A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

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).
A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

KARIN C. RYDING
Georgetown University
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 َين" and the "sisters of َكانا" 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

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 extemporary 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 matter 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 contemporary 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 language causes it to lack the beauty and expressiveness of literary Arabic, and therefore 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 language 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 vocabulary, to create confidence in understanding a wide range of topics, and particu-

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3 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).

4 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).

5 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 cogent discussion of Arabic newspapers and the teaching of MSA in Taha 1995, and Mehall 1999.
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 unwvowed on the final consonant, except where the vowing 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.

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

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>acc.</td>
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<td>adj.</td>
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<td>adv.</td>
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<td>AP</td>
<td>active participle</td>
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<td>any consonant</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>Classical Arabic</td>
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<td>ESA</td>
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<td>p./ pers.</td>
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**List of abbreviations**

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<td>QPP</td>
<td>quadriliteral passive participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refl.</td>
<td>reflexive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rel. pron.</td>
<td>relative pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s.o.</td>
<td>someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s.th.</td>
<td>something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sg./sing.</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subj.</td>
<td>subjunctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>superl.</td>
<td>superlative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trans.</td>
<td>transitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v.</td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>any short vowel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vd.</td>
<td>voiced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vl.</td>
<td>voiceless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VN</td>
<td>verbal noun (maSdar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>verb phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VV</td>
<td>any long vowel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other diacritics:

- **boldface words** indicate key words in examples
- **boldface syllables** indicate primary word stress
- morpheme boundary

---

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° marbuùta (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'
Acknowledgments

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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).1 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.2

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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 book-length introductions to comparative Semitic linguistic structure, see Wright 1966, Gray 1934, and especially Moscati 1969.
2 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.\(^4\)

3 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 qaṣida, 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 koiné, 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.  

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 Qur’ān, 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 ‘Uthmān (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 Qur’ān, it became the object of centuries of religious study and exegesis, theological analysis, grammatical analysis and speculation. 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. 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.  

The language era from the thirteenth century to the eighteenth is generally known as “Middle Arabic,” although there is some ambiguity to this term. 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 koine, see Zwettler 1978, especially Chapter 3; Rabin 1955; Fück 1955; Corrèn 1976; and Versteegh 1984, especially Chapter 1.  
7 For a brief introduction to the origins of Islam and the Qur’ānic 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 Persian 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 supplie 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-fuSHā, or simply, al-fuSHā, which means "the most eloquent (language)." Badawi (1985) draws a helpful distinction between fuSHā al-faSr (of the modern era) (MSA) and fuSHā al-turāth (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 fuSHā.  

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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 fuSHā. In his study of Egyptian native Arabic speakers’ ability with fuSHā, 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. 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. 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.

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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. 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. 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. 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.

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16 For a detailed discussion of variation in Arabic see Elgibali 1993.
17 This is known as “cultivated” speech in Arabic: lughat al-muthaqafin لغة المثقفين. 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 hāṭif (pl. hawāṭif) for ‘telephone’ (based on the Arabic lexical root h-t-f), to counteract the widespread use of the Arabized European term: تليفون التليفون.

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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15 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-lughâ al-fuSâhâ*. 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, *fuSâhâ al‘asr Fussahi al-‘asr*, 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’id: “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’id 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 ‘iDaafa 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 yaay – are semivowels that serve two functions, sometimes as consonants and other times as vowels, depending on context.¹ For the most part, the Arabic alphabet corresponds to the distinctive sounds (phonemes) of Arabic, and each sound or letter has a name.² 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

¹ “Certain consonants have some of the phonetic properties of vowels … they are usually referred to as approximants (or frictionless continuants), though [w/ and /j/] 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>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic letter shape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final</td>
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<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(hamza)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'atalf</td>
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<tr>
<td>baa</td>
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<tr>
<td>taa</td>
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<tr>
<td>thaa</td>
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<tr>
<td>jittim</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haa</td>
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<tr>
<td>xaa</td>
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<tr>
<td>daal</td>
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<td>dhaal</td>
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<tr>
<td>raa</td>
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<tr>
<td>zaay</td>
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<tr>
<td>siin</td>
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<tr>
<td>shiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taa</td>
</tr>
</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,
HuTih, kalaman, sa 'faS, qurishat, thaxadh-un DaZagh-un (أَبْجَدٌ مُّوزِحٌ كَلِمَةٌ سَعْفَ مُفَرِّقَةٌ ثَلَّثُ ضَطْعٍ).
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: ʿalif, dāal, 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>٣</td>
<td>ﺖ</td>
<td>ﺖ</td>
<td>ﺖ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʿayn</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ghayn</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
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<tr>
<td>faa'</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
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<tr>
<td>qaa'</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
<td>ﻙ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaaf</td>
<td>ﺑ</td>
<td>ﺑ</td>
<td>ﺑ</td>
<td>ﺑ</td>
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<tr>
<td>laam</td>
<td>ﻝ</td>
<td>ﻝ</td>
<td>ﻝ</td>
<td>ﻝ</td>
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<tr>
<td>miim</td>
<td>ﻝ</td>
<td>ﻝ</td>
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<td>ﻝ</td>
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<tr>
<td>nuun</td>
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<td>haa'</td>
<td>ﺑ</td>
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<td>ﺑ</td>
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<tr>
<td>waaw</td>
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<td>ﻝ</td>
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<td>ﻝ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yaa'</td>
<td>ﻝ</td>
<td>ﻝ</td>
<td>ﻝ</td>
<td>ﻝ</td>
</tr>
</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>Stops</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>Voiceless</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>q</td>
<td>ء</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voiced</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>ء</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricates</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voiceless</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voiced</td>
<td>j</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>sh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voiceless</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>sh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voiced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laterals</td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flaps</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semivowels</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(approximants)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<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’ (b) (ب)** voiced bilabial stop; /b/ as in “big”;

3. **taa’ (t) (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 thaa’ (th) (ث) voiceless interdental fricative; /θ/ or /th/ as in “thin”;
5 jiim (j) (ح) 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”;9
6 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!”10
7 xaa’ (x) (خ) voiceless velar fricative; like the /ch/ in Bach or Scottish
loch; in some romanization systems it is represented by
/kh/;
8 daal (d) (د) voiced alveolar stop; /d/ as in “door”;
9 dhaal (dh) (ذ) voiced interdental fricative: /ð/ or /dh/ pronounced like
the /th/ in “this”;
10 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
11 zaay (z) (ز) voiced alveolar fricative: /z/ as in zip;
12 siin (s) (س) voiceless alveolar fricative: /s/ as in sang;
13 shiin (sh) (ش) voiceless palatal fricative: /ʃ/ as in ship;
14 Saad (S) (ض) voiceless velarized alveolar fricative: /s/ but pronounced
farther back in the mouth, with a raised and tensed
tongue;
15 Daad (D) (ض) voiced velarized alveolar stop: /d/ but pronounced
farther back in the mouth, with a raised and tensed
tongue;
16 Taa’ (T) (ط) voiceless velarized alveolar stop: /t/ pronounced farther
back in the mouth, with a raised and tensed tongue;

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/). Thaa’ /ث/ is the voiceless one whereas dhaal /ذ/ is voiced. In this text, the
voiceless version /θ/ is romanized as [θ], and the voiced /ð/ as [ð].
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 jiim is found, with one variant
alterning with another, especially /j/ and /zh/.
10 The nature of the pharyngeal consonants Haa’ and ʿayn 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: /dl/ 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;\(^{12}\)

voiced velar fricative: a “gargled” sound, much like French /r/;

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/ );\(^{14}\)

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

voiced nasal continuant: /n/ as in “moon”;

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

bilabial semivowel: /w/ as in “wind” or long vowel /uw/ 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’ marbuuTa, 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 /l/ as in “belle.” See Cairdner 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' 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-qat‘awi): The Arabic letter hamza (‘) is often written with what is termed a “seat,” or “chair” (kursii 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: ‘alif, waaw, and yaa’. When yaa’ 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 (‘alif, waaw, or yaa’) 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 ‘alif seat. When the vowel with hamza is a fatHa or Damma, the hamza is written on top of the ‘alif, and when the vowel with the hamza is kasra, the hamza is usually written under the ‘alif.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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mother</td>
<td>‘umm</td>
<td>أم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professor</td>
<td>‘ustaadh</td>
<td>أستاذ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where?</td>
<td>‘ayna</td>
<td>أين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bigger</td>
<td>‘akbar</td>
<td>أكبر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>‘islaam</td>
<td>إسلام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>‘iiraan</td>
<td>إيران</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16 In certain kinds of script, the hamza with kasra is split, with the hamza remaining on top of the ‘alif 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 **yaa’** seat (**yaa’** without dots). In the absence of an /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) **yaa’** seat:

- organization *hay’a* هيئة
- deputy *naa’ib* نائب
- Israel *‘israa’iil* إسرائيل
- well *bi’r* بئر
- refuge *maw’il* مويل
- he was asked *su’ila* سئل

(2) **waaw** seat:

- educator *mu’addib* معلم
- affairs *shu’un* شؤون
- he composes *yu’allif* يؤلف
- question *su’aal* سؤال
- feminine *mu’annath* موهنت

(3) ‘**alif** seat:

- visa *ta’shiira* تأشيرة
- she asked *sa’alat* سألت
- head *ra’s* رأس
- late, delayed *muta’axxir* متأخر

(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  ‘ijraa‘aat  إجراءات
attacks  ‘itidaa‘aat  اعتداءات
manliness, valor  muruu‘a  مروة
he wondered  tasaa’ala  تساءل

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  huduu‘  هدوء
port  miinaa‘  ميناء
free; innocent  barii‘  بريء

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

part  juz‘  جزء
thing  shay‘  شيء
burden  ‘ib‘  عبء

(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 fatHa gives it an ‘alif seat, a kasra gives it a yaa’ (without dots) seat, and a Damma gives it a waaw seat.

prophecy  tanabbu‘  تنبو
shore  shaafi‘  شاطئ
warm  daafi‘  دافئ
principle  mabda‘  مبدأ

(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.)  ‘aSdiqa‘-u  أصدقاء
our friends (nom.)  ‘aSdiqa‘-u-naa  أصدقاءُنا
our friends (gen.)  ُّاَسِدْقَاا ُّ-ى-نَاا
our friends (acc.)  ُّاَسِدْقَاا ُّ-ا-نَاا
he read  قَرَأ
we read  قَرَاا-نَاا
they (m.) read  قَرَاا-وَا
you (f.) are reading  تَقْرَاا-ى-ى

3.3.2 Hamza plus long /a:/ Madda

A special symbol stands for hamza followed by a long /a:/ sound: ُّاا. The symbol is called madda (‘extension’) and looks like this: ِّ. It is always written above ُّا and is sometimes referred to as ُّا 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 ُّأَسِيِّاا
final ُّأَخْرِ
mirror ُّمِرَآَا
minarets ُّمَأَتَهْتَيِن
the Qur’ān ُّال-قُرْآن
establishments ُّمُنْشَأَت
they (2 m.) began ُّبَدَاا

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 ُّاif 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

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77 It is the style in certain Arab countries to write even the third person masculine plural with hamza sitting on ُّاif, e.g., qar’a-unn. Either way is correct.
78 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.
79 The technical term for this process is aphaeresis or aphasis, 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 hamzat al-waSl nor waSla are visible in ordinary text.

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

الوزارة هناك.  
al-wizaarat-u hunaaka.  
The ministry is (over) there.  
al-munaafasat-u qawiyat-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.

هم في الوزارة.  
hum fii l-wizaarat-i.  
They are at the ministry.  
لاكن المنافسة قوية.  
laakinna l-munaafasat-a qawiyat-un.  
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  ابن
name  ism  اسم
woman  imra’a  امرأة
two  ithnaan  اثنان

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

ابني مسافر.  
ibn-ii musaafir-un.  
My son is travelling.

(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.

سافر مع ابنى.  
saafar-a ma’a bn-ii.  
He traveled with my son.

باسم الله  
bi-sm-i-llaah-i  
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 ‘alif seat remains in spelling.

انتخب الشعب رئيسا جديداً.
intaxab-a l-sha‘b-u raʾiis-an jadiid-an.
The people elected a new president.

وانتخب الشعب رئيسا جديداً.
wa-intaxab-a l-sha‘b-u raʾiis-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 ‘alif seat remains.

استمتع. فاستمتع.
istamić. fa-stamić.
Listen. So listen.

اقرأ هذه الكلمات.
iqra‘ haadhihi l-kalimaat-i.
Read these words. And read these words.

wa-qa‘ haadhihi l-kalimaat-i.

