? (‘How much is his age?’)

4 kāyf-ā ‘how’
The interrogative word kāyf-ā is invariable in case. It always ends with fatHa. It may be followed by a verb or by a noun.

kāyf-ā l-Haal-u?
How are you? (‘How is the condition?’)

kāyf-ā ‘araf-ti?
How did you (f.) know?

5 li-maadhaa ‘why; what for’
This is a compound word consisting of the preposition li- ‘for’ and the question word maadhaa ‘what.’ Thus its meaning of ‘what for’ or ‘why.’

l-maadhaa tu-Hibb-u l-sibaaHat-a?
Why do you like swimming?

fa-l-maadhaa laa ta-truk-u l-‘umuur-a ‘alaa Tabii‘at-i-haa?
So why don’t you leave matters as they (‘naturally’) are?

6 maa mā and maadhaa mā ‘what’
The interrogatives maa and maadhaa have similar meanings but are used in different contexts. In general, maa is used in questions involving equational (verbless) sentences and maadhaa is used with verbs.5

6.1 maa ‘what’
Interrogative maa is used with verbless predications.

maa sm-u-ka?
What is your (m.) name?

maa ra’y-u-ki?
What is your (f.) opinion?

5 Interrogative maa is probably not used with verbs because it is a homonym with negative maa, which when used with a verb indicates negation (e.g., maa ‘adrii ‘I don’t know.’).
What is the difference? What is the reason?

When used to ask a question with a longer noun phrase, *maa* may be followed directly by an independent third person personal pronoun acting as a copula in the question:

What is the first task ('What is it, the first task')?

What are the most important problems of pollution? ('What are they, the most important problems of pollution')?

6.2 *maadhaa* ‘what’

The question word *maadhaa* is used mainly with verbs:

What happened? What [will] your family do?

What do you think? What does it eat?

6.2.1 *maadhaa* as pronoun

Sometimes *maadhaa* is used like a relative pronoun meaning 'that which,' or 'what':

I don’t understand what you are saying.

6.2.3 *maadhaa* ‘an ‘what about’

The interrogative phrase *maadhaa* ‘an is used to express a general query about a topic.

What about the other leaders?
7 man ‘who; whom’
This word is used both as an interrogative pronoun and as an indefinite pronoun. Because it ends in sukuun, it needs a helping vowel, kasra, if it precedes a consonant cluster.

من هو؟ من الرئيس السابق؟
man huwa? man-i l-ra’ iis-u l-saabiq-u?
Who is he? Who is the former president?

8 mataa ‘when’
The question word mataa is also invariable, ending in ‘alif maqSuura. Note that mataa is used only as an interrogative, not as a connective adverb meaning ‘when’.

متي وجدته؟ متي انتشرت الحياة الحضارية؟
mataa wajad-ta-hu? mataa ntasharat-i l-Hayaat-u l-Haariyyat-u?
When did you find it? When did civilized life spread?

متي يرحل عن بيروت؟ متي وصلت؟
mataa ya-rHal-u ‘an bayruut-a? mataa waSal-at?
When is he departing from Beirut? When did she arrive?

9 hal and ’a- ’i ‘interrogative markers
Both hal and ’a- are prefixed to statements in order to convert them into yes/no questions. They have equivalent functional meaning, but different distribution: hal is used with a wide range of constructions; ’a- is restricted in that it is not used before a noun with the definite article or words that start with ’alif plus hamza, such as ‘anta ‘you.’ Neither word is translatable into English, since shift in word order is the signal of yes/no question formation in English.

9.1 hal 
هل أنا كمبيوتر؟ هل روعي الرأي العام؟
hal ’anaa kumbyuutir? hal ruu’iy-a l-ra’y-u l’aamm-u?
Am I a computer? Was public opinion taken into account?

هل بالإمكان أن نبدأ؟ هل أخذت الزجاجة من هنا؟
hal bi-l?’imkaan-i ‘an na-bda’-a? hal ’axadh-ta l-zujaajat-a min hunaa?
May we begin? Did you take the glass from here?

6 See time adverbials in Chapter 18, and in Chapter 11, section 3.1.3.
9.2 ئا-اَی

This ٌ'a'lif plus hamza is prefixed to a word, but not if the word begins with ٌ'a'lif:

لايس كذلك؟
‘a-lays-ا ka-dhaalika?
Isn’t that so?
أها سمير؟
‘a-haadhaa samiir-un?
Is this Samir?

9.2.1 ئا-laa

Negative yes/no interrogatives are usually prefaced with ٌ‘a-laa:

لا يعني تعصبًا؟
‘a-laa ta-ْنii ta‘aSSub-an?
Doesn’t it mean bigotry?
أ لا يعني تقهقرًا؟
‘a-laa ya-ْنii taqahqur-an?
Doesn’t it mean regression?

A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
Connectives and conjunctions

Connectives – words or phrases that connect one part of discourse with another – are a pervasive feature of MSA syntax. Arabic sentences and clauses within a text are connected and interconnected by means of words or phrases (such as ṭaḥabbūr ‘and’ ) that coordinate, subordinate, and otherwise link them semantically and syntactically. This frequent use of connectives results in a high degree of textual cohesion in Arabic writing that contrasts significantly with the terser style of written English. Not only are parts of Arabic sentences coordinated or subordinated in various ways, but most sentences within a text actually start with a connective word that links each sentence with the previous ones.

Even paragraphs are introduced with connectives that connect them to the text as a whole. As Al-Batal remarks: “MSA seems to have a connecting constraint that requires the writer to signal continuously to the reader, through the use of connectives, the type of link that exists between different parts of the text. This gives the connectives special importance as text-building elements and renders them essential for the reader’s processing of text” (1990, 256).

Connective words that link sentences within a text are referred to as “discourse markers.” Analysis of discourse markers in English has tended to focus on spoken conversation whereas analysis of discourse markers in Arabic (Al-Batal 1990, Johnstone 1990, Kammensjö 1993) has focused particularly on the structure of written narrative. Arabic writing has been characterized as syndetic, that is, as using conjunctions to link discourse elements; and it has also been described as formulaic, that is, relying on “fixed sets of words” (Johnstone 1990, 218) to make

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1 I use the term “connective” after Al-Batal 1990, whose research on Arabic connectives has been crucial to our understanding of their nature and importance. He gives the following definition: “any element in a text which indicates a linking or transitional relationship between phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs or larger units of discourse, exclusive of referential or lexical ties” (1994, 91). Other terms used to refer to these words include “connectors,” “function words,” and “particles.”

2 Schiffrin, in her work Discourse Markers, brings attention to the importance of cohesive elements as interpretive links that connect the “underlying propositional content” of one discourse element with another (1987, 9). She states that markers work “on the discourse level” and that they “have a sequencing function of relating syntactic units and fitting them into a textual or discourse context” (1987, 37).
semantic and syntactic links. In certain instances, short function words such as wa- ‘and,’ actually function in Arabic texts as punctuation marks would function in English texts. These connective words are therefore not always translatable because they sometimes perform strictly grammatical functions rather than adding semantic content. At the discourse or text level, the presence of appropriate connectives is an important feature of “acceptability,” according to Al-Batal, who notes that although “no explicit or formal rules exist,” interconnection between sentences is essential to authentic Arabic texts.³

Connectives are therefore an important topic in studying Arabic. However, like the category of adverbials, the class of words and phrases used as connectives is large and heterogeneous. Different types of words and word groups serve as connectives: conjunctions, adverbs, particles, and also certain idiomatic or set phrases. These elements link at different discourse levels (phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph) and in different ways, some simply coordinating or introducing text elements, and others requiring particular grammatical operations (e.g., subjunctive mood on verb, accusative case on nouns). There are therefore differences in the form, distribution, and function of connectives.⁴ Moreover, different researchers classify members of these categories in different ways.

At the sentence level, traditional Arabic grammarians classify particles (Huruuf حروف) according to whether or not they have a grammatical effect on the following phrase or clause. For instance, the particle kay كي ‘in order that’ requires the following verb to be in the subjunctive mood; the negative particle lam لم requires the verb to be in the jussive mood; and the subordinating conjunction ānā أن ‘that’ requires the subject of the following clause to be either a suffix pronoun or a noun in the accusative case. Thus the operational effect (‘amal عمل) of the function word is a primary feature in its classification. The effects of these particles on the syntax and inflectional status of sentence elements form a major component in the theoretical framework and analysis of Arabic syntax.⁵

Along these lines, connectives are presented here according to whether or not they exercise a grammatical effect on the following sentence element.

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³ Al-Batal points out that a lack of sentence-initial connectives in otherwise “perfectly grammatical” Arabic texts written by nonnative speakers of Arabic reveals a stylistic gap that affects the acceptability of such texts, whose structures do not correspond with “the frequent usage of connectives that is characteristic of Arabic written texts” (1990, 253).

⁴ For further discussion of the nature of Arabic connectives, see Al-Batal 1990 and 1994 as well as Johnstone 1990. For further description and exercises with Arabic connectives, see al-Warraki and Hassanein, 1994.

⁵ For analysis of Arabic syntactic theory in English, see Beeston 1970; Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughli 1990, 49–72; Cantarino 1974–1976 (all three volumes); Holes 1995, 160–247 and Wright II:1–349.
In one class are the many connecting words that serve linking functions only, without requiring a grammatical change, called here “simple linking connectives.”

In the other class are the “operative particles” (Huruuf ‘aamila حروف عاملة) that require inflectional modification of the phrase or clause that they introduce. This class includes, for example, particles that require the subjunctive or the jussive on following verbs, or particles that require the accusative case on nouns, adjectives, and noun phrases. These “operative particles” are dealt with under separate headings in this book. See the sections on subjunctive, jussive, negation and exception, ‘inna and her sisters, and the section on cases and their functions.

In some instances, a connective may have more than one function and may fall into both classes: simple linking and operative.

This chapter deals primarily with simple linking connectives.

1 wa- ‘and’ (waaw al-‘aTīf)
This connective is of the highest frequency of all (almost 50 percent of all Arabic connectives) and occurs at all levels of text to “signal an additive relationship” (Al-Batal 1990, 245).

1.1 Sentence starter wa-
Sentences within an expository text after the introductory sentence are often initiated with wa- ‘and’ and/or another connective expression. The following examples are beginnings of typical sentences. As a sentence-starter, wa- is considered good style in Arabic, but it is not usually translated into English because English style rules normally advise against starting sentences with ‘and.’

وغادر القاهرة أمس مساعد وزير الدفاع ... 
wa-ghaadara l-qaahirat-a 'ams-i musaa'id-u waziir-i l-difaa'-i ... (And) the assistant minister of defense left Cairo yesterday ...

ووصل الرئيسان إلى العاصمة أمس ... 
wa-waSal-a l-ra'isiis-aani 'ilaa l-'aaSimat-i 'ams-i ... (And) the two presidents arrived in the capital yesterday ...

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6 These include what Al-Batal refers to as Huruuf muhmala ‘inoperative particles,’ Huruuf za'ida ‘redundant or augmentative particles,’ and Huruuf al-'aTīf ‘coordinating particles’ (1990, 236).

7 For example, wa- as a coordinating conjunction does not exercise a grammatical effect on the following phrase, but when used as the waaw al-ma’īyyu, ‘the waaw of accompaniment,’ it requires the following noun to be in the accusative case. For more on this see Baalbaki 1986 and Wright 1967, II:83–84.

8 According to Schiffrin (1987, 141) “and” is “a discourse coordinator; the presence of and signals the speaker’s identification of an upcoming unit which is coordinate in structure to some prior unit.”
1.2 Coordinating conjunction *wa*

The coordinating conjunction *wa*—‘and’ functions as an additive term within sentences to link clauses, phrases, and words. In particular, Arabic uses *wa* in lists where in English a comma would be used to separate each item. The items in the list retain the case determined by their role in the sentence.

From these and the Kurdish *wa*-tu-shiir-u maSaadir-u kurdiyyat-un ilaa ‘anna . . .

(And) there are scholars who believe that . . .

(And) Kurdish sources indicate that . . .

There areSuchscholars who believe that . . .

1.2 Coordinating conjunction *wa-

The coordinating conjunction *wa*—‘and’ functions as an additive term within sentences to link clauses, phrases, and words. In particular, Arabic uses *wa* in lists where in English a comma would be used to separate each item. The items in the list retain the case determined by their role in the sentence.

منها مصر والأردن والكويت ولبنان وقطر وعمان ودولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة

والملكة السعودية

min-haa miSr-u wa-l-`urdunn-u wa-l-kuwayt-u wa-qaTar-u wa-`umaan-u wa-dawlat-u l-imaaraat-i l-arabiyyat-i l-muttahidat-i wa-l-mamlakat-u l-mamlakat-u l-sa-wa-

Among them are Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Oman, the (‘State of’) the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

 يتعلق بقضايا العراق والسودان والبوسنة وكشمير والشيشان

ya-ta’allaq-u bi-qaDaayaa l-`iraaq-i wa-l-suudaan-i wa-liibyaa wa-l-Suumaal-i wa-l-buusinat-i wa-kashmiir-u wa-l-shiishaan-i.

It relates to the problems of Iraq, The Sudan, Libya, Somalia, Bosnia, Kashmir, and Chechnia.

مواد أدبية ولغوية وتاريخية وفلسفية

mawaadd-u `adabiyyat-un wa-lughawiyyat-un wa-taariixiyat-un wa-falsafiyyat-un literary, linguistic, historical, and philosophical materials

2 *fa-* ‘and so; and then; yet; and thus’

This connector implies several different kinds of relationships with the previous text elements. It can have a sequential meaning ‘and then,’ a resultative meaning ‘and so’ (*faa* al-sababiyya), a contrastive meaning ‘yet; but,’ a slight shift in topic ‘and also; moreover’, or a conclusive meaning, ‘and therefore; in conclusion.’

Beeston refers to it as “the most interesting of the ambivalent functionals” (1970, 98).

Al-Batal refers to it as “the most complex and the most interesting” connective in his research because of the different functions that it has (1990, 100). Cantarino 1975, III:20–34 has an extensive analysis of the functions of *fa*-, with examples taken from literary contexts.
It may start a sentence in a text or it may knit elements together within a sentence.

فَهُمُ ما زالوا مهتمينً بأحداث الانتفاضة.

Yet they are still interested in the events of the uprising.

و إن لم يبلغ الآخر، فإنَّه يتجاهل.

If he doesn’t abolish the other . . . (then) he ignores it.

3 Contrastive conjunctions

These conjunctions indicate contrast in semantic content between two parts of a sentence.

3.1 bal    ﱙ ‘rather; but actually’

The word bal is termed an “adversative” by Al-Batal because it introduces a clause whose semantic content conveys the idea of something additional but also different or contrastive from the main clause.10

وَتَرْجَمَتْ هَذِهِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَى الْلَّاتِينِيَةَ بَلْ كِتَابٍ مَعْظُومٍ بِحُرُوفٍ عُبْرِيَةً.

These books were translated into Latin, but [actually] they were mostly written in Hebrew script (‘letters’).

لِيَسُ فِي الْأَمْرَتَةَ صَقُورٌ أَوْ حَمَامٌ بِلْ هَذَا تُوْزِيّعٌ وَأَبَعْسَ للأَدْوَارِ.

There are in the matter neither hawks nor doves, but rather there is a wide distribution of roles.

10 See also under “negative and exceptive expressions.”
3.2  'inna-maa  وَإِنَّا ‘but; but moreover; but also, rather’
This connective word has both confirmational and contrastive components to its meaning.11

لم تكن تسجيلاً فقط وإنما هو انعكاس للواقع الاجتماعي.
lam ta-kun tasjiil-an faqaT wa-'inna-maa huwa n‘ikaas-un li-l-waaq‘-i l-ijtima‘‘iyy-i.
It was not only documentation, but moreover a reflection of social reality.

4 Explanatory conjunctions

4.1  ‘ay  أي ‘that is, i.e.’
This small word (which resembles in spelling the word ‘ayy- ‘which’ but is unrelated to it) is an explicative particle equivalent to the Latin abbreviation i.e., for id est ‘that is,’ which is used in English texts.

أي كل ما هو واعي
‘ay, kull-u maa huwa waaqi‘iyy-un
that is, everything that is real

5 Resultative conjunctions

5.1  ‘idh  إذ ‘since,’ ‘inasmuch as’
This small word is a resultative particle that introduces a clause providing a rationale or reason for the main clause.

حقّ الحزب الجمهوري الحاكم نصرًا ساحقًا على منافسيه إذ حصل على معظم المقاعد.
Haqqaa-q-a l-Hizb-u l-jumhuuriyy-u l-Haakim-u naSr-an saaHiq-an ‘alaa munaafis-ii-hi ‘idh
HaSal-a  ‘alaa mu‘Zam-i l-maqaa‘id-i.
The ruling republican party realized an overwhelming victory over its opponents since it obtained most of the seats.

5.2  ‘idhan  إذن ‘therefore; then; so; thus; in that case’
This connective word initiates a clause or question that comes as a result or conclusion from a previous statement. In more conversational style, it may also come at the end of the clause.

إذن لماذا يتوجب علينا ...
‘idhan li-maadhaa ya-tawajjab-u ‘alay-naa ...
Then why do we have to ...

إذن هناك منهجان ...
‘idhan hunaaka manhaj-aani ...
Thus, there are two methods ...

It'll be a big cat, then!

5.3 **Hattaa** + past tense: ‘until’

*Hattaa* followed by a past tense verb introduces a clause that shows the consequences or result of the previous clause. Used in this way, it refers to an event or action that has taken place in the past.\(^{12}\)

It kept growing until it became one of the most important cities of the region.

### 6 Adverbial conjunctions

Adverbial conjunctions in Arabic fill the role of subordinating conjunctions in English such as ‘where,’ ‘when,’ ‘while,’ and ‘as.’ That is, they introduce a clause subordinate to the main clause by indicating a place, time, manner, or result relation between the two.

#### 6.1 Adverbial conjunctions of place: *Hayth-u* ‘where’

The connective adverb *Hayth-u* denotes the concept of ‘where’ or ‘in which.’ It has an invariable Damma suffix.\(^ {13}\) It is an extensively used conjunction of place. It also has non-locative meanings when used with other particles, such as *min Hayth-u* ‘regarding; as for’ or *bi-Hayth-u* ‘so that; so as to.’\(^ {14}\)

- في كلية حيث تدرِس
  - *fii kulliyat-in Hayth-u tu-darris-u* in a college *where* she teaches

- حيث القديم يختلط مع الحديث
  - *Hayth-u l-qadiim-u ya-xtaliT-u ma-a l-Hadiith-i* *where* the old mixes with the new

- في السعودية حيث يعمل مع شركة دولية
  - *fii l-sa‘uudiyat-i Hayth-u ya-mal-u ma-a sharikat-in duwaliyaat-in* in Saudi Arabia *where* he works for an international company

- في مستشفى حيث تقع قصص حب
  - *fii mustashfan Hayth-u ta-qa‘u qiSaS-u Hubb-in* in a hospital *where* love stories take place

\(^{12}\) *Hattaa* may also be an operative particle with the meaning of ‘until; up to the point of,’ followed by a noun in the genitive case (*Hattaa l-sanat-i l-maaDiyyat-i ‘until last year’), but in that case it is considered a preposition. See Chapter 16, section 2.2.3. As a particle of purpose, it has the meaning of ‘in order to’ followed by a verb in the subjunctive mood (see Chapter 34, section 2.2.6).

\(^{13}\) Note that the question word ‘where?’ is different: ‘َاَيْنَا’. See Chapter 17, section 1.

\(^{14}\) For exercises on and further examples of the uses of *Hayth-u*, as well as the conjunctions *Hayth-u* ‘anna and *bi-Hayth-u*, see al-Warraki and Hassanein 1994, 93–97.
6.2 Adverbial conjunctions of time

This category includes expressions that link clauses by specifying how one clause is related to another in terms of time. These adverbials often consist of traditional Zurruuf, the semi-prepositions or locative adverbs, plus the indefinite relative pronoun maa, and sometimes the adverbial suffix -idhin.

The locative adverbs, as noted in the chapter on prepositions and prepositional phrases, are essentially nouns of place that act as prepositions by going into a construct relationship with another noun (e.g., بعد الحرب, qabl-a sanat-in ‘a year ago’). These nouns with the accusative marker are restricted to occurring only before other nouns or pronouns unless a buffer (such as maa or -idhin) is added to them. The locative adverb and buffer may be written together as one word, or they are written separately. By adding the buffer element, the semi-prepositions or locative adverbs are converted into adverbial elements that can directly precede verbs and entire clauses.

6.2.1 bayn-a-maa  بَينُّمَا ‘while; whereas’

This connective word has both a temporal meaning ‘while, during the time that,’ and also a contrastive meaning of ‘whereas.’

ضُبطوُا بينما كانوا يستطيعون المدخل.
They were arrested while they were consuming the drug.

فَكانت الثقافة العربية رسمية بينما ظلَّت اللاتينية العامة لغة للناس.
Arabic culture was official whereas vernacular Latin remained a language of the people.

6.2.2 ba’d-a-maa بَعَدُمَا ‘after’

This connective is usually followed directly by a past tense verb. Note that the preposition ba’d-a ‘after’ can be followed only by a noun or pronoun; it is necessary to use ba’d-a-maa before a clause beginning with a verb.

بعدما شاهده أحد المارة
ba’d-a-maa shaahad-a-hu ‘aHad-u l-maarrat-i
after one of the passers-by saw him

بعدما وَقَعَتَ على الثلج
ba’d-a-maa waqa’-at ‘alaa l-thalj-i
after she fell on the ice

بعدما قدَّمَ للرئيس تعاوضه
ba’d-a-maa quddim-a li-l-ra’iis-i ta’aazii-hi
after his condolences had been presented to the president
6.2.3 \textit{\textipa{ba’d-a ‘an}} ‘after’\footnote{When referring to a non-past situation, or a hypothetical situation, \textipa{ba’d-a ‘an} is followed by a verb in the subjunctive mood. For example, \textipa{sa-na-drus-u ba’d-a ‘an na-‘kul-a}.}

The expression \textipa{ba’d-a ‘an} means essentially the same as \textipa{ba’d-a maa} when describing a situation that has taken place in the past. The phrase \textipa{ba’d-a ‘an}, when referring to an event that has already taken place, is followed by a clause with a past tense verb.\footnote{We will study after we eat.}

\begin{quote}
Гадир القاهرة أمس بعد أن قابل الرئيس.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
ghaadara l-qaahirat-a ‘ams-i \textipa{ba’d-a ‘an} qaabal-a l-ra‘ii-an.
\end{quote}

He left Cairo yesterday after he met with the President.

\begin{quote}
بعد أن شارك اللاعبون في عدة مسابقات مختلفة
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textipa{ba’d-a ‘an} shaarak-a l-la‘aa‘ib-uuna fii ‘iddat-i musaabaqaat-in muxtalifat-in
\end{quote}

after the players had participated in several different contests

6.2.3 \textit{\textipa{ba’d-a ‘idhin}} ‘after that; then; subsequently’

This compound expression is equivalent in most situations to the adverbial conjunction \textit{thumma} (see below 6.2.8):

\begin{quote}
و بعد ان انتقل إلى دار كريم.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
wa-%\textipa{ba’d-a ‘idhin-i} ntaqal-a ‘ila‘a daari kariim-in.
\end{quote}

After that he moved to Karim’s house.

6.2.4 \textit{Hiin-a-maa} حينما ‘when; at the time when’

\begin{quote}
لكن الأزمة نشبت حينما عرقلت الشرطة دخول الطلاب
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
l-azmat-a nashab-at \textit{Hiin-a-maa} ‘arqal-at-i l-shurTat-u duxuul-a l-Tullaab-i
\end{quote}

but the crisis broke out when the police obstructed the entrance of students

\begin{quote}
حينما أصبحت العاصمة
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textit{Hiin-a-maa} ‘aSbaH-at-i l-‘aaSimat-a
\end{quote}

when it became the capital

6.2.5 ‘\textit{ind-a-maa} عندهما ‘when; at the time when’

\begin{quote}
عندما نتقدم في الأمر
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
‘\textit{ind-a-maa} ji’naa ‘ila‘a hunaa ‘\textit{ind-a-maa} ta-taqaddam-u fii l-‘umr-i
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
when we came here when they grow older (‘advance in age’)
\end{quote}
6.2.6 ‘ind-a-‘idhin ‘then; at that point in time; at that time’

ولأياد عندين من طرح قضية الانسحاب.

wa laa budd-a ‘ind-a-‘idhin min Tarīq qaDiyyat-i l-insiHāb.

Rejection of the issue of withdrawal was inevitable at that point.

6.2.7 qabl-a ʾan + subjunctive ‘before’

Contrasting with ba’d-a ʾan, qabl-a ʾan refers to an action anterior to the action in the main clause. The verb after qabl-a ʾan is in the subjunctive mood, even if the main clause reference is past tense.

وصلت قوات الأمن إلى المطار قبل أن يهبط.

waSal-at quwwaat-u l-ʾamn-i ʾilaq l-maTaar-i qabl-a ʾan ya-hbuT-a.

The security forces arrived at the airport before he landed.

قبل أن تمزقه الحرب

qabl-a ʾan tu-mazziq-hu l-Harb-u

before war tears it apart

6.2.8 thumm-a ُثمُّ ‘then; and then; subsequently’

The connective particle thumm-a is an adverb that indicates a sequential action, coming later in time than the action in the preceding sentence or clause.

ثمَّ ضعها فيما بعد في صندوق.

thumm-a Daʾ-haa fii-maa baʾd-u fii Sanduuq-in.

Then put it in a box later.

ثمَّ أنشدوا النشيد الوطني.

thumm-a ʾanshad-uu l-nashiid-a l-waTaniyy-a.

6.3 Adverbial conjunctions of similarity

These expressions predicate a state of similarity with something that has gone before, either in a previous statement or earlier in the same sentence.

6.3.1 ka-maa ُكَمَا ‘as; just as; similarly; likewise’

The expression ka-maa is usually followed by a verb phrase.

كما ذكر المتحدث

ka-maa dhakar-a l-mutaHaddith-u the spokesman likewise mentioned

كما فعلا السنة الماضية

ka-maa faʾal-uu l-sanat-a l-maaDiyat-a just as they did last year

6.3.2 mithl-a-maa ُمِثْلَما ‘like; just as; as’

مثلاً يقول أهلي ...

mithl-a-maa ya-quul-u ʾahl-ii ...

as my family says ...
6.4 Adverbial conjunction of equivalence: *qadr-a-maa* قَدْرَا مَا
‘as much as; just as; as . . . as’

\[
\text{إِنَّ أَمَامًا كَثِيرًا مِنَ الْفَرَصَ قَدْرًا أَمَامًا مِنَ التَّحْدِيَاتِ.}
\]

\[
inna 'amaam-a-naa kathiir-an min-a l-furaS-i qadr-a-maa 'amaam-a-naa min-a l-taHaddiyaat-i.
\]

There are [just] as many opportunities before us as there are challenges.

6.5 Adverbial conjunction of reference or attribution: *Hasab-a-maa* حَسْبَ مَا
‘according to; in accordance with; depending on’

This conjunction links one clause to another clause, expressing a relationship of reference or attribution.\(^{16}\)

\[
\text{وَحَسْبًا تَقُولُ الْأَسْطُوْرَةَ . . .}
\]

\[
w-a-Hasab-a-maa ta-quul-u l-*uSTuurat-u . . .
\]

according to what legend says . . .

\[
\text{حَسْبًا جُرْت تُسَمِّيْتِهَا أَنْذَاكَ}
\]

\[
Hasab-a-maa jar-at tasmiyat-u-haa 'aan-a-dhaaka
\]

in accordance with its naming at that time

6.6 Adverbial conjunctions of potential or possibility

6.6.1 *rubb-a-maa* رُبْعَا مَا
‘perhaps; maybe; possibly’\(^{17}\)

\[
\text{رُبْعَا كَانَ كَثِيرُونَ مِنْهُمْ مَسْجِلِينَ}
\]

\[
rubba-maa kaan-a kathiir-uuna min-hum musajjal-iina.
\]

Perhaps many of them were registered.

\[
\text{رُبْعَا لِهذَا السَّبَبَ . . .}
\]

\[
rubba-maa li-haadhaa l-sabab-i . . .
\]

perhaps for this reason . . .

\[
\text{رُبْعَا كَانَ وَاقِعًا مِنْ نَفْسِي أَكْثَرُ مِنَ الْلِّزْوَمُ}
\]

\[
rubba-maa kun-tu waathiq-an min nafs-ii 'akthar-a min-a l-Huzuum-i.
\]

Perhaps I was overconfident.

7 Disjunctives

Arabic has a set of particles that indicate disjunction, that is, a distinction between one alternative and another. They include the following:

\(^{16}\) As for the expressions *Hasab-a* and *bi-Hasab-i* ‘according to,’ these are not conjunctions but operative particles that are followed by a noun in the genitive case.

\(^{17}\) For another word meaning ‘perhaps’ see *la’alla* in Chapter 19 on ‘*inna* and her sisters.
7.1 'awَ أو 'or'
This disjunctive indicates an option between two or more elements, but that option is inclusive, that is, it may include one, both, or all the elements.

\[
\text{‘an qaSd-in ‘aw min ghayr-i qaSd-in yu-rid-uuna-hu Hayy-an ‘aw mayyit-an.}
\]
on purpose or not on purpose They want him dead or alive (‘alive or dead’).


لنجاح الحزب الحاكم أو فشله
li-najaaH-i l-Hizb-l-Haakim-i ‘aw fashl-i-hi
for the success of the ruling party or its failure

7.2 ‘amَ أم ‘or’
This disjunctive indicates an exclusive option; one or the other, but not both or all. Because it ends with sukuun, it sometimes needs a helping vowel, kasra.

اللحنَ أم الكلمةَ أم الصوت؟
al-haHn-u ‘am-i l-kalimat-u ‘am-i l-Sawt-u?
the tune, or the words, or the voice?

أساتذة كانوا أم طلاباً
‘asaatidhat-an kaan-u ‘am Tullaab-an
[whether] they were professors or students

7.2.1 ‘a with ‘am
Sometimes the particle ‘a- is used on the first element of the exclusive disjunction:

لم يدرأيشهم أم يضحكون
lam ya-dri ‘a-ya-shtam-u ‘am ya-DHak-u.
He didn’t know whether to curse or laugh.

7.3 ‘immaa... ‘awَ أو ‘immaa... wa-‘immaa إما... وإما ‘either... or’
This two-part disjunctive conveys the idea of an exclusive choice: one or the other, but not both. Sometimes the first part of the disjunction is followed by ‘an plus a verb in the subjunctive, but not always.

هذا السلام إماً أن يكون شاملاً أو لا يكون أبداً
This peace is either inclusive, or it is not at all.

إما َ أن تكون معاً وأما مع الإرهاب
‘immaa ‘an ta-kuun-uu ma ‘a-naa wa-‘immaa ma ‘a l-‘irhaab-i.
Either you are with us or [you are] with terrorism.
8 Sentence-starting connectives

In addition to single words as sentence-introducers and connectors, there are also many fixed expressions or idiomatic phrases that serve to start sentences. This process of using a starting formula to introduce a sentence is especially common in journalistic and expository writing and gives it what Johnstone refers to as a certain “formulaic.”¹⁸ Some of the more common phrasal starters are listed here.

8.1 Participle or adjective starters with min-a l-

A definite adjective or passive participle, often preceded by the partitive preposition min, is a common way of introducing a sentence, especially in journalistic prose. This use of min is termed “pleonastic” (superfluous or redundant).¹⁹ It is a way of opening a statement with a generic or general observation, just as “It is . . .” may be used in English.

\[
\text{ومن المتوقع أن} \ldots
\]

\[
\text{wa-min-a l-mutawaqqa^\prime-i } ^\prime \text{an} \ldots
\]

It is expected that . . .

\[
\text{من الممكن أن} \ldots
\]

\[
\text{min-a l-mumkin-i } ^\prime \text{an} \ldots
\]

It is possible that . . .

\[
\text{من المهم عدم تقديم الكثير من التنازلات.}
\]

\[
\text{min-a l-Muhimm-i } ^\prime \text{adam-u taqdim-i l-kathiir-i min-a l-tanaazulaat-i.}
\]

It is important not to offer too many concessions.

\[
\text{من الطبيعي أن نقوم بزيارة . . .}
\]

\[
\text{min-a l-Tabii} ^\prime \text{iyi } ^\prime \text{an na-quum-a bi-ziyaarat-in} \ldots
\]

It is natural that we undertake a visit . . .

8.1.1 Starters without min

Sometimes participle or adjective starters are used on their own, without min, but usually preceded by wa-.

\[
\text{ومعلوم أن} \ldots
\]

\[
\text{wa-ma^\prime luum-un } ^\prime \text{anna} \ldots
\]

It is known that . . .

\[
\text{والمستغرب أن} \ldots
\]

\[
\text{wa-l-mustaghrab-u } ^\prime \text{anna} \ldots
\]

The strange [thing] is . . .

8.2 Passive and passive-like starters

With or without wa- a passive verb in the third person masculine singular may initiate a sentence by introducing a general, unattributed observation. In addition to the morphological passive, a Form V or Form VII verb with passive meaning is sometimes used.

¹⁸ Johnstone 1990, 223. ¹⁹ See also pleonastic min, Chapter 16, section 2.2.2.7.
8.3 Other idiomatic starters

Some other phrases used to start sentences typically include the following.

8.3.1 Topic shift: ‘ًامَّا فَأَسْـَّ~’

This expression denotes a shift in topic from the previous sentence. It is in two parts, the first word, ًامَّا, signaling the new topic, and the second, فَأَسْـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّـَّ~َ, introducing the comment on that topic. In English, the “as for” phrase is here followed by a comma, which introduces the second part of the sentence, or comment. Therefore فَأَسْ is in this case fills the same function as the punctuation mark in English. Since ًامَّا introduces a new sentence and a new topic, the noun following is in the nominative case, as subject of the sentence.

ًٍامَّا الـقسم المترجم ـمـتـنـوـع جدًا.
ًامَّا l-qism-l-mutarjam-fa-mutanawwa-l-jidd-an.
As for the translated part, it is very diverse.

ًامَّا الإسرائيلوـن ـ فيـقولون .
ًامَّا l-israa’-iiliyy-uuna . لـfa-ya-quul-uuna .
as for the Israelis, they say .

ًامَّا المخضرمـة ، فـقد جاءت رابعة.
ًامَّا l-muxaDramat-u , لـfa-qad jaa-at raabi’at-an.
As for the old-timer, she came in fourth.

8.3.2 Addition: ‘إِلَى ذَلِكُ ‘in addition to that; moreover; furthermore’

This phrase is a shortened version of bi-l-iDaafat-i ‘إِلَى ذَلِكُ’:

إِلَى ذَلِكُ أَكَّدَ الصـحاـفيّ.
إِلَى ذَلِكُ ‘إِلَى ذَلِكُ’
Moreover, the journalist affirmed .
In addition to that, the occupation forces continued operations . . .

8.3.3 Statement of contents: *ja'a*-a *fii* /wa-*ja'a*-a *fii*  настоящее в действиях

The expression *ja'a*-a *fii* ‘it came in’ is an idiomatic way to start a sentence that reveals the contents of a letter, announcement, declaration, or other official document. The English equivalent usually omits this expression and begins with the document itself as the subject of the sentence.

وُجَاءَ فِي الْبِيَانَ أَنّ . . .
*wa-*ja'a*-a fii l-bayaan-i 'anna . . .*  (And) the declaration stated that . . .

(‘And it came in the declaration that . . .’)

وُجَاءَ فِي نصَّ الْمَشْرَعِ . . .
*wa-*ja'a*-a fii naSS-i l-mashruu'-i . . .*  And the text of the plan stated that . . .

(‘And it came in the text of the plan . . .’)

"ilaam dhaalika stamarrat quwwat-u l-ihdaal-i fii 'amaliyyaat-in . . ."
Subordinating conjunctions: the particle ฯ inna and her sisters

1 Introduction
This group of particles, referred to as ฯ inna wa-ฯ axawaat-u-haa ฯ enَّ وَاخواتها, are part of the class of Arabic words that are referred to as nawaasix نوااسخ, or words that cause a shift to the accusative case. The members of this particular group are usually used as subordinating conjunctions, connecting two clauses, although ฯ inna itself may also be used at the beginning of a sentence.

These particles include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verily, indeed; that</th>
<th>ฯ inna</th>
<th>ฯ انَّ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that</td>
<td>ฯ anna</td>
<td>ฯ انَّ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td>laakinna</td>
<td>ฯ لكنَّ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because</td>
<td>li’anna</td>
<td>ฯ لَانَّ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perhaps</td>
<td>la’alla</td>
<td>ฯ لَعلَّ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.1 Grammatical effect
These particles have the grammatical effect of making the subject noun in the following clause accusative. If there is no overt subject noun in the clause, a suffix pronoun is affixed to the particle.

1 For more on the nawaasix, see Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.8. Arabic grammars refer to particles that require the accusative as Huruuf mushabbiba bi-l-fi‘ل ‘particles resembling verbs’ because transitive verbs require the accusative on their direct objects. There is therefore a parallel relationship between these two elements; they are both “operators” or “governors” (awaamil), and both have similar effects on a following noun or noun phrase. As Anghelescu states, “it must not be forgotten that ฯ inna, as well as other members of the al-nawaasikh class, resemble verbs in their capacity to ‘act’ (‘amal), or to govern, according to the Arab grammarians” (1999, 136).

2 The subordinating particle ฯ an is also sometimes considered in this category, although it is different in that it is followed by a verb in the subjunctive mood, rather than a noun in the accusative case. For more on ฯ an and the subjunctive, see Chapter 34, section 2.3.
1.2 Overt noun subject
When the subject noun in the following clause is overt, it receives the accusative case and usually follows directly after the particle. Note that the form of the accusative case may vary according to the declension of the noun.

إنَّ الأملَ تحوّلت إلى أوهام
\(\text{\*inna l-\*aamaal-a taHawwal-at \*ila\*awhaam-in.}\)
(Indeed), the hopes have turned into delusions.

نعتقد أنَّ الزراعة لغة عالمية
\(\text{na-\*taqid-u \*anna l-ziraa\'at-a lughat-un \*aalamiyyat-un.}\)
We believe that agriculture is a world language.

ولكنَ الحاصل عكس ذلك
\(\text{wa-laakinna l-HaaSil-a \*aks-u dhaalika}\)
but the actuality is the reverse of that

رغم أنَّ اتجاهات إيجابية أخذت تنبعث
\(\text{raghm-a \*anna ttijaahaat-in \*ijjaabiyyat-an \*axadh-at ta-n\*ba\*ith-u}\)
despite [the fact] that positive trends began to emerge

1.3 Separated subject
The accusative subject noun does not have to be immediately adjacent to the particle – it may be separated from the particle by an adverb or a prepositional phrase. It may not, however, be separated from the subordinating particle by a verb.\(^3\)

لكنَ هناك حيوانات أخرى
\(\text{laakinna hunaaka Hayawaanaat-in \*uxraa}\)
but there are other animals

لكنَ هناك بعض النقوش
\(\text{laakinna hunaaka ba\*D-a l-nuquush-i}\)
but there are some inscriptions

ذكر أنَّ لديه المستندات الرسمية
\(\text{dhakara \*anna laday-hi l-\*mustanadaat-i l-rasmiyyat-a.}\)
He mentioned that he has the official documents.
(\(\text{\*that to-him are the official documents'}\))

1.4 Reduplicated pronoun subject
If the subject of the subordinated clause is shown only by the inflection of a verb, then a subject pronoun suffix duplicating the subject of the verb is affixed to

\(^3\) “The accusative case is not necessarily immediately subsequent to the particle; e.g., it may follow the predicate in a nominal sentence. A verb, however, may never be placed between a particle and the accusative it governs” Cantarino 1975, III:117.
the particle. The subject, whether a noun or a pronoun, must at all times come before its verb in this type of subordinate clause.

\[\text{إنّنا نتمنى لكم عيدًا مباركًا.} \]
\['\text{inna-naa na-tamannaal la-kum \text{ 'iid-an mubaarak-an}.}\]
(Indeed), we wish you a blessed holiday.

أدرّك أنّه نسي اسمها.
\['\text{adrak-a 'anna-hu nasyi-a sm-a-haa}.\]
He realized that he had forgotten her name.

1.5 Equational clause
If the clause after \[\text{ 'inna }\] or one of her sisters is an equational sentence, the subject is a pronoun or a noun in the accusative case, but the predicate (xabar) is in the nominative case.

\[\text{إنّ المعلومات خاطئةً.} \]
\['\text{inna l-ma'luumaat-i xaaTi'at-un}.\]
(Indeed,) the information is incorrect.

لا تهرب إلى السلام لأنّها مكان خطر.
\[l\text{aa ta-hra 'ilaa l-salaalim-i li-'anna-haa makaan-un xaTir-un}.\]
Don’t run to the stairs because they are a dangerous place.

1.6 With invariable pronoun or noun
Sometimes \[\text{ 'inna }\] or one of her sisters may be followed by an invariable noun or pronoun, in which case there is no overt accusative marker.4

\[\text{إٍنّ هذا جريمة بشعة.} \]
\['\text{inna haadhihi jariimat-un bashi-at-un}.\]
(Indeed,) this is a repugnant crime.

لكنّ هذا لا يكفي.
\[l\text{aakinna haadhaa laa ya-kfii}.\]
But this is not enough.

1.7 With buffer pronoun: Damiiir al-sha'\[n\]
Occasionally in MSA a subordinate clause may be preceded by a /hu/ pronoun after the subordinating particle (e.g., \['anna-hu\]) that does not seem to be necessary or even to agree with the subject of the verb. This pronoun refers not to the subject of the clause, but to the entire clause itself, and acts as a generic “buffer” between the subordinating particle and the following clause. In Arabic this particular use of the suffix pronoun is called Damiiir al-sha’\[n\] ‘the pronoun of the fact’ or “pronoun which anticipates a whole subsequent clause.”5

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4 According to traditional Arabic grammatical theory, the accusative marking is there in a “virtual” sense (muqaddar), even though it does not appear on the word.

5 Definition from Cachia 1973, 57. See also Cantarino 1975, II:430–31.
Subordinating conjunctions: The particle *inna and her sisters 425

The particle *inna and her sisters

2 The particles

2.1 Sentence-initial *inna ‘indeed, truly, verily’
The particle *inna has a truth-intensifying function when used at the beginning of a statement. It emphasizes that what follows is true. More frequently used in Classical Arabic than MSA, it nonetheless occurs occasionally in MSA, especially when reporting an official speech.6

Indeed, hopes have turned into delusions. (Indeed,) I affirm that . . .

Indeed, we are working all together on behalf of peace.

2.2 Subordinating *inna ‘that’
The particle *inna is also used as a way of introducing reported speech. As a subordinating conjunction, it is used exclusively after the verb qaal-a ‘to say.’7

He said that he had discussed this topic.

The coach said that he was satisfied.

He said that the politicians use religious terminology.

2.3 *anna ‘that’
The particle *anna is used to report factual information in a subordinate clause. It is used with the meaning of ‘that’ after perception verbs such as sami-a ‘hear,’

6 Dahlgren, in his study of Arabic word order, reports that *inna is “a particle for marking the thematization of (mainly or exclusively) the subject by letting it precede the verb in the sentence” (1998, 217).

7 Note that in English the word “that” may be omitted in reporting speech, but *inna may not be omitted in Arabic.
i’taqad-a, iftakara ‘think’ or ‘believe,’ and also with verbs of communicating such as dhakar-a ‘mention,’ akkad-a ‘assert, declare,’ or a’lan-a ‘announce.’ Belnap in his study of complementation in MSA states that “anna occurs with verbs that assume or claim that the following clause’s assertion is statement of fact.”

The verb in the main clause is referred to in some studies as the “matrix” verb because it determines the nature of the complementizer or subordinating particle that follows it (whether it is anna or an). Note that if the matrix verb requires a preposition, anna follows the preposition.

I do not think that the plays were bad.

He mentioned that the Arabs gave it its name.

He mentioned that there is a famous politician.

They described it as being (that it is) an atmosphere of trust.

Kurdish sources indicate that the true number may reach a thousand persons.

We (indeed) wanted to prove to everyone that we are a good team.

8 Note that anna (+ noun in the accusative) and an (+ verb in the subjunctive) are related particles which differ in their distribution. According to LeComte (1968, 120), “la subordination complétive s’exprime avec an ou anna (que) qui ne sont que deux formes de la même particule. Elles se distinguent toutefois par leur emploi syntaxique: ‘an entraîne normalement un verbe à l’inacc. subj.(subjunctive) . . . ‘anna ne peut être suivie que d’un nom au cas direct ou d’un pronom affixe.” See also Chapter 34. section 2.3.

9 In a personal communication to the author, summarizing his findings in Belnap 1986. Note that matrix verbs indicating attitudes such as intention, feeling, possibility, need, or desire are followed by the subordinating particle an plus a subjunctive verb, not by anna. See Angehelescu 1999, 138 on anna, especially as compared with an; and Cantarino 1975, II: 234–35 and III:106–107.

10 See Persson 1999 for a study of matrix verbs and complement clauses in Arabic.
2.3.1 ka-‘anna كَانَ ‘as though’
The preposition ka- may be prefixed to the subordinating conjunction ‘anna ‘that’ in order to form the expression “as though.” This expression is still a sister of ‘inna and has the same effect on the following clause.

وكاننا متفقون في الواقع على كل شيء
wa ka-‘anna-naa muttafiq-uuna fii l-waaqi‘-i ‘alaa kull-i shay‘-in
as though we actually agreed on everything

كأنه مدرّج رووماني
ka-‘anna-hu mudraaj-un ruumaaniyy-un
as though it were a Roman amphitheater

2.4 laakinna ‘but’
This particle introduces a clause that contrasts with the previous clause.

ليست لبنانية، ولكنها سعت في لبنان.
lays-at lubnaaniyyat-an, wa-laakinna-haa sa‘id-at fii lubnaan-a.
She is not Lebanese, but she was happy in Lebanon.

لكن هذه المساجد محتلة
laakinna haadhihi l-masaajid-a muHtallat-un
but these mosques are occupied

ولكن التجربة تقلقني
wa-laakinna l-tajribat-a tu-qliq-u-nii
but the experiment disturbs me

لكن البرنامج يبقى في الكمبيوتر
laakinna l-barnaamaj-a ya-bqaa fii l-kumbyuutir
but the program remains in the computer

2.4.1 laakin لَكَنُ / wa-laakin وَلَكَنُ ‘but’
This variant of laakinna, written without the shadda or fatha on the nuun, is not a sister of ‘inna and can therefore be followed directly by a verb. It is not as frequent in written Arabic as laakinna. In written text, it is almost impossible to tell the difference between these two particles, except that laakin may be followed by a verb.

ولكن يجب وضع ضوابط ومراقبة
wa-laakin ya-jib-u waD‘-u DawaabiT-a wa-muraaqabat-in
but it is necessary to put [into effect] regulations and surveillance

2.5 li‘anna لَأَنُ ‘because’
This subordinating particle is followed by a clause that gives a rationale or reason.

لأنها استحقاق ديموقراطي
li-‘anna-haa stilIqaaq-un
diimuqraatiyy-un
because it is a democratic right

لأنها تتحدث عن همومي
li-‘anna-haa ta-taHaddath-u ‘an
humuum-ii
because she speaks about my concerns
because the last two years were among the best years

2.6 *la’alla* لعلّ / *wa-la’alla* وَلعلّ ‘perhaps, maybe’

This particle is similar in meaning to *rubba-maa* ‘perhaps,’ but is a sister of *‘inna*. Like *‘inna*, it may start a sentence as well as a clause. If it is followed by a verbal sentence, the subject of the verb must reduplicate itself in the form of a pronoun prefix attached to *la’alla*. Abboud and McCarus state that *la’alla* “often has the implication of hopeful expectation” (1983, Part 1:519).

Perhaps we have really seen the first elements of a plan.

Perhaps he died before that.

Perhaps that is because (‘goes back to that’) the majority of them are foreigners.
Arabic verbs fall into two major groups, those with three-consonant roots (triliteral) and those with four-consonant roots (quadriliteral). Around each lexical root is structured a set of possible stem classes or verb forms (normally ten for triliteral roots and four for quadriliteral). Moreover, each Arabic verb has a corresponding verbal noun (masdar مصدر اسم فاعل), an active participle (ism faa‘il اسم فاعل), and often, a passive participle (ism maf‘ul اسم مفعول). Thus verbs and their derivatives form the foundation for substantial amounts of Arabic vocabulary and can be considered in some ways as the core of the Arabic lexicon.