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 ‘alif Tawiila. For example:

studio isṭuudyuu
strategic isṭraatiijīyy
stable; barn isTabl

3.4 taa‘ marbuuTa (تاء مربوطة)

3.4.1 Spelling
The taa‘ marbuuTa is a spelling variant of regular taa‘. 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 haa’ with two dots over it.
### 3.4.2 Meaning and use

In most cases, 

**taa' marbu'uta** 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’ marbu’uta*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ambassador (m./f.)</td>
<td>safiir/safiira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>king/queen</td>
<td>mulik/malika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prince/princess</td>
<td>'amiir/'amiira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student (m./f.)</td>
<td>Taalib/Taaliba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>storm</td>
<td>'auSifa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>island</td>
<td>jaziira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>culture</td>
<td>thaqaafa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flower</td>
<td>zahra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to showing feminine gender on nouns, *taa’ marbu’uta* also shows feminine gender on adjectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>munaZZama duwaliyya</td>
<td>al-Taaliba 1-muslima</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an international organization</td>
<td>the Muslim student (f.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FurSa sa‘tiida</td>
<td>mamlaka mustaqilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a happy occasion</td>
<td>an independent kingdom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.4.3 Pronunciation

In pronunciation, *taa’ marbu’uta* 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’ marbu’uta* is that it is always preceded by an /a/ sound, usually short /a/ (fathHa), but sometimes, long /aa/ (‘alif).
3.4.3.1 FULL FORM: In full form pronunciation, the taa’ marbu’Ta plus final inflectional vowel is pronounced as /j/:

شَبِكَةُ مَعْلُوماتٍ يَوْمِيَةٍ
shabkat-un ma‘luumaatiyyat-un
information network

فِي حَيَاتِ طَوْلِيَةٍ
fii Hayaat-in Tawilat-in
in a long lifetime

الْجَامِعَةُ الْوَطَنِيَةُ
al-jaami‘at-u l-waTaniyyat-u
the national university

عَاصِمَةُ الْبَلَدِ
‘aaSimat-u l-balad-i
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’ marbu’Ta. In most pause form situations, the pronunciation of taa’ marbu’Ta 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’ marbu’Ta.²⁰

a democratic republic  jumhuuriyya dimuqraatiyya
جُمُهُورِيَةٌ دِمَوْقَرَاتِيَّةٍ

a large island  jaziira kabiira
جَزِيرَةٌ كَبِيرَةٌ

(1) Exceptions:

(1.1) If the taa’ marbu’Ta is preceded by a long /aa/, pronunciation of the /j/ in pause form is optional:

life  Hayaat or Hayaa(h)
حَيَاةٍ

young woman  fataat or fataa(h)
فَتَاةٍ

equality  musaawaat or musaawaa(h)
مُساوَةٌ

²⁰ For pronunciation of taa’ marbu’Ta 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\(^3\) marbu\(\text{u}^3\)Ta is the first term of an annexation structure (*iDaafa*), the taa\(^3\) is usually pronounced, even in pause form:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{مدينة} & \text{قصة} \\
\text{madinat dimashq} & \text{qi\(\text{SS}^7\)at Hubb}
\end{array}
\]

(both words in pause form)

the city of Damascus

a love story

3.5 Consonant doubling (gemination): *tashdiid* 

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: 

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:

- freedom *Hurriyya* 
- pomegranate *rummaan* 
- to appoint *'ayyana* 
- love *Hubb* 
- doubt *shakk*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freedom</th>
<th>Hurriyya</th>
<th>Surgeon</th>
<th>JarraaH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pomegranate</td>
<td>Rummaan</td>
<td>Very</td>
<td>Jidd-an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To appoint</td>
<td>'Ayyna</td>
<td>Pilgrimage</td>
<td>Hajj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Hubb</td>
<td>To sing</td>
<td>Ghannaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doubt</td>
<td>Shakk</td>
<td>To destroy</td>
<td>Xarraba</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*\(^3\), 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.
rule of pronunciation and does not affect the meaning of a word. For example, the
\[ /l/ \] of the definite article [\( \text{al-} \)] 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”
one and three “short”: \( /\text{ii}/ \) and \( /\text{ii}/, /\text{uu}/ \) and \( /\text{u}/, /\text{aa}/ \) and \( /\text{a}/ \). 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 ‘\( \text{alif} \)’, ‘\( \text{waaw} \)’ and ‘\( \text{yaa’} \)’. 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 \( /\text{aa}/ \) and \( /\text{a}/ \), 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 sev-
eral different spelling variants and the letters ‘\( \text{waaw} \)’ and ‘\( \text{yaa’} \)’ 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>/\text{ii}/</td>
<td>/\text{u}/</td>
<td>/\text{u}/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>/\text{a}/</td>
<td></td>
<td>/\text{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 \( /\text{aa}/ \) 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 \(\text{‘alif} \) 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 \(\text{‘alif} \). There are three variations of the letter \(\text{‘alif} \):

- \(\text{‘alif qaSiira} \) (‘dagger\ ‘alif),
- \(\text{‘alif maqSuura} \) (‘shortened\ ‘alif) and
- regular \(\text{‘alif} \) (‘alif Tawiila – ‘tall\ ‘alif). These variants are not optional but are determined by derivational etymology and spelling conventions.

### 4.2.1.3 \(\text{‘alif Tawiila} \) ظُرِيْفَةٌ. This is the standard form of \(\text{‘alif} \). It is a non-connecting letter written into the word:

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

   (1) **\(\text{‘alif Tawiila} \) with hamza and short vowel:**

   - four \(\text{‘arba‘a} \)
   - brothers \(\text{‘ixwaan} \)
   - pipe \(\text{‘unbuub} \)

   (2) **\(\text{‘alif Tawiila} \) with madda:**

   - August \(\text{‘aab} \)
   - instrument \(\text{‘aala} \)
   - other (m.) \(\text{‘aaxar} \)
(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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>north; left</td>
<td>شمَال</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she said</td>
<td>قَالَت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>side</td>
<td>جَانِب</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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”).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>peace</td>
<td>سَلَام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>الأردن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>لا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>here</td>
<td>هَنَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>مَالَطا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this (m.)</td>
<td>هَذَا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>welcome</td>
<td>أَهْلَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomorrow</td>
<td>غَدَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thanks</td>
<td>سُكْرا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greatly</td>
<td>كَثِيرَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very</td>
<td>جَدَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finally</td>
<td>أَخِيرَا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.\(^{23}\)

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:

- God  
  allaah  الله
- god  
  'ilaah  إله
- this (m.)  
  haadha  هذا
- this (f.)  
  haadhihi  هذي
dhulaa'i  هولاء
- that (m.)  
  dhaalika  ذلك
- thus  
  haakadhaa  فكذا
- but  
  laakinna  لكن

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:

Leila  laylaa  ليلى
Mona  munaa  مونى

\(^{23}\) 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: *'ilaal* 

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.

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

- Mustawan: *mustawaa-hu* 
- Quraan: *quraa-naa* 
- Ramaa: *ramaa* 
- Ramaa-haa: *ramaa-haa* 

Certain function words spelled with 'alif maqSuura shift from 'alif to a diph-thongized *yaar* when they receive pronoun suffixes:24

- With, at: *laday-haa* 
- To, toward: *‘ilaal* 
- To them (m.): *‘alay-kum* 
- To, toward: *‘ilaal* 
- To them (m.): *‘alay-kum* 

### 4.2.2 Semivowels/semi-consonants waaw and yaa2

The letters waaw and yaa2 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.”25 The Arabic /ii/ sound symbolized by *yaa*2 is like the /i/ in English “machine.” The /uu/ sound symbolized by *waaw* is like the /u/ in “rule.”

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 waaw: The letter waaw represents either the sound of \(/w/\) or the long vowel \(/uu/\). For example, in the following words, it is \(/w/\):

- boy \(\text{walad}\)
- season \(\text{mawsim}\)
- state \(\text{wilaaya}\)
- first \(\text{'awwal}\)

And in the following it is \(/uu/\):

- breakfast \(\text{faTuur}\)
- light \(\text{nuur}\)
- entry \(\text{duxuul}\)
- forbidden \(\text{mamnuu}\)

4.2.2.2 THE SOUNDS OF yaa: The letter 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 \(\text{yaman}\)
- white \(\text{'abyaD}\)
- day \(\text{yawm}\)

In the following words it is pronounced as \(/ii/\):

- elephant \(\text{fiil}\)
- dune \(\text{kathiib}\)
- religion \(\text{diin}\)

4.3 Short vowels and sukuun (al-Harakaat wa l-sukuun \(\text{الحركات والسكون}\))

The set of three short vowels consists of the sounds \(/a/, /i/, \text{and } /u/\). 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 (\(\text{Huruuf}^{\prime}\)) but as “movements” (\(\text{Harakaat}\)). 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’ān and children’s schoolbooks. In the Qur’ān, 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: فتحة 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>رَقَضَت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mint</td>
<td>نَعْنِع</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2 kasra: كسرة 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>فيفل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skin</td>
<td>جِلَد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apricots</td>
<td>مِشْمِش</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.3 Damma: ضمة 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>مَدْنِي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ear</td>
<td>عُدْحَن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quarter</td>
<td>رُبْع</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.4 Absence of vowel: sukun سكون
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 sukun (‘silence’) which looks like a mini-zero (’) placed directly above the consonant.
As with the short vowel indicators, the sukun is invisible in ordinary script. It is shown here in the following examples:

room ghurfa غرفنا we drink nashrab نشرب

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 sukun 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.

nasharat-ı l-jariidat-u l-ıxaabar-a. hal-ı ntahaah 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:

istaqbal-ı l-hum-u l-bi’that-u l-rasmiyyat-u.
The official delegation met them.

ya-’tabir-una-kum-u l-ruwwad-a.27
They consider you (m. pl.) the pioneers.

hal-ı shtaray-tum-u l-Ta’aam-u?28
Did you (m. pl.) buy the food?

---

27 Phonetically, ya-’tabir-una-kum-u r-ruwwad-a.
28 Phonetically, hal-ı shtaray-tum-u T-ta’aam-u? 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 waaw AS HELPING VOWEL: A special case of a long helping vowel /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 /uu/ is inserted as a buffer between the subject marker on the verb and the object pronoun:

هل نشرتموها؟
hal nashar-tum-uu-haa?
Did you (m. pl.) publish it?

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

من الكويت من الغرب
min-a l-kuwayt-i  min-a l-gharb-i
from Kuwait from the west

من النهاهاء الحرب من اسمنا
min-i nithaa-i l-Harb-i  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 /aw/, /ay/, /iy/, and /uw/. The sequences */iw/ and */uy/ are usually prohibited.

4.4.1 Diphthongs

4.4.1.1 /aw/ (PRONOUNCED LIKE THE “ow” IN “power”)29

above  fawqa فوق  almonds  lawz  لوز
pine-nuts  Sanawbar  صنوبر  appointment  maw‘id  موعد

4.4.1.2 /ay/ (PRONOUNCED LIKE ENGLISH “eye,” OR “aye”)30

egg  bayDa بيضة  car  sayyaara  سيارة
in change  ghayyar  غير  night  layl  ليلى

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

30 Again, in less formal Arabic and colloquial Arabic, the diphthong /ay/ changes to the long vowel /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>Arab (f.)</th>
<th>'arabiyya</th>
<th>Egyptians</th>
<th>miSriyy-uun</th>
<th>مصريون</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>denied</td>
<td>manfiyy</td>
<td>yearly</td>
<td>sanawiyy-an</td>
<td>سنويًا</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>
<th>عدو</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>youth</td>
<td>futuwwa</td>
<td>height</td>
<td>'uluww</td>
<td>علو</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’lis-u Jumhuuriyyat-i ‘ilaa l-‘aasiymat-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 وقف (‘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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>capital</th>
<th>‘aaSima</th>
<th>عاصمة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>university</td>
<td>jaami’a</td>
<td>جامعة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organization</td>
<td>munaZZama</td>
<td>منظمة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘aaSima’</td>
<td>jaami’at bayruut</td>
<td>جامعة بيروت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the capital of Oman</td>
<td>the university of Beirut</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>‘anaa</th>
<th>أنا</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>week</td>
<td>‘usbuu”</td>
<td>أسبوع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if</td>
<td>‘idhaa</td>
<td>إذا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31. Final short vowel /t/ 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: 

\[ \text{fahimt 'I understood'} \quad \text{or} \quad \text{ista'malt 'I used'} \]

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, -diit, -ras, -tab

### 6.2 Additional pause form pronunciation syllables

   - 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: 

\[ \text{Haajj ‘pilgrim’}, \quad \text{SjL> maadda, ‘substance,’} \quad \text{kaaffa ‘entirety,’} \quad \text{saamm ‘poisonous,’} \quad \text{jaajf ‘dry,’} \quad \text{aamm ‘public; general,’} \quad \text{xaasS ‘private; special,’} \quad \text{or} \quad \text{Haarr ‘hot.’} \]

Some borrowed words also contain this sequence, such as \[ \text{maakyuu ‘radio.’} \]

\(^35\) 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: 'ilaa إلى we: naHnu نحن
- what: maadhaa ماذا they visited: zaaruu زاروا
- she: hiya هي here: hunaا هنا

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 جهود
- students (acc.): Tullaaban طلابا
- they taught her: darrasuulhaa درسوها
- they (f.) write: yaktubna يكتب
- you (m. pl.) worked: 'amiltum عملتم

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: 'aaSimatun عاصمة
- all of us: kullunaا كلنا
- a library (nom.): maktabatun مكتبة
- he tries: yulHawaalу يحاول
- Palestinian (f.): filasTiiniyyatun فلسطينية
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: jaami‘atun
- our university: jaami‘atunaa
- office: maktabun
- his office: maktabihu
- we studied: darasnaa
- we studied it (f.): darasnaahaa

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: waziir
- boundaries: Huduud
- discussions: mubaabHathaat
- I tried: Haawalt

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: arabiyy
- official: ra’iiyy
- 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 Cvv 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>official</th>
<th>ra‘īisii</th>
<th>Retnìsi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>‘arabii</td>
<td>Bedouin</td>
<td>badawii</td>
<td>Badawìi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2.2.2 PAUSE FORM CHANGE IN STRESS FOR CERTAIN WORDS SPELLED WITH taa’ marbu’uTa: In pause form, taa’ marbu’uTa, 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 taa’ marbu’uTa 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 taa’ marbu’uTa 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 taa’ marbu’uTa 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 al-

8.1.1 Spelling
The definite article in Arabic is spelled with '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 (al-). It is a proclitic particle, i.e., always attached to a word - either a noun or an adjective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Pronounced</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the sheikh</td>
<td>al-shaykh</td>
<td>al-shaykh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the night</td>
<td>al-layla</td>
<td>al-layla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the genie</td>
<td>al-finnii</td>
<td>al-finnii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the women</td>
<td>al-nisaa'</td>
<td>al-nisaa'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.1.2 Pronunciation
In general, the definite article is pronounced “al” but many speakers shorten the /a/ sound so that it sounds more like “el” (as in English “elbow”). It is spelled with elidable hamza (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 laam of the definite article is actually the final vowel of the preceding word (see also above under hamzat al-waSl).