1 Verb roots
Every Arabic verb has a lexical root, that is, a set of consonants or phonemes in a specific order that embody a broad lexical meaning, such as k-t-b ‘write’; h-n-d-s ‘engineer’; d-r-s ‘study’; ‘l-m ‘know’. These roots may consist of three or four consonants, with three being the most common. Within these two different root types, there are phonological variations according to the nature of the consonant phonemes occurring in the root.

This is mainly to do with the fact that the semivowels /w/ (waaw) and /y/ (yaa’) are not full-fledged consonants; they are weak in the sense that there are restrictions on how they combine with and interact with vowels. Sometimes when these semi-consonants are root phonemes, they behave as regular consonants, sometimes, however, they shift into long vowels, or they may become short vowels, or they turn into hamza, or in some cases, they disappear altogether. This can be confusing when learners need to identify the consonantal root of a word in order to look it up in a dictionary, so it is important for learners to have a basic understanding of how root types interact with rules for word formation.

1 These stem classes are sometimes referred to in current literature on morphological theory as binyanim (singular binyan), using the Hebrew term. See Aronoff 1994, especially Chapter 5: 123–164. Note also that there are in fact fifteen (rather than ten) potential verb forms for triliteral verb roots. But Forms XI–XV are rare in MSA. For more on Forms XI–XV see Chapter 32.

2 Kouloughli (1994, 215) gives the following description of the “deverbal” derivatives: “Tout verbe a dans son sillage des formes déverbales qui lui sont associées et avec lesquelles il entretient des relations morphologiques, syntaxiques et sémantiques stables.”
There are phonotactic rules — rules of sound distribution — for Arabic words, many of which were deduced by Arabic grammarians as long ago as the eighth century (AD), and which remain valid today for MSA.\textsuperscript{3} Whenever possible here, these rules are described and applied in order to explain variations in word structure.

Arabic verb roots are classified into two major classes: \textit{SaHiiH} ‘sound’ and \textit{mu’tall} ‘weak.’ Sound roots are ones that do not contain either \textit{waaw} or \textit{yaa}; “weak” roots contain \textit{waaw} or \textit{yaa} as one or more of the root phonemes. It is essential to know these classes because verb inflection affects the phonological structure of the verb root in all cases except the regular or sound triliteral root.

Within the two major classes of verbal roots, further classification occurs in several subcategories. Each of the subcategories manifests particular variation in the root. This variation is rule-governed, but complex.\textsuperscript{4}

1.1 Regular (sound) triliteral root (\textit{al-fi’l al-SaHiiH al-saalim})

Sound or regular verbal roots consist of three consonants, all of which are different and none of which are \textit{waaw}, \textit{yaa}, or \textit{hamza}. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General meaning</th>
<th>Root consonants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hear</td>
<td>s-m-\textbullet \textbullet \textbullet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reveal</td>
<td>k-sh-f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work</td>
<td>‘-m-l</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 Geminate verb root (\textit{al-fi’l al-muDaaf})

Geminate or doubled verbal roots are ones where the second and third consonant of the root are the same. They show an alternation between repetition of the geminate consonant, with a vowel between, and doubling of the consonant, under specific phonological conditions.\textsuperscript{5}

| respond, reply | r-d-d          | ر-د-د |
| cause          | s-b-b          | س-ب-ب |
| solve          | H-l-l          | ح-ل-ل |

\textsuperscript{3} Al-Khalil ibn Ahmad (d. ca. 791) pioneered Arabic phonological theory and developed the theory of root phonotactics in his introduction to the first Arabic dictionary, the \textit{Kitaab al-’ayn}. For more on this, see Sara 1991.


\textsuperscript{5} For an analysis of the nature of geminate root morphology, see Moore 1990.
1.3 Hamzated verb root (al-fi’i al-mahmuuz) 
A hamzated verb root is one where hamza (the glottal stop) occurs as the first, second, or third consonant. These verbs are considered a separate category because of morphophonemic rules that govern the occurrence and distribution of hamza, and also because of hamza spelling rules.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Root</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>take</td>
<td>ʕ-x-dh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eat</td>
<td>ʕ-k-l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ask</td>
<td>s-ʔ-l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>begin</td>
<td>b-d-ʔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read</td>
<td>q-r-ʔ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4 Roots with semi-consonants

1.4.1 Assimilated verb root (al-fi’i al-mithaal) 
“Assimilated” verb roots begin with a semi-consonant (waaw or yaa’), most often waaw. They are termed “assimilated” because this waaw, even though it is part of the root, often disappears in the present tense and in certain other situations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Root</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arrive</td>
<td>w-S-l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be abundant</td>
<td>w-f-r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>find</td>
<td>w-j-d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be dry</td>
<td>y-b-s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4.2 Hollow verb root (al-fi’i al-ʔajwaf) 
“Hollow” verbs are ones in which the second or middle root consonant is either waaw or yaa’. These two consonants undergo various mutations, turning into ʔalif, a short vowel, a hamza, or a long vowel depending on the word structure. In the past tense citation form, for example, the waaw or yaa’ is not present and is replaced by ʔalif. However, to look up one of these words or its derivation in a dictionary, one must know what the middle root consonant is. The root consonant often recurs in the present tense verb stem (as a vowel) and elsewhere, as will be shown. There are essentially three variations on the hollow verb, determined by which long vowel is present in the present-tense or imperfective stem: waaw, yaa’ or ʔalif.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Root</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>say</td>
<td>q-w-l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be</td>
<td>k-w-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sell</td>
<td>b-y-ʕ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>live</td>
<td>ʕ-y-sh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.4.3 Defective verb root (الفعل الناقص)
“Defective” verb roots are ones where the final consonant is either waaw or yaa’. These semi-consonants may assume various forms and even seem to disappear in certain circumstances.

be sufficient  
forget  
complain  
appear  
build

1.4.4 Doubly weak or “mixed” verb roots
Doubly weak verb roots have semi-consonants and/or hamza in two places, sometimes as the first and third consonants, and sometimes as the second and third. They are not many in number, but some of them are frequently used:

come  
see  
follow  
intend

1.5 Quadriliteral verb root (الفعل الرباعي)
Quadriliteral verb roots contain four consonants. Sometimes the four consonants are all different and sometimes they are reduplicated, that is, the first two consonants are repeated. Reduplicated quadriliteral roots are often considered to be onomatopoetic, that is, derived from particular sounds or repeated motions.

crystalize  
dominate  
obstruct  
flutter  
whisper  
hum  
shake, quake
1.6 Denominal verb roots

Normally, the verb is considered the most basic or elemental form of a lexical entry, but in a few instances, the verb is ultimately derived from a noun, and sometimes the concept is borrowed from another language. These denominals tend to exist chiefly in Forms II and V and rarely in other forms. They can be triliteral or quadriliteral. Some examples of denominal verbs include:

**Form II:**
- to unite: \(\text{waHHada} \ w-H-d\)
- to appoint: \(\text{‘ayyana} \ e-y-n\)

**Form V:**
- to adopt: \(\text{tabannaa} \ b-n\)

**Form II quadriliteral:**
- to center: \(\text{tamarkaza} \ m-r-k-z\)

2 Verb derivation patterns: ‘awzaan al-fiأوزان الفعل

2.1 Comparison with English

In English, it is possible to modify verb meanings or even create verbs from other parts of speech through several morphological procedures, for example, prefixing the morpheme /un-/ as in undo, unfasten, unlock, unpack, indicating the reversal of an action. Nouns and adjectives can be converted into verbs by adding the suffix /-en/, as in strengthen or widen indicating an increase of that quality. Or one can, for example, create verbs by using the suffix /-ize/ as in standardize, mechanize, minimize, maximize, formalize, or trivialize, to indicate the act of adding that quality to something. And there are many more such procedures. Other parts of speech, such as prepositions, adverbs, and nouns are converted to verbs just by inflecting them as verbs: “to down a glass of water,” “to up the price,” “to impact a situation.”

Arabic verb derivation is much more restricted; Arabic verbs fall into a limited number of stem classes. It is much rarer for new verbs to be created in Modern Standard Arabic than in English because each Arabic verb belongs to a particular derivational and inflectional class. That is, it has a particular internal shape, or pattern.

6 In this instance, the word markaz, ‘center,’ a noun of place from the triliteral root r-k-z, has taken on such a lexical identity of its own that a denominal verb form has emerged based on the four consonants, m-r-k-z.
2.2 The ten-form template: ْaf’aal mujarrada wa-ْaf’aal maziida
أفعال مجردة وأفعال مزيدة

Arabic has a verb grid, or template of ten derived “forms” into which any triliteral verb root may theoretically fit. That is, the lexical root of three consonants can theoretically interlock with ten different patterns to produce ten lexical variants on the same root. These variants all have a central, related lexical meaning, but each verb form has a different semantic slant on that meaning. For example, different forms of the lexical root ْ-l-m produce verbs having to do with knowledge: Form I ْalim-a means ‘to know, to be informed’ Form II ْallam-a means ‘to teach’ (cause someone to know), Form IV ْa’lama means ‘to inform’ (cause someone to be informed), Form V ta’allama means ‘to learn, to study’ (cause one’s self to know). The triconsonantal sequence ْ-l-m is common to all these lexical items.

The base form, or Form I is referred to in Arabic as ْal mujarrad, literally the ‘stripped’ form; meaning the morphologically simplest form. All other forms (II–X) are referred to as ْaf’aal maziida, literally, ‘increased’ or ‘augmented’ forms, i.e., more morphologically complex.

In practice, not every lexical root occurs in all ten forms of the verb; some occur in very few forms, while others occur in four, five, or six forms. Dictionaries normally list all the forms in which a lexical root regularly appears.

The interlocking of the lexical root with the various verb form templates creates actual verbs whose meanings can often be analyzed or deduced through the use of compositional semantics. That is, the lexical meaning of the consonantal root plus the grammatical meaning of the particular template combine to yield an actual word. This two-part formula sometimes yields a very clear meaning derivable from the component parts, but other times, the meaning is not as clear because of its evolution over time.

Quadriliteral verbs have a more restricted grid of four possible templates or forms into which they fall.

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7 As mentioned in note 1, there are a possible five more forms, XI–XV, but they are much rarer.
8 As a concise summary of the interrelationships of the Arabic verb forms, Lecomte (1968, 34) writes: “Si l’on met à part la forme dérivée IX, qui est nettement en marge du système, et la forme VII, commune à tout le domaine sémitique et de constitution claire, on peut expliquer comme suit la formation des autres formes dérivées: les formes I, II, III et IV sont les quatre formes de base, auxquelles correspondent respectivement les formes VIII, V, VI et X, obtenues en principe par préfixation d’un t-, qui leur confère une valeur réfléchie-passive. Le principe est appliqué sans altération dans les formes dérivées V et VI. Dans la forme dérivée VIII, on observe une métathèse immédiatement perceptible. La forme dérivée X est issue non de la forme dérivée IV à préfixe hamza, mais d’une forme dérivée IV à préfixe s- qui a existé dans d’autres langues sémitiques (ex. assyrien tardif).”
2.2.1 Conventions

2.2.1.1 FORMS AND MEASURES (‘awzaan أوژان): The derivations or verb templates are identified by the morphological pattern that characterizes them and are often referred to in western grammars of Arabic as “forms” or “measures” of the verb. They are usually identified in English by a roman numeral, i.e., Form II or Form VI. In this convention, when the word “form” refers to a specific verb template, it is capitalized, e.g., Form II. Since this is a widespread convention in the United States and Europe, and because it is the way that verbs are identified in the most widely used Arabic-English dictionary, Hans Wehr’s Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, it is used in this reference grammar.

Arabic grammars term the verb forms ‘awzaan ‘weights’ or ‘measures’ (sg. wazn وزن), and refer to them via the medium of a model root (traditionally فِل فَل) keyed into particular morphological patterns. The base form is mujarrad ‘stripped, bare’ and the derived forms are maziid ‘augmented’ on the model of a particular pattern, for example,

«انتخب» على وزن افعال

“intaxab” ‘alaa wazn-i If’ta’al;
i.e., intaxab ‘he elected’ is on the model of If’ta’al;

«تَجْنَبْ» على وزن تفعَّل

“tajannab” ‘alaa wazn-i Tafa’‘al;
tajannab ‘he avoided’ is on the model of Tafa’‘al.

2.2.1.2 CITATION FORM FOR VERBS: The conventional way of citing Arabic verbal roots is to refer to them using the shortest verb inflection, the third person masculine singular, past tense. This is considered equivalent to using the English citation form, the infinitive (there is no infinitive verb form in Arabic⁹). It is helpful to cite the verb in its past and present forms together, and that is how they are presented in this book. For example:

to discuss baHath-a/ya-bHath-u

to reveal kashaf-a/ya-kshif-u

⁹ The verbal noun, or maṣdar, is considered equivalent to the infinitive for several reasons: first, it is an abstraction of the action of a verb, and second it does not possess a time reference (i.e., tense marking) and is therefore non-finite. Moreover, in certain syntactic constructions it functions as an infinitive does in English. However, it is not used as a citation form for the verb.
2.3 The model root: \( f^-l \) (fa\( a \) - a\( yn \) - laam)

In order to exemplify patterns or prosodic templates in Arabic, a model root \( f^-l \) is used so that any pattern can be referred to or expressed by fitting into it.\(^{10}\) This procedure was established centuries ago when Arabic grammarians first started extracting and analyzing the rules and structures of the language, and it is still the practice today. Any initial root consonant is represented by fa\( a \), any medial consonant by a\( yn \), and any final root consonant by laam.\(^{11}\) The Form IV verb ə\( arsala \) (‘to send’) would be said to be on the pattern of ə\( af\) al\( a \) (‘alaa wazn ə\( af\) al\( a \)
على وزن أفعال), the verb katab\( a \) (‘to write’) is on the pattern of fa\( al\( a \) (‘alaa wazn fa\( al\( a \) على وزن فعل), and so forth.

If a root or stem has four consonants instead of three, then another laam is added to illustrate the pattern. Thus the verb tarjam\( a \) (‘to translate’) would be said to be on the pattern of fa\( l\) al\( a \) (‘alaa wazn fa\( l\) al\( a \) على وزن فعل).

The use of the root \( f^-l \) as the prime exemplar for all Arabic words is a powerful symbolic formalization that provides a model of any morphological template or word pattern. This procedure is used not only to refer to verb forms but also to refer to any lexical item based on the root and pattern system. It is an efficient way of illustrating paradigmatic contrasts, and in keeping with this practice, this reference grammar uses the root \( f^-l \) for points of reference and examples.

2.4 Morphological shifts

When a non-sound root interlocks with a particular pattern, a situation arises where rules of phonology intersect and may clash with rules of morphology, so a modification of the word-structure occurs. When this happens, the rules of phonology are primary. These instances result, therefore, in what are called morphophonemic processes, i.e., rule-governed changes in word structure. These rules generate particular inflectional classes (e.g., Form VIII hollow verbs) which are illustrated in paradigms.

Although it may seem that there are many exceptions to rules in Arabic, the fact is that Arabic phonological structure and rules of phonotactics are primary, and they determine the sequences of morphological alternations that occur. The phonological rules of Arabic and how they interact with the morphology result in morphological structures of Arabic being coherent and rule-governed.

---

\(^{10}\) The lexical root \( f^-l \) has the base meaning of ‘doing’ or ‘making.’

\(^{11}\) The letters/phonemes of the model root are referred to in Arabic as Huruuf al-miizaan al-Sarfiyy ‘the letters of the morphological measure.’ As described by Abd al-Latif et al., “bi-Hayth-u ta-kuun-a haad-hihi l-Huruuf-u l-thalaathat-u mushakkalat-an bi-Harakaat-i \( aHruf-i l-kalimat-i l-muraad-i wazn-u-haa wazn-an Sarfiyy-an \)” (1997, 141). “In order that these three letters be vowelized with the vowels of the word whose pattern is desired.”
This reference grammar defines and describes some basic MSA morphophonemic processes in order to make clear the systematization in the language. However, learners who would prefer to focus on forms rather than rules can consult the paradigms without examining the morphophonemic processes.

2.5 The verb forms: patterns, meanings, deverbal substantives
Verb patterns are traditionally given in their citation forms, the third person masculine singular active past tense, as well as the third person masculine singular present tense. This is a standard procedure for citing Arabic verbs, since there is a stem change between past and present tense.

It is traditional to refer to the short vowel which follows the second root consonant of a verb as the “stem” vowel. Therefore in a present tense verb such as ya-rfuD-u ‘he refuses,’ the stem vowel is Damma. In a derived verb form such as Form VIII ya-HtafiZ-u ‘he maintains,’ the stem vowel is kasra.

Verb citations are provided in Arabic script and in transcription; for discussion of consonant–vowel patterning, consonant-vowel structures are also sometimes given, using the convention:

\[
C = \text{Consonant; } \quad V = \text{short vowel}
\]

\[
C_1 \text{ represents the first root consonant, } \quad VV = \text{long vowel}
\]

\[
C_2 \text{ represents the second and }
\]

\[
C_3 \text{ represents the third.}
\]

\[
C_4 \text{ represents the fourth consonant (if any)}
\]

In the following chapters, each verb form is described, with its particular patterns and meanings. Inflectional characteristics are noted, and examples are provided.

As mentioned at the start of this section, each verb form has in its wake a set of three deverbal substantives: a verbal noun (the name of the action, e.g., ‘defense,’ or ‘defending’), an active participle (describing the doer of the action: ‘defender’ or ‘[person] defending’) and a passive participle (describing the item which undergoes the action, e.g., ‘defended’). Whereas the verbal noun is used strictly as a noun, the participles, being descriptors, may function either as nouns or as adjectives. Different sections of this book describe the form and function of verbal nouns and participles, but because they form such an integral part of the lexical repository of each verb, they are also listed in the context of their deverbal derivations.
Verb inflection: a summary

1 Verb inflection
Arabic verbs inflect for six morphological categories: gender, number, person, tense, mood, and voice. These inflections are marked by means of prefixes, suffixes, changes in vowel pattern, and stem changes. The first three categories, gender, number, and person, are determined by the subject of the verb. That is, the verb agrees with the subject in all those respects.

1.1 Agreement markers: gender, number, and person
Agreement markers ensure that the verb inflects in accordance with the nature of its subject. Arabic verbs inflect by means of affixes attached to a verb stem. In the past tense, the inflectional marker is a suffix that carries all the agreement markers: gender, number, and person. For example: the suffix /-at/ on a past tense stem such as katab- (katab-at كتبَت) carries the information: third person, feminine, singular: i.e., "she wrote."

In the present tense, the verb stem has a prefix as well as a suffix. For example, prefix ya- on a present tense stem such as -ktub- carries partial information: third person. The suffix on the present tense stem carries more information: therefore the suffix -uuna (as in ya-ktub-uuna يكتُبون ‘they write’) gives information on number (plural) and gender (masculine), as well as mood (indicative). This combination of information is uniquely marked on each member in a verb paradigm.1

1.1.1 Gender: masculine or feminine
Arabic verbs are marked for masculine or feminine gender in the second and third persons. The first person (I, we) is gender-neutral.

---

1 In technical linguistic terms, Arabic is a “pro-drop” (i.e., “pronoun-drop”) language. That is, every inflection in a verb paradigm is specified uniquely and does not need to use independent pronouns to differentiate the person, number, and gender of the verb. For Modern Standard Arabic that means that there are thirteen different inflections in every verb paradigm. Consult Haegeman 1994, 19–25 and 454–57 for more on pro-drop languages and the pro-drop parameter in general.
1.1.2 Number: singular, dual, plural
Arabic verbs are inflected for three number categories: singular, dual, or plural. The dual in Arabic verbs is used in the second person ("you two") and in the third person ("they two"), but not the first person.

1.1.3 Person: first, second, third
The concept of "person" refers to the individual/s involved in the speech act: the one/s speaking (first person), the one/s spoken to (second person), and one/s spoken about (third person). Arabic verbs inflect for: first person (I, we), second person (you), and third person (she, he, they).

1.2 Tense
The two basic Arabic verb tenses differ in terms of stems as well as inflectional markers.

1.2.1 Verb stems
Each Arabic verb has two stems, one used for the perfect/past tense and one for the imperfect/present. The past tense stem takes suffixes in order to inflect, and the present tense stem takes both prefixes and suffixes. Because of the salience of the prefix in the present tense and of the suffix in the past tense, certain scholars refer to these tenses as “the prefix set” and “the suffix set,” respectively.²

In Form I verbs, the present tense inflectional stem is not usually predictable from the past tense stem, but in the derived forms and quadriliteral verbs, the present stem is predictable. In this text, stems are usually written with a hyphen where they would connect with inflectional formatives,³ e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past tense stem</th>
<th>Present tense stem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>write</td>
<td>katab-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>كتب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-ktub-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complete</td>
<td>akmal-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>أكمل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-kmil-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meet</td>
<td>ijtama-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>اجتماع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-jtami-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use</td>
<td>istaxdam-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>استخدام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-staxdim-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2.2 Tense/Aspect
Arabic verbs show a range of tenses, but two of them are basic: past and present. These tenses are also often referred to as perfect and imperfect, or perfective and

² For example, see Holes 1995, 86–90 and Beeston 1970, 71–86.
³ Where the prefix or suffix merges with the verb stem (as in the past tense of defective verbs or the present tense of passive assimilated verbs) the morpheme boundary is blurred and therefore not indicated.
imperfective, but those latter terms are more accurately labels of aspect rather than tense.

Tense and aspect can be described as two different ways of looking at time. Tense usually deals with linear points in time that stretch from the far past into the future, in relation to the speaker. Aspect, on the other hand deals with the degree of completeness of an action or state: is the action completed, partial, ongoing, or yet to occur? So the perspectives of tense and aspect are different: tense focuses on the point on the timeline at which the action occurs, whereas aspect is focused on the action itself – whether it is complete or not.4

The difference between tense and aspect can be subtle, and the two categories may overlap to a significant extent. It is theorized that Classical Arabic was more aspect-specific than tense-specific, but in dealing with the modern written language, some linguists and teachers find it more pragmatic to describe Arabic verbs in terms of tense.5

In this work, I often use the term “past tense” to refer to what is also called the perfect, or the perfective aspect; and I use the term “present tense” to refer to what is also called the imperfect tense or the imperfective aspect. In general, I prefer to stick with timeline terms (“past” and “present”) when using the term “tense” because I have found this to be less confusing to learners.6

4 “Tense involves the basic location in time of an event or state of affairs, in relation to the time of speaking (or writing), while aspect relates more to the internal nature of events and states of affairs, such as whether they are (or were) finished, long-lasting, instantaneous, repetitive, the beginning of something, the end of something, and so on” (Hurford 1994, 240). Abboud and McCarus use the terms “perfect tense” and “imperfect tense” (1983, part 1:263): “The perfect tense denotes completed actions; the imperfect tense denotes actions which have not taken place or have not been completed.”

5 Likewise, Haywood and Nahmad state (1962, 95–96): “Arabic, in common with other Semitic languages, is deficient in tenses, and this does not make for ease in learning. Moreover the tenses do not have accurate time-significations as in Indo-European languages. There are two main tenses, the Perfect الماضي المضارع al-maaddii, denoting actions completed at the time to which reference is being made; and the Imperfect present imperfect al-muDaari’, for incompleted actions.”

6 For a thorough and lucid discussion of Arabic verb aspect and tense see Blachère and Gaudefroy-Demombynes 1975, 245–56. More concisely, Wright states the following: “A Semitic Perfect or Imperfect has, in and of itself, no reference to the temporal relations of the speaker (thinker or writer) and of other actions which are brought into juxtaposition with it. It is precisely these relations which determine in what sphere of time (past, present, or future) a Semitic Perfect or Imperfect lies, and by which of our tenses it is to be expressed – whether by our Past, Perfect, Pluperfect, or Future-perfect; by our Present, Imperfect, or Future. The Arabian Grammarians themselves have not, however, succeeded in keeping this important point distinctly in view, but have given an undue importance to the idea of time” (1967, I:51).

The terms “perfect” and “imperfect” are sometimes misleading for English-speaking learners of Arabic because they often compare the terms to European languages they have studied, such as French, for example, where “imparfait” refers to a continuing state or action in the past. Note the definition of “imperfect” in Webster’s Third (unabridged: 1986, q.v.): “of or relating to or being a verb tense used to designate a continuing state or action esp. in the past” (my italics).
1.2.3 The present tense (the imperfect): \textit{al-muDaari} المعشار

1.2.3.1 FORM: The present tense is formed from the present tense stem of a verb, to which both a prefix and a suffix are added. The stem by itself is not an independent word; it needs the prefixes and suffixes to convey a complete meaning. The prefixes are subject markers of person while the suffixes show mood and number.\textsuperscript{7} In MSA, thirteen present tense inflectional forms are used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present tense stem -\textit{ktub}– \textit{‘write’}</th>
<th>Present tense indicative conjugation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>Singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>أكتبَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The prefix and suffix together give the full meaning of the verb. They are sometimes referred to together as a “circumfix” because they surround the stem on both sides.\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{7} The term \textit{muDaari}’ literally means ‘resembling.’ This term was adopted because of the fact that the present tense mood markers on the verb (the suffixed \textit{Damma} of the indicative and the \textit{fatHa} of the subjunctive) resemble the case markers on nouns (especially the nominative and accusative). In other words, whereas the past tense verb has only one mood (the indicative) the present tense verb shifts its mood depending on the syntactic context, just as a noun shifts its case depending on its role in the sentence. The present tense therefore “resembles” a noun in this ability to shift its desinence.

\textsuperscript{8} The term “circumfix” refers to a combination of prefix and suffix used with a stem to create a lexical item, such as the English word “enlighten.” As Anderson states, they “involve simultaneous prefixation and suffixation that correspond to a single unit of morphological form” (1992, 53). The discontinuous inflectional affixes on Arabic present tense verbs may be considered circumfixes, but the concept of circumfix as a separate morphological category is disputed. See Golston 1996, 731, esp. note 8, as well as Anderson 1992, 53, 59, and 389.
1.2.3.2 MEANING: The present tense, or imperfect, refers in a general way to incomplete, ongoing actions or ongoing states. It corresponds to both the English present and present continuous tenses. There is no distinction between these in Arabic.

I write; I am writing  
\[ a-ktub-u \]  

we study; we are studying  
\[ na-drus-u \]  

they (m.) translate, are translating  
\[ yu-tarjim-uuna \]  

they (f.) meet; they are meeting  
\[ ya-jtami\(^{\prime}\)-na \]  

Examples:

They are playing a match.  
\[ ya-l\(^{\prime}\)-fi ab-uuna mubaaraat-an. \]

He works in the administration.  
\[ ya-\(^{\prime}\)-mal-u fi l-\(^{\prime}\)-idaarat-i. \]

He is sitting on the seat.  
\[ ya-jlis-u fi alaa l-maq\(^{\prime}\)-ad-i. \]

She differs from others.  
\[ ta-xtalif-u \(^{\prime}\)-an ghayr-i-haa. \]

1.2.4 Future tense: al-mustaqa\(\)bal

1.2.4.1 FORM: The future tense is formed by prefixing either the morpheme sa- or the particle sawfa to a present tense indicative verb. The verb may be active or passive. The particle sa- is identified by some grammarians as an abbreviation of sawfa.

1.2.4.2 MEANING: This procedure conveys an explicitly future action.

It will help to a great extent.  
\[ sa-yu-saa\(^{\prime}\)-id-u \(^{\prime}\)-ilaa Hadd-in kabiir-in. \]

I’ll think about that.  
\[ sa-\(^{\prime}\)-u-fakkir-u fii dhaalika. \]

The decision will be taken.  
\[ al-qaraar-u sa-yu-ttaxadh-u. \]

They will represent their country.  
\[ sawfa yu-maththil-uuna bilaad-a-hum. \]

1.2.5 Past tense: al-ma\(\)adi

1.2.5.1 FORM: The past tense in Arabic is formed by suffixing person-markers to the past tense verb stem. The person markers in the past tense also denote...
number (singular, dual, plural) and gender. In MSA, thirteen person markers are used in the past tense paradigm:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past tense stem katab- ‘wrote’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>katab-tu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>katab-ta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>katab-ta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>katab-ta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>katab-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>katab-at</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2.5.2 SPELLING: The third person masculine plural suffix, /-uu/ is spelled with a final ‘alif, which is not pronounced, sometimes called “otiose’ ‘alif.9 It is simply a traditional spelling convention. It is deleted if the verb has a pronoun object suffix, e.g.,

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>katab-uu</td>
<td>katab-uu-haa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they wrote</td>
<td>They wrote it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>katab-uu</td>
<td>istaxdam-uu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>istaxdam-uu-hu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waSaf-uu-hu.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They described it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2.5.3 MEANING

(1) Action in the past: The Arabic past tense refers to a completed action and thus equates in most respects with English past tense and past perfect.10

9 See Chapter 2, section 4.2.1.3, subsection (3.3).
10 See Wright 1967, II:1–4 for further analysis of the past tense.
He tried to save a man’s life.

They (m.) delivered a statement.

She returned from a vacation.

Thank you for everything you (m.pl.) have done.

(2) **Non-past action**: Depending on the context, the Arabic past tense may also be used to convey other meanings. For example:

We are almost there (lit. ‘we have almost arrived’).

God bless you (lit. ‘God has blessed you’).

### 1.3 Moods of the verb

Mood or “mode” refers to the Arabic verb properties **indicative**, **subjunctive**, **jussive**, and **imperative**. These categories, or morphosyntactic properties, reflect contextual modalities that condition the action of the verb. For example, the indicative mood is characteristic of straightforward, factual statements or questions, while the subjunctive mood reflects an attitude toward the action such as doubt, desire, intent, wishing, or necessity, and the jussive mood, when used for the imperative, indicates an attitude of command, request, or need-for-action on the part of the speaker.

In Arabic, mood marking is done only on the present tense or imperfective stem; there are no mood variants for the past tense. The Arabic moods are therefore non-finite; that is, they do not refer to specific points in time and are not differentiated by tense. Tense is inferred from context and other parts of the clause. For more extensive description of the moods and their uses, see Chapters 34 and 35.

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11 The second person plural masculine suffix -tum requires a long vowel -uu as a helping vowel before a suffixed personal pronoun.

12 For example, the past tense is used in conditional sentences, as well as in optative (wishing) expressions. For more on this function of the past tense, see Chapter 39.

13 The question of mood marking (on verbs) is a central one in Arabic grammar, along with case marking (on nouns and adjectives). Moods fall under the topic of morphology because they are reflected in Arabic word structure, that is, they are usually indicated by suffixes or modifications of suffixes attached to the present tense verb stem, and the phonological nature of the verb stem determines what form the suffix will take. Moods also, however, fall under the topic of syntax because their use is determined either by particles which govern their occurrence, or by the narrative context in general, including attitude of the speaker and intended meaning. They are therefore referred to in some reference works and theoretical discussions as “morphosyntactic” categories.
1.3.1 Indicative mood

We welcome our customers. He leaves Cairo today.

1.3.2 Subjunctive mood

It is necessary that we undertake a visit.

1.3.3 Jussive mood

The jussive mood in MSA is used most often with the negative particle lam to negate the past tense, and as a basis for forming the imperative.

We did not come.

1.3.4 Imperative

Open, Sesame! Permit me. Don’t forget!

1.4 Voice: active or passive

Whereas the tense of a verb conveys temporal or time-related information, the “voice” of a verb conveys information on the topical focus of a sentence. The active voice is used when the doer of the action is the subject of the verb (“I ate the cake”), and the passive voice is used when the object of the verbal action is the subject (“The cake was eaten.”). Generally speaking, the passive voice is used in Arabic only if the agent or doer of the action is unknown or not to be mentioned for some reason. This contrasts with English where one may mention the agent in a passive construction through use of the preposition “by” (“The cake was eaten by me.”) Rarely is the agent mentioned when the passive is used in Arabic.

The Arabic passive may be internal, through a change in the nature of the internal vowels (e.g., ‘uqid-a ‘it was held’) or derivational (e.g., in’aqad-a ‘it was held’).

For example, the following sentence is in the active voice:

The king held the meeting.
where *al-malik-u* 'the king' is the subject of the verb as well as the agent or doer of the action, *‘aqad-a*, and the object of the verb is *al-ijtimaa*-u ‘the meeting.’

If the sentence were re-phrased as a passive construction, the object of the verb becomes the subject of the sentence, and the verb is marked for passive. The internal morphological change that signals the Arabic passive is a change in the vowel pattern of the verb:

\[ \text{‘uqid-a l-ijtimaa*-u.} \]

The meeting was held.

where *al-ijtimaa*-u is now the subject, and the verb is inflected for passive voice through the vowel sequence /-u-i/ instead of /-a-a/.

Another way of expressing the passive is to use another form of the verb which is passive or reflexive in meaning, usually the Form VII verb, if it exists, or Form V:

\[ \text{in‘aqad-a l-ijtimaa*-u.} \]

The meeting was held.

where the Form VII verb is active in form, but passive in meaning, and the subject of the Form VII verb is *al-ijtimaa*-u. Passive and passive-like structures are described at greater length in Chapter 38.

2 Complex predicates: compound verbs, *qad*, and verb strings

Arabic verbal expressions may consist of more than the main verb. Auxiliary verbs may be used in conjunction with a main verb to express variations of tense and aspect, and the verbal particle *qad* is also used to convey information about aspect.

2.1 Compound verbs

Compound verbs are tenses that consist of the verb *kaan-a* plus a main verb. They are as follows:

2.1.1 The past progressive

To convey the idea of continued or habitual action in the past, the verb *kaan-a* is used in the past tense in conjunction with the present tense of the main verb. Both parts of this compound verb are inflected for person, gender, and number. The main verb always comes after *kaan-a*; if there is a specific subject mentioned, it comes between the two parts of the verb.

This tense of the verb is used for expressing what in English would be “used to,” or “was _____ ing.” Sometimes, with certain verbs in certain contexts it is used to
express a concept of an action that took place in the past, but extended or endured over a period of time, rather than taking place at a discrete moment in time. This is especially true of experiential verbs that denote states of mind, such as knowing, feeling, liking. In those cases, the English equivalent is often just a simple past tense.

**2.1.1.1 PAST PROGRESSIVE WITH EXPERIENTIAL VERBS:** A state of knowing, feeling, or understanding is one that is considered to extend over a period of time in the past, and therefore such verbs are often expressed with the past continuous tense rather than the simple past in Arabic. English does not usually express these concepts with the past progressive tense, but with the simple past.

They used to wake up daily at 6:00.

(1) **Verbal sentences:**

أعيش هنا منذ خمس سنوات.

\[ 'a-‘iish-u hunaa mundhu xams-i sanawaat-in \]

I have been living here for five years.
He has been working in the county administration for two months.

(2) **Equational sentences:** In these two sentences, an active participle is used instead of a verb with past perfect progressive meaning.

- تجارتها قائمة على التصدير والاستيراد منذ زمن طويل.
  
  تجارته ar-ها fa-ic la-ma’at-un al-kafiir-i wa-l-istiiraad-i mundh-u zaman-in 
  
  Its trade has been based on export and import for a long time.

- هذا الزحف مستمر منذ ملايين السنين.
  
  haadh-haa l-zaiIf-u mu-staamiir-un mundh-u malaayiin-i l-saniina.
  
  This reptile has been in continuous existence for millions of years.

2.2 Pluperfect or past perfect: anteriority

To express an anterior action, i.e., an action in the past that is over with and which serves as a background action for the present, the past tense of *kaan-a* is used with a past tense of the main verb. The particle *qad* may be optionally inserted just before the main verb. Note that the subject of the verb, if mentioned as a separate noun, goes between the auxiliary verb and the main verb. If the subject noun is human and plural, the main verb inflects for plural, although the auxiliary verb remains singular because it precedes the subject.

2.2.1 With subject noun

- وكان السفير قد وصل مساء الجمعة.
  
  kaan-a l-safiir-u (qad) waSal-a l-jum”at-i.
  
  The ambassador had arrived Friday evening.

- وكان العلماء توافردوا إلى مدينة بغداد.
  
  wa-kaan-a l-ulamaa”-u tawaafad uu ilaa madiinat-i baghdaad-a.
  
  The scholars had flocked to the city of Baghdad.

- كان محامون أمريكيون شاركوا.
  
  kaan-a muHaam-uuna ’amrikiyy-uuna shaarak-uu.
  
  American lawyers had participated.

---

14 An alternative but less frequently used way of expressing the pluperfect in MSA is to use the expression *sabaq-a* ‘a(n)’it preceded that’ before the main verb:

- سيِق أن التقى مراراً قادة الأكراد.
  
  sabaq-a ’an-i liqaa mara’ar-an qa’adat-a l-akraad-i.
  
  He had already met with the leaders of the Kurds many times.
The mosque had been built thirteen centuries ago.

2.2.2 Without subject noun

They had been working with Amman. He had accused them of provoking him.

They had been working with Amman. He had accused them of provoking him.

2.3 Future perfect

To indicate a state or action expected to be completed in the future, the present or future tense of kaan-a is used with a past tense main verb:

The team would have won in the competitions if the committee had permitted them to participate.

2.4 Unreal condition

To describe an action that would or could have taken place, but actually did not, the past tense of kaan-a is used with the future tense of the main verb. This is called an unreal condition or a contrary-to-fact condition.

The team would have won in the competitions if the committee had permitted them to participate.
2.5 The particle *qad*

The particle *qad* is used with verbs. It has no exact lexical equivalent in English and various theories have been put forth as to its function.\(^{15}\) One theory is that it is used to emphasize or confirm aspect; that is, whether or not an action has been completed, and to what degree. Used with the past (or “perfect”) tense, *qad* emphases and asserts that the action has indeed happened. In this context it may be translated as ‘indeed,’ ‘already,’ or ‘really’ but sometimes it is not translatable.\(^{16}\)

With the imperfect or present tense, it emphasizes the possibility of the action or its potentiality rather than its actual achievement. In this case it is usually translated as ‘may,’ ‘might,’ or ‘perhaps.’

Used in conjunction with the compound pluperfect tense verb (*kaana qad*), it is part of the compound verb structure, coming after the auxiliary verb *kaan-a* and before the past tense main verb.\(^ {17}\) Rarely is *qad* used when the verb is negative.

As with other words that end in *sukuun*, *qad* needs a helping vowel *kasra* if it occurs before a consonant cluster.

### 2.5.1 *qad* with past (perfect) tense

Used with the past tense, *qad* may occur on its own, but it may also be prefixed with the particles *wa-*، *fa-*، or *la-*ل. These particles do not change the meaning of *qad* although they may imply a temporal sequence such as “and then.” Depending on context, the past tense verb with *qad* may be equivalent either to the simple past or to the past perfect. The use of *qad* here serves to confirm the meaning of the past tense by emphasizing that the action did indeed happen. Sometimes the insertion of the word “indeed” in English is appropriate.

---

*Qad* taHaqqaq-at *'axiir-an.*

It was finally / has finally been realized.

*wa-la-qad* wajad-tu-hu fii l-Sanduuq-i.

And (then) I found it in the box.

*Qad-i* rtakab-a haadhihi *l-jariimat-a munfarid-an.*

(Indeed) He committed / has committed this crime on his own.

*wa-li-dhaalika fa-qad* Haafiz-uu *'alaa l-maxTuuTaat-i.*

And therefore they (indeed) kept the manuscripts.

---

\(^{15}\) See Bahloul 1996 for an in-depth analysis of the nature and uses of *qad*.

\(^{16}\) ‘\*Abd al-Latif et al. (1997, 233) state that *qad* “is a particle of affirmation if it comes before a past tense verb, and a particle of diminution if it comes before a present tense verb.” *qad* Harf-u *taHqiqi-n* ‘idhaa daxal-at *'alaa l-muDaari*، *wa-Harf-u taqlli-l-in* ‘idhaa daxal-at *'alaa l-muDaari*.

\(^{17}\) “The modal particle *qad* tends quite often to occur inside the verbal complex, that is, between the auxiliary verb and the thematic verb” (Bahloul 1996, 37).
Verb inflection: a summary

2.5.1.1 fa-qad + PAST TENSE: This conjunction introduces a clause in the past tense that acts as circumstance or background to the previous clause, stating an action or state that precedes the action in the previous clause chronologically or logically. As Abboud and McCarus state (1983, part 1:537), “this construction indicates a completed action whose results are still in effect” with regard to the previous clause. This is considered a type of Haal or circumstantial structure.

2.5.2 qad with present (imperfect) tense = possibility

Used with the indicative present tense, qad implies possibility.

2.6 Verb strings or serial verb constructions

Certain verbs can directly precede others, thereby modifying the meaning of the main verb and acting as auxiliary verbs. Whenever the verb phrase consists of two or more verbs, the subject, if mentioned, is usually put between them. These verbs fall into several classes.

---

Haywood and Nahmad state: “The particle qad is sometimes used before the Perfect verb. It is a confirmatory particle, which may make the verb definitely Past perfect . . . However, this particle may also make the verb Pluperfect . . . according to context” (1962, 100).
2.6.1 Verbs of appropinquation

These verbs indicate proximity or nearness to an action, but not quite the achievement of it, referred to by Wright as verbs of “appropinquation” (1967, II:106). These include verbs such as *kaad-ayyaa-kaaad-uu* ‘to almost [do something]; be on the point of [doing something]’ and *awshak-a yuushik-uu* ‘to be on the verge’ of doing something.

The subject was almost erased from Arab memory.

The sun had almost risen.

We can almost not find a counterpart to it.

Sometimes, *kaad-a* or *awshak-a* are followed by the subjunctivizing particle *an*, in which case the following verb is in the subjunctive:

Sometimes, with *awshak-a*, a verbal noun may be used instead of a following verb:

They almost believed in the existence of a conspiracy ('belief verged').

Used in the negative, the implication of *kaad-a* is that an action has just barely taken place, usually translatable as ‘hardly,’ or ‘scarcely.’

The curtain had hardly been dropped.

---

19 Blachère and Goudefroy Demombynes refer to them as “verbes d'imminence” (1975, 268).
2.6.2 Inceptive verbs
Another set of helping verbs is inceptive or inchoative. They convey the idea of starting or setting about an action and are usually used in the past with a present tense main verb. In MSA these verbs include:

- to set about: \textit{ja'al-a} (literally ‘to make’)
- to start: \textit{³axadh-a} (literally, ‘to take’)
- to start: \textit{bada³-a} (literally, ‘to begin’)
- to set about: \textit{Saara} (literally, ‘to become’)

\textit{³aSbaH-a}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{bada³-a yu-lfit-u l-naZar-a.} \textit{mundhu l-sittiinaat-i Saar-at ta-³xudh-u dawr-an ³akbar-a.}
  \item \textit{It started to attract attention. Since the sixties it has started to assume a larger role.}
\end{itemize}

2.6.3 Verbs of continuation
These verbs, when used as auxiliaries, convey the concept of continuing an action or a state:

\textit{baat-a}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{baat-at-i l-bilaad-u tu-³raf-u bi-hi l-yawm-a.}
  \item \textit{The country is still known by it today.}
\end{itemize}

\textit{Zall-a}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Zall-a yu-raddid-u l-fi ibaarat-a.} \textit{Zall-a ya-s‘aa waraa³-a hadaf-i-hi}
  \item \textit{He kept repeating the expression. He continued to pursue (‘after’) his goal.}
\end{itemize}

\textit{maa zaal-a}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{al-³umuur-u laa ta-zaal-u ta-Htaaj-u ³ilaa kathiiir-in min-a l-jahd-i.}
  \item \textit{Matters still require much effort.}
\end{itemize}

\textit{maDaa}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{wa-maDaa ya-shtirii l-xuDaara.}
  \item \textit{He went on to buy vegetables.}
\end{itemize}
2.6.4 Simultaneous verbal action (al-Haal)

Certain concepts are conveyed by verbs describing simultaneous states or actions. The subject may remain the same for both verbs, or it may be different. This structure is a form of Haal, or adverbial expression that describes what someone was doing at the time of the action of the main verb.20

With same subject:

. . . $\int f \neq j$ $\approx \& h \ldots$
$wa$-$mDaa$ $ya$-$qul$-$u$ $\ldots$
He continued, saying . . .

With different subject:

$shaahad-a$haa$ $ta$-$rushsh$-$u$ $Tilaa^2$-$an$. $laa$ $ta$-$truk$-$u$-$ka$ $ta$-$ntaZir$-$u$.
He saw her spattering paint. It doesn’t leave you waiting.

---

20 On the Haal حَالِلْ construction, see Chapter 11, section 2.3.1, and also Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.3.
Form I: The base form triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern
Form I is considered the base form because of its fundamental structure. In Arabic, this form is termed mujarrad: ‘bare; stripped’ because it is the simplest stem of all. The base pattern for Form I past tense is CaCVC, that is, consonant-fatHa-consonant-short vowel-consonant. Although the first short vowel is consistently fatHa, the second, or stem vowel, may be fatHa, kasra or Damma: fa‘al-a, fa‘il-a, fa‘ul-a.

The present tense stem vowel (the vowel that follows the second root consonant) is also variable in Form I. It may be /a/, /u/, or /i/.

1.2 Meaning
Form I is the closest indicator of the meaning of the lexical root. There are shades of meaning associated with the stem vowel differences in the past tense citation forms, but these semantic differences are very subtle. Note that every verb and verbal noun has a range of meanings, sometimes extensive. Glosses or English equivalents provided here are not exclusive or exact meanings but represent common standard usage.

1.3 Transitivity
Form I covers a wide semantic range and may be either intransitive or transitive. Occasionally it is doubly transitive.

1.4 Inflection
A particular inflectional characteristic of Form I verbs is that the present tense subject-marker vowel is fatHa (e.g., ya-drus-u, ya-wadd-u, ya-‘nii).

1.5 Root types
The nature of the three root consonants determines the root type. Phonological and morphophonemic rules apply to various kinds of sound and irregular roots,
as follows.\(^1\) Paradigm charts for all Form I root types are located at the end of this chapter.

### 2 Regular (sound) triliteral root (al-fi‘i al-SaHiiH al-saalim
الفعل الصحيح السالم)

Sound or regular verbal roots consist of three consonants, all of which are different and none of which are waaw, yaa\(^*\), or hamza. The Form I verbs are presented here by their stem types, which fall into three groups.\(^2\)

#### 2.1 Past tense stem vowel is \textit{fatHa}

When the past tense stem vowel is \textit{fatHa}, the present tense stem vowel may be /\textipa{a}/, /\textipa{u}/, or /\textipa{i}/, so there are three subgroups within this class. Occasionally, the present tense may show two different stem vowels.

**2.1.1 \textit{fa‘al-a/ ya-f‘al-u}

Here \textit{fatHa} is the stem vowel in both the past and present tenses. There is some indication that the present tense medial vowel in this verb form is conditioned by the nature of its contiguous consonants, which would be the second and third root consonants. The general theory is that a \textit{fatHa} in the present tense is associated with a back (pharyngeal or glottal) consonant.\(^3\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jama‘-a/ya-jma‘-u</td>
<td>to gather, to collect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fataH-a/ya-ftaH-u</td>
<td>to open; to conquer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhahab-a/ya-dhhab-u</td>
<td>to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manaH-a/ya-mnaH-u</td>
<td>to grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xala‘-a/ya-xla‘-u</td>
<td>to remove, take off</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2.1.2 \textit{fa‘al-a/ ya-f‘il-u}

This type of Form I verb has \textit{fatHa} in the past tense stem and \textit{kasra} as the medial vowel in the present tense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>raja‘-a/ya-rji‘-u</td>
<td>to return, to go back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hafar-a/ya-Hfir-u</td>
<td>to dig</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

\(^1\) Traditional Arabic grammar divides verb roots into two major classes: (1) \textit{SaHiiH} ‘sound’ and (2) \textit{mu‘tall} ‘weak.’ Sound roots are ones that do not contain either \textit{waaw} or \textit{yaa}; weak roots contain \textit{waaw} or \textit{yaa}’ as one or more of the root phonemes. In this text, I have allotted separate categories for doubled and hamzated verbs because they sometimes involve stem changes when inflected, even though they are considered \textit{SaHiiH}, or ‘sound,’ in Arabic grammatical terms.

\(^2\) Certain roots may have more than one stem in the past. Sometimes this indicates a meaning difference, sometimes not. For example, \textit{shamal-a/ya-shmal-u} ‘to contain, include’ and also \textit{shamil-a/ya-shmal-u} with the same meaning.