8.1.2.1 SUN AND MOON LETTERS
(1) Sun Letters (Huruf shamsiyya (حروف شمسية)): Certain sounds assimilate or absorb the sound of the laam in the definite article. These sounds or letters are called “sun letters” (Huruf shamsiyya). When a word begins with one of these sounds, the 'alif-laam of the definite article is written, but the 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 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.

<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>التِجَارة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the culture</td>
<td>ath-thaqafa</td>
<td>الثقافة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Pronounced</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the religion</td>
<td>ad-dīn</td>
<td>الدّين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the gold</td>
<td>adh-dhahab</td>
<td>الدّهّب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the lord</td>
<td>ar-rabb</td>
<td>الرب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the flowers</td>
<td>az-zuhur</td>
<td>الزّهور</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the secret</td>
<td>as-sīr</td>
<td>السّر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the sun</td>
<td>ash-shams</td>
<td>الشمس</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the wool</td>
<td>aS-Suuf</td>
<td>الصوف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the noise</td>
<td>aD-Dajja</td>
<td>الضّجة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the doctor</td>
<td>aT-Tabiib</td>
<td>الطبيب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the shadow</td>
<td>aZ-Zill</td>
<td>الظلّ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the clothing</td>
<td>al-libaas</td>
<td>اللباس</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the light</td>
<td>an-nuur</td>
<td>النور</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Moon letters (*Hurūf qamariyya* كتابة قمرية): “Moon letters” do not absorb the /l/ of the definite article. The moon letters are:

\[ \text{أ ب ج خ غ ف ق ك م ه و ي} \]

*hamza, baa', jiim, Haa', xaa', 'ayn, ghayn, faa', qaaf, kaaf, miim, haa', waaw, yaa'*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Pronounced</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>al-'islaam</td>
<td>الإسلام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the bedouin</td>
<td>al-badw</td>
<td>البدو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the pocket</td>
<td>al-jayb</td>
<td>الجيب</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

<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>الحظ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the mustard</td>
<td>al-xardal</td>
<td>الحَرْدَل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Arabs</td>
<td>al-'arab</td>
<td>العرب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the west</td>
<td>al-gharb</td>
<td>الغَرَب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the pepper</td>
<td>al-filfil</td>
<td>الفِلْفَل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the moon</td>
<td>al-qamar</td>
<td>القَمَر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the treasure</td>
<td>al-kanz</td>
<td>الكَنْز</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the center</td>
<td>al-markaz</td>
<td>المَكْرَز</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the engineering</td>
<td>al-handasa</td>
<td>الـهِدَّاسَة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the ministry</td>
<td>al-wizaara</td>
<td>الـوِزَارَة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the hand</td>
<td>al-yad</td>
<td>الـيَد</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.1.2.2 SUMMARY: SUN AND MOON LETTERS: The Arabic alphabet, or inventor 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 transliteration systems (Library of Congress, for example), when written Arab romanized into Latin letters, the definite article is spelled “al” even though pronunciation the /l/ may be assimilated. That is the case in the romanization of this text.

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

\(^{38}\) 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)  
\[\text{bayt}-u-n\]  
\[\text{بيت}

a house (genitive)  
\[\text{bayt}-i-n\]  
\[\text{بيت}

a house (accusative)  
\[\text{bayt}-a-n\]  
\[\text{بيتة}

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

place  
\[\text{makaan}-an\]  
\[\text{مكاناً}

bridge  
\[\text{jisr}-an\]  
\[\text{جسرًا}

many  
\[\text{kathiir}-an\]  
\[\text{كثيراً}

In words spelled with taa’ marbu’ta, the nunation sits atop the final letter and the accusative nunation does not require an ‘alif chair. This is also the case in words that end with hamza preceded by a long vowel.

an embassy (nominative)  
\[\text{sifaarat}-u-n\]  
\[\text{سفارة}

an embassy (genitive)  
\[\text{sifaarat}-i-n\]  
\[\text{سفارة}

an embassy (accusative)  
\[\text{sifaarat}-a-n\]  
\[\text{سفارة}

an evening (nominative)  
\[\text{masaa‘}-u-n\]  
\[\text{مساء}

an evening (genitive)  
\[\text{masaa‘}-i-n\]  
\[\text{مساء}

an evening (accusative)  
\[\text{masaa‘}-a-n\]  
\[\text{مساء}

\(^{39}\) Certain “defective” nouns use ‘alif maqSuura as a seat for the fatHataan in both the nominative and the accusative cases, e.g., معنى ‘meaning’ or مقهى ‘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."\(^1\)

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.\(^2\) 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.\(^3\)

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.\(^4\) 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”

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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.
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

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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 سارف صرف and النحو 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 سارف 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, ishtiqaq, 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,” “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 \( \text{katab-a (v.)} \)
- he corresponded \( \text{kaatab-a (v.)} \)
- it was written \( \text{kutib-a (v.)} \)
- book \( \text{kitaab (n.)} \)
- books \( \text{kutub (n.)} \)
- writer; (adj.) writing \( \text{kaatib (n.)} \)
- writers \( \text{kuttaab (n.)} \)
- write! (2 m.s.) \( \text{uktub\(_{\text{fjik}}\) (v.)} \)

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 \( \text{maktab (n.)} \)
- offices; desks \( \text{makaatib (n.)} \)
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-h/) 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 /h/. 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 h-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 tIfn ‘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.
field that actual words come into existence, each one crystallizing into a specific lexical item. The number of lexical roots in Arabic has been estimated between 5,000 and 6,500.\(^{10}\)

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 *mu̯* for many participles, the prefix *ma-* for a noun of place, or the relative adjective suffix */-tyy/\(^{14}\). Consonants that are included in Arabic pattern formation are: */\̣/ (hamza), */t/ (taa‘), */m/ (miim), */n/ (nuun), */s/ (siin), */y/ (yaa‘), and */w/ (waaw).\(^{15}\) These consonants may be used as prefixes, suffixes or even infixes.\(^{16}\) One further component of patterning is gemination or doubling of a consonant. Therefore, the components of MSA pattern-formation include: six vowels (three long: */aː/, */iː/, */uː/; three short: */a/, */i/, and */u/); seven consonants (*∗, t, m, n, s, y, w); and the process of gemination.\(^ {17}\)

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

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\(^{10}\) Kouloughli (1994, 60) cites about 6,500 lexical roots found in a dictionary of 50,000 lexical items. Greenberg (1950) bases his study of lexical 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 *iftama‘-a* ‘to meet,’ from the root *j-m-* ‘gathering together.’ Another example is the infixing of *waaw* in the word *shawaart*, the plural of *shaaart* ‘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‘altumunifhaa* سألتمونيها '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 kaṭṭib ‘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:

قابِلنا كاتِياً.

qaabal-naa kaṭṭib-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.
Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

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)
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-SawTiy, 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)
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 1-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

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,’ ‘ilaa, ‘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 kumbyutir ‘computer.’

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

6 Inflation: an overview of grammatical categories in Arabic
The term “inflation” 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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10 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 bnuuk, 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.22

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.23

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 (‘anaa, 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

22 In his description of “the states (tenses) of the verb” in Classical Arabic, Wright (1967, 1:51) 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-maadDir الماضي الحال or al-HaadDir) and the present (al-Haal الحاضر) 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' m предназначен and 'spirit' ruuH (see Chapter 7 for further discussion).
familiar.\textsuperscript{25} 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.\textsuperscript{26} 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.\textsuperscript{27} 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.\textsuperscript{28} 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 (\textit{al}) which is not independent but is prefixed to nouns and adjectives; the definiteness marker is an affix (-\textit{n}), normally suffixed to the case-marking vowel on nouns and adjectives; thus, \textit{al-bayt-u} (‘the house’ – nominative, definite), but \textit{bayt-u-n} (‘a house’ – nominative, indefinite). The suffixed [-\textit{n}] sound is not written with the

\textsuperscript{25} In English, there are some words that refer specifically to two items such as “both” and “pair.”

\textsuperscript{26} For example, a diptote word such as \textit{wazarat} ‘ministers’ will show the genitive marker as \textit{fatHa}, not \textit{kasar}, because of the nature of its morphological pattern: \textit{CuCaCu}.\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{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).

\textsuperscript{28} Traditional Arabic grammar deals with case inflections as a category of syntax (\textit{natiHw}) rather than morphology (\textit{Sarj}).
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.  

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. 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.

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 diphtotes). 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 -on, which is often written into the script with an 'alif and two fatHas.

29 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).

30 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/. 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 marfuu, and accusative and subjunctive are considered another: naSa 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.33

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.
Basic Arabic sentence structures

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

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.
In his four-volume grammar of modern Arabic, al-naHw al-waafii, Abbaas Hasan defines ‘aamil as “what supervenes on a word and thereby affects its ending by making it nominative/indicative, accusative/subjunctive, genitive, or jussive” (maa ya-dxul-u ‘alaa l-kalimat-i fa-yu'-aththir-u fi 'aaxir-i-haa bi-l-ra'af ‘i, 'aw-i l-naSb-i, 'aw-i l-jarr-i ‘aw-i l-jazm-i).\footnote{Hasan 1987, I:441. The definition is given in an extensive footnote that describes the types of 'aamil.}

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.\footnote{Sometimes the governor is an abstraction ('aamil ma'nawiiyy عامل معنويي, such as the concept "subject of an equational sentence" (ibtidaa' إبتداء). 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 laFziiy 'overt governor' and 'aamil ma'nawiiy 'abstract governor.'}

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.\footnote{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.}

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
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 قريه صغيرة. 

The world [is] a small village.

الطريق طويل. 

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."

al-karaz-u ʾaHmar-u. Cherries [are] red.

al-riyaḥ-u januubiyyat-un sharqiyyat-un muʿ tadilat-un. The winds [are] moderate southeasterly.

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


kull-u-ḥaa ʾaflaam-un siyaasiyyat-un. All of them [are] political films.

(3) **Pronoun/adjective or adjective phrase**:

huwa dhakiyy-un. He [is] intelligent.

hiya ʾamrikiyy-un min ʿaSl-in ʿarabiyy-in. She [is] an American of Arab origin.

(4) **Pronoun/noun**:

ʿanti Sadiqqat-ii. You (f.) [are] my friend.

huwa xabiir-un. He [is] an expert.

naHn-u ʿarab-un. We [are] Arabs.

(5) **Demonstrative pronoun/noun**:

haadhaa daftar-ii. This [is] my notebook.

haadhīhi tajribat-un muḥimmat-un. This [is] an important experiment.

(6) **Demonstrative pronoun/adjective or adjective phrase**:

haadhaa ghayr-u SaHiiH-in. This [is] untrue.

haadhaa jadiid-un. This [is] new.

(7) **Noun/noun or noun/noun phrase**:


al-ziraʾat-u lughat-un ʿaalamiyyat-un. Agriculture [is] a world language.
(8) Noun/prepositional phrase:

الحمد لله.  
al-Hamd-u l-lIlaah-i.  
Praise [be] to God.

السلام عليكم.  
al-salaam-u 'alay-kum.  
Peace [be] upon you.

(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.

هنا حمامًا.  
hunaal Hammaam-u-naa.  
Here [is] our bathroom.

بينهما سيدتان.  
bayn-a-huma sayyidat-aani.  
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.

له أربع أرجل.  
lala-haa 3arba'-u 3arjul-in.  
They have ('to-them are’) four legs.

(11) Existential predications: “there is/there are”

(11.1) With hunaaka “there is; there are”:

هنا موضوعان مهمان.  
hunaaka mawDuw'-aani muhim-m-aani.  
There [are] two important topics.

هنا عوامل كثيرة.  
hunaaka 'awaamil-u kathiirat-un.  
There [are] many factors.

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

فثمة قيمة مختلفة.  
fa-thammat-a qiyaam-un muktalifat-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.\(^8\) The pronoun agrees with the subject (or \textit{mubtada}') in gender and number:

الأهم هو العودة.
\textit{al-muhimm-u huwa l-awdat-u.}
The important [thing] \textit{is} to return ("returning").

الأهم هو العمل.
\textit{al-muhimm-u huwa l-amal-u.}
The important [thing] \textit{is} work.

الأم هي نموذج كل النساء.
\textit{al-'umm-u hiya namuudhaj-u kull-i nisaa'i.}
The mother \textit{is} the model for all women.

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(13)] \textbf{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.
\textit{al-masihiyat-u wa-l-islam-u 'aSl-u-humaa waaHid-un.}
Christianity and Islam \textit{are from} one source ("their \textit{source} is \textit{one}").

\item[(14)] \textbf{Negation of verbless sentences:} Verbless sentences are usually made negative with the use of the verb \textit{lays-a} 'to not be' (see Chapter 37 for further description of \textit{lays-a}). When \textit{lays-a} is used, it changes the predicate of the sentence from the nominative case to the accusative case.\(^9\)

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(14.1)] \textbf{Positive statement:} \textit{You are our friend.}
\textit{yanti Sadiqat-u-naa.}
\textbf{Negation:} \textit{You are not our friend.}
\textit{las-ti Sadiqat-a-naa.}

\item[(14.2)] \textbf{Positive statement:} \textit{He is an expert.}
\textit{huwa xabiir-un.}
\textbf{Negation:} \textit{He is not an expert.}
\textit{lays-a xabiir-an.}
\end{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}

\(^8\) 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 	extit{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 طويلاً.  
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:  
سكتون 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.  

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.

2.2.3 Intransitive verbs (al-*af* ‘aal ghayr al-muta’addiya; al-*af* ‘aal al-laazima)

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

- They lived in Arab countries. 
- Snow falls on the mountains. 
  (*aash-uufii l-bilaad-i l-’arabiyyat-i. ya-Hil-u l-thalj-u *’alaaj l-jibaal-i.*

2.2.4 Transitive verbs (al-*af* ‘aal al-muta’addiya)

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

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.
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.\(^\text{11}\)

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.\(^\text{12}\) Thus a dual or plural noun subject when it follows the verb, does not influence verb inflection for number.\(^\text{13}\)

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.

\(^{11}\) See Parkinson 1981 for a study of word-order shift in MSA.

\(^{12}\) 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.

\(^{13}\) 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.¹⁵ Technically, this word order converts a jumla fi'ilya (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.
A great many of them are traveling on an organized tour.

May God keep you safe.

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

(And) there are also young women who play (‘practice’) soccer.

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:

France warns Islamic activists.

Lead sentence: VSO:

France yesterday warned Islamic extremists.

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.

¹⁶ See Watson’s (1999) article on the syntax of Arabic headlines for more on this topic.
العرب كانت لهم علاقة بحياة إسبانيا.
\( \text{al-}'\text{arab-u kaan-at la-hum} '\text{alaaqat-un bi-Hayaat-i} '\text{isbaanyaa}. \)
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.
\( '\text{ammaa haadhihi l-furSat-u fa-laa na-jid-u-haa} '\text{fllaa fii l-qaahirat-i}. \)
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.
\( HaDar-a l-liqaa\^2-a '\text{adad-un min} '\text{aSHAab-i} l-ixtiSaaS-i. \)
A number of specialists attended the meeting.
('Attended the meeting a number of specialists.')

غُطِّى أحداثها عشرون ألف صفحي.
\( ghaTiaa 'affidaath-a-haa '\text{ishruuna} '\text{alf-a} SuHufiyy-in. \)
Twenty thousand reporters covered its events.
('Covered its events twenty thousand reporters.')

سيشارك في الندوة عدد من الأساتذة.
\( sa-yu-shaarik-u fii l-nadwat-i '\text{adad-un min-a} l-\text{asaatidhat-i}. \)
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.

يغادرون القاهرة اليوم متوجهها إلى باريس وقد مصر.
\( yu-ghaadiru l-qaahirat-a l-yawm-a mutawajjih-an '\text{ila} baarits waJd-un miSriyy-un. \)
An Egyptian delegation left Cairo today heading for Paris.
('Left Cairo today heading for Paris an Egyptian delegation.')

وغادر عثمان أمس مساعد وزير الخارجية.
\( wa-ghaadara 'ammaan-a '\text{ams-i musaa'id-u waziir-i} l-xaarijiyyat-i. \)

\(^{17}\) In this sentence, the object (al-qaahirat-a), a short adverb (l-yawm-a), and an adverbial phrase (mutawajjih-an 'ila baarits) '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 إنجازا تاريخيا كبيرا.
The Omani considered this step a great historical accomplishment.

أعطتهم تمرينات.
‘a’T-at-hum tamriinaat-in.
She gave them exercises.

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

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

ناشدوه القيام بدون.
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.

shaahad-dunyaa jamii‘-an.
He saw the world [as] beautiful.

tarak-‘baab-‘a maftuuH-‘an.
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:

tuwwij-‘a baTal-‘an.
The athlete was crowned champion.

tuwwij-‘a l-la‘ib-‘u baTal-‘an.
The athlete was crowned champion.

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 li- or ‘ilaa is possible. It is only permissible, however, if the beneficiary noun follows the direct object, e.g.:

‘uuyin-‘a Tabilb-‘an xaaSS-‘an li-l-xaliifat-i.
He was appointed [as] special physician to the Caliph.

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.
أعطت البنت الكتاب.
\( 'a\text{Tay-tu l-bint-a l-kitaab-a} \).
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 تمرينات.
\( 'a\text{Tat-hum tamrii'naat-in} \).
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 \( i'tabara \).  
يعتبرونهم نجومهم المفضلين.
\( ya'tabiru'na-hum nujuum-a-hum-u l-mufa'Dal-ina \).
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.
عبّيناها سفيرة.
\( 'ayyan-uu-haa safiirat-an \).
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’).  

19 This group has a special designation in Arabic called \( 'af'aal al-yalib, 'af'aal qalibiyya or 'af'aal qalibah \) ‘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.
darrasa-nii l-taariix-a.
He taught me history.

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.

ya-qDii layaalti-hi fii l-Salaat-i.
He spends his nights in prayer.

ghaadar-a l-qaahirat-a 3ams-i l-safiir-u l-3amriikyy-u l-jadid-u.
The new American ambassador left Cairo yesterday.

ta-nm-uu bi-buT3-in.
They grow slowly.

 affirming what he said 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.
Basic Arabic sentence structures

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Basic Arabic sentence structures

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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 (kaana wa-‘axawaat-‘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. 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." 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. 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.

1 In traditional Arabic grammar, the termisman ‘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 ‘ala ma’nan fii nafs-thi, wa-daysa l-zaman-u juz’-an min-haa; ‘a word indicating a meaning in itself and not containing any reference to time’ (‘Abd 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, 1:267 has a useful chart of noun types: “Tableau du développement morphologique en arabe.”
1 Verbal noun (al-maSdar المصدر)

Verbal nouns are systematically related to specific verb forms and can come from triliteral or quadriliteral roots. The verbal noun or maSdar names the action denoted by its corresponding verb, for example, wuSuul وصول 'arrival' from the Form I verb waSal-a وصل 'to arrive,' or 3idaara إدارة 'administration; management' from the Form IV verb ’adaara اداره 'to manage, direct.' Each maSdar 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' بناه '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 1–X and for quadriliterals 1–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, 1:110–12); Ziadeh and Winder (1957, 71–72) list eighteen of the most commonly

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5 The Arabic term maSdar/maSaadir 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 maSdar is much closer in meaning to an infinitive, but it is not used as a citation form in Arabic.

7 ‘Abd al-Latif, ‘Umar, and Zahran state that "The verbal nouns of the base form are many and varied and cannot be known except by resorting to language [reference] books" maSadar-ul-hulaaathiyi kathirat-un wa-mutanawwa‘at-un laa tu‘rafu ‘ilaa bi-l-rujuu‘-i 4 ‘ilaa kutubi Hughat-i (1997, 83),
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>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>swimming</td>
<td>sibaaHa</td>
<td>(fi’aala)</td>
<td>سباحة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>invitation</td>
<td>da‘wa</td>
<td>(fa’la)</td>
<td>دعوة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forgiveness</td>
<td>ghufraan</td>
<td>(fu’laan)</td>
<td>غفران</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clarity</td>
<td>wuDuuH</td>
<td>(fu’uul)</td>
<td>وضوح</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bravery</td>
<td>buTuula</td>
<td>(fu’uula)</td>
<td>بطوله</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>honor</td>
<td>sharaf</td>
<td>(fa’al)</td>
<td>شرف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glory</td>
<td>majd</td>
<td>(fa’l)</td>
<td>مجد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>part</td>
<td>juz°</td>
<td>(fa’l)</td>
<td>جزء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blessing</td>
<td>baraka</td>
<td>(fa’ala)</td>
<td>بركة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>ma’rifa</td>
<td>(maf’ila)</td>
<td>معرفة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.1.2 Form II

Patterns: *taf’iil* تَفْعَيْل and (for defective roots, especially) *taf’ila* تَفْعَيْل; occasionally *taf’ила* تَفْعَيْل. Less common variants include *taf’aal* تَفْعَال or *tif’aal* تَفْعَال.

<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* مَفْعَالْa and *fi’aal* فَعَال

<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>difaad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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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'aal إفْعَال; for hollow verb roots 'ifaala إفْعَالا; for defectives, 'if‘aa إفْعَاء

- exportation ٣iSdaar إسْدَار
- preparation ٣i‘daad إِدَاد
- administration ٣idaara إِدَارَة
- abolition ٣ilghaa إِلْغَاء

1.1.5 Form V
Pattern: tafa'ul تَفَعُّل; for defectives tafaa‘-in تَفَعَّل

- tension tawattur نَوْتر
- delay ta'axxur تَأخَر
- behavior taSarruf تِصرف
- challenge taHadd-in تَحْدِ
- wish, desire tamann-in تَنْمِ

1.1.6 Form VI
Pattern: tafa’ul تَفَعُّل; for defectives tafaa‘-in تَفَعَّل

- disparity tafaawut نَفَاعُت
- mutual exchange tabaadul تَبَادِل
- rivalry tanaafus تَنافِس
- meeting, encounter talaaq-in تَلَاق
- avoidance tafaad-in تَفَافَ

1.1.7 Form VII
Pattern: infi‘aal انْفَعَال; hollow verb roots, infiyaal انْفِيَاال; for defectives, inf‘aa انْفِعَاء

- reflection in‘ikaas اِنْكَاس
- preoccupation inshighaal اِنشَغَال
- compliance inqyaad انْقِيَاد
- elapsing inqiDaa انْقَضَاء
1.1.8 Form VIII

- acquisition: *iktisaab* إكْتِيَاب
- election: *intixaab* انتِخَاب
- choosing: *ixtiyaar* اخْتِيَار
- beginning: *ibtidaa* إبْتِداء

1.1.9 Form IX
Pattern: *iRilaal* افْتِلال

- greenness: *ixDiraar* إخْضَرَار
- reddening: *ichmiraar* إخْمَرَار
- crookedness: *iwijaaj* إعوجاج

1.1.10 Form X
Pattern: *istif’aal* استِفْعَاءٌ: hollow root, *istifaala* استِفْعَاءٌ: defective, *istif’a’* استِفْعَاءٌ

- readiness: *istif’daad* إسْتِعْداد
- investment: *istithmaar* إسْتِثْماَر
- benefit: *istifaada* إسْتِفَادَة
- exception: *istithnaa* إسْتِئْنَاء

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 Quadrilateral root verbal nouns
Verbal nouns from quadrilateral verbs are primarily from Forms I, II, and IV of those verbs, as follows:

1.2.1 Form I: *fa’lal-a* فَلْتَلَّةٌ
The most common Form I quadrilateral verbal noun patterns are: *fa’lala* فَلْتَلَّةٌ and *fi’laal~fu’laal~fa’laal* فَلْتَلَّـ فَلْتَلَّـ فَلْتَلَّ:

- explosion: *farqa’a* فرَقْعَة
- somersault: *shaqlaba* شَقْلَبَة
earthquake  zilzaal  زلزال
evidence  burhaan  براءان

1.2.2 Form II: tafa’lal-a تفعّل
The Form II quadriliteral verbal noun pattern is tafa’lul تفعّل:
- oscillation  tadhabâhub  تذبذب
- decline  tadahwur  تدهور
- serial  tasalsul  تسلسل

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

1.2.4 Form IV: if’alalla افعلّل
The form IV verbal noun pattern is if’ilaal افعلّل:
- serenity  iTmi’naan  اطمئنان
- shuddering  ishmi’zaaz  استياعاز

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 muTlaq مفعول مطلق) 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

سأحاول إضاء ضوء
sa’u-Haawil-u ‘ilqaal-a Daw-in.
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.

The verbal noun may be used in any part of an ‘iDaafa, as the first or second term:

as first term of construct:

the investment of billions of dollars

the appointing of judges

the chance to visit

the payment of compensation

as second term:

the preoccupation of the officials

visiting the castle

safety belt

the right of asylum
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>استقبال الرئيس</td>
<td>the president’s reception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مغادرة السفير</td>
<td>the departure of the ambassador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(the president is receiving)</td>
<td>(the ambassador departs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>رفع العلم</td>
<td>raising of the flag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دخول الكنيسة</td>
<td>entering the church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لعب دور</td>
<td>playing a role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>باستخدام ذيله</td>
<td>by using its tail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دعا إلى تشكيك جيش.</td>
<td>da'a 'lla tashkil-i jaysh-in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أدى إلى منع الكتاب.</td>
<td>'addaa 'lla man'-i l-kitaab-i.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He called for the formation of an army. It led to banning the book.

(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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>قبل مغادرته العاصمة</td>
<td>qabl-a mughaadarat-i-hi l-'aaSimat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before his leaving the capital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
خلال استقباله أمس وفدا من أهالي المفقودين
xilaal-a stiqbaal-i-hi 3ams-i wafd-an min 'aahaalii l-mafquud-iina
during his meeting yesterday a delegation of families of the missing

ولدى رفضهم ذلك
wa-ladaa rafD-i-him dhaalika
upon their refusal of that/their refusing that

منذ نيلها جائزتها الأولى
mnndh-u nayl-i-haa jaa 'izat-a-haa l-'uulaa
since her winning her first prize

عقب إعلانه الانسحاب من الحياة العامة
'aqib-a 2 i laan-i-hi l-insiHaab-a min-a l-Hayaat-i l-'aammat-i
just after his announcing [his] withdrawal from public life

 سماعهم الأصوات
samaa'-'u-hum-u l-'aSwaat-a
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:

تعيين اللواء مديرًا للدائرة
ta 'yiin-u l-hwaa'2-i mudiir-an li-l-daa2 irat-i
appointment of the general [as] director of the department

تعيين مراد قائد القوات الأمن
ta 'yiin-u muraad-in qaa'id-an li-quwwaat-i l-'umni
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:

اللغوز بالرئاسة
li-l-fawz-i bi-l-ri'aasat-i
in order to win the presidency
(fiaaz-a bi- = 'to win s.th. ')

تحويل الحلم إلى حقيقة
taHwiil-u l-Hulm-i 4laa Haqiiqat-in
transforming the dream into reality
(Hawwal-a ʿilaa = ‘to transform s.th. into s.th.’)