\(^3\) For more analysis of the Form I stem-vowel alternation see McCarthy 1991, esp. pp. 69–70, and see also McOmber 1995, 178–85.
to carry  Hamal-ya-Hmil-u  حمَّل / يحمِّل

to know  ‘araf-ya-‘rif-u  عَرَف / يَعْرِف

to acquire, possess  malak-ya-mlik-u  مَلِك / يملِك

2.1.3 fa‘al-ya-‘ul-u
The past tense stem vowel is fatHa, the present tense stem vowel is Damma.

to rub  farak-ya-fruk-u  فرَك / يفرُك

to leave  tarak-ya-truk-u  ترَك / يتركُ

to request, ask for  Talab-ya-Tlub-u  طلَب / يطلِبُ

to study  daras-ya-drus-u  دَرَس / يدرس

to transfer  naqal-ya-nqul-u  نَقَل / ينقلُ

2.2 Past tense stem vowel is kasra: fa‘il-ya-‘ul-u
When the past tense stem vowel is kasra, the present tense stem vowel is normally fatHa.

to drink  sharib-ya-shrab-u  شَرب / يشربُ

to do, make; to work  ‘amil-ya-‘mal-u  عَمَل / يعمِل

to know  ‘alim-ya-‘lam-u  عَلَم / يعلمُ

to hear  sami-ya-sma‘-u  سَمع / يسمعُ

2.3 Past tense stem vowel is Damma: fa‘ul-ya-f‘ul-u
This Form I stem has Dammas as both stem vowels. This stem class generally denotes states of being, or the acquisition or increase of a certain quality. These roots therefore also are the roots of many adjectives. This type of Form I verb is usually intransitive.

to be heavy  thawul-ya-thqulu-u  ثَثَرْ / يَثثَر

(adjective: ‘heavy’ thawil  ثقيل)

to grow or be big; grow older  kabur-ya-kbur-u  كِبَر / يكبر

(adjective: ‘big, great’ kabir  كبير)

to be good  Hasun-ya-Hsun-u  حَسَن / يَحسَن

(adjective: ‘good’ Hasan  حسن)

2.4 Examples of Form I sound verbs in context

َيَهْضِبُ التَّلِجَ عَلَى الْجِبَالِ.  يدفعون الثمن.
Snow falls on the mountains.  They are paying the price.
A number of representatives attended the meeting. It opened the door.

3 Geminate verb root (al-fi′l al-muDa′af) 

Geminate or doubled verbal roots are ones where the second and third consonant of the root are the same. In the citation form of Form I, the doubled or geminate consonant is written only once, with a shadda above it to show that it is double.

3.1 Stem shifts

Geminate verbs have two stems in the past and also two in the present. This is because of a phonological rule that prevents two identical consonants from being in sequence with a short vowel between them when they are directly followed by a vowel, e.g., instead of *radad-a it is radd-a (‘he replied’), instead of *ya-HTuT-uuna, it is ya-HuTT-uuna (‘they put’).

However, if the second identical stem consonant is followed by another consonant, the identical consonants remain separated, e.g., radad-tu (‘I replied’), ya-HTuT-na (‘they (f.) put’). This second type of stem, where the identical consonants are split, is referred to here as the “split stem.”

In the past tense conjugation, many of the inflectional suffixes start with consonants (-tu, -ta, -ti, -tumaa, -naa, -tunna, -tum, -na), so the split stem in the past tense is fairly common; in the present tense, however, the only suffix that starts with a consonant is the -na of the second and third persons feminine plural (e.g., ya-rdud-na ‘they (f.) reply’).

3.2 Stem types

Doubled Form I verbs fall into three stem types, according to their stem vowels. The citation forms of the past tense third person singular all look alike, so in order to know the stem type, it is necessary to know the stem vowel in the present tense. The first person singular past tense and the third person feminine plural present tense are given as examples for these verbs to illustrate the stem vowels.

3.2.1 fa′al-a /ya-f′ul-u (a/u) –> fa′l-a/ya-fu′l-u

to show, indicate dall-a/ya-dull-u

past tense split stem: dalal-tu

present tense split stem: ya-dlul-na

4 The technical Arabic term for “doubled” is given as muDa′af in ‘Abd al-Latif et al. (1997, 140) and as muDaa′af by Wright 1967 (I:69).

5 Abboud and McCarus 1983 (Part 2:81–88) have a detailed description of the phonological rules and the forms of the doubled Form I verb.
to put, place
past tense split stem: HaTaT-tu
present tense split stem: ya-HTuT-na

3.2.2 fa‘al-a/ya-f‘il-u (a/i) –> fa‘l-a/ya-fi‘l-u
be small, few; diminish
past tense split stem: qalal-tu
present tense split stem: ya-qil-na
to be complete
past tense split stem: tamam-tu
present tense split stem: ya-tmim-na

3.2.3 fa‘il-a/ya-f‘il-u (i/a) –> fa‘l-a/ya-fi‘l-u
In this stem type, the past tense stem vowel kasra shows up only in the split stem, when the verb has a suffix that starts with a consonant. In the citation form, it has been deleted because of phonological restrictions.6

3.1 Examples of Form I geminate verbs in context

تمَ الاتفاق. 
She responded to a question.

سيارة تمر في الشارع.
She responded to a question.

The agreement was completed.
a car passing by in the street.

كيف تنتم عمليات الإخلاء؟
She responded to a question.

6 Wehr (1979) gives both the citation form and the split-stem form for this stem type of doubled verb.
4 Hamzated verb root (al-fi’l al-mahmuuz (الفعل المهموز)

A hamzated verb is one where any one of the root consonants is hamza. It may occur as the first, second, or third consonant. These verbs are considered a separate category because of rules that govern the occurrence and distribution of hamza, and also because of hamza spelling rules. As the verbal roots inflect within conjugations or as they shift into derived forms, the seat of hamza may change.

4.1 Hamza-initial Form I verbs

to eat ّakal-a/ya-ّkul-u أكل / يأكلَن to take ّaxadh-a/ya-ّxudh-u أخذَ / يأخذُن

4.2 Hamza-medial Form I verbs

to ask (s.o. s.th.) sa’il-a/ya-s’al-u سألَ / يسألُن
to repair, to bandage la’am-a/ya-l’am-u لأم / يلامُن

4.3 Hamza-final Form I verbs

to begin bada’a/ya-bda’-u بدأ / بدُأن to read qara’a/ya-qra’-u قرأ / يقرأُن

Examples of Form I hamzated verbs in context:

"fini ‘lay-naa ‘an na-bda’-a min-a l-Sifr-i. fi Beirut starts the magic of the East.

5 Assimilated verb root (al-fi’l al-mithaal (الفعل المثال)

Assimilated verb roots begin with a semi-consonant (waaw or yaa’ ), most often waaw. They are called assimilated in English because the initial waaw, even though it is part of the root, often disappears in the present tense, deleted or assimilated to the subject-marker prefix. The yaa’ does not normally get assimilated.7

5.1 First root consonant deleted in present tense

This group consists of a number of frequently occurring verbs in MSA. They fall into two groups: those with fatHa in the past tense stem and kasra in the present tense, and those with fatHa as the stem vowel in both tenses.

5.1.1 fatHa/kasra

to arrive waSal-a/ya-Sil-u وصل / يصلُ to be wajab-a/ya-jib-u ضاب / يضاب

to find wajad-a/ya-jid-u وجد / يجدُ to weigh wazan-a/ya-zin-u وزن / يزنُ

7 Wright 1967 (I:78–81) provides an extensive analysis of this verb type in Classical Arabic.
5.1.2 fatHa/fatHa

to fall waqa<sup>ʾ</sup>-a/ya-qa<sup>ʾ</sup>-u  وَقَعَ  بِقَعْ  
to put waDa<sup>ʾ</sup>-a/ya-Da<sup>ʾ</sup>-u  وَضَعَ  بِضَعْ

5.2 First root consonant not deleted in present tense

This group consists of waaw-initial verbs whose stem vowel in the past is kasra or Damma, and of verbs whose initial root consonant is yaa<sup>ʾ</sup>. They behave as regular or sound verbs.

5.2.1 kasra/fatHa

to ache, hurt waji<sup>ʾ</sup>-a/ya-wja<sup>ʾ</sup>-u  وَجِعَ  بِجَعْ
to like, love wadd-a/ya-wadd-u<sup>8</sup>  وَدَ  يَودُ

5.2.2 Damma/Damma

to be wide wasu<sup>ʾ</sup>-a/ya-wsu<sup>ʾ</sup>-u  وَسَعَ  بِسَعْ

5.2.3 yaa<sup>ʾ</sup>-initial

to be easy yasir-a/ya-ysir-u<sup>9</sup>  يِسَرَ  بِيَسَرْ
to wake up yaqiZ-a/ya-yqiZ-u<sup>10</sup>  يَقِطَ  بِيَقِطَ

Examples of Form I assimilated verbs in context:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yā-jib-u} & \quad \text{waSaf-uu-haa.} \\
\text{They must stop (it is necessary that they stop').} & \quad \text{They described her.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{waSal-a l-raʾiis-u} & \quad \text{ʾllaa tuunis-a ʾams-i.} \\
The president arrived in Tunis yesterday.
\end{align*}
\]

6 Hollow root (al-fiʿal al-ʾajwab) (الفعل الأجوف)

Hollow verbs are ones in which the second root consonant is actually a semi-consonant: either waaw or yaa<sup>ʾ</sup>. These two semi-consonants undergo various mutations, turning into ʾalif, a short vowel, or a long vowel depending on the word structure and derivation. In the past tense citation form, for example, the waaw or yaa<sup>ʾ</sup> is not present and is replaced by ʾalif. However, to look up one of these words

---

<sup>8</sup> This verb is geminate as well as assimilated. Phonotactic rules prevent the initial waaw from becoming assimilated in this case.

<sup>9</sup> Also ya-sur-ʾa/ya-ysur-u ʾto be small; to be easy.

<sup>10</sup> Also ya-qiZ-ʾa/ya-yqiZ-u.
in a dictionary, one must know what the medial root consonant is, either \textit{waaw} or \textit{yaa}. The medial root consonant often shows itself in the present tense verb stem (as a long or short vowel) and elsewhere, as in the verbal nouns or participles.

There are essentially three variations on the hollow verb root, determined by which long vowel is in the present tense or imperfective stem: \textit{waaw}, \textit{yaa}, or \textit{alif}.

6.1 Hollow-\textit{waaw}
These verbs have \textit{waaw} as their medial radical. The stem vowel in the past tense is \textit{alif} when it is long and \textit{Damma} when it is short. Examples of both stems are given. The first person singular is used to exemplify the short stem. The stem vowel in the present tense is \textit{waaw} when long and \textit{Damma} when short. The third person feminine plural is used to exemplify the short stem.

\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{to say} & qaal-a (qul-tu)/ya-quul-u (ya-quul-na) \\
\hline
\textbf{to visit} & zaar-a (zur-tu)/ya-zuur-u (ya-zur-na) \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

6.2 Hollow \textit{yaa}
These verbs have \textit{yaa} as the medial radical. The stem vowel in the past tense is \textit{alif} when it is long and \textit{kasra} when it is short. Examples of both stems are given. The first person singular is used to exemplify the short stem. The stem vowel in the present tense is \textit{yaa} when long and \textit{kasra} when short. The third person feminine plural is used to exemplify the short stem.

\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{to live} & ‘aash-a (‘ish-tu)/ya-‘iish-u (ya-‘ish-na) \\
\hline
\textbf{to sell} & baa‘-a (bi‘-tu)/ya-bi‘-u (ya-bi‘-na) \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

6.3 Hollow \textit{alif}
These verb roots have either medial \textit{waaw} or \textit{yaa} but do not show it in the present tense, using \textit{alif} instead. The stem vowel in the past tense is \textit{alif} when it is long and \textit{kasra} when it is short. Examples of both stems are given. The first person singular is used to exemplify the short stem. The stem vowel in the present tense is \textit{alif} when long and \textit{fathHa} when short. The third person feminine plural is used to exemplify the short stem.

\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{to sleep} & naam-a (nim-tu)/ya-naam-u (ya-nam-na) \\
& (root: \textit{n-w-m}) \\
\hline
\textbf{to fear} & xaafa (xif-tu)/ya-xaaf-u (ya-xaf-na) \\
& (root: \textit{x-w-f}) \\
\hline
\textbf{to obtain} & naal-a (nil-tu)/ya-naal-u (ya-nal-na) \\
& (root: \textit{n-y-l}) \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
6.3.3 Examples of Form I hollow verbs in context

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yya-’fish-u marHalat-an-i ntiqaaliyyat-an.} & \quad \text{‘aad-uu ’ilay-haa.} \\
\text{It is living \{through\} a transitional stage.} & \quad \text{They returned to it.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{laa ’a-fham-u maadhaa ta-quul-u.} & \quad \text{wa-’alaa l-dawlat-i ’an ta-quum-a} \\
\text{I don’t understand what you are saying.} & \quad \text{bi-dawri-haa.} \\
\text{It is up to the state to undertake its role.}
\end{align*}
\]

7 Defective verb root (al-fi’l al-naaqiṣ)\\n
Defective verb roots are ones where the final consonant is either waaw or yaa’. These final semi-consonants may take on various forms and even seem to disappear under certain circumstances. In the past tense citation form, these roots all have final ‘alif. Roots where yaa’ is the final consonant appear with ‘alif maqSuura or yaa”; roots where waaw is the final consonant are written with ‘alif Tawiila.11

7.1 waaw-defective roots

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{to appear, to seem} & \quad \text{badaa/ya-bduu} \\
\text{to hope; wish; request} & \quad \text{rajaa/ya-rjuu} \\
\text{to call, invite} & \quad \text{da’aa/ya-d’uuu}
\end{align*}
\]

7.2 yaa’ defective roots

Yaa’ defective Form I verbs fall into two main categories: ones that end in -aa (‘alif maqSuura) and ones that end with yaa’. The ones ending in -aa usually inflect in the present tense with -ii; the ones that end with yaa’ in the past tense usually take -aa in the present tense. A few verbs take -aa in both the past and the present.

7.2.1 -aa/-ii verbs

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{to build} & \quad \text{banaa/ya-bnii} \\
\text{to be sufficient} & \quad \text{kafaa/ya-kfii} \\
\text{to walk} & \quad \text{mashaa/ya-mshii}
\end{align*}
\]

7.2.2 -ya/-aa verbs

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{to remain} & \quad \text{baqiy-a/ya-bqaa} \\
\text{to forget} & \quad \text{nasiy-a/ya-nsaa} \\
\text{to encounter} & \quad \text{laqiy-a/ya-lqaa}
\end{align*}
\]

11 For a concise phonological analysis of hollow and defective verbs, see Timothy Mitchell 1981.
7.2.3 -aa/-aa verbs
to move forward; to strive  
\( \text{sa}^{*}\text{a}/\text{ya}-\text{s}^{*}\text{a} \)

7.2.4 -ya/-ii verb
to be near; to follow; to govern  
\( \text{waliy}-\text{a}/\text{ya}-\text{lii} \)

7.3 Examples of Form I defective verbs in context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>يقضون لياليهم في الصلاة.</td>
<td>They spend their nights in prayer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>هذا لا يكفي.</td>
<td>This is not enough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>stebeqī</em> طويلًا في ذاكرة العالم.</td>
<td>This will remain long in the world’s memory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تنمو ببطء.</td>
<td>They grow slowly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>shakaa</em> ِ_adad-un min-a l-naaxib-iina.</td>
<td>A number of voters complained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>نرجو الاتصال بالإدارة.</td>
<td>We would like to contact the management.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 Doubly weak or “mixed” verb root

Doubly weak verb roots have semi-consonants and/or hamza in two places, sometimes as the first and third consonants, and sometimes as the second and third. They are not many in number, but some of them are frequently used:

8.1 Hollow and hamzated
to come  
\( j\text{a}^{*}\text{a} / (ji^{3}\text{tu})/\text{ya}-\text{jii}^{3}\text{-}u \) \( (\text{ya}-\text{jii}^{3}-\text{na}) \)
\( \text{جآء (ِجِنْنُ) / (ِجِبَنَّ) (ِجِبَنن) } \)
\( \text{root: } j-y^{3} \)

8.2 Hamzated and defective
to come  
\( ^{2}\text{ataa}/\text{ya}^{3}\text{tii} \)  
\( \text{أتى / يَأْتى (ِجِبَنَّ) } \)
\( \text{to see } \text{ra}^{*}\text{a}/\text{ya}-\text{raa} \)
\( \text{رَأى / يَرَى (ِجِبَنن) } \)
\( \text{root: } ^{2}-\text{t}^{3}-\text{y} \)

8.3 Assimilated and defective (al-fi' al-lafiif al-mafruuq)
\( \text{الفُل اللفيف المفرّق } \)
These roots have waaw or yaa* in the first and third root consonants.

to perceive, be aware of  
\( w\text{a}^{*}\text{a}/\text{ya}^{*}\text{ii} \)
\( \\text{وَعى / يَعْيى } \)
\( \text{root: w-}^{3}-\text{y} \)

to be near; to follow; to govern  
\( \text{wali}\text{y}-\text{a}/\text{yali} \)
\( \\text{وَلِي / يَلَى } \)
\( \text{root: w-}^{3}-\text{y} \)
8.4 Hollow and defective (al-fi‘l al-lafi‘f al-maqruun)
Where a root is both hollow and defective, the medial root semi-consonant (usually waaw) appears as a regular consonant:

to intend nawaa/ya-nwii َنَوَى / يَنُوِى to narrate rawaa/ya-rwii رَوَى / يَرُوِى
(root: n-w-y)

8.5 Examples of Form I doubly weak verbs in context

sa-taraa! َسَتْرَى!
sa-taraa! َسَتْرَى! hisl-i أَهْوَى رَكُوبِ الخِيْل
You’ll see! َيْلَكَلْيَ لُقُوَابَ
because I am fond of riding horses

You’ll see! َيْلَكَلْيَ لُقُوَابَ

9 Verbal nouns of Form I
Form I verbal nouns have many variations of pattern. Wright lists forty-four possible verbal noun patterns for Form I or as he terms it, “the ground form” of the ordinary triliteral verb (1967, I:110–112); Ziadeh and Winder (1957, 71–72) list eighteen of the most commonly used ones in MSA. ‘Abd al-Latif, ‘Umar and Zahran give an extensive list (in Arabic) with examples and some explanations (1997, 83–86). To some extent, particular verbal noun patterns may be associated with particular Form I verb stem types. For a discussion of this, see Blachère and Demombynes 1975, 78–84. See also Bateson 2003, 15–21 for a general discussion of Arabic noun derivation. The most common forms of Form I verbal nouns are listed here by root type. Sometimes the meaning of the verbal noun is abstract and sometimes it has acquired a specific, concrete denotation.

Note that many verbs have more than one verbal noun. In this case, the nouns usually have different connotations. Owing to space restrictions, I have not listed all verbal noun options for Form I, only typical examples.

9.1 Form I sound root verbal nouns
The most common verbal noun patterns of Form I regular or sound verbs are:

fa‘l

support da‘m دَعْم jumping qafz قَفْز

9.2 Form I geminate root verbal nouns

Common verbal noun patterns for Form I geminate verbs include:

**fa‘al**
- danger: xaTar
- honor: sharaf

**fu‘l**
- distance: bu‘d
- life-span, age: ‘umr

**fi‘l**
- thinking: fikr
- root: jidhr–jadhr

**fi‘la ~ fu‘la ~ fa‘la**
- error, mistake: ghalTa
- expertise: xibra
- wisdom: Hikma
- license, permit: ruxSa

**fu‘uul**
- attendance: HuDuur
- feeling: shu‘uur

**fu‘ula**
- heroism: buTuula
- flexibility: muruuna

**fi‘aal**
- mixture: mizaaj
- scope, sphere: niTaaq

**fi‘aala ~ fa‘aala**
- writing: kitaaba
- studying: diraasa
- splendor: faxaama
- happiness: sa‘aada

**fu‘laan ~ fi‘laan**
- forgiveness: ghufraan
- loss; losing: fiqdaan

**maf‘il ~ maf‘ila**
- logic: manTiq
- knowledge: ma‘rifā

---

**9.2 Form I geminate root verbal nouns**

Common verbal noun patterns for Form I geminate verbs include:

**fa‘l ~ fu‘l**
- pilgrimage: Hajj
- response: radd
- solution: Hall
- friendship: wudd
9.3 Form I hamzated verbal nouns

fa‘al

number ‘adad عدد reason sabab سبب

fa‘uula

necessity Daruura ضرورة

fa‘aala

indication dalaala دلالة

fi‘la

paucity qilla قلة

9.4 Form I Assimilated root verbal nouns

‘ila: In this form of verbal noun, assimilated roots delete the first root semi-
consonant.

direction jiha جهة trust thiqa ثقة

fa‘l

promise wa‘d وعد delegation wafd وفد

fu‘uul

arrival wuSuul وصول clarity wuDuuH وضوح

fi‘aala

agency wikaala وكالة sovereignty; wilaaya ولاية province
fi‘laan
feeling; ecstasy      wijdaan   وجِدَان

mafa‘la
wishing, wanting      mawadda   مَوَدَة

9.5 Form I hollow root verbal nouns
Common hollow verb verbal noun patterns include:

fa‘l
victory          fawz       فَوْزُ   shame          ‘ayb       عَيْب
sleep            nawm       نَومَ   living; life      ‘aysh     عَيْش

fa‘la
revolution       thawra     ثَوْرَة   return         ‘awda     عَوْدَة

fu‘l: This pattern in combination with a hollow root yields a long vowel /uu/ in the middle of the word.

length          Tuul       طول   intensity; lute      ‘uud      عُوْد

fi‘a‘al and fi‘a‘ala: When hollow verbs use this pattern for the verbal noun, the medial semi-consonant often takes the form of yaa' even if the root consonant is waaw.¹³

establishing, qiyaam  قَيَام  mathematics;  riyaaDa  رِياَدَة sports (root: r-w-D)
setting up          (root: q-w-m)
visit              ziyaara   زِيَارَة increase              ziyaada  زِيَادَة (root: z-y-d)
    (root: z-w-r)

fa‘laa
chaos; disorder      fawDa  فوْضَى

fa‘alaan
flying              Tayaraan  طَيَارَان   flooding        fayaDaan  فَيَضَان

mafaal ~ mafiil ~ mafilla: These are miimii masDars.
destiny            maSiir     مُصِير   obtaining       manaal   مَنَال livelihood         ma‘iisha   مَعِيَشَة processional       masiira  مَسِيرَة

¹³ The phonological sequence /-iw-| is usually avoided in Arabic. Therefore hypothetical forms like *ziwaara and *qiwaam shift to become ziyaara 'visit' or qiyaam 'establishing.'
9.6 Form I defective root verbal nouns

fa’l

pardon; ʿafw ʿعفو negation nafy نَفِي
kindness

fa’al ~ fi’al; In this verbal noun pattern, the final root semi-consonant shifts to hamza.

building binaaٌ بناء space faDaaٌ فضاء
singing ghinaaٌ غِناء meeting liqaaٌ لقاء

fi’ala

building binaaya بنِياء protection Himaaya حمايَة

fu’uul: This pattern is often found with final-waaw verbs. The combination of the long /uu/ vowel in this pattern with the final waaw consonant yields a doubled waaw:

height, ʿuluww مَعَوٌعُ نمَوٌوٌ growth numuww نعوٌوٌ
altitude

fa’laa: Because these nouns terminate with an added /-aa/ suffix, they are feminine in gender.

piety taqwaa تَقْوَى complaint shakwaا شَكْوى

fi’laan ~ fu’laan

aggression; ʿudwaان عدوان forgetting; nisyaان نسيان
hostility

maf’an (maf’al معْفَل)

meaning ma’nان مَعْنِى effort; striving mas’an مَسْعَى

9.7 Form I doubly weak or ‘mixed’ verb roots

9.7.1 Hollow and hamzated

maf’il:

coming majiiٌ مجِي

9.7.2 Defective and hamzated

fa’l

opinion ra’y رأي

fu’la

seeing ru’ya روَيَة
9.7.3 Hollow and defective

fi‘la and fa‘l: In these verbal noun patterns, the medial waaw assimilates to the yaa’, yielding a double yaa’:

- intent : niyya
- ironing : kayy

When a hollow root combines with a defective root, the medial waaw is maintained in these verbal noun patterns:

fi‘aala:

- narrative : riwaaya
- hobby; hiwaaya

fa‘aal

- medicine, dawaa’
- remedy

9.8 Form I verbal nouns in context

قِبْلَ السِّباخة إِلَى البحْرَ
qabl-a l-sibaahat-i “ilaa l-bahr-i
before swimming to the sea

نَعِمَ حِيْضًا مِنِّ زَوْجَتِهِ
na-adhayj-u “ila taaj-u li-ruyat-i
We need a microscope to see it.

ما مِنِّ هذَا؟
ma ma‘naa haadhaa?

قِيَامٌ دُوْنِ دَوْلَةِ الْقَانُونِ
qiyaam-u dawlat-i l-qaanun-i
establishing a state of law

What is the meaning of this?

10 Form I participles

10.1 Form I active participle (AP): faa‘il

APs that refer to living beings take the natural gender of the referent; APs that refer to non-living things may be either masculine or feminine. For more detail on AP morphology and syntax see Chapter 6 on participles. Examples are provided here of how the various root types fit into the pattern. The items are categorized as either noun or adjective, but many have both noun and adjective functions.

10.1.1 Strong/regular root

Nouns:

- writer : kaatib/ kuttaab
- researcher : baalHith/-una
- rule; base qaa‘ida/ qawaa‘id
- university jaami‘a/-aat
Adjectives:

- former
- saabiq
- empty
- faarigh

10.1.2 Geminate root: faa^{+}\epsilon

In the active participle of the geminate root, the usual form of the AP is faa^{+}\epsilon, that is, the second and third radicals are together (written with shadda), with no vowel between them.

Noun:

- commodity; material  
  maadda/mawaadd

Adjective:

- dry     
  jaaff
- important  
  haamm

10.1.3 Hamzated root

Certain spelling rules for the hamza apply in the AP hamzated root, depending where in the word the hamza occurs.

Noun:

- reader  
  qaari'/qurraa\^\prime
- accident; emergency  
  Taari'a/Tawaari\^\prime
- refugee  
  laaji\^\prime / laaji'\u2019uuna

Adjective:

- final; last  
  ^\prime aaxir\^\prime awaaaxir~^\prime aaxir-uuna
- calm, peaceful  
  haadi\^\prime

10.1.4 Assimilated root: faa'il

Assimilated roots are regular in Form I active participle formation.

Noun:

- mother  
  waalida/-aat
- import/s  
  waarid/-aat

---

14 The plural mawaadd is the form that the plural pattern fawaa'il takes in geminate nouns because of the phonological restriction on sequences that include a vowel between identical consonants.  
* mawaaddid \rightarrow mawaadd. It is diptote (CaCaAciC pattern).

15 From the hamzated root ^\prime x-r; the initial hamza followed by the long jaa\^\prime of the faa'il pattern creates j/'aa\^\prime, spelled with ^\prime alif madda.
father *waalid/-uuna*  والد / والدَة، و والد  

Adjective:  
wide, broad  *waasi fi™p°SGh*  واسع  
dry; arid  *yaabis*  يابِس  

10.1.5 Hollow root: *faa‘il*  
Hollow roots of Form I have hamza between the long /aa/ and the short /i/ of the AP pattern.  

Noun:  
visitor/s  *zaa‘ir/zuwwaar*  زائر / زوّار  
fluid; liquid/s  *saa‘il/sawa‘il*  سائل / سوائل  
being/s  *kaa‘in/-aat*  كائن / كائنات  
circle/s; department/s  *daa‘ira/dawaa‘ir*  دائرة / دوائر  

Adjective:  
visiting  *zaa‘ir/zaa‘ir-uuna*  زائِر / زائِرونَ  
dreadful  *haa‘il*  هائل  

10.1.6 Defective root: *faa‘-in*  
The defective root shows its weakness in the AP form by having its final waaw or yaa‘ in the form of kasrataan on the base masculine form, putting it into the defective declension. In feminine APs the weakness is regularized into an /-iya / ending.  

Noun:  
judge/s  *qaaDin/quDaah*  قاض / قضاة  
corner/s  *zaawiya/zawaayaa*  زاوية / زوايا  
club/s  *naadin/andiya ~ nawaad-in*  ناد / أنديّة ~ نوار  
pedestrian/s; infantry  *maashin/mushaat*  ماسِ / مُشاة  

Adjective:  
walking  *maashin*  ماضِ / ماض  
remaining  *baaqin*  باقِ / باق  

10.1.7 Examples of Form I AP in context  

المشاريع الباقية في حاجة ماسة إلى المساعدة  
*al-mashaari‘u l-baaqiyat-u*  fii Haajat-in *maassat-in ilaa l-musaa‘dat-in*  
the remaining projects  in urgent need of help
الثلاثاء الجاري
al-thulaathaa-u l-jaarii
this ('current') Tuesday

قوافل أيام زمان
qawaafil-u 'ayyam-i zamaan-in
the caravans of yesteryear

ظلت في غيوبته تامة
Zall-at fi ghaybuubat-in taammat-in.
She remained in a complete coma.

في جلسة طارئة
fit jalsat-in Taari’at-in
at an emergency session

لـ the caravans of yesteryear

10.2 Form I passive participle (PP): maf‘uul

The maf‘uul pattern is maintained in most root types except for the hollow and defective:

10.2.1 Strong/regular root

Noun:

concept/s mafhuum/mafaahiim
plan/s mashruu‘/aat~mashaarii
prisoner/s masjuun/-uuna

النافذة

group/s majmuu‘/a/~aat

Adjective:

famous mashhuur
blessed mabruuk

10.2.2 Geminate root

Noun:

yield; marduud

return

manuscript/s maxTuuT/ aat

Adjective:

lucky maHZuuZ

10.2.3 Hamzated root

Noun:

official mas‘uul

readable maqruu

Adjective:

taken ma‘xuudh

peopled ma’huul
10.2.4 Assimilated root

Noun:
- topic, mawDuuٌ: مَوْضُوع
- subject

Adjective:
- present; mawjuud موجود inherited mawruuth مَوْرُوث
- found

10.2.5 Hollow root

In the hollow root, the mafٌuul pattern becomes mafٌuul for roots whose middle radical is waaw, and mafٌiil for roots whose middle radical is yaaٌ:
- blamed maluum (l-w-m) ملؤم sold mabiiٌ (b-y-ٌ) مَبِيع

10.2.6 Defective root

In the defective root, the mafٌuul PP pattern becomes mafٌuww for roots whose final radical is waaw and mafٌiyy for roots whose final radical is yaaٌ:

Adjective:
- invited madٌuww (d-ٌ-w) مدعو stuffed maHshuww محشوٌ (H-sh-w) منسً محكيٌ
- forgotten mansiyy (n-s-y) منسي spoken maHkiyy (H-k-y) منحكٌ

10.2.7 Examples of Form I PP's in context

طَلَأة مُحْجَوْزَة
- Taawilat-un maHjuuzat-un من مُصادِر موثوِقَ بِهَا
- a reserved table from trusted sources

خَطَها مَفروُوٌأ
- tumuur-un makbuusat-un xaTT-u-haa maqruuuٌ-un.
- pressed dates Her handwriting is legible.

العربية المحكية
- maHshuww-un bi-l-qashsh-i alٌ-arabiyyat-u l-maHkiyyat-u
- stuffed with straw spoken Arabic

In spoken Arabic this PP is often converted to maHshiyyaٌ, used especially when referring to stuffed meat or other food items.
### Form I: The base form triliteral verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Active</th>
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<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>Imperfect</td>
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<td>Jussive</td>
<td>Imperative</td>
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<th>Root</th>
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<td>فعل</td>
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<td>فعلا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Form I Sound root:**  
- **Sound root:** أون، نا  
- **AP:**  
  - **ππγα**  
- **PP:**  
  - **∫∫νενα**  
- **VN:**  
  - **πρηα**  

- **Meaning:** ‘to do; to make’
Form I Geminate root:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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Form I Geminate root: 

AP: دال، يدل  
PP: للذما  
VN: دلالة ‘to indicate’
Form I hamza-initial root: أَكِلَََّ، يَأَكِلُ\n
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Form I hamza-medial root: سأل, يسأل
AP: سائل
PP: سائل
VN: ‘to ask’
Form I: The base form triliteral verb

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| هُنَـ | قَرَآنَ | يَقْرَآُن | يَقْرَآُن | يَقْرَآُن | قَرَآنَ | قَرَآنَ |
Form I Assimilated root: وضع، يستَع

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 توْضعَ          وضعْتُ          أُنَتَ          وضعْتِ          تْوضعَ          وضعْتُ          أُنَتَ          وضعْتِ

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‘to put, to place’
### Form I Hollow, Medial waaw root: زَارَاءُ، يَزُورُ 'to visit'

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**Active AP:** عَزَرَ، مُ-عَزَرَّ، مُ-عَزَرَّ، مُ-عَزَرَّ، مُ-عَزَرَّ
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Form I Hollow Medial ُل root: ُل, ُل
AP: **بَع**
PP: **بَع**
VN: **بَع** 'to sell'

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**Form I Hollow, Medial ‘alif root:** حَافُ، يَخَافُ، مَخَوفَ

**AP:** خَافُ

**PP:** مَخَوفَ

**VN:** حُوفُ ‘to fear’
Form I Defective root (waaw): دَعَاءٍ ُدوُعَاءٍ AP: دَعَاءٍ PP: مَدَعُّ / دَعَاءٍ VN: ‘to call, invite’

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Form I Doubly weak root: رَأَى ، يَرَى
AP: رَايُ PP: مَرَتَيِ VN: رَأَى 'to see'
Form I Doubly weak: 'to perceive'

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</table>

Form I: The base form triliteral verb
Form I Hollow, defective root: نَوَى، يَنَوَى AP: نَوَى PP: مَنَوَى VN: نَيْة ‘to intend’

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</tbody>
</table>

| أنا | أنتَ | نَوَى | يَنَوَى | ينُوَى | ينُوَى | نَوَى | يَنَوَى | ينُوَى | ينُوَى | نَوَى | يَنَوَى | ينُوَى | نَوَى | يَنَوَى | ينُوَى |
| آنَا | آنَتَ | نَوَى | يَنَوَى | ينُوَى | ينُوَى | نَوَى | يَنَوَى | ينُوَى | ينُوَى | نَوَى | يَنَوَى | ينُوَى | نَوَى | يَنَوَى | ينُوَى |

Form I Hollow, defective root: نَوَى, يَنَوَى

| AP: نَوَى | PP: مَنَوَى | VN: نَيْة | ‘to intend’ |

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</table>
1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: \textit{fa'af\textsuperscript{a}l-a} / \textit{yu-fa'af\textsuperscript{a}il-u}

Form II verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that the medial consonant is doubled. They have the stem patterns $C_1aC_2aC_3$ in the past tense and $yu-C_1aC_2aC_3$ in the present. The medial root consonant retains its doubled status throughout the past and present tense conjugations.

1.2 Meaning

Form II verbs are often causative of transitive Form I verbs, or, if Form I is intransitive, Form II may have transitive meaning. Another shade of meaning that is said to be conveyed by Form II is intensive or repeated action (\textit{kassar-a} ‘to smash, to shatter’). Form II may also be denominative, used to form verbs out of nouns (e.g., \textit{Sawwar-a} ‘to photograph’ from Suura, ‘picture’).\footnote{In Arabic, the verb is usually considered the most elemental form of a lexical entry, but in a few instances, the verb is derived from a noun. These “denominal” verbs tend to exist in Forms II and V and rarely in other forms. They can be triliteral or quadriliteral. Denominal verbs rarely have a Form I. Some examples of Form II denominal verbs include:

\begin{itemize}
\item to unite \textit{waHHad-a} / \textit{yu-waHHid-u} (from ‘one’ \textit{waHHid})
\item to head \textit{ra'as-a} / \textit{yu-ra'as-u} (from ‘head’ \textit{ra'as})
\item to name \textit{sammaa} / \textit{yu-sammaii} (from ‘name’ \textit{ism})
\end{itemize}}

1.3 Transitivity

Form II is normally transitive but may sometimes be intransitive.\footnote{Kouloughli 1994, 201 states that Form II is transitive 95 percent of the time. Likewise he states that Form II is “l'une des plus vivaces de l'arabe moderne” (ibid.).} It may also be doubly transitive, taking two direct objects (e.g., \textit{darras-a} ‘to teach (s.o. s.th.’)).

1.4 Inflection

A particular inflectional characteristic of Form II verbs is that the present tense subject-marker vowel is \textit{Damma} and the present tense stem vowel is \textit{kasra} (\textit{yu-darris-u}).
Paradigm charts for Form II verbs of various root types are located at the end of this chapter.

2 Regular (sound) triliteral root
These are examples of verbs that have sound triliteral roots:

- to prefer  faDDal-a/yu-faDDil-u
- to arrange  rattab-a/yu-rattib-u
- to clean  naZZaf-a/yu-naZZif-u
- to appreciate  qaddar-a/yu-qaddir-u

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form II
Geminate roots in Form II have the following stem patterns: \( C_1aC_2C_2aC_2 \) in the past tense and \( yuC_1aC_2C_2iC_2 \) in the present. The doubling of the medial consonant changes the geminate root in Form II so that it inflects as a regular Form II, that is, there is no stem shift as there is in Form I geminates. For example:

- to cause  sabbab-a/yu-sabbib-u
- to decide, determine  qarrar-a/ yu-qarrir-u
- to criticize  naddad-a/ yu-naddid-u
- to analyze  Hallal-a/yu-Hallil-u

4 Hamzated roots in Form II
A hamza may occur in the first, second, or third position in the triliteral root. Depending on its position, and the surrounding vowels, the hamza may have to change its “seat” when the verb inflects for person and tense in Form II.

4.1 Initial hamza
Hamza-initial verbs in Form II have \(^{\text{a}}\text{alif} \) as the hamza seat in the past tense, and \(^{\text{a}}\text{waaw} \) as the hamza seat in the present tense. The hamza seat is determined by its position in the word, according to the orthographical rules for hamza described in Chapter 2, section 3.3. In Form II verbs, initial hamza shifts from word-initial position in the past tense stem to word-medial position in the present tense stem and is influenced by the Damma of the present tense subject-marking prefix so that its seat shifts from \(^{\text{a}}\text{alif} \) to \(^{\text{a}}\text{waaw} \).

- to delay  \(^{\text{a}}\text{ajjal-a/}^{\text{a}}\text{ajjil-u} \)
- to establish, found  \(^{\text{a}}\text{assas-a/}^{\text{a}}\text{assis-u} \)
- to affirm  \(^{\text{a}}\text{akkad-a/}^{\text{a}}\text{akkid-u} \)
- to affect  \(^{\text{a}}\text{aththar-a/}^{\text{a}}\text{aththir-u} \)
4.2 Medial hamza
The seat for medial hamza shifts from 'alif in the past tense to yaa' in the present tense (because of the shift of stem vowel from fatHa to kasra).

- to appoint as head: ra’as-a/ yu-ra’as-u رأس / يرأس

4.3 Final hamza
The seat for final hamza in Form II, as in other forms, shifts according to the rules for word-final hamza; note that certain inflectional suffixes extend the word length, and therefore the seat for hamza is affected (e.g., hanna'-u-haa هنؤوها ‘they congratulated her').

- to free: barra'-a/ yu-barri'-u برأ / يبرئ
- to congratulate: hanna'-a/ yu-hanni'-u هننا / يهني
- to hide: xabba'-a/ yu-xabbi'-u خببا / يخبئ
- to heat, warm: daffa'-a/ yu-daffi'-u دفا / يدفئ

5 Assimilated roots in Form II
Assimilated roots, where the first radical is either waaw or yaa’, are inflected as sound roots in Form II; the waaw or yaa’ remains stable in both tenses.

- to sign, endorse: waqqa'-a/ yu-waqqi'-u وقق / يوقع
- to stop, halt: waqqaf-a/ yu-waqqif-u وقف / يوقف

6 Hollow roots in Form II
Hollow roots behave as sound roots in Form II, the waaw or yaa’ that is the second radical functions as a stable consonant.

- to create: kawwan-a/ yu-kawwin-u كون / يكون
- to change: ghayyar-a/ yu-ghayyir-u غير / يغير
- to photograph: Sawwar-a/ yu-Sawwir-u صور / يصور
- to appoint: ‘ayyan-a/ yu-‘ayyin-u عين / يعين

7 Defective roots in Form II
Defective roots, where the final radical is either waaw or yaa’, behave as -aa/-ii verbs in Form II. They depend on the stem vowel for the nature of the final radical, and the stem vowel is consistently /a/ in the past tense and /i/ in the present tense.
8 Doubly weak roots in Form II
These roots have two forms of weakness which may occur at any point in the root.

8.1 Hamzated and defective

to carry out; to perform (s.th.)  ꧋ddaa/yu-城乡居民

8.2 Hamzated and hollow

to help, aid (s.o. or s.th.)  ꧍yyad-a/yu-城乡居民

8.3 Hollow and defective

to greet; keep alive; grant long life  Hayya/yu-Hayii

9 Examples of Form II verbs in context

al-الله يَسْلَمُكَ
allaah-u yu-sallim-u-ka.
(May) God keep you safe.

He congratulates the new president.

أَصَدَرَ بِيَانًا ٍ نَدْدُ فِيهِ بَعْسَمَارِ الاحْتَلَالِ
aSaDan-a bayaan-an naddad-a fii-hi bi-stimraar-i l-iHtilal-i.
He issued a statement in which he criticized the continuation of occupation.

10 Form II verbal nouns
Verbal nouns from Form II most often have the form  taf‘il تفعيل; occasionally  taf‘ila تفعيلة. Variations on Form II verbal nouns also include  taf‘aal تفعال or  tif‘aal تفعال تفعيلة and  taf‘ila تفعيلة.

3 For an extensive list of Form II verbal noun variants in Classical Arabic see Wright 1967, I:115–16.
10.1 Sound/regular root  
arrangement             tartiib           statue             timthaal
reminder; souvenir       tadhkaar          experiment         tajriba

10.2 Geminate root  
repetition              takraar           renewal            tajdiid

10.3 Hamzated root  
founding                ta’siis            visa               ta’shiira
congratulating          tahni’a            heating            tadfi’a

10.4 Assimilated root  
unification             tawHiid           clarification      tawDiiH

10.5 Hollow root  
creation                takwiin           appointing         ta’yin
photographing           taSwiir           change             taghiir

10.6 Defective root  
naming                  tasmiya           covering           taghtiya

10.7 Doubly weak  
Here are a few examples of doubly weak Form II verbal nouns.

10.7.1 Hamzated and defective  
carrying out;           ta’diya            تَدْيِية
performing

10.7.2 Hamzated and hollow  
assistance              ta’yiid            تَأْيِيد

10.7.3 Hollow and defective  
greeting, salutation     taHiyya           تَحْيَاة

10.8 Borrowing from Form I  
Occasionally a Form II verb uses a verbal noun derived from Form I:

singing                ghinaa’         غَنَاء  praying, prayer        Salaat   صَلاة
10.9 Examples of Form II verbal nouns in context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تدریج مرکزیّة</td>
<td>central heating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تحریر مصریه</td>
<td>self-determination ('deciding its future')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>التغییرات السياسیة</td>
<td>political changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تعیین اللواء مدیراً للدائرہ</td>
<td>appointing the general as director of the department</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 Form II participles

Form II participles occur as nouns and as adjectives. Examples are provided wherever possible.

11.1 Form II active participle (AP): مُفعّل

11.1.1 Sound/regular root

- coordinator; مئاسق monassiq smuggler محرب muharrub
- inspector مفتش mufattish drug/s مخدّراتmuxaddir-i-aat

11.1.2 Geminate root

- editor محرر muHarrir analyst محلل muHallil

11.1.3 Hamzated root

- muezzin مَؤَذّن munaddad congratulating muhanni

11.1.4 Assimilated root

- connecting موصِل muwaSSil

11.1.5 Hollow root

- distinctive مُمکّن mumayyiz creator; مکون mukawwin component

11.1.6 Defective root

The active participle of defective roots is inflected as a defective noun or adjective (declension six) and ends with the defective marker of kasratayn:

- praying4 مُصلّ muSall-i-n singer/singing مغنّ mughann-i-n

4 Also, ‘person in prayer.’
11.1.7 Examples of Form II active participles in context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fi‘ umr-in mubakkir-in</td>
<td>at an early age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>munassiq-u nshaTaat-i l-’umam-i</td>
<td>the coordinator of UN activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l-muttallhidat-i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mubarakh-posthun l-mukhaddir-aat</td>
<td>drug smugglers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muHallil-u l-shu’un-i l-siyyaat-i</td>
<td>(smugglers of drugs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l-askariyyat-i</td>
<td>political-military affairs analyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>munaAZmat-u l-aqaTaari l-arabiyat-i</td>
<td>the organization of Arab oil-exporting countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.2 Form II passive participle (PP): mu’al

11.2.1 Sound/regular root

- volume; tome: mujallad مَجَّلَدُ complicated mu’aq nad مَعَقَدُ
- triangle: muthallath مَثْلَثُ cubic; cubed muka’ab مَكْبَعُ
- square: murabba مَرْبَعُ armed musallaH مَسْلَحٌ

12.2 Assimilated root

- employee: muwaAZaf مَوْظُفُ successful; lucky muwaffaq مُوفَقٌ

12.3 Geminate root

- shattered: mufakkak مَفَكَّكُ set, delineated muHaddad مَحْدَدٌ

12.4 Hamzated root

- nationalized: muammam مَؤْمَمَةَ foundation mu’assasa مُؤْسَسَةَ

12.5 Hollow root

- illustrated: muSawwar مُصَوْرَةَ appointed, designated mu’ayyan مَعْيَنٌ

12.6 Defective root

The passive participle of defective roots ends with ُalif maqSuura and is inflected as an indeclinable noun or adjective (declension seven).

- educated, raised: murabban مَرْبَعٌ covered mughattan مَغْطَثٌ
- preserves, jam
11.2.7 Examples of Form II passive participles in context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>مجمع مفصل</th>
<th>القواط المسلحة</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mu’jam-un mufaSSal-un</td>
<td>al-quwwaat-u l-musallaHat-u</td>
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</table>

- a detailed lexicon
- the armed forces

<table>
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<tr>
<th>في موضع محدد</th>
<th>مصالح مؤمّمة</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fii maw‘id-in muHaddad-in</td>
<td>maSaaliH-u mu‘ammamat-un</td>
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</table>

- at a set time
- nationalized interests/assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>قاموس مصور</th>
<th>السفير المعين</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>qaamuus-un muSawwar-un</td>
<td>al-safiir-u l-mu‘ayyan-u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- an illustrated dictionary
- the ambassador-designate

Form II  Sound root: أربَّتُ، يَرْتَبُ  AP: مُرتَبُ PP: مُرتَبِ VN: تَرْتِيبُ ‘to arrange’

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| أنا | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
| أنتَ | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
| أنتَ | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
| أنتَ | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
| أنتُ مِن/f | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
| أيها | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
| هي | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
| هما -m | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
| هما -f | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
| نحنُ | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
| أنتُنَّ | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
| أنتَنَ | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
| هم | أرْتَبُ | أُرْتَبُ | أرْتَبُ |
**Form II Geminate root:**  
\( \text{قرر } \)  
**AP:**  
- Active: \( \text{قرر } \)  
- Passive: \( \text{قرر } \)  

**PP:**  
- Active: \( \text{قرر } \)  
- Passive: \( \text{قرر } \)  

**VN:**  
- Active: \( \text{قرر } \)  
- Passive: \( \text{قرر } \)  

\( \text{‘to decide’} \)

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- **-m/f: أنتما**
- **-m: هما**
- **-f: هما**

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Form II *hamza*-initial root: مُؤَجَّل ‘to delay’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP: مُؤَجَّل</th>
<th>PP: مُؤَجَّل</th>
<th>VN: تَأَجَّلَ ‘to delay’</th>
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**Form II hamza-initial root: مُؤَجَّل ‘to delay’**
Form II *hamza-final root:* هَنَّأَناً يَبِينَى AP: مَهِنَّةٌ PP: مَهْنَّةٌ VN: تَهْنِئَةٌ ‘to congratulate’

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| The table shows the conjugation of the verb "to congratulate" in the past and present tense in Arabic. | |
Form II Defective root: غطيَّة، يُغطَّي ‘to cover’

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Form I: مَغَطِّيَّة AP: مَغَطَّيَّة PP: مَغَطَّيَّة VN: مَغَطَّيَّة
Form III triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: faa‘al-a/ yu-faa‘il-u

Form III is augmented from Form I by insertion of the long vowel /aa/ after the first radical of the root. It has the basic stem patterns C₁aaC₂aC₃- in the past tense and -C₁aaC₂iC₃- in the present tense, maintaining the long vowel in both tenses.