The vice-president affirmed the desire of his country for achieving peace.
(raghib-afii = ‘to desire s.th.’)

They continued to search for explanations.
(baḥth-a cān = ‘to search for s.th.’)

Our interests are firmly entwined with the interests of the Arab states.

2 Active and passive participle (ism al-lāʾīl, اسم الفاعل,
ism al-mafʿuul 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 ‘street’) or feminine (qaaʿima 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): فاعل

The Form I AP has the typical pattern of faa'il or faa'ila. 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 fu'aaal; those referring to nonhuman entities often take the fawaa'il plural but may take other plurals as well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rider/s</td>
<td>raakib/rukkaab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spokesman/men</td>
<td>naaTiq/naaTiquuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>street/s</td>
<td>shaari'/shawaari'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circle/s</td>
<td>daa'tira/dawaa'ir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>base; rule/s</td>
<td>qaa'ida/qawaa'id</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suburb/s</td>
<td>DaaHiya/DawaaHin</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: mufa'‘il  مَعْفُول

- coordinator  munassiq  مَنْسَقَ مَدَرّس
- inspector    mufattish  مُفَتْشَ مِنْصَر

III: muwa'‘il  مَعْول

- assistant  musaa'id  مَسَاءِد مَهْامِر
- lecturer    muHaaDir  مَهْامِر

IV: muf'‘il  مَعْفُول

- supervisor  mushrif  مَشْرِف مُسيم
- Muslim      muslim  مُسيم

V: mutafa'‘il  مَتَفَعِل

- volunteer  mutaTawwi  مَتَطَوْع مُحَفْصَص
- specialist  mutaxaSSiS  مُحَفْصَص

For the most part, only transitive verbs have passive participles.
VI: mutafaa‘il مَتَافَعٌ الْمُتَرَادِف مَعْلَامٌ

VII: munfa‘il مَنْفَعٌ الْمَناَفِد

is rarely used as a noun.

VIII: musta‘il مَسْتَفَعٌ الْمُتَصَّرِقٌ الْمُتَخَبٌ الْمُتَخَبِّيْنُ الْمُتَخَبِّيْنِ

listener mustami مَسْتَمَع مَسْتَمَعٌ
elector muntaxib مَعْتَخِب مَعْتَخِبٌ

X: mustafa‘il مَسْتَفَعٌ الْمُعْتَدِبِيْنُ الْمُتَوْرِد

orientalist mustashriq مَسْتَشْرَيْق مَسْتَشْرَيْقٌ
importer mustawrid مَعْتَوْرِد مَعْتَوْرِدٌ

2.3 Quadriliteral AP nouns: muta‘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 مِهِنْدِيُّ مِهِنْدِيَّات
- translator/s (m.) mutarjim/mutarjimuuna مُتَرِجُمُ مُتَرِجُمَات
- translator/s (f.) mutarjima/mutarjimaat مُتَرِجِمَةِ مُتَرِجَمَات
- explosive/s mufarqi‘/mufarqi‘aat مُفَرَّقُ مُفَرَّقَات

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: mustash-fun ‘hospital, place of healing’ or Form VIII PP: muxtabar ‘laboratory, place of experiment’).

2.4.1 Form I: maf‘uul مَفْعُول

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

- concept/s mafhuum/mafaahiim مَفْهُوٍّ مَفَاهِيم
- plan; project/s mashruu‘/mashaarii‘ مَشْرِعٌ مَشْرَعَات
~mashruu‘aat
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‘cal
  - organization: munaZZama
  - volume (book): mujallad

- **Form III**: mufa‘al is rare

- **Form IV**: muf‘al
  - attaché: mulHaq
  - lexicon: mu‘jam

- **Form V**: mutafa‘cal
  - requirements: mutaTallabaat

- **Form VI**: mutafa‘al
  - availability; reach: mutanaawal

- **Form VII**: mufa‘al
  - slope: munHadar
  - lowland: munxafaD

- **Form VIII**: mufa‘al
  - society: mujtama\c
  - laboratory: muxtabar

- **Form X**: mustafa‘al
  - future: mustaqbal

2.4.3 Quadriliteral PP nouns: mufta‘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: *maʃ'al* مَعْلُول

For Form I, most nouns of place are of the pattern *maʃ'al* مَعْلُول or *maʃ'al* مَعْلُولة, or in some cases *maʃ'il* مَعْلُول. The plural of this type of noun is most often of the *maʃ'a'il* مَعْلُولة pattern or *maʃ'a'all* مَعْلَعَة 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>mashaH</td>
<td>bank</td>
<td>maSrif</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some nouns of place have both *maʃ'al* and *maʃ'il* forms:

- foothold *mawTa* and *mawTa* مَوْتَأ / مَوْتَأ

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.

- lowland *munxafaD* VII مَنْفَض
- level *mustawan* VIII مُستوِئ
- colony *musta'mara* X مَستَعمرَة
- settlement *mustawTana* X مَستوطنة
- future *mustaqbal* X مَستقبِل
- hospital *mustashfan* X مَستشفِي

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 *miʃ'aal* مَعْلُول, *miʃ'al* مَعْلُول, and *miʃ'ala* مَعْلَعَة. See also section 5.2 below.
Some examples include:

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

5 Nouns of intensity, repetition, profession

A special noun pattern exists to denote intensity of action or repeated action: فعال. 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'/rabbaa"  

5.1 Nouns of profession

The abstract noun denoting the name of a profession is often of the verbal noun pattern 'aala فعال, as follows:

- beekeeping: "niHaala" نحلة
- carpentry: "niijaara" نجارة

5.2 Nouns of intensity as nouns of instrument

Occasionally, the pattern for nouns of intensity (fa' aal فعال or fa’ala فعال) 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: "fattaalHa" فتحة
- dryer: "nashshaafa" نشافة
- washer: "ghassaala" غسالة

6 Common noun (al-ism الاسم)

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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>سلة</td>
<td>basket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>رجل</td>
<td>man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>داباب</td>
<td>Dabaab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دار</td>
<td>faras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جسر</td>
<td>jisr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كتاب</td>
<td>kitaab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>قهوة</td>
<td>coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ضباب</td>
<td>fog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>وطن</td>
<td>waTan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شجرة</td>
<td>shajara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>حرب</td>
<td>Dabaab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شجرة</td>
<td>shajara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غبار</td>
<td>faras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>رأس</td>
<td>faras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لسان</td>
<td>salla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كتب</td>
<td>kitaab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Generic noun (ism al-jins) and noun of instance (ism al-marra)

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
- support da‘m
- safety ʿamaan
- victory fawz

Nouns that refer to actions in general, such as “laughing” or “dancing,” can be contrasted with a singular occurrence or instance of that action, such as “a short laugh” or “a traditional dance.” The generic term is often masculine singular, whereas the individual instance is often feminine singular, marked by taa’ marbuut. This is a general rule, but sometimes the generic term comes to be used to refer to individual, concretized instances (e.g., binaa’ – see below).

- dancing raqs
- waves mawj
- a dance raqSa
- a wave mawja
- shipping shaHan
- building binaa’
- a shipment shaHna
- a building binaa’~binaaya

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’ ‘a building’).

- many laughs DaHkaat-un kathifrat-un
- traditional dances raqSaat-un taqliidiyyat-un
- heat waves mawjaat-un Haarrat-un

13 See Hurford 1994, 81-82, for good examples of generic nouns and noun phrases in English.
sound waves  
\[\text{\'amwaaj-un} \text{ Sawtiyyat-un} \]

new buildings  
\[\text{\'abniyat-un} \text{ jaddiitat-un} \]

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-taSghir 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 | root |  |  
|------------------|---------|------|---|---|
| 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 morphological process for creating even more through suffixing the feminine nisba ending -\(iyya\) (يَّة) 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 prevalence 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.

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>theory</td>
<td>نظريةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diversification</td>
<td>تعديّةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legitimacy</td>
<td>شرعيةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diary</td>
<td>يوميةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>المسيحيةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-masiiHiyya</td>
<td>مسيحيًة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operation</td>
<td>عمليةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'irhaabiyya</td>
<td>إرهابيةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-masiiHiyya</td>
<td>مسيحيًة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'amaliyya</td>
<td>عمليةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'irhaabiyya</td>
<td>إرهابيةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'uluhiyya</td>
<td>ألوهيةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oneness, unity</td>
<td>وحدانيةً</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sometimes from a noun stem which is otherwise not regularly in use:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>divinity</td>
<td>ألوهيةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oneness, unity</td>
<td>وحدانيةً</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.2 Derivation from a plural noun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stardom</td>
<td>نجوميةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horsemanship</td>
<td>فروسيةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fu'usiyya</td>
<td>فروسيةً</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>importance</td>
<td>أهميةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>priority</td>
<td>أولاًً-أولويةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'afDaliyya</td>
<td>أفضليةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'uluhiyya</td>
<td>ألوهيةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oneness, unity</td>
<td>وحدانيةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'akthariyya</td>
<td>أكتريةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effectiveness</td>
<td>فعاليةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fa'aaliyya</td>
<td>فعاليةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minority</td>
<td>أقليةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>priority</td>
<td>أوليةً-أولويةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'awwaliyya</td>
<td>أوليةً-أولويةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'awlawiyya</td>
<td>أوليةً-أولويةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fa-hunaaka 'awlawiyyaat-un</td>
<td>أولاً-أولويةً</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are more important priorities.

9.4 Derivation from a particle or pronoun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>identity</td>
<td>هويةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quantity</td>
<td>كميةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quality</td>
<td>كيفيةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huwiyya</td>
<td>هويةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kammiyya</td>
<td>كميةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kayfiyya</td>
<td>كيفيةً</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.5 Derivation from a participle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>responsibility</td>
<td>مسؤوليةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>majority</td>
<td>غالبيةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mas'uliyya</td>
<td>مسؤوليةً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ghaalibiyya</td>
<td>غالبيةً</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9.6 Derivation from a borrowed word
chauvinism  šuufiinyya  شوفينية  diplomacy  diibluumaasiyya  دبلوماسية
transcendentalism  tiraansindantaliyya  تراستنةطيلة

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>noun</th>
<th>original</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>man</td>
<td>rajul</td>
<td>trap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eye</td>
<td>'ayn</td>
<td>day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>head</td>
<td>ra'is</td>
<td>panther; fahd</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>noun</th>
<th>original</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mother</td>
<td>'umm</td>
<td>hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father</td>
<td>'ab</td>
<td>mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brother</td>
<td>'ax</td>
<td>name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
<td>ibn/bin</td>
<td>water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father-in-law</td>
<td>Ham</td>
<td>possessor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blood</td>
<td>dam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.1.3 The five nouns 31 (al-'asmaa' al-xamsa الأسماء الخمسة)

A subset of five of these nouns ('ab, 'ax, fiu, 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 irréductibles à 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.
Abū Zabiyy
Abu Dhabi

كان ذا مغز
it was significant
('possessing significance')

Deiwan Abī Nuwas
the collected poetry of Abu Nuwas

11 Common nouns from quadriliteral and quinquiliteral roots:
(‘asma‘a’ rubaa’iyya wa xumaasiyya) أسماء رباعية وخماسية

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; uproar: DawDaa’
- skull: jumjuma
- sesame: simsim
- mint: na‘na

11.2 Reduplicated quadriliterals
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
- earthquake (to shake): zilzaal
- fluttering (to flutter): nafrafa

11.2.1 Nouns from quadriliteral reduplicated verbs

- zilzaal earthquake (to shake: zalza-l’)
- nafrafa fluttering (to flutter: nafr-fa)
waswasa rustling, whispering (to whisper: waswasa وسوسة)

11.3 Nouns from quinquiliteral roots

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

- chess: shaTranj
- program: barnaamaj
- parsley: baqduunis
- spider: ‘ankabuut
- violet: banafsaj
- quince: safarjil
- salamander: samandal ~ samandar
- cauliflower: qarnabiiT
- ginger: zanjabiil