1.2 Meaning

In terms of meaning, Form III often has the meaning of involving another person in the action. For this reason it is termed “associative.” Related semantic modifications conveyed by this inflectional class include reciprocal action, repeated action, and attempted action.¹

1.3 Transitivity

Form III verbs are usually transitive, but may occasionally be intransitive.

1.4 Inflection

A distinctive inflectional characteristic of Form III verbs is that the present tense subject-marker vowel is Damma and the present tense stem vowel is kasra (yu-saa‘id-u).

2 Regular (sound) triliteral root

These verbs are examples of Form III sound triliteral roots:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Inflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to experience maaras-a/yu-maarís-u مارس / يمارس</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to defend daafa‘-a/yu-daaﬁ‘-u دافع / يدافع</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to assist, help saa‘ad-a/yu-saa‘id-u ساعد / يساعد</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to observe raqaqab-a/yu-raaqib-u راقب / يراقب</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ For an extensive analysis of Form III and its semantic implications, see Fleisch 1979, II:288–301.
2.1 Associative meaning
Arabic Form III associative verbal concepts are often directly transitive whereas English would need to use the word “with” to indicate reciprocality or associativeness:

- to correspond with (s.o.) raasal-a/yu-raasil-u
- to share with (s.o.) shaarak-a/yu-shaarik-u
- to deal with (s.o., s.th.) ‘aalaj-a/yu-‘aalij-u
- to compete with (s.o.) saabaq-a/yu-saabiq-u

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form III
It is rare to find geminate roots in Form III. The ones that do exist have two variant patterns: one where the identical consonants are written together with a shadda and one where they are written separately, with an intervening fatHa. The following stem patterns occur: $C_1aC_2C_2-a$ ($faa^{‘e}$) and $C_1aC_2aC_2-a$ ($faa^{‘a}$) in the past tense, and $yu-C_1aaC_2C_2$ - ($yu-faa^{‘e}$ - or $yu-C_1aaC_2iC_2$ - ($yu-faa^{‘i}$) in the present.2

- to punish qaaSaS-a/yu-qaaSiS-u

4 Hamzated roots in Form III
The hamza may occur in the first, second, or third position in the triliteral root. Depending on its position, and the surrounding vowels, the hamza may have to change its seat when the verb inflects for person and tense.

4.1 Initial hamza
In Form III, initial hamza merges with the long vowel -aa of the first syllable in the past tense and it written as one ًalif with madda. In the present tense, initial hamza sits on a waaw seat because it is preceded by the Damma of the person-marking prefix:

- to censure, to blame ٪aaxadh-a/yu-٪aaxidh-u
- to consult ٪aamar-a/yu-٪aamir-u

4.2 Medial hamza
The medial hamza sits aloof in the past tense of Form III.3 In the present tense it sits on a yaa’ seat because it is followed by a kasra.

---

2 See Wright 1967, I:71 for further discussion of this variation.
3 This is because it is situated after a long vowel /aa/ and before a short vowel /a/. It would have an ًalif seat, but the general rule is that two ًalifs cannot follow each other in Arabic script, so the hamza here floats aloof.
to match; to be suitable for laa’am-al-yu-laa’im-u

4.3 Final hamza
Final hamza sits on an ‘alif seat in the past tense and on a yaa’ seat in the present tense, but because it is the final consonant in the stem, the seat of the hamza may shift with inflectional suffixes.

4 Assimilated roots in Form III
Assimilated roots, where the first radical is either waaw or yaa’, are inflected as sound roots in Form III; the waaw or yaa’ is stable.

5 Hollow roots in Form III
Hollow roots behave as strong roots in Form III, the waaw or yaa’ that is the second radical functions as a consonant.

6 Defective roots in Form III
Defective roots, where the final radical is either waaw or yaa’, behave as -aa/-ii verbs in Form III. They depend on the stem vowel for the nature of the final radical, and the stem vowel is consistently /a/ in the past tense and /i/ in the present tense.

to call; summon; invite naadaa-al-yu-naadii

to compete (with) baaraa-al-yu-barrii

to endure, to suffer (s.th.) ‘aanaa-al-yu-‘aanii
8 Doubly weak roots in Form III
Hollow and defective:

to be equivalent to; saawaa/yu-saawii ساوی / یساوی
to equalize

9 Examples of Form III verbs in context

She lectures at different universities. He will travel tomorrow.

They will punish him. It suffers from fragmentation.

10 Form III verbal noun

The verbal noun of Form III verbs takes two basic forms: mufaa‘ala and fi‘aal. Usually, one of these verbal nouns is used for a particular Form III verb, but occasionally, a verb may use both of these Form III verbal nouns, with either equivalent or slightly different meanings. For example:

Form: Form III Haawar-a ‘talk, debate, argue’

argument, muHaawara محاوارة conversation, Hiwaar حوار
dispute

class, muHaaDara مبادرة; munaaqasha مناقشة

Form: Form III kaafaH-a ‘to combat, fight, struggle’

confrontation, mukaafaHa مكافحة fight, battle, kifaaH كفاح

battle

For the most part, however, one of these two verbal nouns suffices for a Form III verb. Both of these verbal noun patterns take the sound feminine plural.

10.1 Sound/regular root

mufaa‘ala مفاعلة

lecture muHaaDara تدريس; محاضرة; debate munaaqasha مباحثة

boycott muqadTa‘a مقاطعة; مبادرة initiative mubaadara مبادرة

review muraaja‘a مراجعة conversation mukaalama مكالمة
**fi‘aal**

struggle **niDaal**  
struggle **jihaad**  

combat **kifaaH**  
defense **difaa’**

10.2 Hamzated root

**10.2.1 Hamza initial**
The hamza sits on a waaw seat.

-censure, *mu’aaxadha*  
-blame, *mu’aamara*

consultation; *mu’aamara*  
plotting

**10.2.2 Hamza medial**
In these verbal nouns, the hamza “floats” aloof by itself and has no chair.

-suitability; appropriateness *mulaa’ama*  
-questioning, interrogation *musaa’ala*  

**10.2.3 Hamza final**
In these verbal nouns, *hamza* sits on *’alif*.

-surprise *mufaaja’a*  
-reward *mukaafa’a*  

10.3 Assimilated root
The assimilated root behaves as a sound root in the Form III verbal noun.

-agreement *muwaafaqa*  
-balance *muwaazana*  

10.4 Hollow root
The hollow root behaves as a sound root in the Form III verbal noun.

-attempt *muHaawala*  
-needle *jiwaar*  

-negotiation *mufaawaDa*  
-dialogue; *Hiwaar*  

-conversation

10.5 Defective root
In verbal nouns of defective Form III verbs, the second radical is followed by an *’alif* and *taa’* marbuuTa.

-legal defense *muHaamaat*  

-featuring *mu’aanaat*  

-enduring  

-equality *musaawwaat*  

-match *mubaaraat*
10.6 Examples of Form III verbal nouns in context

- mukaalamat-un tilifuniyyat-un
  a telephone conversation
- bi-munaasabat-i 'i’aadat-i ta’yiin-i l-shaykh-i
  on the occasion of the re-appointment of the sheikh

- wizaarat-u l-difaa-i
  ministry of defense
- ba’d-a muHaavalat-in ‘iddat-in faashilat-in
  after several failed attempts

---

11 Form III participles

Form III participles occur as nouns and as adjectives. In some cases they occur in both functions.

11.1 Form III active participle (AP): mufa‘il مُفاعِل

11.1.1 Sound/regular root

- lecturer mulHaadir مَهْدِيّر
- assistant musaa‘id مَسَعِّد
- farmer muzaari مزوّر
- observer muraaqib مراقب

Similar: mumaathil مماثل
Contemporary: mu‘aasir معاصر
Adjacent: muutaaxim متأخِم
Appropriate: muunaasib مناسِب

11.1.2 Hamzated root

The final root hamza sits on a yaa‘ because it is preceded by kasra.

- surprising mufaaji مُفاجِئ

11.1.3 Assimilated root

Assimilated roots behave as sound roots in the Form III AP.

- citizen muwaaTin مواطن
11.1.4 Hollow root
Hollow roots also behave as sound roots in the Form III AP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>on duty</td>
<td>مُناوِب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>مُحاِيِد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neighboring, adjacent</td>
<td>مُجاَوِر</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.1.5 Defective root
The Form III defective root AP falls into declension six, the defective declension, where the indefinite form of the noun shows the final root consonant as two kasras in the nominative and genitive cases. See Chapter 7, section 5.4.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
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<tr>
<td>lawyer</td>
<td>مُحاَمَّم</td>
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11.1.6 Examples of Form III APs in context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>contemporary arts</td>
<td>الفنون المعاصرة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-funuun-u l-mu‘aaSirat-u</td>
<td>al-duwal-u l-mu‘aariDat-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the officer on duty</td>
<td>دولة محايدة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-DaabiT-u l-munaawib-u</td>
<td>دولة محايدة</td>
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<tr>
<td>the opposing states</td>
<td>محايون أميركيون</td>
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<td>the neutral country</td>
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<tr>
<td>on the adjacent seat</td>
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11.2 Form III passive participle (PP): mufaa‘al
This particular type of passive participle is infrequent, but does exist:

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<td>blessed</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>the blessed month of Ramadan</td>
<td>شهر رمضان المبارك</td>
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</table>
### Form III Sound root:  
"ساعدة، يُساعد"  
AP:  
PP:  
VN:  
‘to help’

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</table>

Form III Sound root:  
"ساعدة، يُساعد"  
AP:  
PP:  
VN:  
‘to help’
Form III hamza-final root: **قرأ، يُفاجِئُ**

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<td>أَفَاجِئُ أَفَاجِئُ أَبَارَأ</td>
<td>فُوجِئَتُ فُوجِئَتُ فُوجِئَتُ أَفَاجِئُ أَفَاجِئُ أَفَاجِئُ</td>
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**مُفاجَأَةُ** ‘to surprise’
Form III Assimilated root: \(\text{Active} \quad \text{Active} \quad \text{Active} \quad \text{Active} \quad \text{Active} \quad \text{Passive} \quad \text{Passive}\)

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Active

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Passive

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Form III Assimilated root:  
AP:  
PP:  
VN: ‘to face, confront’
Form III triliteral verb  

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Form III Hollow root:  

Form III: حاول، يحاول  
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Passive: حاول يحاول  
Indicative: حاول يحاول  
Subjunctive: حاول يحاول  
Jussive: حاول يحاول  
Imperative: حاول يحاول  

مُحاولَةَ ‘to try’

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Form III: حاول، يحاول  
Active: حاول يحاول  
Passive: حاول يحاول  
Indicative: حاول يحاول  
Subjunctive: حاول يحاول  
Jussive: حاول يحاول  
Imperative: حاول يحاول  

مُحاولَةَ ‘to try’
Form III Defective root: نادي، ينادي AP: مَنَادِي PP: مَنَادِي VN: مَنَادِة ‘to call’

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Form III Defective root: نادي، ينادي AP: مَنَادِي PP: مَنَادِي VN: مَنَادِة ‘to call’

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1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: ‘af‘al-a / yu-f’il-u

Form IV is augmented from Form I by the prefixing of hamza plus fatHa on the past tense stem. It has the stem pattern ‘aC1C2aC3- in the past tense and the stem pattern yu-C1aC2iC3- in the present tense.

1.2 Meaning

Form IV verbs are often causative of Form I. If the Form I verb is intransitive, Form IV is transitive; if the Form I verb is transitive, Form IV may be doubly transitive, taking two objects. Form IV verbs may have meanings similar to Form II verbs. For example, xabbar-a and ‘axbar-a, both mean ‘to inform’; waqqaf-a and ‘awqaf-a both mean ‘to halt, to stop.’ Sometimes the meanings of Form II and Form IV verbs are close but not exactly the same. For example, ‘allam-a means ‘to teach’ whereas ‘a‘lam-a means ‘to inform.’

1.3 Transitivity

Form IV verbs are usually transitive and sometimes doubly transitive. Intransitive Form IV is rare.

A doubly transitive Form IV verb may take two objects. It often has the option of marking the indirect object (or beneficiary) with a dative-marking preposition such as li-.

25

Form IV triliteral verb

1 Sterling 1904, 51–53 lists four other less common semantic modifications of Form IV: “finding [estimative],” “change,” “motion to,” and “to be in season,” with examples from Classical Arabic. Wright 1967, I:34–36 gives also a denominative meaning for Form IV.

2 Kouloughli 1994, 203 estimates 80 percent of Form IV verbs are transitive.

3 One example is: ‘to grow dark’ ‘aZlam-a/yu-Zlim-u.

4 For more on double accusatives and use of dative-marking prepositions, see Chapter 4, section 2.5.
1.4 Inflection
Inflectional characteristics of Form IV verbs include:

(1) the present tense subject-marker vowel is *Damma* and the present tense stem vowel is *kasra* (‘akmal-a/yu-kmil-u).

(2) the prefixed *hamza* plus *fatHa* in the past tense disappears in the present tense, replaced by the subject markers.5

(3) the prefixed *hamza* in the past tense is stable (*hamzat al-qasr*) and is not deleted when pronounced after a vowel.

2 Regular (sound) triliteral root: *‘af‘al-a* َأَفْعَلُ / *yu-f‘il-u* َيَفْعَلُ
These verbs are examples of Form IV sound triliteral roots:

- to include, insert ِ‘adraj-a/yu-drij-u ِأَدْرَجُ / ِيُدْرِجُ
- to disturb, bother ِ‘az‘aj-a/yu-z‘ij-u ِأَزْعِجُ / ِيُزْعِجُ
- to announce ِ‘a‘lan-a/yu-lin-u ِأَلْعَنُ / ِيُعَلِّنُ
- to supervise ِ‘ashraf-a/yu-shrif-u ِأَشْرَفُ / ِيُشْرِفُ
- to send ِ‘arsal-a/yu-ssil-u ِأَرْسَلُ / ِيُرْسِلُ
- to please ِ‘ajjab-a/yu-jib-u ِأَجْعَبُ / ِيُجْعِبُ

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form IV: *‘afa‘a-a* َأَفْعَلُ / *yu-f‘a‘e-i* َيَفْعَلُ
The geminate root in Form IV behaves very much as Form I geminates. The geminate or doubled consonant is doubled and written with *shadda* when followed by a vowel suffix and it separates into two separate consonants when followed by a suffix that begins with a consonant.

- to feel, perceive, sense ِ‘aHass-a/yu-Hiss-u ِأَحْصِ / ِيُحْصُ
- to like, to love ِ‘aHabb-a/yu-Hibb-u ِأَحْبَ / ِيُحْبُ
- to persist in, insist on ِ‘aSarr-a/yu-Sirr-u ِ‘alaa ِأَسْرَ / ِيُصْرِعُ ِأَلَا
- to prepare ِ‘a‘add-a/yu-‘idd-u ِأَعْدُ / ِيُعْدُ

5 This has the effect of making unvoweled Form IV verbs resemble Form I verbs in written Arabic.
For verbs which exist in both forms (for example, *Sadar-a/ya-Sdur-u* ِصُدْرُ / ِيُصُدْرُ ‘to emanate, come out’ and ‘aSadra/yu-Sdir-u ِ‘اَصْدِرُ / ِيُصْدِرُ ‘to publish’), context is used to disambiguate form as well as meaning.
4 Hamzated roots in Form IV

4.1 Initial hamza
In Form IV, initial root hamza merges with the prefix hamza in the past tense and they are written as one ‘alif with a madda over it. In the present tense, initial hamza sits on a waaw seat because it is preceded by the Damma of the person-marking prefix:

- to believe, have faith ‏‘امنُ / يَؤمنَ‬ ‏أَمَّنَ / يُؤمن‬
- to rent out, to lease ‏‘أَجِرُ / يَجِرُ‬

4.2 Medial hamza
The medial hamza sits on an ‘alif seat in the past tense. In the present tense it sits on a yaa’ seat because it is followed by a kasra.

- to comply with someone’s request ‏أسألُ / يسْئَلُ‬

4.3 Final hamza
Final hamza may sit on an ‘alif seat in the past tense, but because it is the final consonant in the stem, the seat of hamza may shift with certain suffixes:

- to set up, establish ‏أَنشئُ / يُشْئِئُ‬
- to extinguish ‏أَطْفِئُ / يُطْفِئُ

5 Assimilated roots in Form IV: ‏‘افِئَا / يَهْفَأُ‬ يوْعَلُ
In the past tense of Form IV, the initial waaw or yaa’ of the assimilated root behaves as a regular consonant. In the present tense, however, it assimilates to the vowel /u/ of the subject-marking prefix and becomes long /uu/.

- to explain, clarify ‏أَبْرَحُ / يَبْرِحُ‬
- to halt, stop ‏أَقْفَ / يَقْفُ‬
- to awaken ‏أَيْقَطُ / يَيْقَطُ‬
- to bring, convey ‏أَوصِلُ / يَوصِلُ‬

6 Hollow roots in Form IV: ‏‘افَأَلَ / يَفْعَلُ‬ الأَفَالُ / يَفْعَلُ
The semi-consonants waaw and yaa’ of hollow roots in Form IV show up as ‘alif (long stem) and fatHa (short stem) in the past tense and yaa’ and kasra in the present tense stem. The pattern is ‏‘افَأَلَ / يَفْعَلُ‬. Examples of both stems are given
in both tenses: in addition to the standard citation form of third person masculine singular, first person singular (in the past), and third person feminine plural (in the present).

to broadcast \( ^3\text{adhaa}-\text{a} \) \( \text{‘adha}-\text{tu} \)
\( ^6\text{yu-dhii}-\text{u} \) \( \text{yudhi}-\text{na} \)
to manage, administer \( ^3\text{adaar}-\text{a} \) \( \text{‘adar}-\text{tu} \)
\( ^6\text{yu-diir}-\text{u} \) \( \text{yu-dir}-\text{na} \)

7 Defective roots in Form IV: \( ^3\text{af}-\text{aa} \) \( \text{‘aa} / \text{yu-}^3\text{ii} \) يَفَعَّلُ يَفَعَّلُ
Defective roots, where the final radical is either \( \text{waaw} \) or \( \text{yaa}^* \), behave as -\( \text{aa} \)-\( \text{ii} \) verbs in Form IV. They depend on the stem vowel for the nature of the final radical, and the stem vowel is consistently \( /\text{a} / \) in the past tense and \( /\text{i} / \) in the present tense.

to eliminate \( ^3\text{alghaa}/\text{yu-lghi} \)
to conduct, to run \( ^3\text{ajraa}/\text{yu-jrii} \)
to throw; to deliver (a speech) \( ^3\text{alqaa}/\text{yu-lqii} \)
to give \( ^3\text{a}^6\text{Taa}/\text{yu-}^6\text{Tii} \)

8 Doubly weak roots in Form IV

8.1 Hamza-initial, hollow, and defective

to shelter, accommodate \( ^3\text{aawaa}/\text{yu-}^3\text{wi}^6 \)
\( \text{‘aa} / \text{yu-}^3\text{wi} \)
(from \( ^3\text{-w}-\text{y} ‘\text{to seek refuge}’ \)

8.2 Hamza-medial and defective

to show (s.o. s.th.) \( ^3\text{araa}/\text{yu-rii} \)
\( \text{‘aa} / \text{yu-rii} \)
\( ‘\text{to cause to see}’ \)
\( \text{from }^r\text{-y ‘to see}’ \)

8.3 Hamza-final and hollow

to harm, to hurt \( ^3\text{asaa}^2\text{-a}/\text{yu-sii}^2\text{-u} \)
\( \text{‘aa} / \text{yu-sii} \)
\( \text{‘atii} / \text{yu-}^3\text{ii} \)
\( \text{‘aa} / \text{yu-}^3\text{ii} \)

9. Exclamatory Form IV (\( \text{fi}-\text{l al-ta‘ajjub} \) فَعَلَ التَّعِجبُ)
A Form IV verb in the citation form (3 m.sg. past tense) may be used in written Arabic preceded by the function word \( \text{maa} \) to indicate surprise, wonder, or astonishment

\(^6\) The initial root hamza merges with the prefix hamza in the past tense and the initial vowel \( /\text{a} / \) lengthens to \( /\text{aa} / \).

\(^7\) This verb in Form IV has lost its root hamza completely and inflects as a defective -\( \text{aa} \)-\( \text{ii} \) verb.
at a certain quality or characteristic of something or someone. It is followed by a noun in the accusative, or a pronoun suffix that denotes the possessor of the quality. The occurrence of this construction in media Arabic is rare, but it is found in literary contexts.

The verbs used in this type of construction are usually related to adjectival roots and are sometimes referred to as “adjectival verbs.” They are also termed “verbs of surprise or admiration” (Cowan 1964, 177). Cantarino describes the word following \textit{maa} as “an elative in the accusative of exclamation” (1974–76, II:210), that is, as a comparative adjective. See also in this book Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.12 on “less frequent accusatives.”

\begin{quote}
ما أجل البيت؟
\textit{maa} \textit{\textasciitilde{ajmal-a}} \textit{l-bint-a}!
How beautiful the girl is!
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
ما ألطفهم!
\textit{maa} \textit{\textasciitilde{alTaf-a-hum}}!
How nice they are!
\end{quote}

\section*{10 Examples of Form IV verbs in context}

\begin{quote}
فأوضحت ما تقصدت.
\textit{fa\textasciitilde{awDaH-at}} \textit{maa ta-qSid-u-hu}.
She clarified what she meant.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
لا يضفي أشياء جديدة.
\textit{laa} \textit{yu-Diff-u} \textit{\textasciitilde{ashyaa\textasciitilde{3-a}} jadiidat-an}.
It does not add anything new (‘new things’).
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
هناك أفضلية لمن يجيد اللغة الإنجليزية.
\textit{hunaaka} \textit{\textasciitilde{afDaliiyat-un} li-man \textit{yu-jiid-u}}
\textit{l-Hughat-a l-\textasciitilde{inkliiziyyat-a}}.
There is a preference for whomever is proficient in English.
\end{quote}

\section*{11 Verbal noun of Form IV: \textit{\textasciitilde{if\textasciitilde{aal}}}}

The verbal noun of Form IV normally has the pattern \textit{\textasciitilde{if\textasciitilde{aal}}}.

\subsection*{11.1 Sound/regular root}

\begin{quote}
announcement \textit{\textasciitilde{i\textasciitilde{laan}}}
إعلان
sending \textit{\textasciitilde{irsaa\textasciitilde{l}}} إرسال
disturbance, bother \textit{\textasciitilde{iz\textasciitilde{aaj}}} إزعاج
bankruptcy \textit{\textasciitilde{iflaas}} إفلاس
\end{quote}

\footnotesize 8 See Abboud and McCarus 1976, Part 2:272.

\footnotesize 9 These examples are taken from The MECAS Grammar 1965, 239. See also Fischer 2002, 80.
11.2 Geminate root
The geminate root maintains the √ifaal pattern, splitting the doubled consonant:

perception, ²iHsaas إحساس
sensation

injury, harm ²iDraar إضرار

11.3 Hamzated root

11.3.1 Hamza-initial root
The verbal noun of hamza-initial roots in Form IV lengthens the kasra of the initial syllable into long /ii/ and deletes the root hamza:

faith ²iimaan (‘instead إيمان of ²i’maan)
rent, renting ²iijaar (‘instead إيجار of ²i’jaar)

11.3.2 Hamza-final root
In this verbal noun, the hamza sits aloof after the √alif.

establishment, ²inshaa إنشاء
extinguishing ²iTfaa إطفاء

11.4 Assimilated root: ²ii’aal إبعال
In the verbal nouns of Form IV assimilated verbs, the initial waaw or yaa of the root is assimilated to the kasra /i/ of the initial hamza, and it lengthens to /ii/, i.e., ²if’aal becomes ²ii’aal.

clarification ²iiDaaH إيضاح
bringing, conveying ²iiSaal إيضال

stopping, halting ²tiqaaf إيقاف
awakening ²tiqaaZ إيقاظ

11.5 Hollow root: √ifaala إغالة
The verbal noun of Form IV hollow roots is √ifaala إغالة, ending with taa marbuutaa.

inflicting ²iSaaba إصابة
administration ²idaara إداره

broadcasting ²idhaa’a إذاعة
repetition ²i’aada إعادة

11.6 Defective root: √if’aal إفعاء
In the Form IV verbal noun of defective verbs, the defective semi-consonant (waaw or yaa) disappears and is replaced by hamza, i.e., ²if’aal becomes ²if’aal إفعاء.

elimination ²ilghaa إلغاء
conducting ²ijraa إجراء

giving ²iTaa إعطاء
delivery (of a speech) ²ilqaa إلقاء
11.7 Examples of Form IV verbal nouns in context

انعاش الاقتصاد

إسعاف الدفاع المدني الفوري

*i'aash-u  l-iqtisad

is'aaf-u l-ridfi'i l-madaniyy i l-fawriyy u

reviving the economy

emergency civil defense aid

لا يريد إرسال قوات أمريكية إلى الخارج.

lā yū-rīd-u  'īrsaaλ-u quwwaat-in  'amrikiyyat-in  'ilaa l-xaarij-i.

He doesn’t want to send American forces abroad.

12 Form IV participles

Form IV participles occur as nouns and as adjectives. In some cases they occur in both functions.

12.1 Form IV active participle (AP): muf'il مفعل

12.1.1 Sound/regular root

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<th>مُمْكَن</th>
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<td>ممطر</td>
<td>mumTir</td>
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<tr>
<td>مخّرج</td>
<td>muxrij</td>
<td>مئير</td>
<td>muthlij</td>
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12.1.2 Geminate root: muf'īt مفعّل

The final two consonants of the geminate root are written together, with no intervening vowel. Thus instead of being in the pattern muf'il, they are of the pattern muf'īt مفعّل

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<tr>
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12.1.3 Hamzated root

12.1.3.1 Hamza-INITIAL

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12.1.3.2 *Hamza-FINAL*:

- founder *munshi* مَنشِئُ خطأ
- mistaken *muxTI* مَخطَئٌ

12.1.4 Assimilated root: *mu'uil*

In this root type, the initial *waaw* assimilates to the *Damma* of the *miim*-prefix and yields a long /-uul-/ as the first vowel.

- clarifying *muuDiH* مَوضَحٌ موعد
- consignor, depositor *muudi* موعد
- originator *muujid* موَجدٌ موَجد
- deep-reaching *muughil* موَعِلٌ موَعِل

12.1.5 Hollow root: *mu'uiil*

- ocean *muHiT* مَحيطٌ مدير
- manager; director *mudiir* مدير
- broadcaster *mudhii* مُهِبٍ مُهْبٍ
- beneficial *mufiid* مُفيدٌ مُفيدٌ

12.1.6 Defective root: *mu'fin*

- giver; giving *mu' Tin* مَعتَ مَعتَ
- mufti, giver of formal *muftin* مَفتِن مَفتِن
- legal opinions

12.1.7 Examples of Form IV APs in context

- تَبْيِينَ كلَّ المساعدة الممكَّنة بتقديم كلِّ المساعدة الممكّنة
- committee *bi-taqdiim-i kull-i l-musaa‘adat-i l-mumkinat-i*
- by offering all *possible* aid
- مَعْتَ مَعْتَ
- amazing speed *shay‘-un mu‘sif-un jidd-an*
- a very *regrettable* thing
- the *Atlantic Ocean* *al-muHiiT-u l-√aTlasiyy-u samaaHat-u l-muftii*
- His Eminence *the Mufti*

12.2 Form IV passive participle (PP): *mu'fal*

12.2.1 Sound/regular root

- lexicon *mu‘jam* مَعجمٌ مَعْجُوم
- compacted *mudmaj* مَدَمَج
- singular word *mufrad* مُفرِدٍ مُفرِد
- attaché, officer *mulHaq* مُلحق

12.2.2 Geminate root: *mu‘fa∗

The final two consonants of the root fall together, with no intervening vowel.

- ready, prepared *mu‘add* مَعَدٌ مَعَدٌ
12.2.3 Hamzated root

foundation, establishment; munsha’a مُنشَأة
installation

12.2.4 Assimilated root: muu’al موَعَل
summary muujaz موَجِز

12.2.5 Hollow root: mufaal مُفَاعِل
melted, dissolved mudhaab مُذَاب injured, afflicted muSaab مُصاب

12.2.6 Defective root: muf’an مُفَعَّل
abolished; abrogated mulghan مُلغَيَّة cast off; discarded mulqan مُلقَى

12.2.7 Examples of Form IV PPs in context

mulHaq-u l-shu’uun-i l-thaqaafiyyat-i
ultural affairs attaché
Halqat-un mufraghat-un
a vicious circle ('a seamless circle')

mu’jam-un mufaSSal-un
a detailed lexicon
qurS-un mudmaj-un
a compact disk

muujaz-u l-’axbaar-i
summary of the news
al-’uuksijin-u l-mudhaab-u fii l-maa’-i
oxygen dissolved in water
Form IV Sound root: ارسلُ , يرسلُ  

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**Also**

### ‘to prepare’

Form IV triliteral verb  525

**AP:** مَعِدَ ˈ mocked  

**PP:** مَعِدَ ˈ mocked  

**VN:** مَعِدَ ˈ mocked
**Form IV hamza-final:**

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**AP:** منْشَأٌ | **PP:** منْشَأٌ | **VN:** إِنْشَاءٌ 'to establish'
Form IV triliteral verb

Form IV Assimilated root: `أَوْضَحَ` `يَوضِحِ` `ءَوضِحِ` `ءَوضِحِ` `ءَوضِحِ` `ءَوضِحِ` `ءَوضِحِ` ‘to clarify’

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Form IV Assimilated root: `أَوْضَحَ` `يَوضِحِ` `ءَوضِحِ` `ءَوضِحِ` `ءَوضِحِ` `ءَوضِحِ` `ءَوضِحِ`

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`íóàrënfÉ æ rën°VrhnCG oíp°VƒoJG ƒ oëp°VƒoJG ƒ oëp°VrhnCG`
### Form IV Hollow root: مُدِيعٌ 

- **AP**: مُدِيعٌ  
- **PP**: مُدِيعٌ  
- **VN**: إِذَاَعَّ 'to broadcast'

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Form IV triliteral verb  ملَعَ ‘to abolish’

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AP: مَلَعَ PP: مَلَعَ VN: مَلَعَ ‘to abolish’
Form V triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: tafa' al-a / ya-tafa' al-u

Form V verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that the medial consonant of the triliteral root is doubled (as in Form II) and a prefix ta- is added to the stem.\(^1\) In the present tense, the subject-marking prefix vowel is fat\(\hha\) and the two stem vowels are fat\(\hha\). Form V verbs thus have the stem patterns ta\(C_1C_2C_2aC_3\) in the past tense and ya-ta\(C_1C_2C_2aC_3\) in the present.\(^2\)

1.2 Meaning

In many cases Form V is the reflexive of the Form II verb, meaning that the action expressed in Form II is done to or happens to one’s self. This is sometimes referred to by grammarians as mediopassive.\(^3\) Form V may also be resultative of Form II, showing the result of the Form II action, e.g., kassar-tu-haa fa-takassar-at ‘I broke it (Form II) and it broke (Form V).’\(^4\) Other semantic modifications embodied in this form include gradual progress in an activity or state (e.g., taHassan-a ‘to improve,’ tadaxxal-a ‘to meddle, to interfere,’ tamazzqa-a ‘to be ripped apart, fragmented’) and acquisition or imitation of a quality (e.g., ta’assaf-a ‘to be or act sorry’; ta’addab-a ‘to behave courteously’).

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1 The prefixed ta-, used as a derivational affix is often characterized as a marker of reflexive action or even of the passive. “Its main derivational function is that of the passive” (Cowell 1964, 85). In more recent studies of this form, it is said often to represent “unaccusative” constructions in Arabic. See Mahmoud 1991 for further discussion of both Form V and Form VII as Arabic counterparts for unaccusative structures.

2 Note that in the present tense, there is both an inflectional prefix (the subject marker) and a derivational prefix (the ta- of Form V).

3 “No grammatical distinction is made in Arabic verbs between ‘reflexive’ acts and spontaneous developments – what one does to one’s self and what simply happens to one are equally accommodated by the mediopassive” (Cowell 1964, 238).

4 The Arabic term used to refer to the resultative meaning of derived forms (especially V, VII, and VIII) is mu\(\tu\a\w\a\a\w\)‘a ‘obedience, conformity’ or mu\(\tu\a\w\w\)‘ ‘obedient, conforming’ – that is, conforming with a particular, lexically related action. Fleisch 1979 states (II:305) “Ce mu\(\tu\a\w\w\)‘ exprime l’état dans lequel se trouve un sujet, sous l’action . . . [d’un verbe] précédente.”
1.3 Transitivity
Form V verbs are often reflexive or intransitive, but they may be transitive as well.

1.4 Inflection
Inflectional characteristics of Form V verbs:

The present tense subject-marker vowel is \( \text{fatHa} \) and the present tense stem vowel is \( \text{fatHa} \) (taqaddam-a/ya-taqaddam-u).

2 Regular (sound) triliteral root
These verbs are examples of Form V sound triliteral roots:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to breathe</td>
<td>tanaffas-a/ya-tanaffas-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to move, be in motion</td>
<td>taHarrak-a/ya-taHarrak-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to require</td>
<td>taTallab-a/ya-taTallab-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to speak</td>
<td>takallam-a/ya-takallam-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to get, to receive</td>
<td>tasallam-a/ya-tasallam-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to avoid</td>
<td>tajannab-a/ya-tajannab-u</td>
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3 Geminate (doubled) root Form V
Geminate roots in Form V have the following stem patterns: ta\(C_1\)a\(C_2\)C\(2\)a\(C_2\) in the past tense and yata\(C_1\)a\(C_2\)C\(2\)a\(C_2\) in the present. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to hesitate</td>
<td>taraddad-a/ya-taraddad-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to feel (s.th.); handle, touch (s.th.)</td>
<td>taHassas-a/ya-taHassas-u</td>
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4 Hamzated roots in Form V
The \( \text{hamza} \) may occur in the first, second, or third position in the triliteral root. Depending on its position, and the surrounding vowels, the \( \text{hamza} \) may have to change its “seat” when the verb inflects for person and tense.

4.1 Initial \( \text{hamza} \)
In \( \text{hamza} \)-initial Form V verbs, the \( \text{hamza} \) sits on ‘alif in both tenses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to be late</td>
<td>ta’axzar-a/ya-ta’axzar-u</td>
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<tr>
<td>to be affected (by)</td>
<td>ta’aththar-a/ya-ta’aththar-u bi-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be sorry</td>
<td>ta’assaf-a/ya-ta’assaf-u</td>
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</table>
to be composed (of)  
\( ta’\text{allaf}\text{-a/ya-ta’\text{allaf}\text{-u min} \quad تَالِفَ / يُتَالِفُ مَن }\)

to contemplate (s.th.)  
\( ta’\text{ammal}\text{-a/ya-ta’\text{ammal}\text{-u} \quad تَامَلَ / يُتَامِلُ }\)

4.2 Medial hamza

to be at the head;  
to chair  
\( tara’\text{as}\text{-a/ya-tara’\text{as}\text{-u} \quad تُرَأسَ / يَتْرَأس }\)

4.3 Final hamza

to get prepared  
to predict, forecast  
\( tahayya’\text{-a/ya-tahayya’\text{-u} \quad تَهْيَأُ / يَتَهْيَأ }\)

5 Assimilated roots in Form V
Assimilated roots, where the first radical is either waaw or yaa\(^{\text{a}}\), are inflected as sound roots in Form V; the waaw or yaa\(^{\text{a}}\) remain in both tenses.

- to be extended, spread out  
\( tawassa’\text{-a/ya-tawassa’\text{-u} \quad توسعُ / يَتَوسِعُ }\)

- to be abundant, plentiful  
\( tawaffar\text{-a/ya-tawaffar\text{-u} \quad تَوَفْرُ / يَتَوَفْرُ }\)

- to expect, anticipate  
\( tawaqqa’\text{-a/ya-tawaqqa’\text{-u} \quad تَوْقُعُ / يَتَوْقُعُ }\)

- to stop; stand still  
\( tawaqqaf\text{-a/ya-tawaqqaf\text{-u} \quad تَوْقَفُ / يَتَوْقَفُ }\)

6 Hollow roots in Form V
Hollow roots behave as sound roots in Form V, the waaw or yaa\(^{\text{a}}\) that is the second radical functions as a normal consonant, with shadda.

- to change (intr.)  
\( taghayyar\text{-a/ya-taghayyar\text{-u} \quad تَغَيْرُ / يَتَغَيْرُ }\)

- to volunteer  
\( taTawwa’\text{-a/ya-taTawwa’\text{-u} \quad تَطْوِعُ / يَتَطْوِعُ }\)

7 Defective roots in Form V:  \( tafa’\text{aa} \quad تَفَعَّلُ / ya-tafa’\text{aa} \quad يَتَفَعَّلُ \)
Defective roots, where the final radical is either waaw or yaa\(^{\text{a}}\), behave as -aa/-aa verbs in Form V.\(^{5}\)

- to receive, accept  
\( talaqqaa/ya-talaqqaa \quad تَتَلَقَّى / يَتَتَلَقَّى }\)

- to wish  
\( tamannaa/ya-tamannaa \quad تَتَمنَى / يَتَتَمَنَى }\)

- to trespass, to transcend  
\( ta’\text{addaa/ya-ta’\text{addaa} \quad تَتَعَدَّى / يَتَتَعَدَّى }\)

- to challenge  
\( taHaddaa/ya-taHaddaa \quad تَتَحَدَّى / يَتَتَحَدَّى }\)

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\(^{5}\) They depend on the stem vowel for the nature of the final radical, and the stem vowel is consistently \(\text{/a}/\) in the past tense and also \(\text{/a}/\) in the present tense.
8 Doubly weak roots in Form V
These roots have two forms of weakness which may occur at any point in the root.
For example:

8.1 Assimilated and defective

to take charge of; tawallaaya-tawallaay
be entrusted with (root: w-l-y)

9 Examples of Form V verbs in context

Iraq has adopted a new military strategy.

He spoke of orientalism.

We wish you a blessed holiday.

It will get better.

10 Form V verbal nouns: tafa'ul

10.1 Sound roots

Form V verbal nouns of regular or sound verbs have the pattern taC1aC2C2uC3.

breathing tanaffus تنفس
avoidance tajannub تجنب
progress taqaddum تقدم
interference tadaxxul تدخل

10.2 Geminate roots

hesitation taraddud تردد
feeling, taHassus تحسس

10.3 Hamzated roots

The placement of hamza on a particular seat is determined by contiguous vowels.

lateness ta’axxur تأخر
being affected ta’aththur تأخر
chairmanship taruss تروس
10.4 Assimilated roots

being extended,  
spreading out  
abundance,  
availability  

penetration,  
absorption  
tension  
to

10.5 Hollow roots

change  
volunteering  

development  
pollution  

10.6 Defective roots:  

The verbal nouns of defective verbs in Form V inflect as defective nouns (declension six in this book).

accepting  
transcending,  

wishing  
challenge  

10.7 Examples of Form V verbal nouns in context

It suffers from  

since his assumption of the presidency  

state of  

11 Form V participles

The great majority of Form V participles occur as active participles. The Form V AP may have active, passive, or reflexive meaning. Few occur as passive participles.

11.1 Form V active participle (AP):  

The Form V active participle may have an active meaning but it may also have a passive or reflexive sense because of the reflexive or resultative meaning of many verbs of this form.

11.1.1 Strong/regular root

spokesperson  

extremist  

married  

mutakallim  
mutaTarrif  
mutazawwij
11.1.2 Geminate root

- specialist: mutaxaSSiS
- renewed: mutajaddid

11.2.3 Hamzated root

- sorry, regretful: muta’assif
- late: muta’axxir

11.2.4 Assimilated root

- abundant: mutawaffir
- middle: mutawassiT

11.2.5 Hollow root

- volunteer: mutaTawwi

11.2.6 Defective root: mutafaleel

- These participles inflect as defective nouns (declension six).
  - challenger: mutaHaddin
  - wishing: mutamannin

11.2 Form V passive participle (PP): mutafaleel

- Occurrences of these are few due to the passive-like or reflexive meaning of the many Form V verbs. A few examples include:
  - forced, feigned: mutakallaf
  - requirement/s: mutaTallab/aat
  - expected: mutawaqqa

11.3 Form V participles in context

11.3.1 Active participle

البحر الأبيض المتوسط
al-muHiiT-u l-mutajammid-u
the Mediterranean Sea (‘the middle white sea’)

المحيط المتجمد الشمالي
al-baHru l-’abyaD-u l-mutawassiT-u
the Arctic Ocean (the ‘frozen northern’ ocean)

يغادر القاهرة اليوم متوجهاً إلى باريس.
yu-ghaadir-u l-qaahirat-a l-yawm-a mutawajjih-an ’ilaa baariis.
He leaves Cairo today heading for Paris.
11.3.2 Passive participle

من المتوقع أن...

min-a l-mutawaqa'-i 'an...

it is expected that

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Form V Sound root: تكلم، يتكلم، تكلمن AP: تكلم PP: يتكلمون VN: تكلم ‘to speak’
Form V triliteral verb

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Form V Geminate root: أترد، يترد

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AP: OuOnônàoe
PP: VN: ‘to hesitate’
Form V hamza-initial root: تَأَخَّرُ، يَتَأَخَّرُ  
**AP:** تَأَخَّرُ، يَتَأَخَّرُ  
**VN:** 'to be late, delayed'

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### Form V hamza-final root: `تنبأ` 'to predict`

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**AP:** `تنبأ`  **PP:** `تنبأ`  **VN:** `تنبأ`
Form V Hollow root: تطوع

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Form V Hollow root: تطوع

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### Form V Assimilated root: `o™sbnƒnJ`, `n™sbnƒnJ` (to expect)

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Form V Defective root: *ةَحَدَىَّ*  
**AP:** *ةَحَدُّى*  
**PP:** *ةَحَدُّى*  
**VN:** *ةَحَدُّى*  
*‘to challenge’*

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<td>Subjunctive</td>
<td>Jussive</td>
<td>Imperative</td>
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<td>تحَدَىَّ</td>
<td>هن</td>
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</table>
1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: tafaal- /ya-tafaal-

Form VI verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that there is a prefixed /ta-/ and a long vowel /aa-/ inserted after the first consonant of the triliteral root. It looks like a Form III verb with a /ta-/ prefix. In the present tense, the subject-marking prefix vowel is fatHa and the two stem vowels are fatHa. Form VI verbs thus have the stem patterns taC1aaC2aC3 in the past tense and ya-taC1aaC2aC3 in the present.

1.2 Meaning

In many cases Form VI is the reciprocal of the Form III verb, meaning that the action expressed in Form VI is mutual and happens to two (or more) parties (e.g., ‘to embrace one another’ ta‘aanaq-a /ya-ta‘aanaq-u). Other meanings of this form of the verb include gradual, continuous movement or increase in a quality (e.g., ‘to diminish, grow smaller’ taDaa-al- /ya-taDaa-al-u), and also pretending or feigning something (e.g., ‘to feign ignorance’ tajaahal-a /ya-tajaahal-u).

1.3 Transitivity

Form VI verbs are often reciprocal or intransitive, but sometimes they are transitive.

1.4 Inflection

The present tense subject-marker vowel is fatHa and both the past and present tense stem vowels are fatHa (e.g., tabaadal-a/ya-tabaadal-u ‘to exchange’).

2 Regular (sound) triliteral root

These verbs are examples of Form VI sound triliteral roots:

---

1 See LeTourneau 1998 for discussion of Form VI reciprocality.
to retire, be pensioned  
\( \text{taqaa‘ad-a/ya-taqaa‘ad-u} \)

to correlate (with)  
\( \text{taraafaq-a/ya-taraafaq-u (ma‘a)} \)

to understand each other  
\( \text{tafaaham-a/ya-tafaaham-u} \)

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form VI

Geminate roots in Form VI have the following stem patterns: \( \text{taC}_1\text{aaC}_2\text{C}_2\text{aC}_2 \) in the past tense and \( \text{ya-taC}_1\text{aaC}_2\text{C}_2\text{aC}_2 \) in the present. These are very rare. No examples occurred in the corpus.

4 Hamzated roots in Form VI

The hamza may occur in the first, second, or third position in the triliteral root. Depending on its position, and the surrounding vowels, the hamza may have to change its “seat” when the verb inflects for person and tense:

4.1 Initial hamza

When an initial root hamza meets the ‘alif infix of Form VI, they are written together as ‘alif madda:

- to deliberate; to conspire  
\( \text{ta‘amar-a/ya-ta‘amar-u} \)
- to harmonize (with each other)  
\( \text{ta‘aallaf-a/ya-ta‘aallaf-u (ma‘a)} \)

4.2 Medial hamza

The medial hamza in Form VI sits aloof, after the long vowel ‘alif in the past tense. In the present tense it also sits aloof after the ‘alif.\(^2\)

- to be optimistic  
\( \text{tafaa‘al-a/ya-tafaa‘al-u} \)
- to be pessimistic  
\( \text{tashaa‘am-a/ya-tashaa‘am-u} \)
- to be mended; be in harmony  
\( \text{tala‘am-a/ya-tala‘am-u} \)
- to diminish  
\( \text{taDaa‘al-a/ya-taDaa‘al-u} \)

4.3 Final hamza

Final hamza may sit on an ‘alif seat in the past tense, but because it is the final consonant in the stem, the seat of hamza may shift with certain suffixes.

\(^2\) This is because it is situated after a long vowel /aː/ and before a short vowel /a/. It would have an ‘alif seat, but two ‘alifs cannot follow each other in Arabic script, so it floats aloof.
5 Assimilated roots in Form VI
Assimilated roots, where the first radical is either waaw or yaa\(^{\circ}\), are inflected as sound roots in Form VI; the waaw or yaa\(^{\circ}\) remains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Code</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تاكافأٌ / يتكافأٌ</td>
<td>to coincide; agree with each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>توافاقٌ / يتوافقٌ</td>
<td>to be in equilibrium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 Hollow roots in Form VI
Hollow roots behave as sound roots in Form VI, the waaw or yaa\(^{\circ}\) that is the second radical functions as a normal consonant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Code</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تشااورُ / يتشاورُ</td>
<td>to deliberate; consult one another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تعاونُ / يتعاونُ</td>
<td>to cooperate with one another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تعايشُ / يتعايشُ</td>
<td>to coexist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تناولُ / يتناولُ</td>
<td>to deal with; treat</td>
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</table>

7 Defective roots in Form VI
Defective roots, where the final radical is either waaw or yaa\(^{\circ}\), behave as -aa/-aa verbs in Form VI. They depend on the stem vowel for the nature of the final radical, and the stem vowel is consistently /a/ in the past tense and /a/ in the present tense.

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<tr>
<th>Arabic Code</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تعاطى / يتعماطى</td>
<td>to take, undertake, pursue (a task)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تلاقى / يتلاقى</td>
<td>to meet each other, come together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تساوى / يتساوي</td>
<td>to be equivalent to; be in balance</td>
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8 Examples of Form VI verbs in context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Code</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
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<tr>
<td>يتاذاالكال - تدريجياً</td>
<td>قد يتبادر إلى ذهنك.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ياتاباد - ييلا دهينى-كا</td>
<td>It diminishes gradually.</td>
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</table>
This correlated with complaints of some of the voters.

أن الإسلام يتساوى عندهم مع التطرف ...

that for them, Islam equates with extremism . . .

9 Form VI verbal noun: tafaa‘ul تَفَاعُل
The verbal noun from Form VI has the pattern CaCaaCuC:

9.1 Strong/regular root

embracing ta‘aanuq تَعَاونَق partition taqaasum تقاسم
retirement taqaatud تَقَاعُد mutual tafaahum تَفاهُم understanding

9.2 Geminate root

This is rare in Form VI.

9.3 Hamzated root

9.3.1 Hamza-initial

Here the root hamza combines with the infixed ‘alif of Form VI to result in ‘alif madda:

harmony; ta‘aaluf تَأَلف conspiracy ta‘aamur تَأَمْر
camaraderie

9.3.2 Hamza-medial

In these verbal nouns, the hamza sits on a waaw seat because it is followed by Damma.

optimism tafaau‘ul تَفَاوْل pessimism tasha‘um تَشْأوْم

9.3.3 Hamza-final

In these verbal nouns, hamza sits on waaw because it is preceded by Damma:

equivalence, sameness takaafu’ تَكافُو

9.4 Assimilated root

Assimilated roots preserve their initial root consonant and behave as regular roots in the Form VI verbal noun.

congruity; coinciding tawaafuq تَوَافُق
9.5 Hollow root
The hollow roots behave as regular roots in the Form VI verbal noun.

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<tr>
<td>cooperation</td>
<td>تعاون</td>
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<tr>
<td>increase</td>
<td>تزايد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>joint</td>
<td>تشاور</td>
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<tr>
<td>consultation</td>
<td>تناوب</td>
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9.6 Defective root
In verbal nouns of defective Form VI verbs, the noun is defective:

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<tr>
<td>meeting</td>
<td>تلاق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encounter</td>
<td>تساو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equivalence</td>
<td>تساو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sameness</td>
<td>تساو</td>
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</table>

9.7 Examples of Form VI verbal nouns in context

التوازي بين قوة النظام وشرعته
al-taraabuT-u bayn-a quwwat-i l-niZaam-i wa-shar‘iyat-i-hi
the interconnection between the power of the system and its legitimacy

قيام التسامح والتعايش السلمي بين الشعوب
qiyaam-u l-tasaamuH-i wa-l-ta‘ayush-i l-silmiiyy-i bayn-a l-shu‘uub-i
establishing mutual tolerance and coexistence among peoples

قد يقود إلى تقاسم ثنائي.
qad ya-quud-u ‘ilaa taqaasum-in thunaa‘iyy-in.
It might lead to a bilateral partition.

مجلس تعزيز التعاون العربي البريطاني
majlis-u ta‘ziiz-i l-tafaahum-i l-arabyy-i l-baariTaaniyy-i
the council for strengthening Arab-British (mutual) understanding

بعد أن أتهمهم بالتعاون مع الحكومة
ba‘d-a ‘an-i ttaham-a-hum bi-l-ta‘aamur-i ma‘-a l-Hukuumat-i
after it accused them of conspiracy with the government

صدر الكتاب بالتعاون مع مجلس السفراء العرب.
Sadar-a l-kitaab bi-l-ta‘aawun-i ma‘-a majlis-i l-sufaraa‘-i l-arabi.
The book was published with the cooperation of the council of Arab ambassadors.

10 Form VI participles
As with other participle forms, Form VI active and passive participles occur both as nouns and as adjectives. The active participle is much more frequent in occurrence.
10.1 Form VI active participle (AP): *mutafā‘īl* مَتَّاعِل

10.1.1 sound/regular root

- synonym: *mutaraadif* مَتَّارِد ف scattered *mutanaathir* مُتَّنَاثر
- retired: *mutaqaa‘id* مُتَقَاعِد mutual, *mutaDaamin* مُتَضَامِن reciprocal

10.1.2 Geminate root

This is rare in Form VI.

10.1.3 Hamzated root

10.1.3.1 *Hamza*-INITIAL

- harmonious: *muta‘alif* مَتَتْالِف corroded *muta‘akil* مَتَأَكِل

10.1.3.2 *Hamza*-MEDIAL

- optimistic: *mutafā‘īl* مَتَّافِئ pessimistic *mutasha‘ām* مُتَشَيْمَٰم

10.1.3.3 *Hamza*-FINAL

- commensurate, alike: *mutakaafi* مَتَكَافِئ

10.1.4 Assimilated root

- balanced: *mutawaazin* مَتَوازِن continuous *mutawaaSil* مَتَتَوَّالِ

10.1.5 Hollow root

- increasing: *mutazaayid* مَتَزاَيِد alternating, *mutanaawib* مُتَناوِب rotating

10.1.6 Defective root

- successive, following: *mutataalin* مَتَتَالِ

10.1.7 Examples of Form VI APs in context

- the increasing interest in Islam: *al-ihtimaam-u l-mutazaayid-u bi-l-‘islaam-i* mubaaarat-un *mutakaafi‘at-un* an equal match
10.2 Form VI passive participle (PP): mutafaa'\textsuperscript{al}

This participle form is not frequent in MSA, but a few examples are provided here.

10.2.1 Sound/regular root

mutual, reciprocal mutabaadal متبادل

10.2.2 Hollow root

prevailing, mutadaawal متعاون availability; reach; mutanaawal متعاون available

current

10.2.3 Examples of Form VI PPs in context

bi-l-ma‘\textsuperscript{aa} l-mutadaawal-i الاحترام المتبادل

in the current meaning mutabaadal-u mutual respect
Form VI Sound root: تقاعَد / يتقاعَد

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Indicative | Subjunctive | Jussive | Imperative |

|اناٍ | تقاعَدتْ | تقاعَدْ | تقاعَدْ | تقاعَدْ | تقاعَدْ | تقاعَدْ |
|أنتِ | تقاعَدتْ | تقاعَدْ | تقاعَدْ | تقاعَدْ | تقاعَدْ | تقاعَدْ |
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Form VI Sound root: تقارَف

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</tbody>
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Indicative | Subjunctive | Jussive | Imperative |

|ناهٍ | تقارَفتْ | تقارَفْ | تقارَفْ | تقارَفْ | تقارَفْ | تقارَفْ |
|هَماٍ-m | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ |
|هَماٍ-f | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ |
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|أنتَمْ | تقارَفْ تفاعَلْتمْ تفاعَلْتمْ | تفاعَلْتمْ تفاعَلْتمْ | تفاعَلْتمْ تفاعَلْتمْ | تفاعَلْتمْ تفاعَلْتمْ | تفاعَلْتمْ تفاعَلْتمْ | تفاعَلْتمْ تفاعَلْتمْ |
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Form VI Sound root: تضارَف

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Indicative | Subjunctive | Jussive | Imperative |

|ناهٍ | تضارَفتْ | تضارَفْ | تضارَفْ | تضارَفْ | تضارَفْ | تضارَفْ |
|هَماٍ-m | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ |
|هَماٍ-f | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ | يتأقعَداٍ |
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|أنتَمْ | تضارَفْ تفاعَلْتمْ تفاعَلْتمْ | تفاعَلْتمْ تفاعَلْتمْ | تفاعَلْتمْ تفاعَلْتمْ | تفاعَلْتمْ تفاعَلْتمْ | تفاعَلْتمْ تفاعَلْتمْ | تفاعَلْتمْ تفاعَلْتمْ |
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/to retire/
Form VI triliteral verb  

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Form VI hamza-initial root: أَتَامَرَ / تَتَامَرُ ‘to conspire’
Form VI hamza-medial root: تَفَاءَلٌ / يَتَفَاءَلُ

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AP: تَفَاءَلٌ تَفِئْلَتْ Tَفَاءَلْتَ Tَفَاءَلْتُ Tَفَاءَلْتُنِ تَفَاءَلْتُوُ تَفَاءَلْتُنِوُ

PP: تَفَاءَلْ تَفِئْلَتْ تَفِئْلَتْ تَفِئْلَتْ تَفِئْلَتْ Tَفَاءَلْتُ تَفِئْلَتْ تَفِئْلَتْ تَفِئْلَتْ تَفِئْلَتْ تَفِئْلَتْ

VN: to be optimistic
Form VI triliteral verb: تَكَافَنَ، يُتَكَافِنَ

Form VI hamza-final root: oCÉnaÉnµnJ

Active Passive
Perfect Imperfect Perfect Imperfect
Indicative Subjunctive Imperative

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</table>

- **Active**
  - أنا
  - نَتُكُافِنَن
  - نَتُكُافِنَن
  - نَتُكُافِنَن
  - يُتَكَافِنِّن
  - يُتَكَافِنِّن
  - يُتَكَافِنِّن
  - يُتَكَافِنِّن

- **Passive**
  - نَكَافِنَن
  - نَكَافِنَن
  - نَكَافِنَن
  - نَكَافِنَن
  - نَكَافِنَن
  - نَكَافِنَن
  - نَكَافِنَن
  - نَكَافِنَن

**AP:** åpaœnàoe
**PP:** DøoaœnJ
**VN:** ‘to be equal’
Form VI Defective root: مَعَاءِ، يَتَدَعَّى  
AP: نَتَدَعَ، نَتَدَعُّ PP: VN: ‘to decline, subside’

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</tbody>
</table>

- مَعَاءِ
  - أنا مَعَاءِ
  - أنت مَعَاءِ
  - أنتان مَعَاءِ
  - نحن مَعَاءِ
  - ننتمي مَعَاءِ
  - ننتان مَعَاءِ

- يَتَدَعَّى
  - هو يَتَدَعَّى
  - هن يَتَدَعَّى

- ما
  - مَعَاءِ
  - هَمًا
  - هَمًا

- يَتَدَعَّى
  - مَعَاءِ
  - يَتَدَعَّى

- نَتَدَعَ، نَتَدَعُّ
  - نَتَدَعَ، نَتَدَعُّ
  - نَتَدَعَ، نَتَدَعُّ
  - نَتَدَعَ، نَتَدَعُّ
Form VII triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: *infaʕal* - *yaf'al-ū* اِنفَعَلَْ يَفْعَلُ

Form VII verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that a prefix */n/* is added to the Form I stem. Form VII has the past tense stem *inC₁aC₂aC₃* and the present tense stem */C₁aC₂iC₃*. A prefixed elidable *hamza* with *kasra* is added to the past tense stem of Form VII; this *hamza* and its vowel are deleted in the present tense, replaced by the present tense subject markers. There is a restriction on the roots that can be used in Form VII: roots beginning with the consonants *hamza*, *waaw*, *yaa*, *raa*, *laam*, or *nuun* do not have a Form VII.¹ In these instances, either Form V or Form VIII is used instead.

1.2 Meaning

Form VII verbs may be reflexive, resultative, passive, or mediopassive in meaning. They may express the consequences of a Form I verb action and have been classified also as verbs that express ergative and “unaccusative” constructions in Arabic.² The Arabic term for referring to their meaning is *muTaawi* - ‘obeying, corresponding with’ – that is, Form VII verbs show the result of Form I action, e.g., *fataH-tu l-baab-a* fa-nfataH-a ‘I opened (Form I) the door and it opened (Form VII).’³

1.3 Transitivity

Form VII verbs are intransitive.

1.4 Inflection

The prefixed *hamzat al-waSl* with *kasra* in the past tense stem is deleted in the present tense and replaced by the subject-marker prefix. The vowel of the present

---

¹ The prefixed */n/* of Form VII is considered phonologically incompatible with these consonants. In addition, roots whose initial consonant is *miim* are relatively rare in Form VII in MSA.
² See Mahmoud 1991 for further discussion and definition of Arabic unaccusatives.
³ For more on *muTaawi* see Chapter 26 on Form V, note 4.
tense subject-marker prefix is $fatHa$ and the stem vowel in the present tense is $kasra$ (e.g., $inSaraf-a/ya-nSarif-u$ ‘to leave, go out’).

2 Regular (sound) triliteral root

2.1 Intransitive

- to explode $infajar-a/ya-nfajir-u$
- to be at ease, be happy$^4$ $inbasaT-a/ya-nbasiT-u$
- to sink, decline $inxafaD-a/ya-nxafiD-u$
- to withdraw; be withdrawn $insaHab-a/ya-nsaHib-u$

2.2 Passive/reflexive

Form VII is often the passive, resultative, or reflexive of Form I:

- to be separated, divided $inqasam-a/ya-nqasim-u$
- to be cut off $inqaTa^c-a/ya-nqaTi^c-u$
- to be reflected $in^cakas-a/ya-n^cakis-u$
- to be held, convened $in^caqad-a/ya-n^caqid-u$

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form VII

Geminate roots in Form VII have the following stem patterns: $inC_1aC_2C_2^-$ in the past tense and $ya-nC_1aC_2C_2^-$ in the present.

- to affiliate; join (with) $inDamm-a/ya-nDamm-u$ (**ilaah**)
- to disintegrate $inHall-a/ya-nHall-u$
- to split, crack $inshaqq-a/ya-nshaqq-u$

4 Hamzated roots in Form VII

The hamza may occur in the second or third position of the triliteral root in Form VII, but not in root-initial position. Depending on its position and the surrounding vowels, the hamza may have to change its “seat” when the verb inflects for person and tense:

Medial hamza: rare

Final hamza:

- to be extinguished $inTafa^i-a/ya-nTafi^i-u$

$^4$ Also, ‘to be spread out;’ s.v. $basTa$ in Wehr 1979.
5 Assimilated roots in Form VII

These do not occur (see 1.1).

6 Hollow roots in Form VII infaal-

Hollow roots in Form VII are inflected with ‘alif as the long vowel and fatHa as the short vowel in the present and in the past: inC1aaC3-u /ya-nC1aaC3-u.

- to take sides, align: inHaaz-al-ya-nHaaz-u
- to decline, collapse: inhaar-al-ya-nhaar-u

7 Defective roots in Form VII

Defective roots in Form VII inflect as -aa/-ii defectives.

- to be necessary; ought to: inbaghaa/ya-nbaghii
- to elapse; expire: inqaDaal/ya-nqaDi
- to be folded; be absorbed5: inTawaa/ya-nTawii

8 Examples of Form VII verbs in context

The situation exploded in the streets.

The electric current was cut off.

9 Form VII verbal noun: infi’aal

9.1 Strong/regular root

reflection: in’ikaas
explosion: infijaar

9.2 Geminate root

The Form VII verbal noun of geminate roots has the regular pattern infi’aal, the alif coming between the identical second and third root consonants:

- affiliating: inDimaam
- disintegration: inhIlaal

5 Used with the preposition ‘alaa, inTawaa means ‘to contain.’
9.3 Hamzated root
extinguishing $\text{inTifaa'}$

9.4 Assimilated root
These do not occur.

9.5 Hollow root: $\text{infiyaal}$
The verbal noun for Form VII hollow verbs has a $\text{yaa'}$ as the medial consonant, no matter what the root of origin.

9.6 Defective root: $\text{infi'aa'}$
The verbal noun of defective Form VII verbs is of the pattern $\text{infi'aa'}$, with $\text{hamza}$ after the long $\text{-aa}$.

9.7 Examples of Form VII verbal nouns in context

\begin{verbatim}
الانحلال السياسي
al-inHilaal-u l-siyaasiyy-u
political disintegration

قبل انفجار عام على ذلك
qabl-a nqiDaa$^3$-i 'aam-in 'alaa dhaalika
before the elapsing of a year after that

هو انعكس للواقع الاجتماعي.
huwa n'ikaas-un li-l-waar'i
l-ijtimaa'iyy-yi.
It is a reflection of social reality.
\end{verbatim}

10 Form VII participles

10.1 Form VII active participle (AP): $\text{munfa'}il$

10.1.1 Sound/regular root
isolated
$\text{mun'}azil}$ sloping $\text{munHadir}$
introverted; shrunken $\text{munkamish}$ sliding $\text{munzaliq}$

10.1.2 Geminate root: $\text{munfa}^c$
The active and passive participles for geminate roots in Form VII have the same pattern; $\text{munfa}^c$. If the verb itself has a passive, reflexive, or intransitive meaning,

6 Because of the shift of the semi-consonant ($\text{waaw}$ or $\text{yaa'}$) to $\text{hamza}$, this verbal noun winds up looking like the verbal noun for $\text{hamza}$-final roots.
the AP will carry that passive or reflexive meaning. It is therefore sometimes difficult to tell the Form VII AP and PP apart.

closely packed; munDamm منضم separatist munshaqq منشق

affiliated with

10.1.3 Hamzated root
extinguished munTafi منطفئ

10.1.4 Assimilated root
These do not occur.

10.1.5 Hollow root: munfaal منفَّع
The active and passive participles for hollow roots in Form VII have the same pattern; munfaal. If the verb itself has a passive, reflexive, or intransitive meaning, the AP will carry that passive or reflexive meaning. It is often difficult to distinguish between the Form VII AP and PP.

aligned munHaaz منحاز

10.1.6 Defective root
introverted munTawin منطوق

10.2 Form VII passive participle (PP): munfaal منفَّع
These are not frequent in occurrence because of the intransitivity or reflexivity of the meaning of this form. Form VII PPs that do occur tend to be used as nouns of place.

10.2.1 Sound/regular root
slope, incline munHadar منحدر starting point munTalaq منطلق
lowland munxafaD منخفض

10.2.2 Geminate root: munfa منفَّع
As noted in 10.1.2, the passive participle and active participle are indistinguishable in form.

10.2.3 Hamzated root
This does not occur.

10.2.4 Assimilated root
This does not occur.
10.2.5 Hollow root: munfaal مُنَفَّال
As noted in 10.1.5, the passive participles and active participles of hollow roots in this form are identical.

10.2.6 Defective root: munfa’an مُنَفَّعٍ
enclosed, folded in munTawan مَنْطُوَى

10.3 Examples of Form VII participles in context

الدول غير المنحازة
al-duwal-u ghayr-u l-munHaazat-i
non-aligned states

باب منزلق
baab-un munzaliq-un

ـ تطوق منحدراته الآشجار
tu-Tawwiq-u munHadaraat-i-hi l-3ashjaar-u.
Trees encircle its slopes.
Form VII triliteral verb

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Form VII Sound root: انْبِسَتْ, ينْبِسَتْ | AP: انْبِسَتْ | PP: ينْبِسَتْ | VN: ‘to be glad, happy’
### Form VII  Geminate root: 

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#### مَنْضَمَ / يَنْضَمُ (to join with, affiliate with)

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**Form VII** Hollow root: اٍنّحَاز / ينّحَاز ‘to take sides’

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Form VII triliteral verb 563
Form VII Defective root: انْقضَى / انْقضَى

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**VN:** 'to elapse, expire'
1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: \( \text{ifta'\text{-}a} / \text{ya-} \text{fta'\text{-}il-u} \)

Form VIII verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that an infix /\( t \)/ is added to the Form I stem after the first radical. Thus Form VIII has the past tense stem \( \text{iC}_1\text{taC}_2\text{aC}_3 \) and the present tense stem \(-\text{C}_1\text{taC}_2\text{iC}_3\). A prefixed elidable \( \text{hamza} \) with \( \text{kasra} \) is added to the past tense stem of Form VIII in order to make it pronounceable; this \( \text{hamza} \) and its vowel are deleted in the present tense, replaced by the present tense subject markers.

1.2 Meaning

Form VIII verbs may be reflexive or medio-passive in meaning, but they also express a wide range of meanings that are difficult to predict. They may express the consequences of a Form I verb action and are sometimes considered resultative (\( \text{mu}^\text{Taawi} \)), in the same way that Form VII verbs may be resultative of the action of a Form I verb. This is especially true for verb roots starting with the consonants \( \text{hamza}, \text{waaw}, \text{raa'}, \text{laam} \) or \( \text{nuun} \), because these roots do not occur in Form VII and often use Form VIII instead to express the resultative (e.g., Form I \( \text{rafa'-'a/ya-} \text{rafa'-'u} \) ‘to raise’ and Form VIII \( \text{irtafa'-'a/ya-} \text{rtafi'-'u} \) ‘to be raised, to rise’). Form VIII is distinguished from Form VII by the ability to have a reciprocal meaning, that is, the action takes place mutually among several entities, e.g., Form I \( \text{jama'-'a/ya-jma'-'u} \) ‘to collect, gather (s.th.)’ and Form VIII \( \text{ijtama'-'a/ya-jtami'-'u} \) to meet with each other; collect together.\(^1\)

1.3 Transitivity

Form VIII verbs may be transitive or intransitive. Some are doubly transitive, such as \( \text{i'tabar-a/ya-} \text{tabir-u} \) ‘to consider (s.o.) (s.th.).’

\(^1\) On this point see Fleisch 1979, II: 311.
1.4 Inflection
The prefixed hamzat al-waṣl with kasra in the past tense stem is deleted in the present tense and replaced by the subject-marker prefix. The vowel of the present tense subject-marker prefix is fatHa and the stem vowel in the present tense is kasra (e.g., intaxab-a يَنْتَخَبُ ‘to elect’).

1.5 Special phonological characteristics of Form VIII
The insertion of the extraneous consonant /t/ within the root sometimes affects the spelling and pronunciation of Form VIII verbs. Various forms of assimilation of the infixed taa³ to the initial root consonant occur, and with assimilated verb roots the taa³ itself assimilates the initial waaw or yaa³ completely.

1.5.1 Progressive assimilation
In progressive assimilation, the taa³ is influenced by the preceding sound in the word.

1.5.1.1 Velarization: Where the initial root consonant is velarized (S, D, T, Z) and the infixed taa³ acquires the velarization feature. This results in a spelling change from taa³ to Taa³.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{to crash (into); collide with} & \quad iS\text{Tadam-a/ya-STadim-u (bi)} \\
& \quad \text{اصطدم / يصتدم} \\
& \quad \text{(root: S-d-m)} \\
\text{to be disturbed, agitated} & \quad iD\text{Tarab-a/ya-DTarib-u} \\
& \quad \text{اضطرب / يضتررب} \\
& \quad \text{(root: D-r-b)} \\
\text{to be aware; examine, look into} & \quad iT\text{Tala³-a/ya-TTal³-u ('ala)} \\
& \quad \text{اطلع / يطلع (على)} \\
& \quad \text{(root: T-l³)} \\
\end{align*}
\]

1.5.1.2 Voiced Alveolars: Where the initial root consonant is voiced and alveolar (d or z)

\(1\) daal-initial root: The taa³ assimilates totally to the daal.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{to be inserted; to assimilate} & \quad id\text{dagham-a/ya-ddaghim-u} \\
& \quad \text{اديغم / يدغم} \\
& \quad \text{(root: d-gh-m)} \\
\text{to allege, claim} & \quad id\text{da³a/ya-dda³ii} \\
& \quad \text{اديغى / يدعي} \\
& \quad \text{(root: d³-w)} \\
\end{align*}
\]

\(2\) zaay-initial root: In the zaay-initial root, the infixed taa³ partially assimilates to the /z/ sound by becoming a voiced dental stop (daal) instead of a voiceless dental stop (/t/). That is, instead of ifta³al-a it becomes ifda³al-a.
to flourish  izdahar-a/ya-zdahir-u  ازدهر / يزدهر
(root: z-h-r)

to be crowded  izdaham-a/ya-zdahim-u  ازدهم / يزدهم
(root: z-H-m)

to be doubled, be paired  izdawaij-a/ya-zdawaij-u  ازدوج / يزدوج
(root: z-w-j)

to increase  izdaad-a/ya-zaad-u  ازداد / يزداد
(root: z-w-d)

1.5.1.3 INTERDENTALS: Where the initial root consonant is interdental (th, dh, Z)
The infixed taa’ assimilates completely to the interdental root consonant.

(1)  thaa’-initial root

to avenge, get revenge  iththa’ar-a/ya-ththa’ir-u  اثاثر / ياثثر

(2)  dhaal-initial root: In dhaal-initial roots, the dhaal and infixed taa’ mutually
influence one another, assimilating together as two daals (the dhaal loses its
interdental quality, the taa’ acquires voicing):

to amass, save  iddaxar-a/ya-ddaxir-u  ادخر / يدخر
(root: dh-x-r)

(3)  Zaa’-initial root:

to be wronged, suffer injustice  iZZalam-a/ya-ZZalim-u  ظلم / يظلم
(root: Z-l-m)

1.5.2 Form VIII regressive assimilation

In regressive assimilation, the initial root consonant waaw or yaa’ is affected by
the infixed taa’ and is assimilated into it. That is, for example, instead of the
shape *iwtahad-a (from the root w-H-d) the actual Form VIII verb is ittaHad-a.

to be united  ittaHad-a/ya-ttaHid-u  اتحد / يتحد
(root w-H-d)

to expand  ittasa’-a/ya-ttasi’-u  استسع / يتسع
(root: w-s’)

to face, take the
direction of  ittajah-a/ya-ttajih-u  يتجه / يتجه
(root: w-j-h)

to accuse  ittaham-a/ya-ttahim-u  اتهم / يتهم
(root w-h-m)
2 Regular or sound roots

to celebrate, have a party
\[\text{iHtafal-a/ya-Htafil-u}\]  
\[\text{احتفل / يحتفل}\]

to respect
\[\text{iHtaram-a/ya-Htarim-u}\]  
\[\text{احترم / يحرّم}\]

to earn
\[\text{iktasab-a/ya-ktasib-u}\]  
\[\text{يكتسب / يكتسب}\]

to be different; to differ
\[\text{ixtalaf-a/ya-xtalif-u}\]  
\[\text{اختلاف / يختلف}\]

2.1 Initial-\text{nuun} roots

A number of intransitive Form VIII verbs are from roots whose initial consonant is /\text{n}/, since these do not assume Form VII.

to move, be transferred
\[\text{intaqal-a/ya-ntaqil-u}\]  
\[\text{انتقل / ينتقل}\]

to spread out
\[\text{intashar-a/ya-ntashir-u}\]  
\[\text{انتشار / ينتشر}\]

to elect
\[\text{intaxab-a/ya-ntaxib-u}\]  
\[\text{انتخاب / ينتخب}\]

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form VIII

to be interested, concerned (with)
\[\text{ihtamm-a/ya-htamm-u (bi-)}\]  
\[\text{هتم / يهم ب}\]

to be spread, extended
\[\text{imtadd-a/ya-mtadd-u}\]  
\[\text{متمت / يمدّ}\]

to occupy
\[\text{iHtall-a/ya-Htall-u}\]  
\[\text{احتال / يحتل}\]

4 Hamzated roots in Form VIII

4.1 \text{Hamza-initial}

to deliberate; to plot
\[\text{i'tamar-a/ya-'tamir-u}\]  
\[\text{يتأمر / يأمر}\]

to go well together; form a coalition
\[\text{i'talaf-a/ya-'talif-u}\]  
\[\text{يختلف / يختلف}\]

4.2 \text{Hamza-medial}

to be healed, to heal
\[\text{ilta'am-a/ya-lta'im-u}\]  
\[\text{الّمام / يلتئم}\]

4.3 \text{Hamza-final}

to begin
\[\text{ibtada'a/ya-btadi'a-u}\]  
\[\text{ابتدأ / يبدأ}\]

to be filled
\[\text{imtala'a/ya-mtali'a-u}\]  
\[\text{امتّأ / يملأ}\]
5 Assimilated roots in Form VIII
In Form VIII, the inflixed taa’ assimilates the initial semi-consonant waaw or yaa’, and doubles in strength (see above 1.5.2).

6 Hollow roots in Form VIII *iftaal-a / ya-ftaal-u
Hollow roots in Form VIII are usually inflected with *’alif as the long vowel and fatHa as the short vowel in the present and in the past iC1CaaC3-a /ya-C1CaaC3-u.

- to need: iHtaaj-ya-Htaaj-u
- to assassinate: ightaal-ya-ghtaal-u
- to choose: ixtaar-ya-xtaar-u

6.1 Retention of medial semivowel
In some cases, a hollow root in Form VIII keeps its medial semi-consonant, as follows:

- to be doubled, paired: izdawaj-ya-zdawij-u
- to contain: iHtawaa-ya-Htawii

7 Defective roots in Form VIII
Defective roots in Form VIII inflect as -aa/-ii defectives:

- to meet, encounter (s.o.): iltaqaa-ya-ltaqii
- to be content, satisfied: iktafa-ya-ktafii
- to wear, be dressed (in): irtadaa-ya-rtadii

7.1 Hollow and defective
The hollow-defective Form VIII verb keeps its medial semi-consonant (usually waaw) as a strong consonant:

- to contain (s.th.): iHtawaa-ya-Htawii

8 Examples of Form VIII verbs in context

- واكتشف أيضاً أخطاء
wa-ktashaf-ya *ayD-an *axTaa*-an
and he also discovered mistakes

- ما يحتوي هذا المتحف
maa ya-Htawii haadhaa l-matHaf-u
what this museum contains

- يترك لكل إنسان أن يختار
He leaves [it] to every person to choose.

- يحتوي / يحتوى
iHtawaa-ya-Htawii
9 Verbal nouns of Form VIII

9.1 Sound/regular root: *ifti*‘aaL افتُعال

- respect: *iHtiraam* احْترام
- election: *intixaab* انتِخاب
- meeting: *ijtimaa‘* اجْتِماع
- difference: *ixtilaaf* اخْتِلاف

9.1.1 With assimilation of *taa*’

- collision, crash: *iSTidaam* اصْطِدام
- flourishing, bloom: *izdihaar* ازْدِهار
- disturbance, unrest: *iDTiraab* اضْطِراب
- crowd, jam: *izdiHaam* ازْدِهام
  
9.2 Geminate root

- interest, concern: *ihtimaam* اهْتِمام
- occupation: *ihTilaal* احْتِلال
- spreading: *imtidaad* امْتِداد
- gratitude: *imtinaan* امْتِنان
  
9.3 Hamzated root

- coalition: *i’tilaaf* انْتِلَاف
- beginning: *ibtidaa‘* ابْتِداء
  
9.4 Assimilated root

- union: *ittiHaad* اتْحَاد
- accusation: *ittihaam* اتْهَام
  
9.5 Hollow root

- reserve; precaution: *iHtiyaaT* احْتِياط
- increase: *izdiyaad* ازْدِياد
- pleasure, delight: *irtiyyaaH* ارْتِياح
- doubling, pairing: *izdiwaaj* ازْدِواج
  
9.6 Defective root

In the defective root Form VIII verbal noun, the final defective root consonant is represented by a hamza.

- membership; belonging: *intima‘* اِنْتِمَاه
- disappearance: *ixtifaa‘* اخْتِفاء

---

2 In this particular root, the waaw behaves as a strong consonant. See section 6 above.
9.7 Form VIII verbal nouns in context

عدم ارتياح الجانبين
‘adam-u rtiyaaH-i l-jaanib-ayni
the discomfort of both sides

لا احترام للحقوق الشخصية للإنسان.
lau Htiraam-a l-l-Huquq-i l-shaxSiyyat-i l-l-insaan-i.
There is no respect for the personal rights of humans.

10 Form VIII participles

10.1 Form VIII active participle (AP): mufta‘il
In addition to carrying the meaning of doer of the action, the AP of Form VIII may sometimes convey a passive or resultative meaning, especially when derived from a resultative verb, e.g., muqtani ‘convinced’ or muttaHid ‘united.’

10.1.1 Sound/regular root: mufta‘il

respecting muHtarim respect
listener mustami‘e objection

10.1.2 Geminate root: mufta‘il

Because of the sequence of identical second and third root consonants, the stem vowel kasra is deleted from this AP form. That is, instead of “mufta‘il,” the form is mufta‘il.³ As a result of the deletion of the stem vowel in this AP form, the AP and PP are identical.

occupying muHtal different, muxtalif

10.1.3 Hamzated root

Hamza-final: mufta‘il

beginning mubtadi‘e beginning
filled mumtali‘e filled

³ This stems from phonological restrictions on identical consonants separated by a short vowel.
10.1.4 Assimilated root: *mutta‘il* مَتَّعَلُ

united *muttaHid* مَتَّعدَ
contacting *muttaSil* مَتَّصلِ

facing *muttajih* مَتَّجِ
accusing; *muttahim* مَتَّهم
accuser

10.1.5 Hollow root: *muftaal* مَفْتَالُ

relaxing; *murtaaH* مَرْتَاح
satisfied

accustomed *mu’taad* مَعْتَادٌ
(to); usual (*‘alaa)

needing *muHtaaj* مَحْتَاجٌ

10.1.6 Defective root: *mufta‘in* مَفْتَع ع

belonging *muntam-in* مُنْتَمٌ
containing *muHtaw-in* مَحْتَوَرٌ

10.1.7 Form VIII APs in context

الولايات المتحدة the United States
الأمم المتحدة the United Nations
المتحدة a double bind

fii makaan-i-hi l-mu‘taad-i in its usual place
baat-uu muqtani‘-iina.

They have become convinced.

10.2 Form VIII passive participle (PP): *mufta‘al* مَفْتَع ع

In addition to acting as an adjective, in many cases the Form VIII passive participle acts as a noun of place, denoting the location where the Form VIII verbal activity takes place.

10.2.1 Strong/regular root: *mufta‘al* مَفْتَع ع

respected *muHtaram* مُحْتَرَمَ
common

society *mujtama‘* مَجْمَع

elected *muntaxab* مُنْتَخَب

See note 2.
10.2.2 Geminate root: *mufta*<r>ت<

The AP and PP of geminate Form VIII verbs are identical. Context is often needed to differentiate the meaning.

occupied  

muHtall  مُحتل

10.2.2 Hamzated root

Hamza- initial: *mu’ta’al* مُتْعِل

conference  

mu’tamar  مُتَّمَر

10.2.3 Assimilated root: *mutta’al* مُتْعِل

accused; suspected  

muttaham  مَتَّهِم

10.2.4 Hollow root: *muftaal*

The AP and PP of hollow Form VIII verbs are identical. Context is needed to differentiate the meaning.

excellent,  

mumtaaz  مُتَّاز    chosen  muxtaar  مُختار

distinguished

10.2.5 Defective root: *mufta’an* مَفْتَعِي

required  

muqtaD-an  مُقْتَدٍ    level  mustaw-an  مُسْتَوٍ

10.2.6 Examples of Form VIII PPs in context

مصادر مطلعة  

maSaadir-u  muTTala’t-un  

informed sources  

He has the official documents.

الرئيس المنتخب  

bi-muqtaDaa l-Huquuq-i  

in accordance with the laws  

the president-elect

في الأراضي المحتلة  

jadwal-u ’a’maal-in  mushtarak-un  

a shared agenda  

in the occupied territories
Form VIII Sound root: ṣaḥḥata, ṣaḥḥata

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VN: ṣaḥḥat, ṣaḥḥat
AP: 'to respect'
PP: 'to respect'
Form VIII Geminate root:  

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*AP: مَحَّلَ مَحَّلَ مَحَّلَ مَحَّلَ*  
*PP: مَحَّلَ مَحَّلَ مَحَّلَ مَحَّلَ*  
*VN: 'to occupy'*
Form VIII hamza-final root: `

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*AP:* مبتداً | PP:* ني: | VN:* ‘to begin’
Form VIII triliteral verb

Form VIII Hollow root: اختيار، يختار

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Form VIII: AP: أختار، PP: يختارا، VN: 'to choose'
Form VIII Defective root: مَلْتَقِيّ َتَقَي ، يَلْتَقِي

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Indicative | Subjunctive | Jussive | Imperative

| أنا | النَقِي | النَقِي | النَقِي | النَقِي | النَقِي | النَقِي |
|انت | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي |
|انت | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي |
|ملتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي | تَلْتَقِي |

المَلْتَقِي مَلَتَقِي مَلَتَقِي مَلَتَقِي مَلَتَقِي

AP: m≥نَقِي PP: k≈≤نَقِي VN: A≤ق p≈≤نَقِي

‘to encounter, meet’
Form IX triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: if‘all-a / ya-f‘all-u

Form IX verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that the final root consonant is doubled and the first and second root consonants are not separated by a vowel. Form IX has the past tense stem $iC_1C_2aC_3$ and the present tense stem $-C_1C_2aC_3C_3$. A prefixed elidable hamza with kasra is added to the past tense stem of Form IX to make it pronounceable; this hamza and its vowel are deleted in the present tense, replaced by the present tense subject markers. The vowel of the present tense subject marker in Form IX is fatHa.

1.2 Meaning

Form IX verbs generally denote the acquisition of a color or a physical trait. They are normally based on roots occurring in the $\sqrt{af‘al}$ adjectival pattern, as the colors, e.g., $\sqrt{aswad}$ ‘black,’ $\sqrt{aHmar}$ ‘red,’ or adjectives that describe physical defects. These verbs are infrequent in MSA.1

1.3 Transitivity

Form IX verbs are intransitive.

1.4 Inflection

The prefixed hamzat al-waSl with kasra in the past tense stem is deleted in the present tense and replaced by the subject-marker prefix. The vowel of the present tense subject-marker prefix is fatHa and the stem vowel in the present tense is fatHa.

2 Sound/regular roots in Form IX: if‘all-a / ya-f‘all-u

- to be or become green
- ixDarr-a/ya-xDarr-u

1 Kouloughli (1994, 207) reports their occurrence as 0.5 percent of all the augmented forms of the verb (II–X).
to be or become red; to blush  
iHmarr-a/ya-Hmarr-u  

tônªrënj / sônªrMpG

to be or become yellow;  
iSfarr-a/ya-Sfarr-u  
to become pale

tônØr°ünj / sônØr°UpG

3 Geminate (doubled) roots in Form IX
These roots are rare in Form IX.

4 Hamzated roots in Form IX
These roots are rare in Form IX.

5 Assimilated roots in Form IX
These roots are rare in Form IX.

6 Hollow roots in Form IX
The semi-consonant of the hollow root stabilizes in Form IX and acts as a strong consonant (waaw or yaa√):

to become black  

iswadd-a/ya-swadd-u  

aswad / ya-\textcolor[rgb]{1.00,0.50,0.20}{\textit{sawd}}  

to be or become white  

ibyaDD-a/ya-byaDD-u  

abjaz / ya-\textcolor[rgb]{1.00,0.50,0.20}{\textit{byaz}}  
to squint; be cross-eyed  

iHwall-a/ya-Hwall-u  

ahwall / ya-\textcolor[rgb]{1.00,0.50,0.20}{\textit{ha\textit{-}wall}}  
to become crooked  

i‘wajj-a/ya-‘wajj-u  

awajj / ya-\textcolor[rgb]{1.00,0.50,0.20}{\textit{wajj}}

7 Defective roots in Form IX: rare

8 Form IX verbs in context

i‘wajj-at-i l-shajarat-u.  
The tree became crooked.

9 Verbal nouns of Form IX

9.1 Sound/regular root: if‘ilaal  
i‘x:\textcolor[rgb]{1.00,0.50,0.20}{\textit{ulus}}  
greenness  

ixDiraar  

akṣ\textcolor[rgb]{1.00,0.50,0.20}{\textit{arar}}  
blushing  

iHmiraar  

ah\textcolor[rgb]{1.00,0.50,0.20}{\textit{mirar}}  
yellowness; pallor  

iSfiraar  

akṣ\textcolor[rgb]{1.00,0.50,0.20}{\textit{arar}}
9.2 Hollow root: *illaal

- *illaal (الحُولَال): squinting
- i*illaal (اَحْوَالَ): crookedness

10 Form IX participles

10.1 Form IX participles (AP and PP): *mufall (مقْال)
Form IX active participles and passive participles have the same pattern. However, passive participles in this form are exceedingly rare, since the verbs are intransitive.

Strong/regular root:

- *marr (مُمَّرَ): blushing
- *marr (مُمَّرَ): blushing

Hollow root:

- *swadd (مُسْوَدَ): blackening
- *swadd (مُسْوَدَ): blackening
Form IX Sound root: حَمُرَانِ ‘to become red’

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<tr>
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<th>Active</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Passive</th>
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<td>Imperative</td>
<td>Indicative</td>
<td>Subjunctive</td>
<td>Jussive</td>
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| آنِتا|athaana| مَحْرَ أو| hamara | مَحْرَ أو| hamara |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| مَحْرَ| hamara| تَمحَرَ| tamahara| تَمحَرَ| tamahara |
| مَحْرَنِ| hamiran| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan |
| مَحْرَنِ| hamiran| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan |
| مَحْرَنِ| hamiran| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan |
| مَحْرَنِ| hamiran| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan |

| مُهَا| maha| مَحْرَ أو| hamara | مَحْرَ أو| hamara |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| مَحْرَ| hamara| تَمحَرَ| tamahara| تَمحَرَ| tamahara |
| مَحْرَنِ| hamiran| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan |
| مَحْرَنِ| hamiran| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan |
| مَحْرَنِ| hamiran| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan| تَمحَرَنِ| tamaharan |
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### Form IX triliteral verb

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### Form IX Hollow root: أسود، يسود

**AP:** يسود

**PP:** يسودون

**VN:** to turn black
Form X triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: istafal-a / ya-stafil-u

Form X verbs are augmented with respect to Form I in that a prefixed /-st-/ is added and the first and second root consonants are not separated by a vowel. Form X has the past tense stem istaC1C2C3 and the present tense stem -staC1C2iC3. A prefixed elidable hamza with kasra is added to the past tense stem of Form X to make it pronounceable; this hamza and its vowel are deleted in the present tense, replaced by the present tense subject markers. The vowel of the present tense subject marker in Form X is fatHa.

1.2 Meaning

Form X verbs may be requestative or estimative but may also reflect other semantic modifications of the base form. Examples of requestatives include:

- to request guidance: istarshad-a / ya-starshid-u
  (from s.o.)
- to request or seek: istafsar-a / ya-stafsir-u
  explanation (from s.o.)

Examples of estimatives include:

- to consider (s.th.) good: istaHsan-a / ya-staHsin-u
- to consider (s.th.) strange: istaghrab-a / ya-staghrib-u

Form X may be the reflexive of Form IV: Wright writes (1967, I:44): “Form X converts the factitive signification of Form IV into the reflexive or middle.” For example, Form IV a’add-a / yu’idd-u ‘to prepare (s.th.)’ and Form X ista’add-a / ya-sta’idd-u ‘to prepare one’s self, get ready.’

1.3 Transitivity

Form X verbs may be transitive or intransitive.¹

¹ Kouloughli (1994, 208) reports that Form X is transitive more than 75 percent of the time.
1.4 Inflection
The prefixed *hamzat al-wasl* with *kasra* in the past tense stem is deleted in the present tense and replaced by the subject-marker prefix. The vowel of the present tense subject-marker prefix is *fatHa* and the stem vowel in the present tense is *kasra* (e.g., *istaqbal-a* / *ya-staqbil-u* 'to receive (s.o.)').

2 Sound/regular root

- **to consume** *istahlak-a* / *ya-stahlik-u* 
- **to discover; invent** *istanbaT-a* / *ya-stanbiT-u* 
- **to disdain; detest** *istankar-a* / *ya-stankir-u* 
- **to invest** *istathmar-a* / *ya-stathmir-u* 

3 Geminate (doubled) roots in Form X

- **to continue, to last** *istamarr-a* / *ya-stamirr-u* 
- **to be independent** *istaqall-a* / *ya-staqill-u* 

4 Hamzated roots in Form X

- **to rent, to hire** *ista’jar-a* / *ya-sta’jir-u* 
- **to resume** *ista’naf-a* / *ya-sta’nif-u* 

5 Assimilated roots in Form X

The root-initial semi-consonant *waaw* or *yaa* acts as a regular consonant in the inflected verb forms.

- **to import** *istawrad-a* / *ya-stawrid-u* 
- **to colonize, settle** *istawTan-a* / *ya-stawTin-u* 
- **to awaken, wake up** *istayqaZ-a* / *ya-stayqiZ-u* 

6 Hollow roots in Form X

Hollow roots in Form X, whether based on roots with *waaw* or *yaa* as the medial semi-consonant, inflect with long */ii* in the present tense stem.

- **to benefit (from or by)** *istafaad-a* / *ya-staﬁd-u (min)* 
  (root: *f-y-d* / *فَيَدَ - دَيْ فَ*) 
- **to be able (to do s.th.)** *istaTaa*-a* / *ya-staTii*-u* 
  (root: *T-w*-a* / *تَوْعَ - عَوِتْ تَ طِ*)
to resign  
(\textit{root}: \text{q-y-l} / \text{-l -y})

7 Defective roots in Form X

Defective roots in Form X inflect as -\textit{aal-ii} defectives.

- to except, exclude  \text{istathnaa/ya-stathnii} 
- to seek an opinion  \text{istaftaa/ya-staftii} 
- to appropriate  \text{istawlaa/ya-stawlii}

8 Examples of Form X verbs in context

\begin{itemize}
\item Hattaa \textit{‘ind-a-maa staDaafat-i l-qimmat-a}  
\text{laa ya-staTii‘-uuna l-dhahaab-a}.
\item on a visit to France that \text{lasts} a week 
\item The snow season \text{lasts} from November until March.
\end{itemize}

9 Form X verbal nouns: \textit{istif‘aal} 

9.1 Sound/regular root

\begin{itemize}
\item inquiry  \text{istixbaar} 
\item investment  \text{istithmaar}
\end{itemize}

9.2 Geminate root

The verbal noun of the geminate Form X verb is regular, using the \textit{istif‘aal} pattern and splitting the identical second and third root consonants:

\begin{itemize}
\item continuation  \text{istimraar} 
\item merit, worthiness  \text{istiHqaaq} 
\item claim
\item preparation  \text{isti‘daad} 
\item independence  \text{istiqlaal}
\end{itemize}

9.3 Hamzated root

The verbal noun of hamzated roots of Form X is usually regular in formation. The \textit{hamza} takes a seat appropriate to its phonetic context.

\begin{itemize}
\item renting  \text{isti‘jaar} 
\item resumption  \text{isti‘naaf}
\end{itemize}
9.4 Assimilated root: استعمال
In the verbal noun of assimilated-root Form X, the root-initial waaw assimilates to the preceding kasra and becomes long /ii/:

- importation: istiiraad
- awakening: istiqaaz

9.5 Hollow root: استغفاله
The verbal noun of Form X hollow verbs has the form istifaala استغفاله spelled with taa’ marbuuta.

- benefit: istifaada
- ability: istiTa’aa
- response: istijaaba
- resignation: istiqaaZ

9.6 Defective root: استعفائه
The verbal noun of defective roots in From X has the pattern istifaal استعفائه. The weakness of the final root element converts into hamza:

- exception: istithnaa
- renunciation: istighnaa
- plebiscite: istiftaa
- referendum: istilaa

9.7 Form X verbal nouns in context

لأنها استحقاق ديمقراطي إلى استثمار بلايين الدولارات
li-anna-haa stiHqaaq-un ُila stithmaar-i balaayiin-i
ikiid-i l-xamsiina l-istiqlaal-i lubnaan-a
because it is a democratic claim to the investment of billions of dollars

في العيد الخمسي لاستقلال لبنان
fii l-idi-l-xamsiina l-istiqlaal-l lubnaan-a
on the 50th [anniversary] celebration of the independence of Lebanon

10 Form X participles

10.1 Form X active participle (AP): mustaf’il مستفعل

10.1.1 Sound/regular root

- consumer: mustahlak
- orientalist: mustashriq

2 Instead of *istiwraad or *istiwTaan. The sequence /-iw/ is usually avoided in Arabic.
10.1.2 Geminate root: mustafi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>root</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>continuous</th>
<th>independent</th>
<th>ready</th>
<th>entitled; worthy</th>
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<td>ready</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>mustaHiqq</td>
<td>entitled; worthy</td>
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10.1.3 Hamzated root

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>root</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>musta∂ir</td>
<td>tenant, renter</td>
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</table>

10.1.4 Assimilated root

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>mustawrid</td>
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<tr>
<td>mustawTin</td>
<td>colonizer</td>
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10.1.5 Hollow root: mustafiil

<table>
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<tr>
<td>mustadiir</td>
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<tr>
<td>mustaghrab</td>
<td>used</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

10.1.6 Defective root: mustaf`in

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>mustaghrab</td>
<td>strange</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

10.1.7 Form X APs in context

 satuHat-un mustadiirat-un ٨aHad-u l-nuwwaab-i l-mustaqill-iina

in one of the deputies

10.2 Form X passive participle (PP): mustaf`al

In addition to acting as an adjective, the Form X passive participle may also serve as a noun of place, denoting the location where the Form X activity takes place.

10.2.1 Sound/regular root: mustaf`al

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mustaxbar</td>
<td>laboratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>must‘amar</td>
<td>used</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.2.2 Geminate root

This root type is rare in the passive participle.
10.2.3 Hamzated root
resumed  musta’naʃ  مُستَنَفَث  rented  musta’jar  مُستَنَفَر

10.2.4 Assimilated root: mustaf’al
settlement  mustawTaʃa  مُستَوَتَنَة  imported  mustawrad  مُستَرْوَد

10.2.5 Hollow root: mustaf’al
borrowed; false; musta’aar  مُستَعَار  counsellor  mustashaar  مُستَشَار
artificial

10.2.6 Defective root: mustaf’an
hospital  mustashfan  مُستَشَفَي  excepted  mustathnan  مُستَثْنَيَة

10.2.7 Form X PPs in context

أسماء مستعارة
‘asmaa’-un  musta’aar-un  pseudonyms (‘borrowed names’)
waD‘-u Hajr-i l-‘asaas-i li-l-mustashfaa  setting the foundation stone for the hospital

وفي المستقبل القريب
fii l-mustaqbal-i l-qariib-i  in the near future
mi‘at-u milyuun-i duulaar-in lays-at mustaghrabat-an.