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>Chicken(s)</th>
<th>Dajaj</th>
<th>Eggs</th>
<th>BayD</th>
<th>Beesh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owls</td>
<td>Buum</td>
<td>Fish</td>
<td>Samak</td>
<td>Smek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bees</td>
<td>NaHl</td>
<td>Stone</td>
<td>Hajar</td>
<td>Hjir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almonds</td>
<td>Lawz</td>
<td>Feathers</td>
<td>Riish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12.2 Unit term

a chicken  

an owl  

a bee  

an almond

dajaaja  

buuma  

naHla  

lawza

nouns

an egg  

a fish  

a stone  

a feather

bayDa  

samaka  

Hajara  

riisha

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  

six owls  

three eggs  

types of fish

dajas-xams-u  

abwaam-sitt-u  

bayDaat-thalaath-u  

l-asmaak-’anwaat-i

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  

comedy  

petroleum  

computer  

television  

telephone

muustiqaa  

kuumifidiyyaa  

batruul  

kumbiyuutir  

taflizyuun  

talifiin

camera  

doctor  

ton  

film

kaamiiraa  

duktuur  

Tann  

film  

bank

Certain common everyday terms, such as “telephone,” “camera,” and “doctor,” also have Arabic-based equivalents (loan translations) (e.g., haatif, *aalat taSWiir, Tabiiib, 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
- hormones هرمونات
- cassette كاست
- radar رادار
- cocaine كوكايين
- viruses فيروسات
- hormones هرمونات
- radar رادار
- viruses 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>اليونيسيسكو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'a'lan-a-hu l-yyuniisksu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPEC</td>
<td>أوبك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>daaxil-a 'uubiik wa-xaarif-a-hu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>اليونيسيف</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>tuunis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>al-maghrib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nile</td>
<td>al-niil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jidda</td>
<td>jidda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>al-qahira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Euphrates</td>
<td>al-furaat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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., bayruutiyy ‘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>karima</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farida</td>
<td>'incomparable'</td>
<td>fariida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afaf</td>
<td>'chastity'</td>
<td>'afaaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yasmine</td>
<td>'jasmine'</td>
<td>yaasamiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>'lily of the valley'</td>
<td>sawsan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.2.1.1 MATRONYMICS: Arabic uses teknonymics - 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>'umm-u Hasan-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umm Ahmad</td>
<td>Mother of Ahmad</td>
<td>'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:

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*
- **Karim** ‘generous’ *kariim*
- **Said** ‘happy’ *sa‘iid*

(2) **Nouns:**
- **Raad** ‘thunder’ *ra‘d*
- **Leith** ‘lion’ *layth*
- **Fahd** ‘panther’ *fahd*

(3) **Participles:**
- **Mahmoud** ‘praised’ *maHmuud*
- **Adil** ‘just’ ‘aadil
- **Mukhtar** ‘chosen’ *muxtaar*

(4) **Nisba adjectives:**
- **Shukri** ‘thankful’ *shukriyy*
- **Lutfi** ‘kind’ *luTfiyy*

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

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

(7) **Phrase names:** Arabic has phrasal names, usually in the form of construct phrases:
- **Aladdin** ‘nobility of the religion’ ‘*ala‘u l-diin
- **Abdallah** ‘servant of God’ ‘*abd-u ilaah
- **Abdurrahman** ‘servant of the merciful’ ‘*abd-u l-raHmaan
(8) **Teknonyms**: The Arabic term for this kind of name is *kunya* كنية. 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’ *'abuu Hasan-in* أبو حسن
Abu Bakr ‘Father of Bakr’ *'abuu bakr-in* أبو بكر

(9) **Patronymics**: A patronymic is a name derived from the father’s given name:

ibn Fadlan ‘Son of Fadlan’ *ibn-u faDlaan* ابن فضلان
ibn Khaldoun ‘Son of Khaldoun’ *ibn-u xalduun* ابن خلدون
ibn Saud ‘Son of Saud’ *ibn-u sa‘uud* ابن سعود

15 Complex nouns, compound nouns, and compound nominals
(نحو and تركيب)

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  
julmuud-jalmad
(from jalida جلد ‘to freeze’ and jamuda جمد ‘to harden’)

supranationalism  
alk-fawqawmiyya
(from fawq-a فوق ‘above’ and qawmiyya قومية ‘nationalism’)

amphibian  
barmaa'iyy
(from barr بر ‘land’ and maa ماء ‘water’ with nisba suffix -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 taa’ marbuuta.

basmalah
the act of saying: bi-ism-i llah-i (‘in the name of God’)

Hawqalah
the act of saying: laa Hawl-a wa-laa quwwat-a illaa bi-llah-i (‘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 ra’s-maal رأس المال ‘capital’ formed from conjoining the words ra’s ‘head’ and maal ‘money.’24 Another example is laa-markaziyya لا مركزية for ‘decentralization,’ from the words laa ‘no’ and markaziyya ‘centralization.’ Other examples include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>invertebrate</td>
<td>laa-faqaariyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>invertebrates</td>
<td>al-laa-faqaariyyaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>petition, application</td>
<td>‘arD-u-Haal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>petitions</td>
<td>‘ard-u-Haalaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>course of events</td>
<td>maa jarua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>courses of events</td>
<td>maa jarayaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lottery</td>
<td>yaa-naSiib</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24 The plural of ra’s-maal is found both as rasaamil رأساميل and as ru’uus ‘amwaal رؤوس 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.

- bedroom: ghurfat-u nawm-in غرفة نوم
- two bedrooms: ghurfat-aa nawm-in غرفتان نوم
- bedrooms: ghuraf-u nawm-in غرف نوم
- reaction: radd-u fi’l-in رد فعل
- two reactions: radd-aa fi’l-in ردآ فعل
- reactions: ruduud-u fi’l-in ردود فعل
- passport: jawaaz-u safar-in جواز سفر
- two passports: jawaaz-aa safar-in جوازا سفر
- passports: jawaazaat-u safar-in جوازات سفر

Examples:

- كرد فعل للاعتداءات
  ka-radd-i fi’l-in li-l-i tidaa’ aat-i
  as a reaction to the attacks
  xams-u ghuraf-i nawm-in
  five bedrooms

- خمس غرف نوم
  ghuraf-u nawm-in
  five bedrooms
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-fā'ūl اسم الفاعل) describes the doer of an action and the passive participle (ism al-maf'ūl اسم المفعول) describes the entity that receives the action, or has the action done to it. 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.

In form, participles are substantives, that is they inflect as nouns or adjectives (for case, definiteness, gender, number). In terms of their function, however, they may serve as nouns, adjectives, adverbs or even verb substitutes. 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.

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-fā‘ūl and ism al-maf‘ūl.
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-fa‘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’ (muḍarris مدرس), for example, is an active participle, as is the term for ‘visitor’ (zaa‘ir رائر). 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 jāw-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’: ḥuwa 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 (fa‘il فعل). 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 fut ‘aal pattern. The nonhuman AP noun may be masculine or feminine and it may take the sound feminine plural or a broken plural, usually fawaa‘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., nath-in ‘satisfied’ from nādiya ‘to be satisfied’) may have an English equivalent that ends in /-ed/, but it is still an active participle.
### Strong/regular root: *faa’il*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Modern Standard Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>guard/s</td>
<td>حارس/حارس</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>researcher/s</td>
<td>باحث/باحثون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rider/s; passenger/s</td>
<td>راكب/راكب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coast/s; shore/s</td>
<td>ساحل/ساحل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>floor/s; storey/ies</td>
<td>مصاطب/مطابق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>side/s</td>
<td>جانب/جانب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rule/s; base/s</td>
<td>قاعدة/قواعد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fruit/s</td>
<td>فاكهة/فواكه</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>university/ies</td>
<td>جامعة/جامعات</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Geminate root:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Modern Standard Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>material/s</td>
<td>مادة/مواد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pilgrim/s</td>
<td>حاج/حُجاجـ/حـجاج</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hamzated root:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Modern Standard Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>reader/s</td>
<td>قارئ/قراء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accident/s; emergency/ies</td>
<td>طارئ/طوارئ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Assimilated root:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Modern Standard Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mother/s</td>
<td>والدة/والديات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father/s</td>
<td>والد/والد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>import/s</td>
<td>وارد/وارات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duty/ies; homework</td>
<td>واجب/واجبات</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Hollow root:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Modern Standard Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>visitor/s</td>
<td>زائر/زوار</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leader/s</td>
<td>قائد/قُوِاد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fluid/s; liquid/s</td>
<td>سائل/سوائل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being/s</td>
<td>كائن/كُانِينات</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

8 Of a building. Also pronounced *Taabaq*.

9 The plural *mawaadd* is the form that the plural pattern *fawaal* takes in geminate nouns because of the phonological restriction on sequences that include a vowel between identical consonants. *mawaaddid* → *mawaadd*. 
menu/s; list/s  qaa'ima/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/نواود
corner/s  zaawiyaa/zawaayaa زاوية/زوايا

Examples of Form I APs as nouns in context:

الوالدة والمولود في خير. النادي العربي
al-waalidat-u wa-l-mawluud-u fii xayr-in al-naadii l-'arabiiyy-u

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

ناطق باسم الملكة
naalTiq-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  kaabis عابس unable  'aajiz عاجز
ruling  Haakim حاكم next, coming  qaadim قادم

Assimilated root:

wide, broad  waasiواسع 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  saamn سم

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

- sorry, regretful: ِّاَـسِـفُ • aasif
- calm, peaceful: ِّـهَـادِـئُ • haadi

Final; last: ٌّاَـکُ • aaxir

Hollow root:

- visiting: ِّاَّـیِـرُ • zaa’ir
- frightful; amazing: ِّـهاَـیِـلُ • haa’il

Defective root:

- growing: ِّـنَاَمـِـینُ • naam-in
- satisfied; pleased: ِّـرَاضِـرـ • raaD-in
- high: ِّـعَالـیُ • zaa’il
- last; past: ِّـمَازِـضـ • maaD-in
- remaining: ِّـبَاقِـ • baaq-in

Examples of APs in context as adjectives:

الثلاثاء الماضي
al-thulaatha‘-a l-maaDiy-a
last Tuesday

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

المشاريع الباقية
al-mashaarii‘-u l-baaqiyat-u
the remaining projects

الأستخدام المضار بالبيئة
al-istixdaam-u l-Daarr-u bi-l-bii’at-i
use injurious to the environment

آخر التطورات
ِّاَـکُ • aaxir-u l-taTuuwuraat-i
the latest developments

المعلومات اللازمة
al-na‘huumaat-u Haazimat-u
the necessary information

From the hamzated root ِّـخـِـرُ; the initial hamza followed by the long ِّـأـلـ carácter the long ِّـإـلـ carácter create ِّـأـلـ carácter، spelled with ِّـجــلـ carácter 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’aal فعَّال). 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-‘amila/-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 مَخْدَر ‘drug,’ its plural is sound feminine plural, muxaddir-aat مَخْدَرات ‘drugs.’

1.2.1 Form II AP: mufa‘il مُفَعَّل

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

hors d’oeuvres  
muqabbilaat\(^{12}\)

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

مسّاق نشاطات الأمم المتحدة  
munassiq-u nashaaTaat-i l-umam-i l-muttaHidat-i

coordinator of the activities of the United Nations

1.2.2 Form III AP: mulaa‘il

assistant  
musaa‘id

lecturer  
muHaaDir

lawyer  
muHaam-in

observer  
muraaqib

Form III APs in context:

ابن مسافر  
ibn-i musaaﬁr-un.

My son is traveling.

1.2.3 Form IV AP: muf’il

Muslim  
muslim

ocean  
muHiiT

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

Form IV APs in context:

الأَيامُ المُشمسةَ ِ
al-a’yyaam-u l-mushmisat-u
the sunny days

شَيءٌ مُؤسِّفٌ جَدًّا
shay’-un mu’sif-un jidd-an
a very distressing thing

المحيط الأطلسي
al-muHiiT-u l-’aTlasiyy-u
the Atlantic Ocean

النسائم المُنعشةِ
al-nasaa’im-u l-mun’ishat-u
the refreshing breezes

Form V APs in context:

تَاثيرٌ حَماص المُتفرِّجينَ
tu-thiihr-u Hamaas-a l-mutafarrij-iina.
It arouses the excitement of the spectators.

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

المحيط المتجمَّع الشمالي
al-muHiiT-u l-mutajammad-u l-shimaaliyy-u
the Arctic Ocean (‘the frozen northern ocean’)

manager  mudiir  مدير  mull  ممل
sunny  mushmis  مشمس  mumkin  ممكن

boring  mumill  ممل

Note that some Form V APs can have passive meanings:

married  mutazawwij
late; delayed  muta’axxir
frozen  mutajammid

volunteer  mutaTawwi
specialist  mutaxaSSiS
extremist  mutaTarrif

sorry  muta’assif
abundant  mutawaffir
diverse, various  mutanawwi

Note that some Form V APs can have passive meanings:

married  mutazawwij
late; delayed  muta’axxir
frozen  mutajammid

1.2.5 Form VI AP: mutafā‘il

successive  mutataal-in  متتاليّ

equal,  mutakaafī  متكافئٌ

commensurate

increasing  mutazaayid  متزايدٌ

optimistic  mutafa‘il  متفضلٌ

scattered  mutanaathir  مُتَناثِرٌ

pessimistic  mutashaa‘im  مُشائِمٌ

Form VI APs in context:

سنوات متتالية

sanawaat-un mutataaliyat-un

successive years

latable-un mutanaathrat-un

scattered containers

الاهتمام المتزايد بالإسلام

al-Ihtimaam-ul-mutazaayid-ul bi-l-islam-i

the increasing interest in Islam

an equal contest

1.2.6 Form VII AP: munta‘il

منتفعل

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

sliding  munzaliq  منزلقٌ

isolated  mun‘azil  منعزلٌ

originating  munbathiq  منبتٌقٌ

notched, indented  munba‘ij  منبجٌ

باب منزلق

baab-un munzaliq-un

a sliding door

1.2.7 Form VIII AP: mufta‘il

منفعتل

listener  mustami‘  مستمعٍ

respectful  mu’htartm  محتتمٌ

waiting  muntaZir  مبتظرٌ

smiling  muhtasim  مبتسمٌ

agreeing  muttafiq  متفقٌ

moderate  mu’tadil  معتدلٌ

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  muttal‘i‘ (bi-)

united  muttaHid

hidden  muxtabi‘
Form VIII APs in context:

- al-'umam-u l-muttaHidat-u (العمام والمهدة) - the United Nations
- alfataat-u l-mubtasimat-u (الفتاة المبتسمة) - the smiling girl

1.2.8 Form IX AP: mut tether

The Form IX APs are rare.