A hundred million dollars is not unusual.
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Form X Sound root: مُستَخْدَمَ ‘to use’
Form X Geminate root: استمر، يستمر
AP: استمر
PP: VN: استمرار
‘to last’

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**Form X hamza-initial root:** 

**AP:** بِسْتَأْجَرَوْنَهُ

**PP:** يُسْتَأْجِرُوْنَهُ

**VN:** ‘to rent’

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<tr>
<td>أنا</td>
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**A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic**
Form X triliteral verb

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<th>Subjunctive</th>
<th>Jussive</th>
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<td>أنا تستورد</td>
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Form X Assimilated root: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP:</th>
<th>PP:</th>
<th>VN:</th>
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| أستورد | أستورد | كأ Gastorad |}

‘to import’
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<th>Active</th>
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Form X Hollow root: استطاع, يستطيع

AP: استطاع  
PP: استطيع  
VN: ‘to be able’
Form X Defective root: مُستَثنِيِّ ُبِعِثِينَّ 'to except'

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| Ana        | أَتَنَ | أَتَنَ | أَتَنَ | أَتَنَ |
| Ant        | أَتَنَ | أَتَنَ | أَتَنَ | أَتَنَ |
| Ant        | أَتَنَ | أَتَنَ | أَتَنَ | أَتَنَ |
| m/f        | أَتَنَ | أَتَنَ | أَتَنَ | أَتَنَ |

AP: mُوَرَأَنَّ أَوَأَنَ | PP: أَكَّأَرَنَّ أَوَأَنَ | VN: أَكَّأَرَنَّ أَوَأَنَ | 'to except'

| m | أَكَّأَرَنَّ أَوَأَنَ | أَكَّأَرَنَّ أَوَأَنَ | أَكَّأَرَنَّ أَوَأَنَ | أَكَّأَرَنَّ أَوَأَنَ |
| f | أَكَّأَرَنَّ أَوَأَنَ | أَكَّأَرَنَّ أَوَأَنَ | أَكَّأَرَنَّ أَوَأَنَ | أَكَّأَرَنَّ أَوَأَنَ |
Forms XI–XV triliteral verb

These forms of the triliteral verb are chiefly archaic and/or poetic in use. For the sake of completeness, they are described briefly here, but few examples occurred in the corpus, and even in Classical Arabic, they are rare. Examples are taken from Wright 1967, I:43–47 or Fleisch 1979, II: 330–40.1

1 Form XI: \textit{if'aall-u} افعالٌ / \textit{ya-f'aall-u} افعالٌ

This form is related to Form IX and usually denotes a similar concept: the acquisition or existence of a color or physical trait.2 It is prefixed with \textit{hamzat al-waSl} and is distinguished by the lengthening of the stem vowel from \textit{fatHa} to \textit{'alif}, and the doubling of the final consonant, giving the pattern \textit{iC₁C₂aaC₃a/ya-C₁C₂aaC₃C₄'u}. It is intransitive.

- to become temporarily red: \textit{iHmaarr-a/ya-Hmaarr-u} احمرٌ / يحمار
- to become temporarily yellow: \textit{iSfaarr-a/ya-Sfaarr-u} اصفرٌ / يصبَر
- to be dark brown: \textit{ismaarr-a/ya-smaarr-u} أسمرٌ / يسمر

1.1 Verbal noun: \textit{if'ilail} افعالٌ

- turning temporarily red: \textit{iHmiiraar} احمرار

2 Form XII: \textit{if'aw'al-u} افعالٌ / \textit{ya-f'aw'il-u} افعالٌ

Form XII has the pattern \textit{iC₁C₂awC₃ -a/ya-C₁C₂awC₃C₄'i}, with doubling of the medial radical and insertion of a \textit{waaw} between the two doubled radicals. It is

---

1 Fleisch (1979, II:330–35) provides examples and discussion of the etymology of these forms. Haywood and Nahmad (1962, 152–53) have a comprehensive verb form chart that includes Forms XI–XV. Although some grammars include the verbal nouns of these forms, most do not include the participles, so I have omitted these, except where they are found in Wehr 1979.

2 See Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 185. Wright (1967, I:43–44) states: "According to some grammarians, the distinction between the ninth and the eleventh forms is, that the ninth indicates permanent colours or qualities, the eleventh those that are transitory or mutable . . . Others hold that Form XI indicates a higher degree of the quality than IX."
prefixed with hamzat al-waSl. In meaning it, like Form IX, usually indicates color or physical quality.

to be convex; be humpbacked  
\textit{iHdawdab-a/ya-Hdawdib-u}

2.1 Verbal noun: 
\textit{ifti‘a\textsuperscript{a}al}

becoming humpbacked  
\textit{iHdii\textsuperscript{a}ab}

2.2 Active participle: 
\textit{muft\\textsuperscript{a}aw‘il}

mounded; humpbacked  
\textit{muHdawdib}

3 Form XII:
\textit{ift\\textsuperscript{a}awwal-a / ya-f\\textsuperscript{a}awwil-u}

Form XIII inserts a doubled waaw between the second and third root consonants, yielding the pattern \textit{iC_2C_3awwaC_4-a/ya-C_1C_2awwiC_3-u}. It, too, usually denotes color or quality but may also denote an action.

to last long  
\textit{ixrawwaT-a/ya-xrawwiT-u}

to mount a camel without a saddle  
\textit{i‘lawwaT-a/ya-‘lawwiT-u}

3.1 Verbal noun: 
\textit{ift\\textsuperscript{a}iwwaal}

lasting long  
\textit{ixriwwaaT}

4 Form XIV:
\textit{ift\\textsuperscript{a}anlal-a / ya-f\\textsuperscript{a}anlil-u}

Form XIV has the pattern \textit{iC_1C_2anC_3aC_3-i/ya-C_1C_2anC_3iC_3-u}, with doubling of the third radical and insertion of a \textit{nuun} between the second and third radicals. It is prefixed with hamzat al-waSl. In meaning it, like Form IX, usually indicates color or physical quality.

to be dark  
\textit{isHankak-a}

4.1 Verbal noun: 
\textit{ift\\textsuperscript{a}inlaal}

being dark  
\textit{isHinkaak}

5 Form XV:
\textit{ift\\textsuperscript{a}anlaa / ya-f\\textsuperscript{a}anlili}

Form XV resembles Form XIV in that there is an inserted \textit{nuun} between the second and third radicals of the root. However, there is an added suffix /-aa/ which turns

3 Note that this form with its inserted \textit{nuun} correlates closely with Form III of quadriliteral verbs (also very rare; e.g., \textit{ibranshaq-a / ya-branshiq-u} ‘to bloom.’ The difference is that in the quadrilateral, the third and fourth root consonants are different. See Chapter 33, section 4.
the verb into a defective of the -aa/-ii type. It has the pattern iC₁C₂anC₃aa/ya-
C₁C₂anC₃ii.

to be stout and strong  i'landaayala-landii إَعْلَنَّى / يَعْلَنُ نْ
to conquer, vanquish  israndaay-a-srandii أَسْرَنَّى / يَسْرِنُ نْ

5.1 Verbal noun: ifinlaa’ إِفْعَنَلاً
    conquering       isrindaay’ أَسْرَنْدَآً
Quadriliteral verbs

1 Basic characteristics of quadriliteral verb roots

Quadriliteral verb roots contain four consonants instead of three (e.g., zaxraf-a / yu-zaxrif-u ‘to embellish, adorn’ or fahras-a / yu-fahris-u ‘to compile an index, to index’). Sometimes the four consonants are all different and sometimes they are reduplicated.

1.1 Reduplicated quadriliteral verbs

In reduplicated quadriliteral verbs the first two consonants repeat themselves (somewhat like English words such as chitchat, zigzag, or mish mash). These verbs usually refer to repeated motion or sound. When referring to a sound, they are onomatopoeic; that is, they reflect or mimic the sound itself (e.g., rafraf-a / yu-rafrif-u ‘to flutter,’ waswas-a / yu-waswis-u ‘to whisper’).

1.2 Complex roots

Complex roots combine elements from more than one root into a quadriliteral verb (e.g., basmala / yu-basmil-u ‘to say bi-sm-i llaah-i ‘in the name of God’).

1.3 Borrowed roots

Quadriliteral verb patterns are sometimes used to borrow verbal concepts from another language (e.g., talfan-a / yu-talfin-u ‘to telephone’).

1.4 Forms

Quadriliteral roots occur in four different forms or stem classes, labeled with roman numerals I-IV, along the same lines as the labeling system for the ten forms of the triliteral verb. Forms I and II of the quadriliterals are by far the most common in MSA.

2 Form I: fa’al-a /yu-fa’il-u

2.1 Pattern

The consonant-vowel distribution pattern for Form I of the quadriliteral verb mirrors Form II of the triliteral: C₁aC₂C₃aC₄ / yu-C₁aC₂C₃iC₄. This is possible because
the triliteral Form II is increased by one consonant by virtue of the doubling of its second radical. The difference between them is that in a quadriliteral verb Form I, the two middle consonants are different, whereas in a Form II triliteral, they are the same.

2.2 Transitivity
Form I quadriliterals may be transitive or intransitive.

2.3 Regular quadriliterals
In regular or sound quadriliteral roots, all the consonants are different. Most quadriliterals of this type contain a “liquid” consonant: /r/, /l/, /n/.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Arabic Form</th>
<th>English Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to obstruct</td>
<td>'arqal-a/yu-arqil-u</td>
<td>عرقل / يعرقل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to translate</td>
<td>tarjam-a/yu-tarjim-u</td>
<td>ترجم / يترجم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to dominate</td>
<td>sayT-a/yu-sayT-u</td>
<td>سيطر / يسيطر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to prove</td>
<td>barhan-a/yu-barhin-u</td>
<td>برهن / يبرهن</td>
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</table>

2.4 Reduplicated quadriliterals
In these roots the first two consonants are repeated, either in imitation of a sound or to refer to a movement, especially a repeated movement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Arabic Form</th>
<th>English Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to gargle</td>
<td>gharghar-a/yu-gharghir-u</td>
<td>غرغر / يغرغر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to flutter</td>
<td>rafraf-a/yu-rafrif-u</td>
<td>برفرف / يبرفرف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to move, to budge</td>
<td>zaHzaH-a/yu-zahziH-u</td>
<td>زحزح / يزحزح</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to ruin, demolish</td>
<td>Da‘Da‘-a/yu-Da‘Di‘-u</td>
<td>ضضضع / يضمضع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to shake</td>
<td>zalzal-a/yu-zalzil-u</td>
<td>ززلز / ينزلز</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to chatter</td>
<td>tharthar-a/yu-tharthir-u</td>
<td>ثثارث / يثارث</td>
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2.5 Complex roots

2.5.1 Acronymic roots
This involves taking the initial letters of a string of words in a traditional, formulaic saying, or an often-repeated phrase, and turning them into a lexical root. It is

1 Certain quadriliteral verbs appear to be expanded triliterals, with liquid or continuant phonemes /r/, /l/, /n/, /m/, /w/ added to the root. They are called mulHaqaat bi-l-rubaaً for example: zaHlaf-a ‘زحلف / يزحلف ‘to roll along’ from z-H-f ‘advance slowly.’ See Roochnik, n.d.; Sterling 1904, 26–27; Wright 1967, I:47–48.
2 For a semantic analysis of reduplicated quadriliteral verbs see Procházka 1993.
somewhat like creating an acronym, but in Arabic this particular usage creates verbs that denote saying a set phrase.

basma-l-a/yu-basiml-u  

basmal / bismal

to say: bi-ism-i illaah-i (‘in the name of God’)

Hawqal-a/yu-Hawqil-u  

hawqal / hawqal

to say: laa hawl wa laa quwwat illa bi-llaah-i  

(‘There is no power and no strength save in God’)

fadhla-l-a/yu-fadhlik-u  

fadhla / fadhlik

to say fadhlik, fadhlik

fa-dhaalika kadhaa wa-kadhaa . . .  

(‘And that is thus and so . . .’)

2.5.2 Compound roots

These verbs combine consonants from two roots. They are mostly of older usage.

to worship the sun  ‘absham-a/yu-‘abshim-u  

‘absham / ‘abshim

(from roots: ع - ب - د ‘serve, to worship’ and ش - م - س ‘sun’)

to be petrified  jalmad-a/yu-jalmid-u  

jalmad / jalmid

(from roots: ج - م - د ‘freeze’ and ج - م - د ‘harden’)

2.6 Borrowed quadriliterals

Verbal concepts from foreign languages can sometimes be transferred into Arabic through use of the quadriliteral verb pattern.

to telephone  talfan-a/yu-talfin-u  

telfan / telfin

to televise  talfaz-a/yu-talfiz-u  

telfaz / telfiz

to philosophize  falsaf-a/yu-falsif-u  

falsaf / falsif

3 Form II quadriliterals: tafa‘al-l-a / ya-tafa‘al-l-u

3.1 Pattern

The consonant-vowel distribution pattern for Form II quadriliterals mirrors Form V of the triliteral verb: taCaCCaC-a /ya-taCaCCaC-u.
3.2 Meaning
In meaning, this form is often the reflexive, resultative, or passive of the Form I quadriliteral.

- become electrified: takahrab-ya-takahrab
- to decline, go down: tadahwar-ya-tadahwar
- to be crystallized: tabalwar-ya-tabalwar
- to adorn one’s self, dress up: tabahraj-ya-tabahraj
- to acclimatize (o.s.): ta’aqlam-ya-ta’aqlam
- to become dilapidated: taDa’aDa-ya-taDa’aDa

3.3 Denominals
Form II quadriliterals may be denominalizations, as in the following verb:

to concentrate, be centered: tamarkaz-ya-tamarkaz

Concentrated

(from the noun of place, markaz ‘center’ from the root رُكُز)

3.4 Verbs of comportment
Form II quadriliterals may also have a meaning of acting or behaving in a certain way, e.g.,

to play the philosopher: tafalsaf-ya-tafalsaf

to act like a philosopher: ta’amrak-ya-ta’amrak

to act American: ta’amrak-ya-ta’amrak

4 Form III: if’analal-ya-f’analil
This form of the quadriliteral verb is rare in MSA. It has an infixed /n/ inserted between the second and third radicals of the root and corresponds in meaning to form VII of the triliteral roots. It is normally intransitive. No occurrences of this form of the verb occurred in the data covered for this book. Examples include:

to bloom, to flourish:ibranshaq-ya-branshiq

(Wright 1967, I:49)

to be proud, raise the nose: ixranTam-ya-xranTim

(Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 263)

Whereas Wright (1967) as well as Haywood and Nahmad (1962) give this Form as III, other authors, including the MECAS grammar (1965, 225) and Sterling (1904, 26) give it as Form IV of the quadrilateral, and Form IV as Form III.
5 Form IV: \( \text{if-alall-} / \text{ya-f-alill-u} \)

Form IV of the quadriliteral corresponds in meaning to Form IX of the triliteral verb. The final radical is doubled, giving the pattern iCCaCaCC-a, ya-CCaCiCC-u. It denotes an intensity of quality or degree and is intransitive.

- to be calm, serene, reassured: \(iTma^{ann}-a/ya-Tma^{inn}-u\)
- to vanish away, disappear: \(iDmaHall-a/ya-DmaHall-u\)
- to shudder: \(iqsha^{arr}-a/ya-qsha^{irr}-u\)
- to stretch: \(ishra^{abb}-a/ya-shra^{ibb}-u\)
- to shrink, shudder, recoil: \(ishma^{azz}-a/ya-shma^{izz}-u\)
- to become dark, gloomy: \(ikfaharr-a/ya-kfahirr-u\)

6 Examples of quadriliteral verbs in context

**Form I:**

\(baHlaq-a\) fii `ayn-ay-haa.
He stared into her eyes.

\(yu-tarjim-u\) `ilaa lughat-i-hi.
He translates into his language.

**Form II:**

\(tazaHzaH-at-i\) l-Saxrat-u.
The rock moved.

\(shay-an fa-shay-an\) yu-mkin-u `an ya-tadaHraj-a.
It can deteriorate (‘it is possible that it deteriorate’) bit by bit.

**Form IV:**

\(waD^{un} ya-Tma^{inn}-u\) fii-hi jamii`-u
\(l-muwaaTin-iina\)
a situation in which all citizens can be reassured

\(Hayth-u\) ta-shra`ibb-u l-Tariiq-u
where the road stretches
7 Quadrilateral verbal nouns

7.1 Form I quadrilateral verbal nouns

7.1.1 *fa‘lala* ~ *fi‘lila* 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>translation</th>
<th>tarjama</th>
<th>obstacle; 'arqala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>obstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>chattering</th>
<th>tharthara</th>
<th>link, chain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>silsila</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.1.2 *fu‘laal* ~ *fa‘laal* ~ *fi‘laal* 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>proof,</th>
<th>burhaan</th>
<th>earthquake</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>zilzaal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2 Form II quadrilateral verbal nouns: *tafa‘lu*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>deterioration</th>
<th>tadahwur</th>
<th>sequence; tasalsul</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>تسَلْسَل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>تَدَهُوُر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>تَدَهُوُر</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.3 Form III quadrilateral verbal nouns: *if‘inlaal* 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>flourishing</th>
<th>ibrinshaq</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.4 Form IV quadrilateral verbal nouns: *if‘illaal* 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>serenity</th>
<th>iTmi‘naan</th>
<th>vanishing</th>
<th>iDmiHlaal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.5 Quadrilateral verbal nouns in context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>لوقف تدهور الدينار</th>
<th>سلسلة جبال</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>li-waqf-i tadahwur-i l-diinaar</td>
<td>silsilat-u jibaal-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to stop the decline of the dinar</td>
<td>a chain of mountains</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 Form I quadrilateral participles

Quadrilateral verb participles are formed on the same basis as participles of triliteral verb roots. There are active and passive participles, all prefixed with /mu-/ and differentiated by a stem vowel /-i/- for the active participle and stem vowel /-a/- for the passive participle. They occur both as nouns and as adjectives.

8.1 Quadrilateral active participle (QAP)

8.1.1 Form I QAP: *mufa‘liil* 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>engineer</th>
<th>muhandis</th>
<th>مُهْنِدَس</th>
<th>explosive</th>
<th>mufarqí</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.1.2 Form II QAP: mutafa‘il

deteriorating mutadahwir  مَتْدَهْوَر  crystalline mutabalwir  مَتْبَلْوِر

8.1.3 Form III QAP: rare

8.1.4 Form IV QAP: mu‘aflil

serene, calm muTma‘inn  مُطَمَّنَّ  dusky, gloomy mukfahir  مُكَفَّهِرَ

8.1.5 QAPs in context

هم في حال صحة متدهرة.
hum fii Haal-i SiHHat-in mutadahwirat-in.
They are in a deteriorating state of health.

بناءيات حي المهندسين
binaayaat-u Hayy-i l-muhandis-iina
the buildings of the Muhandisin (‘engineers’) quarter

8.2 Quadriliteral passive participle (QPP)

8.2.1 Form I passive participle: mu‘all

camp mu‘askar  مَعَسْكَر  embellished muzarkash  مُزْرَكْشَ مُرْكيَّن
series musalsal  مُسَلْسَل  crystallized mubalwar  مُبْلَوْر مَبْلُور
old-timer muxaDram  مَخْضَرَم  electrified mukahrab  مُكَهْرَب

8.2.2 Form II QPP: mutafa‘al

This form is rare.

8.2.3 Form III and Form IV QPP

These are rare.

8.2.4 Quadriliteral PPs in context

مُسَلْسَل جديد
musalsal-un jadiid-un
a new series

مَقالات مترجمة من العربية
maqaalaat-un mutarjamat-un min-a l-arabiyat-i
articles translated from Arabic
Mood or “mode” refers to the Arabic verb properties indicative, subjunctive, and jussive.¹ These categories reflect or are caused by contextual modalities that condition the action of the verb. For example, the indicative mood tends to be characteristic of straightforward, factual statements or questions, while the subjunctive mood reflects an attitude toward the action such as doubt, desire, intent, wishing, or necessity, and the jussive mood, when used for the imperative, indicates an attitude of command, request, or need for action on the part of the speaker.

In Arabic, mood marking is only done on the present tense or imperfective stem; there are no mood variants for the past tense. The Arabic moods are therefore non-finite; that is, they do not refer to points in time and are not differentiated by tense. Tense is inferred from context and other parts of the clause.²

1 The indicative mood: al-muDaari al-marfuu
المضارع المرفوع
The indicative mood is considered the basic mood; it is used in factual statements or straightforward questions. It is also used in statements about the future, either with the future markers sa- or sawfa, or in a context that refers to a future action. A full paradigm of the indicative mood for a regular Form I verb is as follows:

¹ An additional mood, the “energetic” exists in Classical Arabic but not in MSA. It denotes an intensified affirmation of action. See Wright 1967, I:61ff. and Fischer 2002, 110 and 118 for more on the energetic mood.
² The question of mood marking (on verbs) is a central one in traditional Arabic grammar, along with case marking (on nouns and adjectives). Moods fall under the topic of morphology because they are indicated in Arabic word structure, that is, they are usually marked by suffixes or modifications of suffixes attached to the present tense verb stem. Moods also, however, fall under the topic of syntax because their use is determined either by particles which govern their occurrence, or by the narrative context in general, including attitude of the speaker and intended meaning. They are therefore referred to in some reference works and theoretical discussions as “morphosyntactic” categories, combining features of morphology and syntax.
1.2 Indicative mood paradigm

Present tense stem -\textipa{rif-} - 'know'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| First person   | أَرَفَ  
\textipa{a-riʃ-u} |                 | نَرَفٍ  
\textipa{na-riʃ-u} |
| Second person  | تَرَفَ  
\textipa{ta-riʃ-u} | تَرَفَانٍ  
\textipa{ta-riʃ-\textipa{ani}} | تَرَفَونٍ  
\textipa{ta-riʃ-\textipa{uuna}} |
| m.             |                  |                 |                 |
| f.             | تَرَفُّيَنٍ  
\textipa{ta-riʃ-i\textipa{i}na} | تَرَفَانٍ  
\textipa{ta-riʃ-\textipa{ani}} | تَرَفَنٍ  
\textipa{ta-riʃ-na} |
| Third person   | يَرَفَ  
\textipa{ya-riʃ-u} | يَرَفانِ  
\textipa{ya-riʃ-\textipa{ani}} | يَرَفونٍ  
\textipa{ya-riʃ-\textipa{uuna}} |
| m.             |                  |                 |                 |
| f.             | تَرَفَ  
\textipa{ta-riʃ-u} | تَرَفانِ  
\textipa{ta-riʃ-\textipa{ani}} | يَرَفَن  
\textipa{ya-riʃ-na} |

It is the suffix on the verb that indicates the mood. The indicative mood shows the full form of the suffixes, and that is one reason why it is considered the base form. Particular indicators of the indicative are:

1. the short vowel Damma (-\textipa{u}-) suffix on five of the persons (I, we, you m.sg., he and she);\footnote{It is this Damma suffix that leads to the name of the mood, because the Damma mood marker resembles the Damma case marker on nouns. Both the indicative mood and the nominative case are called \textipa{marʃuu} in Arabic.}
2. the /-\textipa{na}/ suffix after the long vowel /-\textipa{uu}/ in the second and third persons masculine plural and after /-\textipa{ii}/ in the second person feminine singular;
3. the /-\textipa{ni}/ suffix after the long vowel /-\textipa{aa}/ in the dual.

1.3 Examples of indicative in context

1.3.1 Statements

\textipa{ta-riʃ-u} kulla shay\textipa{a} in. \textipa{nu-raH\textipa{bi}-u} bit\textipa{a}\textipa{a} in-i\textipa{na}.  
She knows everything. We welcome our customers.
1.3.2 Questions

ماذا تفعل؟ ماذا تحب؟
maadhaa ta-f al-u? li-maadhaa tu-Hibb-u-hu?
What does it (f.) do? Why do you like it (m.)?

1.3.3 Future tense

1.3.3.1 WITH FUTURE MARKER

سيعون اجتماعاً.
sawfa ya-taHassan-u.
It will get better.

1.3.3.2 BY CONTEXT

يغادر العاصمة غداً.
yu-ghaadir-u l-aasmat-a ghad-an.
He leaves (will leave) the capital tomorrow.

1.3.4 Passive indicative

The indicative may occur in the passive voice, for example:

أسعار لا تُصدق.
'tas'aar-un laa tu-Saddaq-u!
Unbelievable prices!

تُستخدم لصنع الأوراق.
tu-staxdam-u li-San'i l-awraaq-i
It is used to make papers.

2 The subjunctive mood: al-muDaari' al-manSuub

The subjunctive mood is a form of the present tense, or imperfect, that occurs under specific circumstances in Arabic, taking the form of a distinct subset of inflectional endings on the imperfect verb stem, in other words, a separate conjugation. It has the following features: the short inflectional vowel suffix is fatHa (instead of the Damma of the indicative). For the longer verb suffixes, such as
/-una/, /-ina/, and /-an/, the nuun and its short vowel are dropped, so the suffixes are left as long vowels /-uu/, /-ii/, /-aa/.4

Because of the use of fatHa instead of Damma as the short vowel suffix, the subjunctive mood is referred to in Arabic as al-muDaari al-manSuub المضارع المنصوب, using the same term for the subjunctive as for the accusative case on nouns and adjectives (al-manSuub المنصوب).

**Subjective mood paradigm**

*Present tense stem* -‘rif -‘know’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>أَعْرَفَ</td>
<td>نَعْرَفَ</td>
<td>نَعْرِفَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'a-‘rif-a</td>
<td></td>
<td>na-‘rif-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>تَعُرَفَ</td>
<td>تَعِرَفَ</td>
<td>تَعِرَفَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ta-‘rif-a</td>
<td>ta-‘rif-aa</td>
<td>ta-‘rif-uu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تَعُرُفَ</td>
<td>تَعِرَفَ</td>
<td>تَعِرَفَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ta-‘rif-ií</td>
<td>ta-‘rif-aa</td>
<td>ta-‘rif-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>يَعُرَفَ</td>
<td>يَعِرَفَ</td>
<td>يَعِرَفَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ya-‘rif-a</td>
<td>ya-‘rif-aa</td>
<td>ya-‘rif-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تَعُرَفَ</td>
<td>تَعِرَفَ</td>
<td>تَعِرَفَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ta-‘rif-a</td>
<td>ta-‘rif-aa</td>
<td>ya-‘rif-na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, the subjunctive mood is determined by an attitude toward the verbal action such as volition, intent, purpose, doubt, attempting, expectation, permission, hope, ability, or necessity. In Arabic, the subjunctive is also syntactically determined by the presence of particular ‘subjunctivizing’ particles. Those particles include lan لَنْ, which negates the future; a series of particles that express purpose (li-ٌ، kay كَيْ، li-kay لَكِيْ، Hattaa حُتَّى), and the subordinating conjunction particle ^an, which links a subordinate clause to a main clause. The subjunctive mood may also occur in the passive voice.

2.1 Negative particle: lan لَنْ ‘will not; shall not’

After the negative particle lan the subjunctive is used. This combination of lan + subjunctive yields a future negative.

4 For the history and development of the Arabic subjunctive, see Testen 1994.
They will not prevent them from being Arabs. We will not forget.

2.2 Particles of purpose
These particles are subordinating conjunctions that denote the sense of ‘in order to’ or ‘in order that.’ With certain particles a verbal noun may be substituted for the subjunctive verb.

2.2.1 li- لـ ‘for; to; in order to, in order that’
The purpose particle li- لـ may be followed by a verb in the subjunctive, or by a verbal noun in the genitive case.

2.2.1.1 WITH SUBJUNCTIVE

لاذَهُ لِدِي نَزْهَة
li-‘aaxudh-a-hu fii nuzhat-in
in order that I take him for a walk

ليْبُقُوا دَاخِلَ الْحُدُود
li-ya- nghaliq-uu daaxil-a l-Huduud-i
in order that they be closed inside the borders

2.2.1.2 WITH VERBAL NOUN

لِلْدِيْفَاء عَنْ نَفْسِهِ
li-l-difaa‘-i ‘an nafs-i-hi
in order to defend himself

2.2.2 kay كَي ‘in order that, in order to’

كَيْ نَسْتَعِدُ لِلْامْتِحَانِ
kay na-sta ‘idd-a li-l-imtiHaan-i
in order for us to get ready for the exam

2.2.3 kay laa كَيْ لَا ‘in order not to’

كَيْ لَا أَقْوَلُ . . .
kay laa ‘a-quaal-a . . .
in order that I not say . . .

كَيْ لَا يَبْقِي قَوْيَاً
kay laa ya-bqaa qawiyy-an
so that it not remain strong

2.2.4 li-kay لِكَيْ ‘in order to; in order that’

لِكَيْ يَعْقُودُ إِلَى بَلَادِهِ
li-kay ya-‘uud-a ‘ilaal bilaad-i-hi
in order to return to his country

لِكَيْ يَحْفَظُ عَلَى مَوْقُوعِهِ
li-kay yu-HaafiZ-a ‘alaal mawqii‘-i-hi
in order to maintain his position
Moods of the verb I: indicative and subjunctive

2.2.5 \textit{li-kay-laa} ‘in order not to’

\textit{li-kay-laa} ta-dxul-a \textit{l-maktab-a}
in order that she not enter the office

2.2.6 \textit{Hattaa} ‘in order that’
The particle \textit{Hattaa} has other meanings, as well (‘until’ or ‘even’), but when used with a verb in the subjunctive it indicates purpose.

\textit{Hattaa} nu-drik-a Su′uubat-a haadhaa \textit{l-amal-i}
in order that we realize the difficulty of this work

2.2.7 \textit{Hattaa laa} ‘in order not to; so that . . . not’

\textit{Hattaa laa} ya-shuTT-a fii ta′yiid-i \textit{l-insiHaab-i}
so that it does not go too far in supporting withdrawal

2.3 Subordinating conjunction: \textit{\'an} + subjunctive

The particle \textit{\'an} follows certain types of verbs in order to conjoin a complement clause to the verb. These verbs (sometimes called “matrix” verbs) usually denote attitudes or feelings toward the action such as liking, disliking, expecting, deciding, intending, wanting, wishing, requesting, possibility, attempting, needing.\(^5\) For example:

\begin{itemize}
  \item to like, love \textit{\'aHabb-a \'an} \quad \textit{\'ahb\-b\-\'an}
  \item to be possible \textit{\'amkan-a \'an} \quad \textit{\'amk\-\'an}
  \item to decide \textit{qarrara\-\'an} \quad \textit{\'urr\-\'an}
  \item to be able \textit{istaTaa\-\'an} \quad \textit{\'ist\-\'an}
  \item to want \textit{\'araad-a \'an} \quad \textit{\'ara\-\'an}
  \item to be able \textit{qadar-a \'an} \quad \textit{\'adar\-\'an}
  \item to be on the verge of \textit{awshak-a \'an} \quad \textit{\'a\-\'an}
  \item to be able \textit{tamakkan-a \textit{min \'an}} \quad \textit{\'am\-\'an}
  \item to try \textit{Haawal-a \'an} \quad \textit{\'a\-\'an}
  \item to intend \textit{qaSad-a \'an} \quad \textit{\'i\-\'an}
\end{itemize}

\(^5\) Cantarino states: “after verbs that present their objects as something striven for or simply as a possibility or capability of a future action, only \textit{\'an} will be used” (1975, III:107). See his extensive section on \textit{\'an} 1975, III: 107–16. Compare these verbs to verbs followed by the particle \textit{\'anna}, which is used to report factual information in a subordinate clause (see Chapter 19, section 2.3).
In most cases, the ‘an + subjunctive structure is replaceable with a verbal noun. Thus it is possible to have sentences such as:

\[
\text{ناحب أن نقرأ.} \\
\text{nu-Hibb-u ‘an na-qra‘-a.}
\]

We like to read (lit. ‘we like that we read’).\(^6\)

or

\[
\text{ناحب القراءة.} \\
\text{nu-Hibb-u l-qiraa‘at-a.}
\]

We like to read (lit. ‘we like reading’).

Sentences in English may use the infinitive (e.g., “to read”) as the equivalent of either structure. For example:

\[
\text{لا نريد أن ننسى.} \\
\text{lAA nu-riid-u ‘an na-nssa.}
\]

We don’t want to forget (‘that we forget’).

\[
\text{نستطيع أن نفعله.} \\
\text{na-staTii‘-u ‘an na-f‘al-a-hu.}
\]

We are able to do it (‘we are able that we do it’).

\[
\text{ثم طلبت أن يكون الموعد بعد غد.} \\
\text{thumm-a Talab-at ‘an ya-kuun-a l-maw‘id-u ba‘d-a ghad-in.}
\]

Then it requested that the appointment be [the day] after tomorrow.

2.3.1 qabl-a ‘an ‘BEFORE’ and ba‘d-a ‘an ‘AFTER’
The particle ‘an also follows certain semi-prepositions so that they may be followed by a verb phrase or entire clause.\(^7\)

2.3.1.1 qabl-a ‘an ‘BEFORE’: The semi-preposition qabl-a قبل أن قبل ‘before’ by itself must be directly followed by a noun or a pronoun suffix. Using ‘an as a buffer, qabl-a may be followed by a verb in the subjunctive mood. Tense is inferred from context.

(1) Present tense meaning:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{قبل أن نفكر بذلك} & \quad \text{قبل أن تمرَّقَه الحرب} \\
\text{qabl-a ‘an nu-fakkir-a bi-dhaalika} & \quad \text{qabl-a ‘an tu-mazziq-a-hu l-Harb-u}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^6\) For more detailed description of the use of the verbal noun in such structures, see Chapter 5, section 1.3.

\(^7\) Normally, prepositions and semi-prepositions are followed by a noun in the genitive case or by a pronoun.
(2) Past tense meaning:

قال ذلك قبل أن يخفَّف العقوبة.

qaal-a dhaalika qabl-a ‘an yu-xaffif-a l-uquubat-a.

He said that **before he lightened** the penalty.

2.3.1.2 *ba’d-a ‘an* بعد أن ‘AFTER’: The phrase *ba’d-a ‘an* may be followed either by a verb in the subjunctive mood or by a past tense verb. It requires a verb in the subjunctive if the situation is not yet an actual fact, that is, if the situation is in the future or is still a possibility.

However, if the situation is in the past and has already taken place, *ba’d-a ‘an* بعد أن is followed by a past tense verb. The latter case is one of the few situations where the particle *‘an* أن is followed by anything other than a subjunctive.8

(1) Describing the past:

بعد أن اتهمهم بالتأمر

*ba’d-a ‘an-i ttaham-a-hum bi-l-ta’aamur-i*

after he accused them of conspiracy

(2) Discussing the future:

سنأكل بعد أن ندرس.

*sa-na-kul-u ba’d-a ‘an na-drus-a.*

We will eat after we study.

2.3.2 Impersonal verbs + subjunctive

Certain impersonal verbal expressions followed by /‘an/ أن plus a verb in the subjunctive indicate necessity or possibility:

- it is necessary that  
  
  *ya-jib-u ‘an*  
  
  يجب أن

- it ought to be that  
  
  *ya-nbaghii ‘an*  
  
  ينبغي أن

- it is possible that  
  
  *yu-mkin-u ‘an*  
  
  يمكن أن

  *min-a l-mumkin-i ‘an*  
  
  من الممكن أن

---

8 Al-Warraki and Hassanein (1994, 51) state it clearly: “If *ba’d-a ‘an* is preceded by a perfect [verb] in the main clause, it is also followed by a perfect; if it is preceded by imperfect or future in the main clause, it is followed by a subjunctive.” They devote an entire chapter to *ba’d-a ‘an* and *qabl-a ‘an*.

9 The phrase *ya-jib-u an* may include the use of the preposition ‘*ala* to specify for whom the action is necessary, e.g., *ya-jib-u ‘ala-nnaa ‘an* nu-faawiDa ‘We have to negotiate (it is necessary/ incumbent upon us that we negotiate)."
2.3.2.1 NEGATION OF NECESSITY involves prefixing the negative particle laa before the verb of necessity:

Isn’t it necessary (‘for us’) that we defend ourselves?

2.3.2.2 NEGATION OF ACTION involves prefixing the negative particle laa before the subjunctive verb. Sometimes ‘an + laa ‘an + laa ‘an nu-daafi‘-a ‘an ‘anfus-i-naa?

He must not feel anxious.

It must not be paid in cash.

2.3.2.3 PAST TENSE OF IMPERSONAL VERBS: These impersonal verbs are put into the past tense through the use of the past tense verb kaan-a as an auxiliary verb:

The preposition ‘alaa may indicate necessity or incumbence “upon” someone to do something. It may be used with a pronoun suffix or with a noun in the genitive, followed by ‘an and a verb in the subjunctive.
We must begin from zero.

It is incumbent upon the state to assume its role.

2.3.4 Adjective + 'an أن + subjunctive

The particle 'an may be used with an adjective or participle used to express a feeling, expectation, or opinion.


It is very natural that we love our country.

[It is] strange that we delay.

[It is] determined that explosives experts will detonate the bombs.
Moods of the verb II: jussive and imperative

1 The jussive: al-jazmיים
The jussive mood is restricted in occurrence. It does not carry a particular semantic content; rather, it is a mood of the verb required in written Arabic under specific circumstances. The distinctive feature of jussive inflection is the absence of a final short inflectional vowel. Where the indicative mood inflects with Damma and the subjunctive mood inflects with fatHa, the jussive mood inflects with sukūn.

Like the subjunctive, the jussive shortens the longer verb suffixes, such as /-uuna/, /-iina/, and /-aani/, by deleting the nuun and its short vowel, so those suffixes are left as long vowels /-uu/, /-ii/, /-aa/. Again, as with the subjunctive and indicative, the /-na/ of the second and third persons feminine plural is retained.

1.1 Jussive mood paradigm: sound Form I verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>عَرِفْ</td>
<td>نَعَفَ</td>
<td>نَعَفَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>تَعْرِفَ</td>
<td>تَعْرِفَ</td>
<td>تَعْرِفَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>تَأْرِفَ</td>
<td>تَأْرِفَ</td>
<td>تَأْرِفَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تَأْرِفَ</td>
<td>تَأْرِفَ</td>
<td>تَأْرِفَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td>يَعْرِفَ</td>
<td>يَعْرِفَ</td>
<td>يَعْرِفَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>يَأْرِفَ</td>
<td>يَأْرِفَ</td>
<td>يَأْرِفَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تَأْرِفَ</td>
<td>تَأْرِفَ</td>
<td>تَأْرِفَ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The absence of an inflectional vowel in the first person singular and plural, the second person masculine singular and the third persons feminine and masculine singular causes certain pronunciation and spelling changes in geminate, hollow, and defective verbs.

1.2 Jussive mood paradigm: geminate Form I verb
When the jussive mood is used with geminate verbs, the deletion of the inflectional short vowel in the first person singular and plural, the second person masculine singular, and the third persons feminine and masculine singular causes a consonant cluster to occur at the end of the inflected verb, and this violates the phonological rule against word-final consonant clusters in MSA. To counteract this, a short vowel /-a/ is added to these persons of the verb in order to make them pronounceable. However, the addition of the short vowel /-a/ has the effect of making the jussive of geminate verbs look exactly like the subjunctive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ٚرُدُْْ</td>
<td>إ-رُدّ-ا</td>
<td>نٚ-رُدّ-ا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>ٚرُدُْْ</td>
<td>تٍرُدّ-ا</td>
<td>تٍرُدّ-اا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>ٚرُدُْْ</td>
<td>تٍرُدّ-ي</td>
<td>تٍرُدّ-اا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>ٚرُدُْْ</td>
<td>يٍرُدّ-ا</td>
<td>يٍرُدّ-اا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>ٚرُدُْْ</td>
<td>تٍرُدّ</td>
<td>تٍرُدّ-اا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3 Jussive mood paradigm: hollow Form I verb
Hollow verbs inflected in the jussive mood have both a long vowel stem and a short vowel stem. The long vowel stem is only used when the inflectional suffix is a vowel, as follows:
### 1.3.1 Hollow-\(\text{waaw}\) verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>-qu(\text{l} ) / quul - ‘say’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>اُقْلُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'a-qu(\text{l})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>تَقُولَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تَقْوِي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>يَقُولُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تَقُولَ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.3.2 Hollow yaa\(^{\text{\textdegree}}\) verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>- bi(^{\text{\textdegree}}) / - bi(^{\text{\textdegree}}) - ‘buy’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>اوغُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'a-bi(^{\text{\textdegree}})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>تَبِيعَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تَبِيعي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>يَبِيعُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تَبِيعَ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.3.3 Hollow 'alif verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-nam- / -naam- ‘sleep’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ُنَام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ُنا-نام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>نَانام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَانام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>نانام-ي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَانام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>يَنام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَنام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>نانام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَنام</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4 Jussive mood paradigm: Defective Form I verb
The effect of the sukūn of the jussive on certain inflectional forms of defective verbs is to shorten the long vowel ending to a short vowel. As a short vowel it usually does not appear in written text.

1.4.1 Jussive of yaa²-defective verb (-aa/-ii)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-bni- / -bniy- ‘build’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ُنَين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ُنَ-نين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَيني</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَيني</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>يَن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>يَن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَين</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 1.4.2 Jussive of **yaa**'-defective verb (-ii/-aa)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ṉsa- / -nsay- ‘forget’</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>ننسَ</td>
<td>ننسَ</td>
<td>ننسَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تنسٍ</td>
<td>تنسَ</td>
<td>تنسَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>تنسٍ</td>
<td>تنسَ</td>
<td>تنسَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تنسَ</td>
<td>تنسَ</td>
<td>تنسَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>ينسٍ</td>
<td>ينسَ</td>
<td>ينسَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تنسَ</td>
<td>تنسَ</td>
<td>تنسَ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.4.3 Jussive of **waaw**-defective verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-bdu- / -bdew- ‘seem, appear’</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>م.</td>
<td>ودَٰدُ</td>
<td>ودَٰدُ</td>
<td>ودَٰدُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>ودَٰدَ</td>
<td>ودَٰدَ</td>
<td>ودَٰدَ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.5 Use of the jussive

The jussive is used in essentially five ways: with conditional sentences, with the negative particle lam لم; with the negative imperative particle laa لا, the indirect imperative particle /li/ لي, and as a basis for forming the imperative.

Most often, the jussive mood in MSA is used with the negative particle lam to negate the past tense, and with the imperative.

1.5.1 In conditional sentences

The jussive in conditional sentences occurred rarely in the MSA database covered for this analysis. This particular function of the jussive is more common in literary and classical texts.¹ For discussion of this use of the jussive see Chapter 39 on conditional and optative expressions.

إن ذهب، أذهب معك.

in ta-dhhab-ii, 'a-dhhab ma-'a-ki.

If you (f.) go, I’ll go with you.

¹ See, for example, Cantarino’s extensive description of conditional clauses in literary Arabic, Cantarino 1975, III:311–71, and Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 290–300.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-bdu- / -bdw- ‘seem, appear’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If a person breaks the tooth of another, (then) his tooth shall be broken.

1.5.2 With lam لم

The negative particle lam is used to negate the past tense. However, it is not used with a past tense verb. Instead, it is used with the jussive form of the verb, conveying a meaning of past tense. In Arabic grammatical terms if is said to “transform the [meaning of] the verb following it to the past.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>لم نَتَم</td>
<td>We did not come.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لم تَتَمَكَ ٛلَّا</td>
<td>She has not yet succeeded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لم أَتَم</td>
<td>I didn’t sleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لم يَتَمَكَ ٛلَّا ٍثَمَلَاءٙ</td>
<td>Renovations that haven’t been completed in two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لم يَتَمَكَ ٛلَّا</td>
<td>She didn’t used to pay the rent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لم يَتَمَكَٛلَّا</td>
<td>They did not notify their colleagues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For further examples of lam لم plus the jussive, see Chapter 37 on negation and exception, section 2.2.1.

2 The imperative: al-ّamr الأمر

The imperative or command form of the verb in Arabic is based upon the imperfect/present tense verb in the jussive mood. It occurs in the second person (all forms of “you”), for the most part, although it occasionally occurs in the first person plural (“let’s”) and the third person (“let him/her/them”).

2.1 To form the imperative

The general rule for forming the imperative is to take the second person form of the jussive verb and remove the subject marker (the ta- or tu- prefix). If the remaining

---

2 From Ziadeh and Winder 1957, 160.
verb stem starts with a consonant-vowel (CV) sequence, then the stem is left as it is because it is easily pronounceable. If the remaining stem starts with a consonant cluster, then it needs a helping vowel prefix. The nature of the helping vowel depends on the verb form and (in Form I) the nature of the stem vowel.

For example, the verb *katab-a* ‘to write’ in the present tense, jussive mood, second person is:

- you (m. sg.) write: \( ta-ktub \)
- you (f. sg.) write: \( ta-ktub-ii \)
- you two write: \( ta-ktub-aa \)
- you (m. pl.) write: \( ta-ktub-uu \)
- you (f. pl.) write: \( ta-ktub-na \)

To create the imperative, the *ta-* prefix is dropped, leaving:

- *ktub*
- *ktub-ii*
- *ktub-aa*
- *ktub-uu*
- *ktub-na*

Because these forms start with consonant clusters, they violate a phonological rule in Arabic that prohibits word-initial consonant clusters. They therefore need a helping vowel to be pronounceable. The helping vowel selected in this case is /\( u \)/ because the stem vowel of the verb is /\( u \)/. However, another rule in Arabic prohibits words from starting with vowels, so the /\( u \)/ vowel is preceded by *hamza*, and the *hamza* plus short vowel sit on an *\( \mathtt{\text{\textindex{alif}}} \)* seat. This yields the pronounceable forms:

- Write! \( u-ktub! \)
- \( u-ktub-ii! \)
- \( u-ktub-aa! \)
- \( u-ktub-uu! \)
- \( u-ktub-na! \)

This helping vowel is used with *hamzat al-wa\( \text{\textindex{Sl}} \)*, that is, elidable *hamza*, which is normally not written and drops out if it is preceded by another vowel, as in:

- Read and write! \( i-\text{\textindex{qra}}^\ast \text{\textindex{wa-ktub}}! \)
Note that although the prefix hamza drops out in pronunciation, the 'alif seat remains in the spelling of the word.

The deletion of the subject-marker prefix (ta- or tu-) does not always leave a stem that starts with two consonants. For example, in the Form II verb fassara 'to explain':

- you (m. sg.) explain: tu-fassir
- you (f. sg.) explain: tu-fassir-ii
- you two explain: tu-fassir-aa
- you (m. pl.) explain: tu-fassir-uu
- you (f. pl.) explain: tu-fassir-na

The imperative forms stripped of the subject marker are:

- Explain!: fassir!
- fassir-ii!
- fassir-aa!
- fassir-uu!
- fassir-na!

These are pronounceable just as they are, so they need no initial helping vowel and are left as they are in the imperative.

2.1.1 Summary

The word-initial helping vowel is needed in the imperative of Forms I, IV, VII, VIII, and X of the verb. Forms II, III, V, and VI do not need helping vowels in the imperative. The specifics of the Forms are summarized here.

2.2 Form I imperatives

Form I imperatives usually require initial helping vowels, either /i/ or /u/. The nature of the helping vowel is determined by the stem vowel of the present tense. If the stem vowel is fatHa or kasra, the helping vowel is kasra; if the stem vowel is Damma, the helping vowel is Damma.

2.2.1 Sound verbs

2.2.1.1 STEM VOWEL fatHa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stem vowel</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ftAH</td>
<td>Open, Sesame!</td>
<td>افتح يا سمسم!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rfe</td>
<td>Raise your (two) hands!</td>
<td>ارفع يديك!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smAH-ii</td>
<td>Permit (f. sg.) me!</td>
<td>اسمح لي!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic
2.2.1.2 STEM VOWEL kasra

احفر هنا!  
\(i\)-\(H\)fir hunaa!  
Dig here! Forgive me/Excuse me.

2.2.1.3 STEM VOWEL Damma

انظر جيدا!  
\(u\)-\(dxul!\)  
Enter! Look well/look closely!

2.2.2 Hamzated verbs

Form I verbs with initial hamza tend to drop the hamza entirely in the imperative in order to avoid less acceptable phonological sequences that involve two hamzas in sequence such as *\(u\)’ kul or *\(u\)’xudh:

كل الجزء.  
\(kul-i\) l\(jaz\)ara.  
Eat the carrots. Take this!

Verbs with medial hamza may behave as regular verbs or may drop the initial hamza:

استال عن معنى أي كلمة.  
\(i-s\)’al! \(~\)sal!  
Ask! Ask about the meaning of any word.

Verbs with final hamza behave regularly in the imperative:

ابدني!  
\(i-q\)’ra’! \(i-b\)’d\(a\)’-ii!  
Read! Begin(f. sg.)!

2.2.3 Geminate verbs

Form I geminate verbs are mixed as to whether or not they take a helping vowel prefix. They do not take the hamza prefix in the forms that end with a long vowel, but they may or may not take the hamza in the second person masculine singular. If the hamza is omitted, the imperative in this person takes a final fatHa in order for it to be pronounceable. A hamza prefix is used in the second person feminine plural.

Respond!  
rudd-a \(~\) u-r\(d\)ud!  
أرد\(d\) ~ رد!  
rudd-\(i\)i  
وردي  
rudd-\(a\)a  
رد\(ا\)ا
2.2.4 Assimilated verbs
Most verbs whose initial root consonant is \(\textit{waaw}\) or \(\textit{yaa}\) (such as \(\textit{waDa}^\text{a}\)/ \(\textit{ya-Da}^\text{a}\)-\(\text{u}\) ‘to put, place’) delete that consonant in all moods of the present tense. Therefore when the subject prefix is deleted from the jussive mood in order to form the imperative, it leaves a very short but pronounceable stem. For example:

Put! \(\textit{Da}^\text{a}!\)
\(\text{ضَعُّ!}\)
\(\text{ضَعِّي!}\)
\(\text{ضَعَّا!}\)
\(\text{ضَعَّا!}\)
\(\text{ضَعَّا!}\)

\(\text{من فضلك قف...}\)
\(\textit{Da}^\text{a}-\text{haa fii kitaab-i-ka.}\)
\(\text{Please stop.}\)

2.2.5 Hollow verbs
Form I hollow verbs, just as regular verbs, make the imperative based on the jussive forms without the subject-marker prefix. There are two stem variants in the jussive of hollow verbs, short-vowel and long-vowel. Both stems are pronounceable without the need for a helping vowel prefix. For example:

2.2.5.1 HOLLOW \(\textit{waaw}\) VERB: \(\textit{qaal-a}/\textit{ya-quul-u}\) ‘TO SAY’

Say! \(\text{qu!}\)
\(\text{قُلُّ!}\)
\(\text{قُولِي!}\)
\(\text{قُولاً!}\)
\(\text{قُولوا!}\)
\(\text{قَلْنَ!}\)

2.2.5.2 HOLLOW \(\textit{yaa}\) VERB: \(\textit{bii-a}/\textit{ya-bii-i-u}\) ‘TO SELL’

Sell! \(\text{bi!}\)
\(\text{بِعْ!}\)
\(\text{بِيِعَ!}\)
2.2.5.3 HOLLOW ‘alif VERB: naam-a/ya-naam-u ‘TO SLEEP’

- bii-aa!
- bii-uu!
- bi-aa!

Sleep! nam!

naam-ii!
naam-aa!
naaam-uu!
nam-na!

2.2.6 Defective verbs

Defective verbs have either waaw or yaa’ as their final root consonant. In the jussive mood, this consonant undergoes shifts in length and quality. The imperative of defectives is based on the jussive form, with no changes except the deletion of the subject marker and the addition of the helping vowel prefix. As with regular verbs, the nature of the short helping vowel prefix depends on the stem vowel of the verb.

2.2.6.1 Yaa’-DESTRUCTIVE VERBS: The yaa’-defective verbs are of two types: ones that end in -aa (‘alif maqSuura) and ones that end with yaa’ in the past tense. The ones ending in -aa usually inflect the present tense with -ii; the ones that end with yaa’ in the past tense take -aa in the present tense. These verbs take kasra as their imperative prefix helping vowel.

(1) /-ii/ verb: ramaa رَمَى ‘to throw’

- i-rmi!
- i-rm-ii!
- i-rmiy-aa!
- i-rmiy-uu!
- i-rmii-na!
2.2.6.2 **Waaw-DEFECTIVE VERBS:** The waaw-defective verbs end in `-aa` (اَلْفَ طُوْىِلَةُ) in the past tense citation form, and in `waaw` in the present tense. In the jussive mood, the waaw shifts and sometimes shortens. The prefix helping vowel for these imperative forms is **Damma**.

(2) `/ii-aa/ verb: nasiy-َا / ya-nsaa ينسىٌ 'to forget'

Forget! i-nsa!

i-ns-ay!

i-nsay-aa!

i-ns-aw!

i-nsay-na!

2.2.7 **Doubly defective verbs**

Doubly defective verbs have semi-consonants and/or hamza in two places, sometimes as the first and third consonants, and sometimes as the second and third. Their imperatives are defective in more ways than one. Two examples are given here, the verb `ra`aa يِرَى 'to see' and the verb `wa`aa وَعَيَ 'to heed, pay attention.'

2.2.7.1 **IMPERATIVE OF ra`aa يِرَى / ya-raa أَرَاىٌ**

See! ra~ rah!

ray!

ray-aa!

raw!

ray-na!
2.2.7.2 Imperative of wa’aa وَعِي / ya-‘ii يَعي

Pay attention! 'i!
'ii!
'iyy-aa!
'i-uu!
'ii-na!

2.2.8 Replacive imperative verb: ta‘aal تُعال ‘come!’

The verb jaa’ة / ya-jii‘uu ‘to come’ has a different form in the imperative, based on another root entirely.5

Come!  

Come here!

2.3 Form II imperative

Form II imperatives do not require the addition of an initial helping vowel. Examples include:

xabbir-nii! fakkir fii-maa ta-‘kul-u-hu.
Tell me! Think about what you eat.

sallim lii ‘alay-hi. sakkir-uu kutub-a-kum.
Greet him for me. Close (m. pl.) your books.

2.4 Form III

Form III imperatives do not require the addition of an initial helping vowel. Examples include:

5 Based on the Form VI defective verb ta‘aalaayyo-ta‘aalaa ‘to rise, ascend, be sublime.’ For discussion of this “suppletive imperative” see Testen 1997.
قاطع البضائع اليابانية!
Boycott Japanese goods!

حافظوا على نظافة مدينتكم.
Preserve the cleanliness of your city!

سارع إلى إغلاقها.
Join me in welcoming him.

2.5 Form IV
Form IV verbs are prefixed by the vowel /a/ (fatHa) and a non-elidable hamza (hamzat al-qat):

أغلقْ يا سمسم!
Close, Sesame!

أجبِ عن سؤالِي!
Answer my question!

2.6 Form V
Form V imperative verbs do not require a prefix vowel.

تفضّل بالدخول.
Please come in.

تعانونوا!
Cooperate (m. pl.!!

2.7 Form VI
Form VI imperative verbs do not require a prefix vowel.

تعالوا!
Cooperate (m. pl.!!

2.8 Form VII
Form VII verbs require a prefixed /i/ vowel (kasra) and hamzat al-waSl.

انصرفْ من هنا.
Leave here.
2.9 Form VIII
Form VIII verbs require a prefixed /i/ vowel (kasra) and hamzat al-waSl.

ibta‘id-u u ‘an hunaa!  intaZir daqiqat-an!
Get away (m. pl.) from here!  Wait a minute!

2.10 Form IX
This form is rarely used in the imperative.

2.11 Form X
Form X verbs require a prefixed /i/ vowel (kasra) and hamzat al-waSl.

ista‘mil haadhaa l-miftaaH-a.  istariH!  ista‘jil!
Use this key.  Relax!  Hurry up!

2.12 Quadriliteral imperatives
Using the identical process of stripping the subject prefix from the second person jussive verb forms, one gets, for example, in the Form I quadriliteral verb tarjam-a ‘to translate’:

Base form jussive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>you (m. sg.) translate</td>
<td>tu-tarjim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you (f. sg.) translate</td>
<td>tu-tarjim-ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you two translate</td>
<td>tu-tarjim-aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you (m. pl.) translate</td>
<td>tu-tarjim-uu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you (f. pl.) translate</td>
<td>tu-tarjim-na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The imperative forms stripped of the subject marker are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translate!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tarjim-ii!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tarjim-aa!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tarjim-uu!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tarjim-na!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are pronounceable so they need no initial helping vowel and are left as they are in the imperative. Form I is by far the most frequent in usage, since the
quadriliteral Form II (for example, tabalwar-a تَبَلْوَر ‘to be crystallized’) is often reflexive or passive in meaning.

talfin lī ghad-an. tarjim-ii haadhihi l-jumlat-a.

Phone me tomorrow. Translate (f. sg.) this sentence.

3 The permissive or hortative imperative: laam al-‘amr لَآم ّالأُمْر
An “indirect” type of imperative may be used to exhort or enjoin someone to do something. This may occur in the first (I, we) or third (he, she, they) persons. In this type of imperative structure, the jussive verb is used (no deletion of subject marker), preceded by the particle /li-/، implying the idea of permission or encouragement to do something:

li-na-zur fī l-sallat-i.
Let’s look in the basket.

Sometimes the /li-/ لَيْ particle is preceded by the particle /fa-/ فَ، in which case the vowel is dropped from /li-/ making it just /l/.

fa-l-na-dhab. fa-l-na-sriً.
(So) let’s go. Let’s hurry.

4 The negative imperative: laa غ + jussive
The negative imperative is formed by using the negative particle laa غ plus the jussive form of the (second person) verb. Note that in the negative imperative, the jussive verb form preserves its prefix.

Don’t go back!

m. sg. laa ta-rjiً!
f. sg. laa ta-rjiً-ii!
dual laa ta-rjiً-aa!
m. pl. laa ta-rjiً-uu!
f. pl. laa ta-rjiً-na!

Examples:

laa ta-ftaH-ii l-shubbaak-a. laa ta-nsa! laa tu-daxxin.
Don’t (f. sg.) open the window. Don’t forget! Don’t smoke.
Don’t (m. pl.) be afraid! Don’t (m.pl.) wait. Don’t hurry.

Don’t postpone today’s work to tomorrow. Don’t disturb yourself/don’t bother.
Verbs of being, becoming, remaining, seeming (kaan-a wa-3axawaat-u-haa)

Verbs of being, becoming, and remaining have special status in Arabic. Because these verbs resemble each other in meaning and in syntactic effect, they are referred to as “sisters” of the verb ‘to be,’ kaan-a (‘axawaat-u kaan-a). All of them describe states of existence (e.g., being, inception, duration, continuation) and each of them requires the accusative marker on the predicate or complement (xabar kaan-a خبر كان ‘He was a leader.’). The subject of kaan-a (ism kaan-a اسم كان) and her sisters, if mentioned specifically, is in the nominative case (e.g., kaan-a l-rajul-u za-im-an, الرجل زعيم ‘The man was a leader’). Another special characteristic of kaan-a and her sisters is that they function as auxiliary verbs. In particular, kaan-a is used for forming compound tenses such as past progressive and future perfect. Some examples of this are offered here, but the topic is presented in detail in Chapter 21.

Verbs of seeming or appearing also mark their complements with the accusative case, but they are not usually classified among the “sisters” of kaan-a.

1 The verb kaan-a كَانَ ‘to be’
This verb is unusual in that it is not generally used in the present tense indicative. It is omitted from the syntax of a simple predication.

1.1 Omission of kaan-a in simple present tense predication
These verbless sentences are usually termed “equational” sentences in English descriptions of Arabic syntax; in Arabic they are called “nominal sentences” (jumal ismiyya جمل اسمية). For more on equational sentences, see Chapter 4, section 2.

أنا متأكدٌ. هي محظوظةٌ.
‘anaa muta’akkid-un. hiya maHZZuzZat-un.
I [am] certain. She [is] fortunate.

1 For more extensive discussion of ‘axawaat-u-haa in Classical Arabic, see Wright 1967, II:99–109.
2 Arab grammarians actually term any sentence that starts with a noun a “nominal sentence” even if it includes a verb. Following the practice of Cantarino (1974, f:2), I use the terms “nominal sentence” and “equational sentence” as equivalents.
Verbs of being, becoming, remaining, seeming

1. Use of kaan-a
The verb kaan-a enters when the predication is anything but present tense indicative. It takes a subject in the nominative and it requires that the complement be in the accusative case.

1.1 Past tense

kun-tu muta’akkid-an.
I was certain.

kaan-uu muta’axxir-iina.
They were late.

1.2 Future tense

sa-‘a-kuun-u muta’akkid-an.
I will be certain.

sa-ya-kuun-uuna muta’axxir-iina.
They will be late.

1.3 Further examples
Here are some examples of kaan-a in various tenses and moods:

1.3.1 PAST TENSE

kaan-a jaasuus-an.
He was a spy.

These were our homes.

kaan-a kathiir-uuna min-hum musajjal-iina.
Many of them were registered.

1.3.2 FUTURE TENSE

sa-‘a-kuun-u muta’akkid-an.
I will be certain.

sa-ya-kuun-uuna muta’axxir-iina.
They will be late.

sa-ta-kuun-u maHzuuZat-an.
She will be fortunate.

sa-yaa-kuun-uuna maHzuuZat-an.
They will be fortunate.

sa-ya-kuun-u l-malik-a.
He will be the king.

sa-ta-kuun-u l-malik-a.
She will be the king.

kaan-a l-malik-a.
He was the king.

kaan-a l-malik-a.
He was the king.

kaan-a l-malik-a.
He was the king.
1.2.3.2 NEGATIVE PAST WITH lam لَمُّ JUSSIVE MOOD OF kaan-a

يمكن القول إن هذا الاجتماع لم يكن ضرورياً.
yu-mkin-u l-qawl-u 'inna haadhaa l-ijtima'a-l lam ya-kun Daruuriyy-an.
It could be said that this meeting was not necessary.

لَمْ يَكُنْ حَلَماً عَادِيًا.
lam ya-kun Hulm-an 'aadiyy-an.
It was not a regular dream.

1.2.3.3 PAST TENSE FOR OPTATIVE/CONDITIONAL

كَمْ كَنَّا سَعَاءً
kam kun-naa su‘adaa‘-a!
How happy we would be!

1.2.3.4 FUTURE TENSE

لِبَنَانٌ سَيْكُونُ غَانِباً عَنَّ الْقَمَةِ
lubnaan-u sa-ya-kuun-u ghaa‘ib-an ‘an-i l-qimmat-i.
Lebanon will be absent from the summit [meeting].

1.2.3.5 SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD

لا يَكُنْ أَنْ يَكُونَ عَرَبِيًا
laa yu-mkin-u 'an ya-kuun-a 'arabiyy-an.
It is not possible that he is an Arab.

1.3 The use of kaan-a as auxiliary verb
An important function of kaan-a is as an auxiliary verb in conjunction with main verbs to construct compound verb forms that convey different temporal meanings. Compound verbs are discussed at greater length in Chapter 21, section 2.

1.3.1 Past progressive
For habitual or continual action in the past, the past tense of kaan-a is used with the present tense of the main verb. Both the main verb and the auxiliary are inflected for person, number, and gender.

كَنَّا نَأَمَلُ
kun-naa na-‘amal-u 'anaa min ‘aa’ilat-in kaan-at ta-‘mal-u fii l-madiinat-i.
we were hoping I am from a family that used to work in the city.
1.3.2 Pluperfect or past perfect
To express an action in the past that is over with and which serves as a background action for the present, the past tense of *kaan-a* is used with a past tense of the main verb. The particle *qad* قد may be optionally inserted just before the main verb.

كانوا (قد) عملوا معهم على إعادة فتح السفارة.  
*kaan-uu (qad) ‘amil-uu ma‘-hum `alaa ’i’aadat-i fatH-i l-sifaarat-i.*  
They had worked with them on re-opening the embassy.

كأن السفير (قد) وصل مساء الجمعة.  
*kaana l-safiir-u (qad) waSaal-a masaa‘-a l-jum‘at-i.*  
The ambassador had arrived Friday evening.

كنت (قد) أبتعد وضع مصر على القائمة.  
*kun-tu (qad) ‘ayyad-tu waD-e-a misRa-a ‘alaa l-qaa’imat-i.*  
I had supported putting Egypt on the list.

2 The verb *lays-a* ليس ‘to not be’
This irregular verb negates the present tense. It is discussed in detail in Chapter 37, section 1. It is noted here because it is a sister of *kaan-a* and requires a complement in the accusative case. Although it is inflected as a past tense verb, it conveys negation of the present tense.

لا يس محامياً.  
*lays-a muHaamiy-an.*  
He is not a lawyer.

3 Verbs of becoming: *baat-a* بات ‘to become; come to be’
Verbs that indicate a change of state or condition are also sisters of *kaan-a*.

3.1 *baat-a* بات ‘to become; come to be’
The verb *baat-ayya-bit-u* indicates a change of state (or sometimes the continuation of a state) and is used chiefly in the past tense. It may be used as a main verb or as an auxiliary verb.

بات من الضروري.  
*baat-uu muqtani‘-ina.*  
They have become convinced.

بات البلاد تعرف به اليوم.  
*baat-at-i l-bilaad-u tu-‘raf-u bi-hi lyawm-a.*  
The country has become to be known for it today.
3.2 'aSbaH-a /yu-SbiH-u 'to become'
This is a Form IV verb that has an inceptive meaning: 'to start to be,' or 'to become.'

قد أصبحَ أمرًا ضروريًا. qad 'aSbaH-a 'amran Daruuriyy-an.
It has become an essential matter.

وضِيِّصُحَ جزءًا أكثر أهمية. wa-sa-yu-SbiH-u juz‘-an 'akthar-a
And it will become a more important part.

'aSbaH-a hamm-a-hum-u l-yawmiyy-a.
It became their daily concern.

'aSbaH-a hamm-a-hum-u l-yawmiyy-a.
It has become an essential matter.

'aSbaH-a hamm-a-hum-u l-yawmiyy-a.
It has become an essential matter.

'aSbaH-a hamm-a-hum-u l-yawmiyy-a.
It has become an essential matter.

'aSbaH-a hamm-a-hum-u l-yawmiyy-a.
It has become an essential matter.

3.3 Saar-a /ya-Siir-u 'صارْ / يصيرُ 'to become; to come to be'
The verb Saar-a was not found to be very frequent in the material covered for this work. When used as the main verb it has the same meaning and effect as 'aSbaH-a.

صارت ثقافتها أطلسية عالمية. Saar-at thaqaafat-u-haa 'aalamiyyat-an.
Its culture became global.

3.3.1 As an auxiliary verb
When used as an auxiliary verb, Saar-a denotes inception and continuation:

Since the sixties it has come to play a greater role.

3.3.2 Saar li-
When used with the preposition li- expressing possession, it conveys the idea of 'come to have' or 'come to possess':

The Ottomans came to have allegiance in form.
('Allegiance came to be to the Ottomans in form').

4 Verbs of remaining: baqiy-a بقَيْ, Zall-a ظَلْ, maa zaal-a ما زال, maa daam-a ما دام Several verbs and verbal expressions that are sisters of kaan-a denote the concept of remaining in a particular state or condition. They may be used independently or as auxiliary verbs. These include:
4.1 baqiy-a / ya-bqaa ‘to stay; remain’

سرِقَ سِرِيًّا.

sa-ya-bqaa sirriyy-an.

It will remain secret.

It will remain long in the world’s memory.

4.2 Zall-a / ya-Zall-u ‘to keep, keep on, to remain’

ظلَّ في غيبوبة تامة.

Zall-a fii ghaybuubat-in taamat-in.

He remained in a complete coma.

It will remain better.

ظلَّ موجودًا تحت رماد العلاقات الجيدة.

Zall-at mawjuudat-an taHt-a ramaad-i l-‘alaqaat-i l-jayyidat-i.

It remained present under the ashes of good relations.

4.3 maa zaal-a / laa ya-zaal-u ‘to remain; to continue to be; to still be’

This expression consists of a negative particle (maa plus the past tense; lam plus the jussive; or laa plus the imperfect) plus the verb zaal-a ‘to cease,’ thus it means literally ‘to not cease to be.’ In terms of tense, both the past tense form and the present tense usually have present tense meaning. Sometimes in context, however, they may refer to the past, or be equivalent to an English past tense.

الصناعات الشعبية ما زالت حيَّة.


Handicrafts continue to be lively.

ما زالت مستعملة.

maa zaal-at musta‘malat-an.

They are still used.

4.3.1 maa zaal-a As an auxiliary verb

As an auxiliary verb maa zaal-a conveys the idea of continuation of a state or action. It is followed by a present tense main verb.

أسوار لا تزال تقفَ

‘aswaar-un laa ta-zaal-u ta-qif-u

walls that are still standing

We still love it.
4.3.1.1 WITH EQUATIONAL SENTENCES

We still have time
I am still in the preparation stage.

(‘there is still time to-us’).

4.4 maa daam-a ‘as long as’
The expression maa daam-a consists of the pronoun maa ‘that which’ or ‘what’ and the verb daam-a ‘to continue,’ ‘to remain,’ or ‘to last.’

As long as it remains outside legality, the boycott will continue.

5 Verbs of seeming or appearing
These verbs are not considered sisters of kaan-a but are similar in that they take an object complement in the accusative case even though they are not transitive.

5.1 badaa / ya-bduu ‘to seem; to appear’

He does not seem optimistic. It looks very ancient/antique.

5.2 Zahar-a/ya-Zhar-u ‘to seem; to appear’

He seems weak.
Negation and exception

Arabic uses a variety of means to express negation and exception. This is accomplished primarily through the use of negative or exceptive particles, which often affect the following phrase by requiring a particular case on a noun or noun phrase, or a particular mood of the verb. There is also a verb, lays-a لَيْسَ, which has a negative meaning ‘to not be.’ Each of these negative or exceptive expressions could be the topic for extensive grammatical analysis, but here their description is limited to their basic functions in MSA.

1 The verb lays-a لَيْسَ ‘to not be’
This verb is exceptional in two ways:

(1) it is inflected only as a past tense verb but it negates the present tense of “be”;
(2) it is a sister of kaan-a كَانَ and therefore requires its complement to be in the accusative case.

1.1 Chart: conjugation of lays-a لَيْسَ ‘to not be’
The verb lays-a لَيْسَ has only one type of conjugation. It appears on the surface to resemble a past tense verb because it is inflected with the past tense suffixes, but in terms of meaning, it negates the present tense. Like a hollow verb, lays-a لَيْسَ has two stems; a short one, las- لَسَ, used when the suffix starts with a consonant, and a longer stem, lays- لَيْسَ, used when the suffix starts with a vowel or is only a vowel.2

---

1 Negation of the perfect or past tense of “be” is not done with lays-a, but with the use of the negative particle lam plus the jussive form of kaan-a ‘to be.’ Similarly, the future tense of “be” is negated through the use of the future negative particle lan plus the subjunctive of kaan-a. The verb lays-a, therefore, is specialized and limited to negating the present tense of “be.”

2 Lecomte (1968, 87) states that lays-a “est une curieuse particule pseudo-verbale dotée d’une conjugaison d’allure concave.”
1.2 Discussion and examples of lays-a ليَسْ
ليس الأستاذ مُؤَرَّخًا.

lays-a لَيْسَتْ الأستاذ مُؤَرَّخًا.
mu’arrix-an.
The professor is not a historian.

In the above example, the verb lays-a ليَسْ starts the sentence, followed by the subject noun al-ustaadh-u الأستاذ-

الأستاذ لَيْسَتْ in the nominative case. The predicate or complement of the verb lays-a ليَسْ (mu’arrix-an مُؤَرَّخًا) is in the accusative case because lays-a ليَسْ is a “sister” of the verb kaan-a كان and thus belongs to a group of verbs that (although intransitive in the traditional sense of the term) take their complements in the accusative case.3

If the sentence were not negative, it would be equational and verbless. The subject would be al-ustaadh-u الأستاذ and the predicate mu’arrix-un مُؤَرَّخ, both in the nominative case, as is the rule with equational sentences:

الأستاذ مُؤَرَّخ.
al-ustaadh-u mu’arrix-un.
The professor is a historian.

In another example,

لَيْسَتْ لبنانِيَّة.
las-tu lubnaaniyyat-an.
I am not Lebanese.

---

3 See Chapter 36, on verbs of being, becoming, remaining, seeming (kaan-a وَعُمْرًا and أخواتها).
The verb is inflected for the first person ("I") and the predicate or complement consists of just one word, an adjective, in the accusative case: lubnaaniyyat-an لِبنانيَّة. It is feminine because the writer is feminine and speaking of herself. If the sentence were not negative it would be:

أنا لبنانية.

ًanaa lubnaaniyyat-un.

I am Lebanese (f.).

with a pronoun subject (ًanaa أنا ‘I’), no overt verb, and the adjective as predicate, in the nominative case. For more extensive discussion of equational sentences, see Chapter 4, section 2.

1.3 Further examples
Here are a few more examples of lays-أ لِبِسً in context:

1.3.1 Predicate of lays-أ لِبِسً is a noun or adjective in the accusative case

لِبِسْ مَنْ قَبَّةً آتَارَ

لـَيْسَ رِجَالًا شَرِيفًا.

lays-at munaqqibat-a 3aathaar-in haadhaa lays-a rajul-an shariif-an.

She is not an archaeologist. This is not a noble man.

لَيْسُ السِّبْعَ

سمحت ليِّسَ جَيْدًا.

haadhaa lays-a l-sabab-a. sum‘at-u-ka lays-at jayyidat-an.

This is not the reason. Your reputation is not good.

1.3.2 Predicate of lays-أ لِبِسً is a prepositional phrase
The predicate or complement of lays-أ may be a prepositional phrase rather than a noun, noun phrase, or adjective. In this case, the preposition causes the following noun to be in the genitive case.

لِبِسْ مَنْ الضروريِ

لِبِسْ كَذِلَكْ؟

lays-a min-a l-Daruuriyy-i. 3a-lays-a ka-dhaalika?

It is not necessary. Isn’t it so (‘like that’)?

لُسْتِ على اِطْلاَع كَافٍ عَلَى المَشْرِوعِ

las-tu 3ala Ttilaa3-in kaaf-in 3ala l-mawDuu3-i.

I am not informed enough about the subject.

1.3.3 Predicate of lays-أ لِبِسً is an adverb
The predicate of lays-أ may also be an invariable adverb that does not take case inflections. In the following sentence, the adverb hunaaka هَنَاكَ is the predicate and Siraa6-un 6َسْطَurray ‘struggle’ is the subject of lays-أ ليس.
There is no struggle ('There is not a struggle').

2 Negative particles and their effects

2.1 laa 'no; not; there is no'
The negative particle laa has five functions: (1) by itself, it can mean simply 'no' in response to a statement, question, or a request; (2) it negates the present tense of verbs; (3) it is used for the negative imperative; (4) to indicate categorical negation; and (5) when repeated, indicates 'neither . . . nor.'

2.1.1 laa = 'no'

Are you Egyptian? No. I am not Egyptian.

2.1.2 laa = not; negation of present tense verb
The negative particle laa is used to negate present tense verbs. The verb remains in the indicative mood.

I do not understand what you are saying. I do not smoke.

I am not trying to leave. I do not like carrots.

It does not constitute a guarantee. It is not possible/permissible.

2.1.3 laa with the subjunctive

2.1.3.1 'allaan 'alaan 'a + laa: The negative particle laa may negate a verb in the subjunctive if there is a subjunctivizing element present. In the following

4 In his 1996 article “Negative polarity and presupposition in Arabic” Elabbas Benmamoun proposes that “negative laa has three different suppletive forms that correlate with different temporal interpretations: laa which occurs in the present tense . . . , lam which carries past tense . . . , and lan which carries future tense” (Benmamoun 1996, 51). While all three particles are negations, and all start with the letter laam, they have different effects on the following verb and are presented separately here.
sentences, the subjunctivizing phrase ya-jib-u 'an ('it is necessary that') is followed by laa plus a verb in the subjunctive, and the subjunctivizing verb phrase, qarrara 'an ‘to decide to’ is also followed by laa plus a verb in the subjunctive. The particles 'an and laa are joined together in a contraction, 'allaːa:

qarr-tu 'allaːa 'a-ːmal-ːa fii-hi.
I decided not to work in it.

2.1.3.2 laa ɬ AFTER Hattaa ‘حتَّى: The subjunctivizing particle Hattaa ‘in order that, so that’ may be followed by laa ɬ plus a verb in the subjunctive:

‘حتَّى لا يشْتَطُ في تأييد سياسَتهم
Hattaa laa ya-shuTT-a fii ta’yiid-i siyaasat-i-him
so that it does not go too far in supporting their policy

2.1.4 laa ɬ + verb as modifier
A negative verb phrase is occasionally used to express a negative adjectival or adverbial concept in Arabic. This phrase usually takes the form of an indefinite relative clause:

حرَكة لا تنْها قُربِ المسجد
Harakat-un laa-ta-hdaː-u qurb-a l-ːmasjid-i
non-stop motion/movement near the mosque

تعطي للسياحة معنى خاصًا لا يمكَن إنكاره،
tu-‘Tii li-ːsiyaHat-i ma’n nan xaaSS-an laa yu-mkin-u ‘inkaar-u-hu.
It gives to tourism an undeniably special meaning.

2.1.5 The negative imperative with laa ɬ
The negative imperative is formed by using laa plus the jussive form of the verb in the second person ("you").

لا تَذْرَعُ نفسكَ
laa tu-z‘if nafs-ːa-ka.
Don’t disturb yourself/don’t bother.

لا تَتَسْخَمَ المصعد
laa ta-staxdim-i l-miS‘ad-a.
Don’t use the elevator.

2.1.6 The laa ɬ of categorical or absolute negation: (laa al-naafya li-l-jins لا النافية للجنس)
This is a special use of laa that negates the existence of something absolutely. The particle laa precedes a noun which is in the accusative, but with no nunation

5 For further discussion of the imperative, see Chapter 35.
and no definite article. This type of negation is used in a number of idiomastic expressions.

لا سبيل لِدعَه.
lā sabīl-a li-daf‘i-hi
There is no way to defend it.

لا قِلب لِها.
lā qalb-a la-haa.
She is heartless ('there is no heart to her').

لا فائدة.
lā faa‘idat-a.
There's no doubt about it.

لا باس بِه.
lā ba‘s-s-a bi-hi.
It's not bad ('There is no harm in it').

لا حَوْل وَلَوْ أَلَّلَهَ.
lā Hawl-a wa-lāa quwwat-a ‘illaa bi-l-laah-i.
There is no power and no strength but in God.

لا خُذِّلَة وَلَا يُّحَمِّدَ أَلَّا بَالِلَّهِ.
lā ʾallaah u ʾillaah Ilaah-u
There is no god but God.

2.1.6.1 RELIGIOUS EXPRESSIONS WITH lāa لِاَلْلَّهُ OF ABSOLUTE NEGATION

لا إِلَه إِلَّا اللَّهُ.
lā allāh-u ʾillaah u
There is no god but God.

2.1.7 lāa... wa-lāa ولا... لِاَلْلَّهُ 'neither... nor'
The two-part formation of lāa... wa-lāa ولا... لِاَلْلَّهُ is used for the coordinate negative 'neither... nor' or 'don't... even...'. In response to a negative statement, the wa-lāa ولا part may be used at the start of the response.

لا فِي فَاس وَلَا فِي مَراَكِش.
lā faa‘s-a wa-lāa fii marraakash-a
neither in Fez nor in Marrakesh

Me either/me neither (depending on context)

لا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.

لا الْوَلَادُون وَلَا الْوَلَادُون أَناٰ.
wa-lāa ʾanaa.
2.1.8 laa ḍ as component of compound

Because of its ability to negate a noun or adjective directly, laa enters actively into the formation of compound words that include concepts of negation. They include both adjectives and nouns. For example,

- invertebrate: laa-faqaariyy
- never-ending: laa -nihaa‘iyy
- decentralization: al-laa-markaziyya
- the unconscious: al-laa-wa‘y

 نقطةُ الا خرج
nuqTat-u l-laa-rujuu‘-i
the point of no return

2.2 Negation of the past

2.2.1 lam نم + jussive

The most common way to negate a past tense verb in written Arabic is to use the negative particle lam followed by the verb in the jussive mood.

- لم نأت.
  lam na-ti.
  We did not come.

- لم يقع حادث
  lam ya-qat Haadith-un.
  No accident happened.

- لم يعتر أحد
  lam ya-mut ‘aHad-un.
  No one died.

(past tense verb)

2.2.2 maa ماز + past tense verb

This way of negating the past is rare in written Arabic, although it is widely used in spoken Arabic vernaculars. The only instance of it that occurred in the database was in a negation of a future perfect verb:

ما كانت ستعرَف القراءة والكتابة

She would not have known how to read and write (‘reading and writing’).
2.2.3 lan لَنّ plus subjunctive to negate the future tense
To negate a proposition in the future the particle lan لَنّ is used followed by the verb in the subjunctive mood.

| lan 'a-nsaa. | lan ya-kuun-a l-'axiir-a min naw'-i-hi. |
| I won't forget. | It will not be the last of its kind. |

| lan ya-tawaqqaf-a. | lan tu-'arqil-a l-ttifaq-a. |
| He will not stop. | It will not obstruct the agreement. |

2.2.4 Use of ghayr غَيْر ‘other than; non-
The noun ghayr is used in three ways: as a noun plus pronoun suffix, as the first term of a construct phrase with another noun, and as the first term of a descriptive construct phrase whose second term is an adjective.

It conveys the idea of “otherness” or that something is different from something else.6

2.2.4.1 USE OF ghayr غَيْر PLUS PRONOUN SUFFIX: The pronoun suffix on ghayr غَيْر reflects the number and gender of the noun or pronoun antecedent.

| ta-xtalif-u ʿan ghayr-i-haa. | mithl-a ghayr-i-haa min-a l-munaZZamaat-i |
| She differs from others | like other (‘other than it’) organizations |

| miSr-u wa-ghayr-u-haa min-a l-bilaad-i l-arabiyyat-i | مصر وغييرها من البلدان العربية |
| Egypt and other Arab countries |

2.2.4.2 USE OF ghayr غَيْر AS FIRST TERM OF NOUN CONSTRUCT: Used as the first term of a construct phrase or ʿiDaafa إضافة, ghayr غَيْر carries the meaning of ‘other than.’

| laa ya-ʿkul-u ghayr-a l-haTl-i wa-l-baTaaTaa. | لا يأكل غيّر اللحم والبطاطا. |
| He doesn’t eat [anything] other than meat and potatoes. |

---

2.2.4.3 ghayr غیب + ADJECTIVE: ‘NON-; IN-; UN-; OTHER THAN; -LESS’: In this construction, the noun ghayr ‘non-; un-; in-, other than’ is used as the first term of a construct phrase or ئیدافا إضافة in order to express negative or privative concepts denoting absence of a quality or attribute. The second term of this kind of construct phrase is an adjective. As the first term of a construct, ghayr غیب carries the same case as the noun it modifies. As a noun which is the first term of an ئیدافا, it cannot have the definite article.

The second term of the ئیدافا construction is an adjective or participle in the genitive case which agrees with the noun being modified in gender, number, and definiteness. Therefore, it is the second term of this descriptive construct that shows agreement with the modified noun.7 Here are some examples:8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Islamic</th>
<th>ghayr-u ُ-islaamiyy-in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unusual</td>
<td>ghayr-u ُ-aadiyy-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-oil-exporting</td>
<td>ghayr-u muSaddir-in li-l-nafT-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsuitable</td>
<td>ghayr-u munaasib-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>ghayr-u mubaashir-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unofficial</td>
<td>ghayr-u rasmiyy-in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) **Modifying definite noun:** To modify a definite noun, ghayr غیب is followed by an adjective with the definite article.

الدولُ غیب المنحارة
al-bilaad-u ghayr-u ُ-islamiyyat-i
the non-Islamic countries

الدولُ الإسلامية غیب العربيَ
al-duwal-u ghayr-u ُ-islamiyyat-u ghayr-u ُ-arabiyyat-i
the non-Muslim reader

(2) **Modifying indefinite noun:** To modify an indefinite noun, ghayr غیب is followed by an indefinite adjective.

كلبُ غیب أصيل
kalb-un ghayr-u ُ-asSil-in
a non-pedigreed dog

ghayr-u SaHiiH-in maa ya-quul-u-hu.
It is untrue what he says.

7 For more examples, see ghayr غیب in Chapter 10, section 7.2.
2.2.4.3 ghayr غِيْر FOLLOWING NEGATIVE VERB: Following a negative verb, ghayr غِيْر has the meaning of ‘only’ or ‘merely.’

لَمْ يَقْبَدُ غِيْرُ الْفِقْلِمِ مِنَ الأَمْوَالِ

Iam yu-qaddim ghayr-a l-qaliil-i min-a l-amwaal-i.
It offered only a little money (‘It did not offer other than a little money’).

2.2.5 ‘adam عمَّ + noun ‘non’
The noun ‘adam ‘lack; absence; nonexistence’ may be annexed to another noun as the first term of a genitive construct to create a compound lexical item equivalent to various kinds of privative or negative expressions. Although the annexation structure or ‘iDaafa is a two-word expression in Arabic, it may carry a non-compositional meaning.9

non-interference ‘adam-u tadaxxul-in عَدَمُ تَدْخِل
nonexistence ‘adam-u wujuud-in عَدَمُ وَجْوَدٍ
neutrality; ‘adam-u nHiyaaz-in عَدَمُ اِنْحِيَازٍ
non-alignment

instability ‘adam-u stiqraar-in عَدَمُ أَسْتَقْرَارْ

عدم تقديم أي حركة كردية
‘adam-u da’m-i ‘ayy-i Harakat-in kurdiyyat-in
the non-support of any Kurdish movement

non-realization of progress

عدم تحقيق تقدم
‘adam-u taHqiq-i taqaddum-in

من المهم عدم تقديم الكثير من التنازلات
min-a l-muhimm-i ‘adam-u taqdiim-i l-kathiir-i min-a l-tanaazulaat-i.
It is important not to offer [too] many concessions.

3 Exceptive expressions
This category of expressions includes connectives and adverbs with meanings that contrast with previous propositional content. It includes items that have meanings such as “except for,” “however,” “nevertheless” and “despite; in spite of.” Sometimes these items consist of one word, other times they are phrases. They are also referred to as “adversative” expressions.

9 See also Chapter 8, section 1.7.1.
3.1 *bal* : ‘but; rather; but rather’

This word introduces a subordinate clause that contrasts in meaning with the main clause.\(^\text{10}\) The verb in the main clause is normally negative, with *bal* introducing a contrary affirmation.

\[
\text{ليست رائدة بل من أصل الكلمة.}
\]

\[
lays-at zaa\text{‘}idat-an *bal* min \text{‘}aSl-i l-kalimat-i.
\]

It is not an affix; rather, it is [part] of the root of the word.

\[
\text{ليس فقط في الشرق الأدنى بل في العالم كله.}
\]

\[
lays-a faqaT fii l-sharq-i l-adnaa *bal* fii l-\text{‘}aalam-i kull-i-hi.
\]

Not only in the Near East, but [also] in the whole world.

3.2 *‘illaa* : ‘except; but; but for’

This is a frequently used exceptive word in modern written Arabic. Its effect on the following phrase varies depending on whether the main clause is a negative or positive assertion.

3.2.1 Affirmative clause + *‘illaa* 

When the main clause is affirmative and *‘illaa* introduces an exception to that statement, it is followed by a noun in the accusative.

\[
\text{الساعة الخامسة إلا ربعاً}
\]

\[
\text{al-saa\text{‘}at-a l-xaamisat-a *‘illaa rub\text{‘}an}
\]

at a quarter to five (‘the fifth hour except for a quarter’)

\[
\text{جاء كل الطلاب إلا نجيباً.}
\]

\[
\text{jaa\text{‘}a kull-u l-Tullab-i *‘illaa najiib-an.}
\]

All the students came except Najib.

3.2.2 Negative clause + *‘illaa* 

When the main clause is negative, *‘illaa* is followed by a noun that takes whatever case its role in the sentence requires. That is, *‘illaa* has no grammatical effect on the noun. In the following sentences, for example, the noun phrase after *‘illaa* fills the logical role of subject of the verb and is therefore in the nominative case.\(^\text{11}\)

\[
\text{لا يوجد إلا أقلية صغيرة.}
\]

\[
laa yuujad-u *‘illaa *aqalliyyat-un Saghiirat-un.
\]

There is only a small minority. (‘There is not but a small minority.’)

\(^{10}\) See al-Warraki and Hassanein 1994, 62. In this book, see also Chapter 18, section 3.1.

\(^{11}\) It is interesting to note that verb-subject gender agreement does not extend across *‘illaa* back to the verb. Although the logical subject in all these cases is feminine singular, the verb is masculine singular.
3.2.3 ‘illaa إلا + prepositional phrase
A prepositional phrase may follow ‘illaa, especially after a negative main clause.

لا عودة للمهاجرين إلا من خلال الوزير.
laa ‘awdat-a li-l-mahjariina ‘illaa min xilaal-i l-waziir-i.
There is no return for exiles except through the minister.

هذه الفرصة لا نجد لها إلا في القاهرة.
haadhihi l-furSat-u laa na-jid-uu ‘illaa fii l-qahirat-i.
This opportunity is found only in Cairo.
(‘We do not find this opportunity except in Cairo.’)

لا يخرج من مخابئه إلا خلال الليل.
laa ya-xruj-u min maxaabi’-i-hi ‘illaa xilaal-a l-layl-i.
He doesn’t leave his hiding places except at night.

3.2.4 ‘illaa ‘anna إلا أنّ: ‘however; nonetheless; but’
This exceptive phrase introduces a clause or a sentence which contrasts with or balances out the previous one. Following the subordinating particle ‘anna is either a noun in the accusative case, or else a suffixed pronoun. In the following sentences, ‘illaa ‘anna is the initial element, relating the sentence to one that came just prior to it.

لا أنّ تطوراً أكثر إثارة بدأ يلفت النظر.
However, a more exciting development has started to redirect attention.

لا أنه لم ينجح حتى موعد قريب.
However, it wasn’t completed until recently.
Елла 'анна l-‘adaalat-a sa-ta-xudh-u majraa-haa.
However, justice will take its course.

In the following sentences, 'illaa 'anna introduces an exceptive clause that contrasts with the main clause. In this situation, it does not always have a lexical equivalent in English. Note that the main clause may start with an exceptive expression.

However, justice will take its course.

In the following sentences, 'illaa 'anna introduces an exceptive clause that contrasts with the main clause. In this situation, it does not always have a lexical equivalent in English. Note that the main clause may start with an exceptive expression.

It would have disappeared, except that the professor held conferences.

Although my start was delayed, [however] it did come.

Although I didn’t know the details, [however] it was my understanding that the negotiations were being held.

This exceptive phrase is followed by an accusative noun:

All the students laughed except Ahmad.

except for these observations except for these observations

This word is an indeclinable noun which normally goes into an 'iDaafa structure with the following noun, very much as does ghayr. The following noun or noun phrase is therefore in the genitive case. Usually, siwaa سوئي introduces an exception to a negative statement.
There remained only a few months (‘there did not remain but a few months’).

In the box were only precious jewels (‘There was not in the box but precious jewels’).

even if you don’t see but one film a year

The semi-preposition ma‘-a means ‘with’ but it may also convey a sense of contrast or exception, as in these two expressions.

although I do not know the details

The word raghm is a noun which goes into an iDaafa relationship with the following noun or noun phrase, which is thus in the genitive case. It may be used by itself, or with bi- or with ‘alaa.

despite this strong comeback
3.7 ʿalaa raghm-i ʿanna: ‘despite [the fact] that’

The phrase ʿalaa raghm-i ʿanna may be directly followed by the subordinating conjunction ʿanna and a subordinate clause. In this case, the entire clause acts as the second term of an ʿiDaafa after raghm. It is often followed by another exceptive clause introduced by ʿillaa ʿanna ‘nevertheless.’

وَعَلَى رَغْمَ أَنْ مَسْؤُولِينَ فِي الْوَزَارَةِ قَالُوا... إِلَّا أَنْ يُقَدِّقَ أَنْ...

wa-ʿalaa raghm-i ʿanna masʾuul-iina fī l-wizarat-i qaal-uu... ʿillaa ʿanna-hu yuʿtaqad-u ʿanna...

despite the fact that ministry officials said... it is nevertheless considered that...

وَعَلَى رَغْمَ أَنْ شَرِكَةٌ لم تَعْلَن كَلِفَةَ الْمَشْرَعٍ، إِلَّا أَنْ مُصَنَّدِر صَنَاعةَ الغَازِ الطَّبَعِيَّةُ

wa-ʿalaa raghm-i ʿanna l-sharikat-a lam tuʿlin kalfat-a l-mashruuʾ-i, ʿillaa ʿanna maSaadira Sinaaʿat-i l-ghaaaz-i l-Tabiiyy-i

despite the fact that the company did not announce the cost of the plan, nevertheless, natural gas industry sources...

فَعَلَى رَغْمَ أَنْ الخَلِافَةِ الْبَابِسِيَّةَ كَانَتِ المَرْجِعِ

fa-ʿalaa raghm-i ʿanna l-xalaafat-a l-ʿabbaasiyy-a kaan-at l-marjiʿ-a
despite the fact that the Abbasid Caliphate was the authority...

3.8 wa-ʿin: ‘even though; even if; despite the fact that’

This phrase is a combination of the conjunction wa- and the conditional marker, ʿin.

وَأَنَّ كَانَ هَذِهِ مَحَافِظُونَ يُرْفَعُونَ الْإِذْعَانَ لِهذَا الْتَغْيِيرِ

wa-ʿin kaan-a hunaaka muHaafiz-uuna ya-rafDuuna l-ʿidhʿaan-a li-ḥaadhaa l-taghyiir-i
even though there were conservatives who refused to comply with this change

3.9 law-laa ʿanna: ‘had it not been for; if it were not for’

This word is a conjunction with exceptive meaning created through the contraction of two particles, law ʿanna (contrary to fact conditional) + laa ʿanna (negative), resulting in the meaning of hypothetical negation: ‘had it not been for.’ It is generally followed by a noun in the nominative case but may also be followed by a suffix pronoun.12

لَوْ لاِ السَّبْعَونَ مَلَأَهَا الَّذِي انتَهَى عَلَى الْبَلَادِ

law-laa l-sabʿuuna milim-an-i llattii nhamar-at ʿalaa l-bilaad-i

had it not been for the 70 millimeters [of rain] that poured on the country

12 No instances of law-laa ʿanna followed by a suffix pronoun were encountered in the data. For further discussion and examples, including suffix pronouns, see Cantarino 1975, III:326–30.
Law-laa Htikaak-u-haa bi-l-shu’uub-i l-yuunaaniyyat-i
had it not been for their close contact with the Greek peoples.

Kaad ad-masraH-u yu-nsaa law-laa l-uubiraa.
The theater would have almost been forgotten had it not been for the opera.
1 Introduction

The concept of passive meaning contrasted with active meaning is referred to as voice in Western grammatical terms. That is, a verb is either in the active voice or the passive voice. In general, when in the active voice, the doer of the action is the subject of the verb (‘We studied the problem’ *daras-naa l-mushkilat-a*). When a verb is in the passive, the entity affected by the action (the direct object of the verb) becomes the subject (‘The problem was studied’ *duris-at-i l-mushkilat-u*). The voice of a verb therefore conveys information on the topical focus of a sentence.

1.1 Two types of Arabic passive: inflectional and derivational

There are two basic ways to convey a passive meaning in Arabic, the first being an inflectional (or internal) passive, involving a shift of vowel pattern within the verb: e.g., ‘uqad-a ‘it was held’ from ‘aqad-a ‘he held,’ and the second a derivational passive, where a derivational verb form (typically V, VII, or VIII) is used to convey a passive, reflexive, or mediopassive sense of the action involved in the verb (e.g., Form VII *in‘aqad-a* ‘it was held’). The type of action denoted by the derivational passive is referred to in Arabic as *muTaawi* ‘obedience, conformity’ because it reflects a resultative state of the object (*fataH-tu l-baab-a fa-nfataH-a* ‘I opened the door and it opened’).

---

1 As Wright notes (1967, I:51): “The idea of the passive voice must not be thought to be absolutely identical with that of the fifth, seventh, and eighth forms. These are, strictly speaking effective [or resultative-KCR] . . . whilst the other is purely passive” (Italics in original). In English, however, it is sometimes necessary to render the equivalent meaning of these derived forms in the passive.

2 Terminology for the passive: The passive voice, especially the inflectional passive (*fu‘il-a* فعَلُ), is referred to in Arabic as the “unknown” *al-majhuul* المجهول, indicating that the agent or doer of the action is not known. When a passive-like or mediopassive meaning is conveyed by a derived form of the verb, it is characterized as *muTaawi* مطاعم or, literally, ‘obedient’ to an action that has occurred (e.g., *infataH-a* افتتح ‘it opened’).
1.2 Use of the inflectional passive
Generally speaking, the inflectional passive is used in Arabic only if the agent or
doer of the action is non-designated, unknown, or not to be mentioned for some
reason. This contrasts with English where one may readily mention the agent in a
passive construction through use of the preposition ‘by’ (‘The problem was studied
by us’).³

1.3 Contrast between active and passive voice
When the Arabic passive voice is used the object of the action is the subject of
the verb. The object of the action in the passive is therefore in the nominative
case. Note that an essential requirement for a verb to take a passive form is that it
must be a transitive verb, i.e., one that takes an object.⁴

If active-verb sentences are rephrased as passive constructions, the object of the
verb becomes the subject of the sentence, and the verb is marked for passive by
virtue of a change in the internal vowels. The doer of the action is normally not
mentioned.