1.2.9 Form X AP: must tether

- orientalist: mustashrīq (مستشرق) - consumer; user
- continuous: mustamīr (مستمر) - impossible
- circular: mustādīr (مستدير) - impossible

Form X APs in context:

- bi-Sīfat-in mustamirrat-in (بصفة مستمرّة) - in a continuous way: continuously
- thalaathat-u mustaHīlaat-in (ثلاثة مستحيلات) - three impossible [things]
- li-kull-i mustaxdim-in (لكل مستخدم) - for every consumer

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'ālīl (فعلًا)

- engineer/s: muhandis-u (مهندس) - muhandis-unna
- translator/s: mutarjīm-u (مترجم) - mutarjīm-unna
- explosive/s: mufarqīt/aat (مفرق) - mufarqīt/aat
Form II: *mutafa'īl* مَتَعَفِّلٌ

- deteriorating *mutadahwir* مَتَدْهَورٌ
- profound; far-reaching *mutaghalghil* مَتَعَفِّلٌ

Form IV: *muf‘alīl* مَفْعُولِلٌ

- serene, calm *muTma’inn* مَتْمِئْنَٰ
- vanishing *muDmaHill* مَضْمَحٌ
- dusky, gloomy *mukfahirr* مُكَفَّهِرٌ

Quadriliteral APs in context:

هم في حال صحة متدهورة. *hum fii Haal-i SiHHat-in mutadahwirat-in.*

خبراء المفروقات. *xubaraa’-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 musaafir-un.*

He is traveling/has gone traveling.


The students are visiting.

أتاني فاهم. *‘anaa faahim-un.*

I understand (‘I am understanding’).

1.4.2 The Haal حَال construction

A particular adverbial function of active participles is their use in the *Haal* or circumstantial accusative construction. The active participle is used to describe additional 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 متأخرا. *daxal-a l-Saff-a muta‘axxir-an.*

He entered the classroom late.
Participles:

1. Active and passive

... They entered the country by ship, coming from Algeria.

... They departed, returning to their houses.

2. Passive participle (PP): ism al-maf‘uul

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 quadrilateral verbs as well as trilateral. 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 مُوظَف), or they may correspond to an English past passive participle (e.g., maktuub مكتوب 'written'). However, a second important function of the PPs of derived verb forms (II–X) and quadrilaterals 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 مُستشفى 'hospital' (X PP), muxtabar مختبر 'laboratory' (VIII PP), and mu‘askar مَعَاشَكْرُ 'camp' (Quad. I PP).

2.1 Form I passive participle: maf‘uul

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...

---

\[11] 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/mafaahiim
- group/s: majmuu‘a/-aat
- plan/s: mashruu‘/-aat~ mashaarit
- manuscript/s: maxTuuT/-aat
- implication/s: madluul/-aat
- topic/s: mawDuu‘/-aat/mawDuu‘aat~ mawaadii
- 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

في مشاريعها هذه والولادة والمواليد 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-`aadaat-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 makhluuqa and as maxTuuTa makhluuqa.
2.2.1 Form II PP: *mufalʿ* مَفَعُولَ

**Nouns:**
- organization: *munaẓẓama* منظمة
- volume (book): *mufallad* مجلد
- triangle: *mathallath* مثلث

**Adjectives:**
- illustrated: *muṣawwar* مصور
- preferred: *muḥdal* مفضل
- favorite

2.2.1.1 FORM II PPS IN CONTEXT:

*muṭawwaD-u l-sharikat-i 'ilaa l-ūnfi l-muṣallaH-i*
the company agent to armed force

*li-mujarrad-i 'ilaa fii l-miʾaaḏ-ḏ al-muḥaddad-i*
for mere proof at the designated time

2.2.2 Form III PP: *mufaʿal* مَفَعُولً

addressed, spoken to

2.2.3 Form IV PP: *mufalʿ* مَفَعُولَ

**attaché**
*mulHaq/uuna* ملحق/ملحقون

**lexicon**
*muʿjam/maʿajim* معجم/معاجم

**compact/ed**
*mudmaj* مدمج

**cast: seamless**
*mufragh* مفرغ

**disused; disregarded**
*muhmal* مهلم

2.2.3.1 FORM IV PPS IN CONTEXT:

*al-mulHaq-u l-askariyy-u qurS-un mudmaj-un*
the military attaché a compact disk
2.2.4 Form V PP: mutala‘al

change mutaghayyar متغير expected; mutawaqqa' متوقع 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: munla‘al

These usually occur as nouns of place or time:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place/Time</th>
<th>PPS</th>
<th>Manner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>slope/s</td>
<td>munHadar-aat</td>
<td>متَحصَر/متَحضَرات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lowland/s</td>
<td>munxafaD-aat</td>
<td>متَحضَر/متَحضَرات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>end of the month</td>
<td>munsalax</td>
<td>متَسَلَخ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.7 Form VIII PP: multa‘al

When they occur as nouns, the Form VIII PPs sometimes denote nouns of place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place/Time</th>
<th>PPS</th>
<th>Manner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>level/s</td>
<td>mustawan-ayaat</td>
<td>مستوى/مستويات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>content/s</td>
<td>muHtawan-ayaat</td>
<td>مستوى/مستويات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>society/s</td>
<td>mujtama‘-aat</td>
<td>مجتمع/مجتمعات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid-point; half way</td>
<td>muntaSaf-aat</td>
<td>منصف/منصفات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technical term/s</td>
<td>muSTalaH-aat</td>
<td>مصطلح/مصطلحات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elected</td>
<td>muntaxab</td>
<td>مُنَتَخِب/مُنَتَخِبون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chosen</td>
<td>muxtaar</td>
<td>مختار/مختارون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occupied</td>
<td>muHtall</td>
<td>محتل</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15 Literally 'sloughed off, detached.'
2.2.7.1 FORM VIII PPS IN CONTEXT:

الأراضي المحتجلة
في منتصف الليل
al-‘arad-u l-muhtallat-u fii muntasaf-i l- layl-i
the occupied lands at midnight

Sometimes an AP of Form VIII will have a passive connotation, e.g.,

الولايات المتحدة
al-wilaayat-u l-muttahidat-u
the United States

2.2.8 Form IX PP: mu‘al  مُفعَلٌ
greened muxDarr

2.2.9 Form X PP: mustaf‘al  مُستَفْعَلٌ
future/s mustaqbal/-aat مستقبَليَّات
hospital/s mustashfa‘/-aayat مستشفِيَّات
warehouse/s mustawa’d/-aat مستودعات

counselor/s mustashaar/-uuna مستشاروُن
imported mustawrad مستورَد
borrowed musta‘aar مستعار

2.2.9.1 FORM X PPS IN CONTEXT:

أسماء مستعارة
‘asma‘-un musta‘arat-un عطور مستوردة
pseudonyms (‘borrowed names’) ‘uTuur-un mustawradat-un imported essences

أحد مستشاري الرئيس
‘aHad-u mustashaar-i 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: mu’al  مَعْسَكَر

camp mu‘askar مَعْسَكَر
series musalsal مُسَلَّس
old-timer muxaDram مَخْضَرٌ
flattened mufarTaH مَفْرَطُح
embellished muzarkash مَزْرَكْش
crystallized mubalwar مِبلْوُر
2.3.2 Form II QPP: mutafalal

This form is rare.

2.3.3 Quadriliteral PPs in context

musalsal-un jadid-un

a new series

أما المخضرمة فقد جاءت رابعة.

As for the old-timer, she came in fourth.

لسكان الريف المبعثرين

to the scattered country dwellers

المقالات المترجمة

the translated articles

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>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>edibles; foods</td>
<td>PP I ma‘kuulaat</td>
<td>مأكولات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refreshments</td>
<td>PP I mashruubaat</td>
<td>مشروبات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grilled meats</td>
<td>PP I mashwiyyaat</td>
<td>مشويات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information</td>
<td>PP I ma‘huumaat</td>
<td>معلومات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>canned goods</td>
<td>PP II mu‘allabaat</td>
<td>معلومات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nuts</td>
<td>PP II mukassaraat</td>
<td>مكسرات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>variety; mixture</td>
<td>PP II munawwa‘aat</td>
<td>متنوعات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>products</td>
<td>PP IV muntajaat</td>
<td>منتجات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>selections</td>
<td>PP VIII mixtaaraat</td>
<td>مختارات</td>
<td></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>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ambassador</td>
<td>safiir-un</td>
<td>poetry</td>
<td>shi’r-un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>map</td>
<td>xariiTat-un</td>
<td>glory</td>
<td>majd-un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entrance</td>
<td>makhkl-un</td>
<td>silver</td>
<td>fiDDat-un</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Gender

Arabic nouns are classified as either feminine or masculine.\(^1\) 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</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>river</td>
<td>nahr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>council</td>
<td>majlis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proof</td>
<td>burhaan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minister</td>
<td>waziir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>progress</td>
<td>taqaddum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peace</td>
<td>salaam</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 ‘alif:

- Makram  
- Amin  
- Fouad

1.1.1.2 COUNTRIES: Country names are usually feminine, but there are a few masculine ones, including:

- Morocco  
- Iraq  
- Lebanon

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:

great scholar  
Caliph

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.

This pattern, fa”ala, is one that implies greatness or intensity. Another example is ‘globe-trotter’ raHHaala.
Plural:

Pharaohs (pl.)  

Faraa‘ina  
brothers  
\textit{’ixwa}  
\textit{Ehwayne}  

doctors (m. pl.)  

dakaatira  
students  
\textit{Talaba}  
\textit{Tabb}  

Shiites (coll.)  

Shi‘a  
great men  
\textit{Rijaalaat}\footnote{This is a “plural of a plural.” (See section 3.2.5 for details on this structure.)}  
\textit{Rijals}  

1.2 Feminine nouns

Most feminine nouns are marked by the \textit{taa’ marbua’Ta} suffix (prounounced -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  
\textit{Suura}  
\textit{Suura}  
tribe  
\textit{qabilat}  
\textit{Qabila}  

storm  
\textit{’aaSifa}  
\textit{’aaSifa}  
meal  
\textit{wajba}  
\textit{Wajba}  

1.2.2 Concepts

Arabism  
\textit{’uruuba}  
\textit{’uruuba}  
trust  
\textit{thiqa}  
\textit{Thiqa}  

Culture  
\textit{thaqaafa}  
\textit{thaqaafa}  
civilization  
\textit{HaDaara}  
\textit{HaDaara}  

1.2.3 Abstract ideas

diversification  
\textit{ta’addudiyya}  
\textit{ta’addudiyya}  
importance  
\textit{’ahammiyya}  
\textit{’Amhama}  

stardom  
\textit{unjuumiyya}  
\textit{unjuumiyya}  
freedom  
\textit{Hurriyya}  
\textit{Hurriyya}  

1.2.4 Instances (a single instance of an action)

a convulsion  
\textit{za’za’a}  
\textit{Zuza’ata}  
a shipment  
\textit{shatlina}  
\textit{Shatleni}  

a coincidence  
\textit{Sudfa}  
\textit{Sufuna}  
a burst of laughter  
\textit{qahqaha}  
\textit{Qahqaha}  

1.2.5 Unit nouns (individual units of larger collective entities)

a tree  
\textit{shajara}  
\textit{Shajara}  
a fish  
\textit{samaka}  
\textit{Samaka}  

d a grape  
\textit{’inaba}  
\textit{’Inaba}  
\textit{Unaba}  
a thorn  
\textit{shawka}  
\textit{Shawka}  
\textit{Shaqua}
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>Arabic Name</th>
<th>English Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tunis</td>
<td>tuunis</td>
<td>Tunis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>al-qaahira</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerusalem</td>
<td>al-quds</td>
<td>Jerusalem</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>Arabic Name</th>
<th>English Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>miSr</td>
<td>مصر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>suuriyaa</td>
<td>سوريا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>faransaa</td>
<td>فرنسا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of phrases:

- Muslim Spain *'isbaanyaa l-muslimat-u*
- North America *'amriikaa 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>Arabic Name</th>
<th>English Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zahra</td>
<td><em>zahra</em></td>
<td>زهرة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alia</td>
<td><em>'aaliya</em></td>
<td>عالية</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karima</td>
<td><em>kariima</em></td>
<td>كريمة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Arabic Name</th>
<th>English Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zeinab</td>
<td><em>ziinab</em></td>
<td>زينب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selma</td>
<td><em>salmaa</em></td>
<td>سلمى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanan</td>
<td><em>Hanaan</em></td>
<td>حنان</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2.9 Nouns spelled with final *taa’*
Two common words that are feminine by nature but spelled with a final *taa’* (rather than *taa’ marbuuta*):

daughter: girl  *bint*  بنت    sister  *’uxt*     أخت

1.2.10 Parts of the body
Certain parts of the body are considered feminine although not marked with *taa’ marbuuta*, especially those parts that come in pairs. For example:

foot  *qadam*  قدم    hand  *yad*     يد

eye  *’ayn*  عين    ear  *’udhun*  أذن

1.2.11 Borrowed nouns
Nouns borrowed from other languages that end with an -*ah* or -*aa* sound are usually treated as feminine:

doctorate (Fr. ‘doctorat’)  *duktuuraah*  دكتوراه

cinema (Fr. ‘cinéma’)  *siinamaa*  سينما

music  *muusiiqaa*  موسيقى

opera  *’uubiraa*  أوبرا

delta (Greek ‘delta’)  *daltaa*  دلتا

1.2.12 Other feminine suffixes
Some nouns are marked feminine by suffixes other than *taa’ marbuuta*. These endings include: ‘*alif* plus *hamza* (*-aa* ṣ) or ‘*alif* Tawiila (*-aa* ِ) or ‘*alif* mqSuura (*-aa* ى). These endings are suffixed after the root consonants.⁶ For example:

desert (root: S-H-r)  *SaHraa’*  صحراء

remembrance (root: dh-k-r)  *dhikraa*  ذكري

universe; world (root: d-n-y)  *dunyaa*  دنيا

⁵ As in *daltaa l-niil-i* ‘the Nile Delta.’