Active: Passive:

\[
\text{fataH-tu l-baab-a.} \quad \text{futiH-a l-baab-u.}
\]
I opened the door. The door was opened.

\[
\text{fataH-tu-hu.} \quad \text{futiH-a.}
\]
I opened it. It was opened.

In the derivational passive, or resultative, a particular form of the verb is used
to convey passive meaning. Here, it is Form VII:

\[
\text{infataH-a l-baab-u.} \quad \text{infataH-a.}
\]
The door opened. It opened.

³ Wright states: “the passive is especially used in four cases; namely (a) when God or some higher
being, is indicated as the author of the act; (b) when the author is unknown, or at least not known
for certain; (c) when the speaker or writer does not wish to name him; (d) when the attention of
the hearer or reader is directed more to the person affected by the act (patiens, the patient), than
to the doer of it (agens, the agent)” 1967, I:50.

⁴ The term that Arab grammarians use for “transitive verbs” is ‘af’al muta‘addiyah, أفعال متعددة, derived from the Form V verb ta’addaa ‘to go beyond, exceed.’ That is, the action of the verb
extends beyond the agent and all the way to the object. For intransitive verbs, the Arabic term is
either ‘a f’al ghayr muta‘addiyah, أفعال غير متعددة or ‘af’al laazima, أفعال لأزمة, verbs whose action
does not extend beyond the subject.
Sometimes Arabic inflectional and derivational passives exist side by side; other times one is preferred. Moreover, they may carry slightly different implications about how the action was accomplished (see below).

1.4 Syntax: Restriction on mention of agent
When a passive verb is used in Arabic, mention of the identity of the agent or doer of the action is usually omitted. It may be unknown or simply unnecessary. For this reason, a term used to refer to the passive in Arabic is *al-majhuul* (المجهول) ‘the unknown.’ In fact, if the agent is to be mentioned, the passive is not normally used; the active verb is then the preferred option.

However, **instruments** or other inanimate causative factors (such as the weather) may be mentioned by means of prepositional phrases, e.g.,

ُفتح البابْ بهذا المفتاح

*futiH-a l-baab-u bi-haadhaa l-miftaaH-i.*

The door was opened by/with this key.

When the subject of the passive verb is mentioned as a separate noun, it is in the nominative case (as in the sentence above, *al-baab-u* (الباب)). The technical Arabic term for the subject of a passive verb is *naa’ib al-faa’il* (نائب الفاعل) ‘the deputy doer; the representative of the doer.’

Note that the passive verb may occur in the present or past tense, and in the indicative, jussive or subjunctive moods, depending on context.

2 The internal or inflectional passive
The internal passive is formed by changing the vowel sequence of the verb in the following ways:

2.1 Past tense
In the past or perfect tense, the vowel sequence is /-u ـi-/. That is, within the stem, all vowels previous to the stem vowel are /u/ and the stem vowel itself is /i/. This is true for all verb forms (derivations), and for quadriliteral verbs as well as triliteral verbs. Aside from the internal vowel change, the past tense verb in the passive conjugates as usual, with the normal suffixes:

---

5 Another term used to describe the passive verb in Arabic is *maa lam yu-samma faa’il-u-hu* (ما لم يسمه الفاعل). See Wright 1967, I:50–51 for more on terminology and section 2.5 in this chapter.

6 As Cowan notes (1964, 59): “If the agent is mentioned in the sentence one **cannot use the passive**” (emphasis in original). This rule is occasionally, but only rarely, broken in MSA.

7 On the syntax of passive verbs in literary Arabic, see Cantarino 1974, I:52–58.
2.1.1 Examples of the Form I past tense passive in context

### 2.1.1.1 STRONG/REGULAR ROOT

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<td>ولدتْنا</td>
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<td>wulid-tumaa</td>
<td>wulid-tunna</td>
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<td>Second person:</td>
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<td>ولدتْما</td>
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<td>wulid-at</td>
<td>wulid-ataa</td>
<td>wulid-na</td>
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**Paradigm: wulid-a ًولدْتْ ‘was/were born’**

2.1.1.1 STRONG/REGULAR ROOT

- نقلّ إلى المستشفى. **nuqil-a ًilaal l-mustashfaa.**
  He was transported to the hospital.

- فُرضْ رسم دخول. **furid-a rasm-u dukhuul-in.**
  An entry fee was imposed.

2.1.1.2 ASSIMILATED ROOT

- سوريا وُضعتْ على القائمة. **suuriyaa wudi’-at ًalaal l-qaat’imat-i.**
  Syria was placed on the list.

- وُجدَ في الإسطبل. **wujid-a fii l-isTabil-i.**
  It was found in the stable.

2.1.1.3 GEMINATE ROOT

- عدت الأصوات. **‘udd-at-i l-aSwaat-u.**
  The votes were counted.
2.1.1.4 HAMZATED ROOT

The minister was asked about the crime.

2.1.1.5 HOLLOW ROOT: In the past tense passive of hollow roots, the long medial vowel is /-ii/. This applies to Forms I, IV, VII, VIII, and X.

and it was sold to one of the museums. It was said to him.

2.1.1.6 DEFECTIVE ROOT: In the past tense passive of defective verbs, the final radical is yaa*. This applies to the derived forms as well.

They found two towers [which] were built of stone.

Therefore, the villages there were named after them.

The agreement was blessed. She was surprised at the agreement.

2.1.2 The past passive in derived forms of the verb

2.1.2.1 FORM II: fu'a-il-a

He was appointed physician to the king. The meetings were delayed.

2.1.2.2 FORM III: fu'u'il-a

The long vowel -aa- characteristic of Form III verbs changes to long -uu- in the passive.

The agreement was blessed. She was surprised at the agreement.
2.1.2.3 FORM IV: ُعِفِّيْلَةٌ; HOLLOW FORM IV ُعِفِّيْلَةٌ; DEFECTIVE FORM IV ُعِفِّيَةٌ

أُرسلت الرسالة من أمريكا.

ُعَهْلَةٌ المطار.

The letter was sent from America.

The airport was closed.

أخلى إلى المستشفى.

One of them was afflicted with serious wounds.

2.1.2.4 FORM V: ْتُعْفِّيْلَةٌ (rare)

تُعْفَيْلَةٌ

tuwuffiy-a.

He passed away.

2.1.2.5 FORM VI: ْتَعْفُوْلَةٌ (rare)

2.1.2.6 FORM VII: none.8

2.1.2.7 FORM VIII: ْعَتْفَيْلَةٌ, FORM VIII HOLLOW ْعَتْفَيْلَةٌ, FORM VIII DEFECTIVE ْعَتْفَيْلَةٌ

سبعة أشخاص أُعتقلوا.

Seven persons were arrested.

وكان قد أُعْتِّلَ.

He had been assassinated.

2.1.2.8 FORM VIII: ْعَتْفَيْلَةٌ, FORM VIII HOLLOW ْعَتْفَيْلَةٌ, FORM VIII DEFECTIVE ْعَتْفَيْلَةٌ

8 Note that although the Form VII passive verb does not occur, some Form VII passive participles do exist, e.g., munHadar َمَنْحَادَرَ 'slope.'
2.1.2.8 FORM IX: none.

2.1.2.9 FORM X: ustuf‘il-a تُستَفِعَل FORM X HOLLOW ustufii-l-a تُستَفِعَل FORM X DEFECTIVE ustuf‘iy-a تُستَفِعَل

It was used.

It was beneficial

Some correspondents were invited. ('it was benefitted from').

2.1.3 Quadriliteral verbs in the past passive

Quadriliteral verbs have the same vowel sequence (-u-i) as triliteral verbs in the passive.

2.1.3.1 FORM I: tu‘ii-l-a تُعَجِّل

These commentaries were translated into Latin.

2.1.3.2 FORMS II, III, IV: rare.

2.2 Inflectional passive: present tense stem

In the present tense, the vowel sequence in the passive is /u/ on the subject marker and, subsequently, /a/ within the verb stem. Note that the present tense stem is used for the subjunctive and jussive, as well.

Present tense passive indicative: yu-dhkar-u يَذُكَرُ 'he/it is mentioned'

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<td>yu-dhkar-u</td>
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<td>Second person:</td>
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<td>tu-dhkar-u</td>
<td>tu-dhkar-aani</td>
<td>tu-dhkar-aani</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2.1 Examples of the Form I present tense passive in context

2.2.1.1 STRONG/REGULAR ROOT: yu-f'al-u

\[ tu-	ext{qad}-u \text{ fii l-qaahirat-i SabaH-a ghad-in. } \]

It will be held tomorrow morning in Cairo.

\[ wa-yu-	ext{dhkar}-u \ 'anna l-	ext{amiin-a} l-	ext{aamm-a } \]

It is mentioned that the secretary general

2.2.1.2 ASSIMILATED ROOTS: yuu'al-u

In assimilated verbs, the present tense passive shows a long vowel /-uu-/ after the subject marker because of the merging of the /-u-/ of the passive with the underlying verb-initial semivowel (usually waaw).

\[ al-	ext{silaal}-u \text{ llatii yuuDa'-u fii-haa l-xubz-u } \]

There is (‘is found’) an answer to the problem.

2.2.1.3 GEMINATE ROOTS: yu-fa'-u

\[ tu-	ext{add}-u \ 'adiibat-an mawhuubat-an. \]

She is considered a gifted writer.

2.2.1.4 HAMZATED ROOTS: hamza-INITIAL: yu-`al-u; hamza-MEDIAL: yu-f'al-u; hamza-FINAL: yu-f'a'-u

\[ tu-	ext{kal}-u \text{ l-muqabbilaat-u. } \]

The hors d’oeuvres are being eaten.

\[ tu-	ext{gra}'-u \text{ l-maqaalat-u. } \]

The article is being read.

2.2.1.5 HOLLOW ROOTS: yu-faal-u

\[ tu-	ext{baa}'-u \text{ fii-haa l-hadaayaa. } \]

Gifts are sold in it.

\[ maa qiil-a wa-maa sa-yu-	ext{qaal}-u \ 'an-hu \]

what has been said and what will be said about it
2.2.1.6 DEFECTIVE ROOTS: *yu-f*aa

وكاد الموضوع يُمحَي.

wa-kaad-a l-mawDuu'*-u yu-mHaa.

The topic was almost erased.

2.2.2 Derived forms of the verb in the present tense passive

Following are examples of the present passive in derived forms of the verb. Note that certain forms (V, VI, VII, VIII, IX) occur less frequently in the inflectional passive because they are intransitive or have passive or mediopassive meaning.9

2.2.2.1 FORM II: *yu-fa‘al-u* يَفَعَلَ;

DEFECTIVE: *yu-fa‘a*aa يَفَعَى

أسعار لا تصدق

lam yu-kallal bi-l-naaH-i.

unbelievable ('not believed') prices

It was not crowned with success.

يمسمى أحمد.

yu-sammaa *aHmad-u.

He is called/named Ahmad.

2.2.2.2 FORM III: *yu-fa‘al-u* يَفَعَلَ: rare.

2.2.2.3 FORM IV: *yu-f‘a-al-u* يَفَعَى;

HOLLOW: *yu-fa‘al-u* يَفَعَى;

DEFECTIVE: *yu-f‘a*aa يَفَعَى

سيطَن غداً.

tu-jraa muHaadaathaat-un muhimmat-un.

It will be announced tomorrow. Important talks are being conducted.

يضاف إليها عشور بالمئة ضريبة حكومية.


Added to it is twenty percent government tax.

2.2.2.4 FORM V: *yu-tafa‘al-u* يَتَفَعَى:

rare.

2.2.2.5 FORM VI: *yu-fa‘al-u* يَفَعَى:

rare.

2.2.2.6 FORM VII: *yu-nfa‘al-u* يَفَعَى:

rare.

9 See section 3.
2.2.2.7 FORM VIII: yu-faʿal-u \(\text{يُفْتَعَلُ}\); HOLLOW: yu-faʿal-u \(\text{يُفْتَعَلُ}\); DEFECTIVE: yu-faʿaa \\
\(\text{يُفْتَعُي} \) \\
يُعْتَبِرُ من أشهر الرسَّامين في العصر الحديث.
yu-ʿtabar-u min ʿashhar-i l-rassam-iina fii l-ʿaSr-i l-Hadiith-i.  
He is considered one of the most famous artists of the modern era.

فسكان الخليفة يُنتَخِبُ في المسجد. 
fa-kaan-a l-xaliifat-u yu-ntaxab-u fii l-masjid-i. 
The Caliph used to be elected at the mosque.

يُنتَظِرُ أن تعلن الحكومة ... 
yu-ntaZar-u ʿan tu-lin-a l-Hukuumat-u ... 
it is expected that the government will announce ...

2.2.2.8 FORM IX: none.

2.2.2.9 FORM X: yu-staʿal-u \(\text{يُسْتَفَعَلُ}\); HOLLOW: yu-staʿal-u \(\text{يُسْتَفَعَلُ}\); DEFECTIVE: yu-staʿaa \\
\(\text{يُسْتَفْعَعَ} \) \\
تُسَتمَدَ لصنع الأوراق.
tu-staxdam-u li-Sanaaʿ-i l-ʿawraaq-i. 
It is used to make papers.

2.2.3 Quadriliteral present tense passive

Form I: yu-faʿal-u \(\text{يُفْتَعَلُ}\) 
The passive of quadriliterals occurs most often in Form I.

al-kutub-u llatii lam tu-fahras al-kutub-u llatii tu-tarjam-u  
the books which have not been the books which are being translated indexed

2.3 Passive with verb-preposition idioms

When a concept is conveyed by a verb-preposition idiom, the verb remains in the third person masculine singular in the passive. It does not inflect for agreement in number or gender. If a passive participle is used, it also remains in the masculine singular. In the following illustrations, an active sentence using a verb-preposition idiom is changed to passive.

Verb-preposition idiom: \textit{baHath-a} ‘\textit{an} عنّ to search for, to look for’

Active: \quad Passive:

\begin{align*}
\text{baHath-naa} & \text{ ‘an-i l-} ^3\text{awlaad-i}. & \text{buHith-a} & \text{ ‘an-i l-} ^3\text{awlaad-i}. \\
\text{We looked for the children.} & & \text{The children were looked for.} \\
\text{baHath-naa} & \text{ ‘an-i l-maqaalat-i}. & \text{buHith-a} & \text{ ‘an-i l-maqaalat-i}. \\
\text{We looked for the article.} & & \text{The article was looked for.}
\end{align*}

Further examples:

\textit{Hukim-a} ‘\textit{ala}a \textit{l-rijaal-i bi-l-Habs-i li-muddat-i mi}’\textit{at-i yawm-in}.  
\textit{The men were sentenced} to imprisonment for 100 days.

\textit{Min maSaadir-a} \textit{mawthuuq-in bi-haa}  
\textit{from trusted} sources

\textit{alwaati}‘un \textit{Tiniyyat-un} ‘\textit{uthir-a} ‘\textit{alay-haa} fii \textit{l-hilaal-i l-xaSiib-i}  
\textit{clay tablets discovered in the Fertile Crescent}

2.4 Passive with doubly transitive verbs

With verbs that are doubly transitive, taking two objects, only one of the objects switches to be the subject of the passive sentence. The other remains in the accusative case:

\begin{align*}
\text{li-} ^3\text{anna-hu} & \text{ yu-} ^3\text{tabar-u} \text{ ntiqaal-an naw}’\text{iy-y-an bayn-a l-naSr-i wa-l-haziimat-i}. \\
\text{Because it is considered} & \text{ a characteristic transition between victory and defeat.}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{yu-} ^3\text{tabar-u} & \text{ aHad-a ‘arwa‘-i l-} ^3\text{aathaar-i l-fanniyyat-i}. \\
\text{It is considered} & \text{ one of the most splendid artifacts.}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{‘uyyin-a} & \text{ Tabiib-an li-l-malik-i}. & \text{‘uddi’-uu} & \text{ l-sijn-a}. \\
\text{He was appointed} & \text{ physician to the king.} & \text{They were thrown} & \text{ [into] prison.}
\end{align*}
2.5 Mention of agent: ‘alaa yad-i، min qibal-i منْ قِبْلَ اِنْ

Rarely, an agent or doer of the action may be mentioned in an Arabic passive sentence. When this is the case, certain phrases tend to be used, just as English would use the term “by.” These are ‘alaa yad-i عَلَى يَدْ اِنْ + noun ‘by the hand of’ or min qibal-i منْ قِبْلَ اِنْ + noun ‘on the part of.’

لكن هذه المساجد محتلة من قِبْل المسلمين.

laakinna haadhihi l-masaajid-a muHtallat-un min qibal-i l-muslim-iina.

But these mosques are occupied by Muslims.

أُغْتَيْل عَلَى يَدٍ عَلَمٍ.

ughitiil-a ‘alaa yad-i ‘almaaniyy-iina.

He was assassinated by laymen.

حَتَّى فَتَحَهَا عَلَى يَدُ المُسْلِمِينَ

Hattaa fatH-i-haa ‘alaa yad-i l-muslim-iina

until it was conquered (‘its conquering’) by the Muslims

2.5.1 bi-qalam-i بِقَلَامٍ

With authors of books, the phrase bi-qalam-i + noun ‘by the pen of’ is often used instead of ‘by’:

بَقَلَام الْعَالَمِ الْشَّاعِرِ المَعْرُوف

bi-qalam-i l-aalim-i wa-l-shaa’ir-i l-ma‘ruufi

by the famous scholar and poet

2.6 Passive with potential meaning

The Arabic passive is sometimes used to indicate possibility, worth, or potential. The passive participle in particular may have a meaning equivalent to an English adjective ending in “-able.”

فَلَمْ يَكُن لِلْمَعَارِضَةِ وَجْهٍ يَذَّكَرُ

fa-lam ya-kun li-l-mu‘araDat-i wujuud-un yu-dhkar-u.

The opposition did not have a presence [worth] mentioning.

المكولات

al-ma‘kuulaat-u  al-mashruubaat-u

edibles, foods refreshments (‘drinkables’)

3 Passive with derived forms of the verb

Derived forms of the verb, especially V, VII, VIII, and IX may indicate a passive or passive-like meaning, and may sometimes be used in this way. However, this is not always the case. These derivational verbs need to be learned as separate lexical
items in order to know if their meaning is equivalent to a passive expression in English. For more detailed analysis of these verb forms, see the separate chapters on each derivational form.

3.1 The Form V verb: *tafaxal-a* / *ya-tafaxal-u* 
Form V verbs may function as the reflexive of the Form II verb. This is sometimes referred to by grammarians as “mediopassive.”

Form V may also be resultative of Form II, showing the result of the Form II action, e.g., *kassartu-haa fa-takassar-at* 
*I broke it (Form II) and it broke (Form V).*

- to disintegrate, break apart: *tafakkak-a/ya-tafakkak-u* 
- be fragmented: *tamazzaq-a/ya-tamazzaq-u*

3.2 The Form VII verb: *infaxal-a* / *ya-nfaxal-u* 
Form VII verbs may be analyzed as ergative, that is, the subject of the Form VII verb is the same as the object of the transitive Form I verb.

Form VII verbs are also referred to as reflexive, resultative, passive or mediopassive in meaning. In Arabic they are described as *muTaawi* ‘obeying, corresponding with’ – that is, Form VII verbs show the result of Form I action.

- be fragmented: *tamazzaq-a/ya-tamazzaq-u* 

3.3 Form VIII

Form VIII may also have mediopassive meaning. Some examples include:

- to disintegrate, break apart: *tafakkak-a/ya-tafakkak-u*
- to be related, linked: *intasab-a/ya-intasib-u*

---

10 “No grammatical distinction is made in Arabic verbs between “reflexive” acts and spontaneous developments – what one does to one’s self and what simply happens to one are equally accommodated by the mediopassive” (Cowell 1964, 238).

11 For more on the Form V verb and its meanings, see Chapter 26.


13 For more on *muTaawi* see section 1.1 in this chapter and also Chapter 26, note 4.

14 One reason for the existence of mediopassive verbs in Form VIII is the phonological restriction in Form VII against lexical roots beginning with the consonants *hamza*, *waaw*, *yaa*, *raa*, *laam*, or *nuun*. Form VIII or Form V take over the mediopassive function for those roots.
to rise, be raised  
irtafaً-a/ya-raftaً-u

to be healed  
ilta’am-a/ya-lta’im-u

to be completed  
iktamal-a/ya-ktamil-u

إصلاحات لم تكتمل منذ عامين
‘iSlaaHaat-un lam ta-ktamil mundh-u ‘aam-ayni
renovations that haven’t been completed in two years

جروح لم تلتئم بعد
juruulH-un lam ta-lta’im ba’d-u
wounds that have not been healed yet
Conditional and optative expressions

Conditional propositions are ones in which hypothetical conditions are specified in order for something else to take place. Usually there are two clauses, one that specifies the condition (typically starting with “if . . .”) and one that specifies the consequences or result of those conditions (typically starting with “then . . .”). In traditional English grammar the clause that specifies the conditions (the “if-clause”) is termed the protasis and the second clause (the “then-clause”) is termed the apodosis. In Arabic the equivalent terms are شرط (sharT) (for the condition clause) and جواب (jawaab) (for the consequence clause).

Arabic often uses a past tense verb in the conditional clause or protasis (شرط). However, the jussive mood of the present tense verb may also be used in the protasis. The apodosis or consequence clause (جواب) may be in the same tense as the previous one, or it may be different. If there is a tense switch between clauses, the particle fa- normally precedes the apodosis; in practice in current MSA, however, it is often omitted.1

Some conditions are reasonably realizable (“If you wait, I’ll go with you”), but others are simply expressions of impossible or “contrary to fact” conditions (“If I were your fairy godmother, I would grant your wish”). Arabic uses different particles to express possible conditions and impossible conditions.2

1 Possible conditions: idhaa إذا and ‘in إن

To express possible conditions, Arabic uses two conditional particles: ‘idhaa or ‘in to start the protasis or شرط conditional clause. In the texts covered for this study, ‘idhaa occurred much more frequently than ‘in.3 The use of ‘idhaa is considered to imply probable conditions.4

1 See Taha 1995, 180–82 on this topic.
3 Note that ‘idhaa does not always translate as ‘if.’ Sometimes it is used in the adverbial sense of ‘when.’ See Cantarino 1975, III:297–302.
4 “‘in is a straight hypothesis – ‘if, if it is the case that . . ., if it should be that . . .’ while ‘idhaa ‘if’ implies some degree of probability and sometimes implies ‘when, whenever.’” Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 2:176.
1.1 ʿidhaa ‘if’ + past tense

When ʿidhaa is used as the conditional particle in the sharT clause, the verb is in the past tense. In the jawaab, a tense switch may or may not happen. This type of conditional is the most frequent in MSA.

If you are on the upper floors, do not rush to the lower [floors].

If the windows are open, hasten to close them.

If you want to reserve a ticket, (then) you must pay in advance.

1.1.1 Negative conditional: ʿidhaa lam

A negative condition may be expressed with lam + jussive verb.

[Even] if he hasn’t abolished the law... he ignores it.

1.1.2 Negative conditional wa-ʿillaa... fa- ‘if not; or else’

Another type of negative condition is expressed through the used of wa-ʿillaa (a contraction of wa-ʿin-laa), which introduces a consequence clause. Sometimes it is accompanied by fa-:

and if not, it will have failed in its role

Eat the vegetables or else they [will] punish you.

1.1.3 Reversal of clause order

Most of the time, the sharT clause comes first, before the jawaab or apodosis, but sometimes the order is reversed. This is referred to as a “postposed condition,” and the normal rules for the result clause do not apply. The particle fa- is omitted and the verb in the first clause may vary as to tense.
The team would have won if the committee had permitted them to participate.

1.2 Conditional with ٍّ + perfect or ٍّ + jussive

The conditional particle ٍّ may be followed by either verbs in the perfect or verbs in the jussive in both the condition and the result clauses. If the jussive is used in the conditional clause, then the verb in the result clause may also be jussive. For this reason, the particle ٍّ is called in Arabic grammar one of the “particles that require the jussive on two verbs”: َّدَّتٍ ٍّ + ٍّ. If, however, the verb in the result clause is part of a nominal clause (i.e., a clause that starts with a noun), then it is in the imperfect indicative. The verb in the result clause may also be in the past tense.

The use of ٍّ with conditional clauses is less frequent in Modern Standard Arabic than in literary and classical Arabic.

They will get sick if they eat all that now.

If you (pl.) visit me I shall honor you. If God wills.

---

5 See Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 2:178: “If the verb in the condition clause is jussive, the verb in the result clause must also be jussive.” See also ‘Abd al-Latif et al., 1997, 307ff. for more examples. But note that in Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 291, they list under possibilities for the conditional sentence: “The Jussive is used in the Protasis, the Perfect in the Apodosis:

ٍّ يُذَهِبُ يُذَهِبُ يُذَهِبُ يُذَهِبُ
‘If Zayd goes I will go.’ (their example)

The condition clause may also be in the imperative, without a conditional particle, and followed immediately by a verb in the jussive in the result clause. Abboud and McCarus 1983 give the following example (Part 2:178):

ٍّ دَرَسَ
ٍّ شَهِي
ٍّ تَنْجَعُ
ٍّ دَرَسَ تَنْجَعُ
Study and you will succeed.

6 See Ziadeh and Winder 1957, 162.

If a person breaks the tooth of another, (then) his tooth shall be broken.

If you would wait for me at the airport at the time of my arrival, I would consider that a kindness from you.

1.2.1 wa-‘in وانُ ‘although; even though’

Although his start was late, nevertheless it came.

He realized the dream of a medal although it was bronze.

2 Conditional expressed with -maa ما ‘ever’

The adverbial suffix -maa can be suffixed to an adverb or a noun to shift its meaning to ‘ever,’ such as “whenever” or “wherever.” These expressions are considered conditionals in Arabic and follow the rules for conditional sentences. Cowell 1964 refers to clauses using these particles as “quasi-conditional” clauses.

2.1 mahmaa مهما ‘whatever’

I don’t think it will stop, whatever the United States says.

2.2 ‘ayn-a-maa أيمنا ‘wherever’

Wherever you are, you can listen.

---

8 From Ziadeh and Winder 1957, 160.
9 Ibid., 164.
10 Cowell 1964, 337–38. Cowell is describing types of conditional clauses in Syrian Arabic but deals with similar particles.
2.3 *kull-a-maa* ‘whenever’
This connective also specifies a condition and therefore requires the use of the past tense verb in the clause that it introduces.

يمكن تكرارها كلما تجده الذات 
*yu-mkin-u takraar-u-haa kull-a-maa tajaddad-a l-xaTar-u.*
It can be repeated whenever danger recurs.

2.4 *’idhaa + maa* ‘if ever’
Occasionally, even *’idhaa* will be followed by the particle *-maa*. In this sense, *-maa* is not used as a negative particle but implies ‘if ever’ or ‘if and when.’

إذا ما فتح باب الحوار 
*’idhaa-maa futiH-a baab-u l-Hiwaar-i*  
if the door of discussion is ever opened

2.5 *man* ‘whoever’
The pronoun *man*, meaning ‘who’ or ‘whoever’ may be followed by a conditional clause in the jussive. This kind of conditional is often found in proverbs.

من يزرع شوكة بحصد شوكة. 
*man ya-zra*’ shawk-an ya-HSid shawk-an.*11*  
He who sows thorns [will] reap thorns.

من يقتل قتلت. 
*man ya-qtul yu-qtal.*12*  
He who kills, shall be killed.

3. Contrary-to-fact conditionals: *la- ِلاَ،َ law ِلوُْ*  
Some conditional sentences express impossible or unreasonable conditions. The conditional particle used to introduce contrary-to-fact conditions is *law ِلوُْ*, followed by either a past tense verb or *lam* plus the jussive for the negative. The contrary-to-fact condition is usually followed by a result clause (*jawaab*) that is preceded by the particle *la- ِلاَ،َ*; there are some exceptions, however. The *la- ِلاَ،َ* is omitted when the result clause precedes the condition clause as in:

عنزة ولو طارت. 
*’anzat-un wa-law Taar-at.*  
It is [still] a goat even if it flies.*13*
Seek knowledge even if it be in China.

or if the result clause is understood or implied, and therefore not specified:

law samaH-ta.

If you permit.

3.1 ‘even if’ حتَّى لو
The addition of Hattaa to law, yields the meaning of ‘even if.’ It is usually followed by a past tense verb or negated past tense through the use of lam plus the jussive.

Hattaa law lam na-tarf bi-dhaalika

even if we don’t acknowledge that

4 Optative constructions
Wishes, blessings, and curses are often expressed in the past tense in Arabic, just as the past tense is used in many hypothetical expressions. There is no need for a particular particle, just the expression phrased in the past tense.

May God bless you. May God preserve him.

May God have mercy on him. May God help you.

‘Long’ live the king! May you live long.

(‘May [God] lengthen your life.’)

4.1 Optatives in the present tense
The past tense is not always used in optatives. Some of them are in the present tense:

May God keep you safe. Peace be upon you.
Appendix I: How to use an Arabic dictionary

Using an Arabic dictionary
The organization of Arabic dictionaries is based on word roots and not word spelling. Word roots are listed alphabetically according to the order of letters in the Arabic alphabet. For example, the root k-t-f comes after k-t-b because /f/ comes after /b/ in the Arabic alphabet. Therefore, in order to find the root, one has to know the order of the alphabet. This system applies to genuinely Arabic words or words that have been thoroughly Arabized.

Loanwords, however, — words borrowed from other languages — are listed in an Arabic dictionary according to their spelling (e.g., *haliikubtar* هليكوبتر ‘helicopter’).

Instead of relying on the exact orthography of a word, therefore, Arabic dictionaries are organized by the root or consonant core of a word, providing under that initial entry every word derived from that particular root. The root is therefore often called a “lexical root” because it is the actual foundation for the lexicon, or dictionary. The lexical root provides a semantic field within which actual vocabulary items can be located. In this respect, an Arabic dictionary might be seen as closer to a thesaurus than a dictionary, locating all possible variations of meaning in one referential domain or semantic field under one entry.

Most often, Arabic words can be reduced to three radicals or root consonants (e.g., H-m-l ‘carry’), but some roots have more or less than three. There are a number of biliteral (y-d ‘hand’), quadriliteral (t-r-j-m ‘translate’), and quinquiliteral (b-n-f-s-j ‘violet’) roots in Arabic, and there are even some monoliteral roots (for function words such as the preposition ka- ‘as, like’).

The verb citation form for dictionary use is the third person masculine singular past tense. There is no infinitive form of the verb in Arabic.

For example, all the following words having to do with “studying” are found in the dictionary under the root *d-r-s*, even though some begin with *m*- or *m*-,. because all of them are located within the semantic field of *d-r-s*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lesson</td>
<td><em>dars</em> درس</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lessons</td>
<td><em>duruus</em> دروس</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Because of this major difference in dictionary organization, it is necessary for Western learners of Arabic to learn rules of Arabic word structure in order to be able to make sense of an Arabic or Arabic–English dictionary. Learners must be able to identify the root consonants in a word in order to find the main dictionary entry; then they need to know generally how the word pattern fits into the overall system of derivational morphology in order to locate that particular word within the abundant and sometimes extensive subcategories provided within the semantic field of the entry. The root-pattern system is fundamental for Arabic word creation and accounts for about 80–85 percent of Arabic vocabulary.

Using the Wehr Dictionary
In the most widely used Arabic–English dictionary, the Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic (DMWA) by Hans Wehr and edited by J. Milton Cowan, fourth edition (1979), the compilers assume that the users know and understand the system of Arabic derivational verb morphology based on the roman numerals I–X (or sometimes even up to XV). Wehr lists verbs first, in the I–X order, marked only by the roman numeral, not giving the actual verb spelling except for Form I.¹

For example, under the root q-b-l, are listed roman numerals II, III, IV, V, VI, VIII, and X, and after each roman numeral are definitions for each of these forms of the verb. Thus, if the user is looking up an inflected verb form, such as istaqbal-at, the user needs to know that this is a Form X verb, that the root is q-b-l, and that it is inflected for third person feminine singular past tense. In this manner, the user can locate the verb root, find the roman numeral X and see that the listed definitions for this form include ‘to face, to meet, to receive.’ By putting together the lexical meaning from the dictionary information, contextual meaning from the text being read, and the grammatical meaning from the inflectional suffix, the user can deduce that the word istaqbal-at means ‘she received.’

Note that the DMWA provides the present tense or imperfective stem vowel for Form I because it is not predictable. It does not do this for the derived forms, because they are predictable. It therefore includes, in romanization, after the Arabic script, under the entry for k-t-b, for example:

kataba  u (kath, kitba, kitaaba)

¹ Wehr provides a useful summary of the arrangement of entries in his introduction (1979, pp. vii–xvii).
That is, it gives the voweling for the past tense citation form, the present tense stem vowel, and, in parentheses, the most common verbal nouns for the Form I verb, all in romanization. The DMWA does not include short vowels in the Arabic script spelling of the entries; short vowels are indicated only by the romanization that directly follows the dictionary entry.

To look up the word istiqbaal، استقبال، it is helpful to know that it is a verbal noun of Form X, since the DMWA lists nouns (including nouns of place and nouns of instrument, for example), adjectives, adverbs, and verbal nouns immediately after the verb definitions, in the I–X order. After that are listed active participles I–X and then passive participles, also in the I–X order. Note, however, that the DMWA does not identify the nouns or participles by number; it assumes that the user knows the derivational system.

It is also important for users to be able to recognize noun, adjective, and participle plurals because plurals are not listed as separate items in the dictionary, even though their word structure may differ substantially from the singular form, especially with broken plurals. Thus, coming across a word such as mashaakil، مشاكل، the reader needs to know how to determine the root, sh-k-l, but also needs to recognize that this is a broken plural pattern, and will not be listed as a separate entry, but as a plural under the entry of mushkila، مشكلة، 'problem' (a Form IV active participle).

Particular challenges emerge when lexical roots are weak or irregular in some way, that is, if they are geminate, hamzated, assimilated, hollow, defective, or doubly defective. In these cases, the nature of a root consonant may shift (from a long vowel to a hamza, for example as in the word zaa’ir، زائر، ‘visitor’ derived from the root z-w-r) or a root consonant may simply disappear (for example, the noun thiga، ‘trust, confidence’ from the root w-th-q). It is therefore crucial for learners to practice using the dictionary and to gain an understanding of the system of Arabic word structure in order to have quick and efficient access to vocabulary items. Having a knowledge of the basic derivational systems and the logic and rules within these systems is key to building vocabulary and to gaining access to the full range of the abundant Arabic lexicon.

Naturally, it is not possible for learners at the early stages to recognize all possible root variants, but understanding the logic of dictionary organization will help right from the beginning. While it is possible to simply scour all the entries under a particular root without knowing the I–X system or the part-of-speech information that tells one where to look, it takes a great deal more time, and can be very frustrating, if not defeating.

This reference grammar includes extensive analysis of the permutations of regular and irregular lexical roots, in the I–X system. Please consult these sections for analysis of word structure, paradigms, and examples of words in context.
Thus, to summarize, the DMWA lists entries for a lexical root in the following order:

1. the root (which resembles the third person masculine singular past tense Form I verb)
2. verbal nouns of Form I (listed directly after the root in romanization)
3. verbs I–X listed numerically by roman numeral only
4. nouns and other parts of speech derived from Form I
5. nouns derived from other forms of the verb (in II–X sequence)
6. active participles from Forms I–X
7. passive participles from Forms I–X

Using an Arabic–Arabic dictionary
Arabic-Arabic dictionaries are likewise organized by lexical roots and the roots are listed in alphabetical order. Note, however, that Arabic lexicons do not use the I–X roman numeral system and make no reference to it.

For example, a standard reference work in Arabic is *al-Munjid fii l-Hugha wa-l-‘a‘laam*, a combination of dictionary and concise encyclopedia. In the dictionary part, it lists verb derivations in the I–X order by listing them as they are spelled.

It also introduces verbal nouns, especially of Form I, in context, used in a short sentence, for example:

كَتَبَ كَتِبَةً وَكِتَابَةً وَكِتَابَةً وَكِتَابَةُ الْكِتَابِ

*katab-a katab-an wa-kitaab-an wa-kitbat-an i l-kitaab-a.*

Literally: ‘He wrote writing and writing and writing and writing the book.’

It is standard practice in Arabic reference works to use the verbal noun/s in a sentence with the verb in order to illustrate what they are (even though the example might not make logical sense). In the above example, there are four different verbal nouns displayed in boldface type.

This procedure is used with Form I verbs, but the verbal nouns of the derived forms II–X are not separately indicated because they are predictable. The *al-Munjid fii l-Hugha wa-l-‘a‘laam* has an excellent introductory section summarizing Arabic derivational and inflectional morphology (pp. *haa* to *faa*).

Arabic dictionary structure has evolved over time, and some older dictionaries are organized in different ways. Note also that some modern Arabic dictionaries are referred to as “‘*abjadiyy*” or ‘alphabetical,’ meaning that their

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2 See Haywood 1965 for a history of Arabic lexicography. See also Shivtiel 1993 for a comparison of Arabic root dictionaries and alphabetical dictionaries.
entries are organized by word spelling (for example, *al-Munjid al-‘abjadiyy*, 1968). Although this type of organization eases use somewhat for those who do not understand the derivational system of Arabic word structure, it is much less useful in helping the learner grasp semantic fields, word structure patterns, and meaning relationships among lexical items.
Appendix II: Glossary of technical terms

1. Glossary of Arabic grammatical terms
These entries are transliterated and organized in English alphabetical order with ‘ayn and hamza discounted as orthographic elements.

‘aamil  syntactic governor or ‘operator’
‘abjad; ‘abjadiyya  alphabet
‘af‘aal  verbs (plural of fi‘l)
‘af‘aal al-quluub/ verbs of perception or cognition, in particular, of emotions and intellect
‘af‘aal qalbiyya
‘af‘aal taHwiil  verbs of transformation (of something from one state to another)

‘amal  syntactic government; regime
‘amr  imperative; command
‘asma‘  nouns (pl. of ism)
‘asma‘ al-‘ishaara  demonstrative pronouns
‘axawaat  “sisters” – words similar in class and in governing effect

badal  apposition
Damiir/Damaa‘ir  personal pronoun
   Damaa‘ir munfaSiLa  independent personal pronouns, subject pronouns
Damma  short vowel /u/
faDla  ‘extra’ or ‘surplus’ parts of the sentence rather than the kernel or core of the predication
faa‘il  subject of a verbal sentence; agent; doer of the action
fatHa  short vowel /a/
fi‘l / ‘af‘aal  verb; action
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Term</th>
<th>English Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fi‘l ʿajwaf</td>
<td>hollow verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi‘l ghayr mutaʿaddin</td>
<td>intransitive verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi‘l laazim</td>
<td>intransitive verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi‘l lafiif mafruq</td>
<td>assimilated and defective verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>hamzat al-qaT⁺</td>
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<td>hamzat al-waSl</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haraka/-aat</td>
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<td>Harf / Huruuf</td>
<td>letter (of the alphabet); particle, function word</td>
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<tr>
<td>Huruuf qamariyya</td>
<td>“moon” letters; word-initial sounds that do not assimilate the laam of the definite article</td>
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<td>Huruuf shamsiyya</td>
<td>“sun” letters; word-initial sounds that assimilate the laam of the definite article</td>
</tr>
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<td>ʿiDaafa</td>
<td>annexation structure, noun construct, genitive construct</td>
</tr>
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<td>“unreal” ʿiDaafa, adjective ʿiDaafa</td>
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<td>ism al-ʿishaara</td>
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<td>ism al-mafʿuul</td>
<td>passive participle</td>
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<td>ism maqSuur</td>
<td>indeclinable noun</td>
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<td>ism mawSuul</td>
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<tr>
<td>ism al-tafDiil</td>
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<td>istithnaa’</td>
<td>exception, exceptive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix II

jam⁶

jam⁶ mu’aannath saalim  sound feminine plural
jam⁶ mudhakkar saalim  sound masculine plural
jam⁶ al-taksiir  broken plural

jarr  genitive case
jazm  jussive mood
jawaab  answer; the apodosis, consequence clause
jumla  sentence
  jumla fi‘liyya  verbal sentence
  jumla ismiyya  equational sentence; noun-initial sentence

kasra  short vowel /i/

laa nafy-i l-jins-i  the laa of absolute or categorical negation
laam al-‘amr  permissive or hortative imperative

maa l-ta‘ajjub  the maa of astonishment
maaDii  past, past tense; perfective aspect

madda/ ‘alif madda  hamza followed by a long /aa/; the symbol that
  indicates this sound (Tam)

maf‘uul bi-hi  direct object of transitive verb; the accusative of
direct object

maf‘uul fii-hi  accusative adverb of time, manner, or place
maf‘uul li-‘ajl-i-hi /  accusative of purpose
maf‘uul la-hu

maf‘uul muTlaq  cognate accusative

mamnuu‘ min-a l-Sarf  diptote
majruur  genitive
manSuub  accusative/subjunctive
manquuS  defective
marfuu‘  nominative/indicative
maSdar  verbal noun
  maSdar miimii  a verbal noun whose initial consonant is a
  prefixed miim

mustaqbal  future tense
maziid  “augmented”; extended verb form (II–X)
mu’annath feminine
mubtada’ subject of equational sentence
muDaaf the first term of an ‘iDaafa, or annexation structure

muDaaf ‘ilay-hi the second term of an ‘iDaafa, or annexation structure
muDaari’ present tense; imperfective aspect
mudhakkar masculine
mufrad singular
mujarrad base form verb; Form I; literally ‘stripped’
mu‘rab triptote; fully inflectable
muTaabaqa agreement or concord
muTaawa‘a ‘obedience; conformity’; verbal noun referring to verbs that are resultative, reflexive, passive, or semi-passive in meaning

muTaawi’ ‘obedient, conforming’ – that is, conforming with a particular, lexically related action; passive, resultative, reflexive, or semi-passive

muthannaa dual
naaqiS defective
nafy negation
naHw grammar; syntactic theory
naHt compounding into one word
naa‘il al-faa‘il subject of a passive verb
naSb accusative case (on substantives)/subjunctive mood (on verbs)
na‘t adjective
nawaasix lexical items that convert substantives to the accusative case
nidaa’ vocative
nisba relative adjective
raf’ nominative case (on substantives)/indicative mood (on verbs)
rubaa‘iyy quadriliteral (root)
Appendix II

Sarf derivational morphology and inflectional morphology that does not include case and mood marking

shadda symbol that indicates doubling of a consonant (ʼ)

sharT condition; protasis, conditional clause

Sifa adjective

sukuun absence of vowel; quiescence, symbolized by a small circle (ُ)

tamyiiz accusative of specification

tanwiin nunation; pronunciation of an /n/ sound after the case-marking short vowel on a noun, adjective, or adverb

tarkiib compounding

tashdiid doubling of a consonant; the use of shadda (q.v.)

thulaathiyy triliteral (root)

waaw al-‘aTf conjoining waaw; conjunction waaw

waSf descriptive adjective

waSla symbol used to mark elision of hamza

wazn/√awzaan Form/s of the verb (I–X and XI–XV)

xabar predicate of an equational sentence

xafD genitive case (see also jarr)

Zarf adverb generally derived from a triliteral lexical root

Zarf makaan adverb of place

Zarf zamaan adverb of time

2. Glossary of English grammatical terms

Many of these brief definitions are elaborated upon in various parts of this book. See the index for page and section references for more extended explanations and examples.

accusative one of the three cases in Arabic noun and adjective declensions; it typically marks the object of a transitive verb but also serves to mark a wide range of adverbial functions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>affix</td>
<td>an inflectional or derivational feature added to a word stem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agreement</td>
<td>a relationship between words where one word requires a corresponding form in another (e.g., agreement in gender or in case)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allophone</td>
<td>a contextually determined variant of a phoneme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>annexation structure</td>
<td>a genitive noun construct; an ‘iDaafa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assimilated</td>
<td>referring to lexical roots, those whose initial phoneme is waaw or yaa³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assimilation</td>
<td>a phonological process wherein one sound acquires features of another (usually adjacent) sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biliteral</td>
<td>having only two root phonemes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>case</td>
<td>a form of word-final inflection on nouns and adjectives that shows their relationship to other words in a sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clause</td>
<td>a unit of sentence structure that includes a predication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>construct phrase</td>
<td>a structure in which two nouns are juxtaposed in a genitive relationship; an annexation structure; an ‘iDaafa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cryptofeminine</td>
<td>a feminine noun not overtly marked for feminine gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cryptomasculine</td>
<td>a masculine noun not overtly marked for masculine gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circumfix</td>
<td>a combination of prefix and suffix used with a stem to create a lexical item, such as the English word “enlighten,” or an Arabic verb such as ta-drus-uuna ‘you (m.pl.) study’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>defective</td>
<td>a term applied to lexical roots referring to those with a final waaw or yaa³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desinential inflection</td>
<td>word-final marking for syntactically determined case or mood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diptote</td>
<td>a term applied to certain indefinite nouns that do not take either kasra or nuna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
elative
refers to the comparative and superlative forms of Arabic adjectives

geminate
a term applied to lexical roots wherein the second and third root consonants are identical

gemination
the process of doubling the length or strength of a consonant

genitive
one of the three cases in Arabic noun and adjective declensions; it typically marks the object of a preposition and also the second noun in the construct phrase

government
a syntactic principle wherein certain words (“governors”) cause others to inflect in particular ways

hamzated
including the consonant hamza (glottal stop) as part of the root morpheme (e.g., √k-l , √s-l or q-r-

hollow verb
a verb whose lexical root contains a semi-vowel in the medial position (e.g., q-w-l or S-y-r)

imperative
a mood of the verb expressing command

imperfect
as applied to a verb, denoting an incomplete action or referring in a general way to incomplete, ongoing actions or states

(indicative
a mood of the verb that is ungoverned by a syntactic operator (‘aamil ); it is characteristic of statements of fact and of questions

infix
an affix inserted into the body of a word stem

intransitive
describes verbs whose action or process involves only the doer

jussive
a mood of the Arabic verb required by certain governing particles (e.g., lam)

morphology
the study of word structure and word formation

morphophonemics
the study of how word structure interacts with phonological rules

nominative
one of the three cases in Arabic noun and adjective declensions; it typically marks the subject of a sentence
nunation  
the pronunciation of an /n/ sound after the marker of case inflection; typically it denotes indefiniteness

object  
a syntactic term that describes the recipient of an action (the object of a verb, also referred to as a “direct object”), or the noun or pronoun that follows a preposition

optative  
expressing wish or desire

participle  
a deverbal adjective that may function as a noun
active participle  
describes the doer of the action
passive participle  
describes the recipient or object of the action

pattern  
the morphological framework into which an Arabic lexical root fits in order to form a word

perfect  
as applied to a verb, denoting a completed action in the past
(also “perfective”)

phoneme  
a distinctive language sound that carries a differential function

phonology  
the study of the sound system of a language
phonotactics  
the study of the rules of sound distribution in a language

phrase  
a group of words that forms a syntactic unit but does not include a predication (noun-adjective phrase, prepositional phrase, demonstrative phrase, etc.)

prefix  
an affix attached at the beginning of a word stem

quadriliteral  
containing four root consonants
quinquiliteral  
containing five root consonants

radical  
a root consonant

resultative  
referring to a verb form expressing the result of an action

root  
the most elemental consonant structure of an Arabic word

semi-consonant  
a waaw or yaa√; also referred to as “semi-vowels”; consonants that have some of the properties of vowels or which serve as vowels in certain contexts
sound (adj.)  regular in inflection or structure (see also “strong”)
stem; word stem  the base form of a word without inflections
stem vowel  the vowel that follows the second root consonant in a verb stem
strong (see also “sound”)  regular in inflection or structure
subjunctive  a mood of the Arabic verb typically used after expressions of wishing, desire, hoping, necessity, or other attitudes expressed toward the action of the verb
suffix  an affix attached at the end of a word stem
syntax  the relationship among words in a phrase, clause, or sentence
triliteral  containing three root consonants
triprote  a term applied to nouns meaning that they inflect for all three cases
transitive  describes verbs whose action affects an object (often referred to as “direct object”)
verbal noun  a noun derived from a particular verb that describes the action of that verb (e.g., acceptance – qubul; departure – mughadara; swimming – sibaHa); Arabic: masdar or ism fi’l
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