⁶ Note that there are also a number of masculine nouns that end with ‘*alif* plus *hamza*, ‘*alif* Tawiila, or ‘*alif* mqSuura. The ‘*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:

song (root: gh-n-y)  *ghinaa*  غناء

meaning (root: mu’-n-y)  *ma’nan*  معنى

stream (root: j-r-y)  *majran*  مجرى

formal legal opinion (root: f-t-y)  *fatwaa*  قُنْوِي
beautiful woman; belle  Hasnaa’  حسناء
(root: H-s-n)
candy (root: H-l-w)  Halwaa  حلوى
fever (root H-m-m)  Hummaa  حمى
chaos (root f-w-D)  faawDaa  فوضى

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1aruu</td>
<td>self; soul</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ummn</td>
<td>wine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>naar</td>
<td>well</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daar</td>
<td>cup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ard</td>
<td>sun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harb</td>
<td>tooth; age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of cryptofeminine nouns and modifiers:

- the afterlife: al-daar-u l-taaaxirat-u
dal dar al‘arba‘
- the Holy Land: al-ta‘ard-u l-muqaddasat-u
al ar‘a‘ud mursam-
- common ground: t-arD-un mushtarakat-un
A’rD u mursamta-
- the First World War: al-Harb-u l-caalamiyyat-u
l-camal-
- in a deep well: fi‘ bi‘r-in ‘amiiqat-in
fi‘ b‘r s-saxmam

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‘ marbuutu. Examples of some of these include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>malik/malika</td>
<td>king/queen</td>
<td>ملكة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fannaan/fannaana</td>
<td>artist</td>
<td>فنانة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>safiir/safiira</td>
<td>ambassador</td>
<td>سفیرة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
manager (m/f) mudiir/mudiira
grandfather/grandmother jadd/jadda
cat (m/f) qiTT/qiTTa
leopard (m/f) namir/namira

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 سوق
road; path Tariiq طريق
bag kiis كيس
salt milH ملح

Examples:
the black market al-suqq-u l-sawdaa'-u السوق السوداء
the Arab spirit al-ruuH-u l-'arabiyyat-u الروح العربية
in good condition fii Haal-in jayyidat-in في حال جيدة

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, I: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 straight-forward, using masculine or feminine plural forms as appropriate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Phrase</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-sufaraa‘-u l-‘arab-u</td>
<td>the Arab ambassadors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qaadat-un ‘askariyy-uuna</td>
<td>military leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-‘ixwaan-u l-muslim-uuna</td>
<td>the Muslim Brotherhood (‘Brothers’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-da‘ al-suluTaat-u l-ruumaaniyyat-u</td>
<td>the Roman authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-nisaa‘-u l-mutaqaddimaat-u fii l-sinn-i</td>
<td>women of advanced age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘alHad-u l-sukkaan-i l-‘aSliyy-iina</td>
<td>one of the indigenous residents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Phrase</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-suluTaT-u l-ruumaaniyyat-u</td>
<td>the Roman authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jamii‘-u ‘usar-i-him-i l-kariimat-i</td>
<td>all their distinguished families</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are many groups of people [who] live underground.

Hunaaka fi‘aat-un kathiirat-un min-a l-sha‘b-i ta‘ish-u taHi‘a l-‘arD-i.
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

فإن الغالبية اتخرّجت في جدول عنيف
fa-‘inna l-ghaalibiyat-a nxaraT-at fii jadal-in ‘anif-in
but the majority plunged into violent debate

قتلت خمسة أشخاص على الأقل.
qu’til-at xamsat-u ‘ashxaas-in ‘alaa l‘aqall-i."
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:

امثل 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 ‘aanisa ‘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:

(2.1) Plural agreement:

الطبان ناس شرفاء.
al-jalyaan-u naas-un shurafa‘-u.
The Italians are noble (pl.) people.

فالناس يتناولون أنواعاً مختلفة من الأغذية.
fa-l-naas-u ya-tanaawal-uuna ‘unwa‘an muxtalifat-an min-a l‘aghdiyat-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

- engineer/s: muhandis/muhandis-uuna
- cook/s: Tabbaax/Tabbaax-uuna
- Omani/s: ‘umaaniyy/‘umaaniyy-uuna
- Lebanese: lubnaaniyy/lubnaaniyy-uuna

2.2.2 Broken plurals of certain patterns

a. fu‘alaa’
- president/s: ra’ iis/ru‘asaa‘
- ambassador/s: safiir/sufaraa’
- prince/s: ‘amiir/’ umaraa’

b. ‘af‘ilaa’
- friend/s: Sadiiq/‘aSdiqaa’
- doctor/s: Tabiib/‘aTibbaa’

c. fu‘aal
- writer/s: kaatib/kuttaab
- student/s: Taalib/Tullaab
- guard/s: Haaris/Hurraas

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/عمال
factor/s  `aamil/`awuamil  عامل/عمال

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-muthannaا المثنى)
Arabic has a separate number category for two of anything. Instead of using the number “two” (ithnaani or ithnataani إثنان) 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:

وصل سفيران
waSal-a safiir-aani.
Two ambassadors arrived.

Genitive:

بين سفرين
bayn-a safiir-ayni
between two ambassadors

Accusative:

زاروا السفرين.
zaar-uu l-safiir-ayni.
They visited the two ambassadors.

3.1.1 Dual with taa’ marbuwaTa
When the dual suffix is added to a noun ending in taa’ marbuwaTa، the taa’ marbuwaTa is no longer the final letter in the word and it turns into regular taa’.
a year sanat-un
two years sanat-aani
in (after) two years ba'd-a sanat-ayni
a city madiinat-un
two cities madiinat-aani
in two cities fii madiinat-ayni

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:10

أبوان ‘ab-a-w-aani
أخوان ‘ax-a-w-aani
parents two brothers two lawyers
قاضيان qaaDiy-aani
محاميان muHaamiy-aani
مةين مهارب-aani
two judges two cafés two hospitals

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.11

two smugglers muharrib-aani
the two smugglers al-muharrib-aani
with two smugglers mu‘a-muharrib-ayni
with the two smugglers ma‘a I-muharrib-ayni

3.1.4 Nuun-deletion in ‘iDaafa
If a dual noun is the first term of an ‘iDaafa or annexation structure, the nun plus kasra ( /-n/ ن) of the dual suffix is deleted. Thus, ‘aani becomes -aa and -ayni becomes -ay.12

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 nun, 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 -a sound. This applies to nunation (indefiniteness marking), to the dual suffix, and to the sound masculine plural.
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

وزيرًا العدل والإعلام

waziir-aa l-‘adl-i wa l-‘laam-i

the two ministers of Justice and Information

في سياسة الدفاع والتجارة

fī siyaasat-ay-i l-difaa‘-i wa l-tijaarat-i

in the two policies of defense and trade

شقة مكونة من غرفتي نوم

shaqqat-un mukawwanat-un min ghurfat-ay nawm-in

a two-bedroom apartment (‘an apartment consisting of two bedrooms’)

3.1.5 Noun-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:

بين يديه

bayn-a yad-ay-hi

in front of him (‘between his two hands’)

من جانبيه

min jaanib-ay-hi

from its two sides

تفتح ذراعيها

ta-ftaH-u dhiraa‘-ay-haa.

She opens her arms.

وصل مندوباه

waSal-a manduub-aa-hu.

His two delegates arrived.

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:

هناك موضوعان مهمان

hunaaka mawDuu‘-aani muhimmi-aani.

There are two important subjects.

خادم الحرمين الشريفين

xaadim-u l-Haram-ayni l-shariif-ayni

the Servant of the two Holy Places

خلال السنتين الماضين

xilaal-a l-sanat-ayni l-maaDiyat-ayni

during the past two years

بين هذين الحدثين

bayn-a haadh-ayni l-Hadath-ayni

between these two events

13 In this and the following phrases the -ay dual ending is given a “helping vowel” kasra 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 (جمع مؤنث سالم)

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 -a't (-ات) attached to the singular stem of the noun. Note that when this suffix is attached to a noun that has ta' marbu'ta in the singular, it replaces the ta' marbu'ta:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Modern Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>power/s</td>
<td>quwwa/</td>
<td>قوة/قوات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>quww-aat</td>
<td>maHaTTa/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>maHaTT-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oasis/es</td>
<td>waaHa/</td>
<td>واحة/واحات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>waaH-aat</td>
<td>mujtama'/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mujtama'-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>company/ies</td>
<td>sharika/</td>
<td>شركة/شركات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sharik-aat</td>
<td>maTaar/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>maTaar-aat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 /-um/ 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>sharik-aat-un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>al-sharik-aat-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>fii sharik-aat-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fii l-sharik-aat-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>'assas-a sharik-aat-in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'assas-a l-sharik-aat-i.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples:

Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

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` marbu`Ta`:

(1) `waaw` insertion:

(1.1) Two common bi-consonantal nouns insert `waaw` before the `-aat` ending:

sister/s `uxt`/`uxa-w-aat   兄弟/أخوات   年/سنوات
year/s `sana`/`sana-w-aat`

(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.

pasha/s `baasha`/`baasha-w-aat`   باشا/باشرات
pope/s `baabaa`/`baabaa-w-aat`  `baaba-w-aat`  باپا/بابواتـ ـ بابوات

(1.3) Nouns ending in the suffix `-aa` often drop the final `hamza` and add a `waaw` between the stem and suffix:

`green(s)`/`greens`  `xaDraa`/`xaDraa-w-aat`   خضراء/خضراوات
`desert(s)`  `SaHraa`/`SaHraa-w-aat`   صحراء/صحراءوات
`parrot/s`  `babbaghaa`/`babbaghaa-w-aat`   ببغاء/ببغاوات

(1.4) Nouns ending in `alif` plus `taa` marbu`Ta` usually shorten `alif` to `fatHa`, and add a `waaw`:

`channel(s); canal/s`  `qanaat/qana-w-aat`   قناة/قنوات
`prayer/s`  `Salaat/Sala-w-aat`   صلاة/صلوات

(2) `yaa` insertion: Nouns that end with with `alif` maqSuura` shorten the `alif` to `fatHa` and insert `yaa` before the sound feminine plural suffix:

`memory/ies`  `dhikraa/dhikra-y-aat`   ذكري/ذكريات
`sweet/s`  `Halwaa/Halwa-y-aat`   حلوي/حلويات

Note that if the `hamza` in the `-aa` ending is part of the root, then the `hamza` is not deletable, as in:

`ijraaat` إجراوات

Alternative plurals for `SaHraa` are `SaHaaraa` صحرار `and SaHaar-in` صحرار.
fever/s  Hummaa/Um‫ه‬م‫م‬ا/حمَيَّات
level/s  mustawan/mustawa-y-aat  مستوى/مستويات
hospital/s  mustashfan/mustashfa-y-aat  مستشفى/مستشفىات

(3) haː' insertion: The word 'umm, 'mother' inserts a haː' preceded by fatha before suffixing the sound feminine plural:¹⁷
mother/s  'umm/ umm-ah-aat  أم/أمَّات

Borrowed words ending with a long vowel (especially -uu) often insert haː' as a buffer before the /-aat/ suffix in order to avoid two long vowels coming together:
casino/s  kaaziinuu/kaaziinuu-h-aat  كازينوهات
radio/s  raadyuu/raadyuu-h-aat  راديو/راديووات
studio/s  (i)stuudyuu/(i)stuudyuu-h-aat  (ا) ستوديو/(ا) 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 -aan. 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 taa' marbuuTa:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>embassy/ies</td>
<td>sifaara/sifaar-aat</td>
<td>government/s</td>
<td>Hukuuma/Hukuum-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language/s</td>
<td>lugha/lugh-aat</td>
<td>ticket/s</td>
<td>bīTaaqa/bīTaaq-aat-baTaa iq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pharmacy/ies</td>
<td>Saydaliyya/Saydaliyy-aat</td>
<td>continent/s</td>
<td>qaarra/qaar-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barracks</td>
<td>thukna/thukn-aat-thukan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.1) Vowel variation: Feminine nouns ending with taa' marbuuTa or taa' that have sukūn 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.
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun/Forms</th>
<th>Arabic/Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>service/s</td>
<td>xidma/xidam-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experience/s</td>
<td>xibra/xibar-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girl/s; daughter/s</td>
<td>bint/ban-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>session/s</td>
<td>jalsa/jalas-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sister/s</td>
<td>ʾuxt/ʾaxaw-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circle/s; ring/s</td>
<td>Halqa/Halaq-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>authority/ies</td>
<td>sulṭa/suluṭ-aat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(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.¹⁸

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun/Forms</th>
<th>Arabic/Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lady/ies</td>
<td>sayyida/sayyid-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>queen/s</td>
<td>malika/malik-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>actress/es</td>
<td>mumaththiia/mumaththil-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professor/s (f.)</td>
<td>ʾustaadh/a/ʾustaadh-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>customer/s (f.)</td>
<td>zabuuna/zabuun-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim/s (f.)</td>
<td>musliima/muslim-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expert/s (f.)</td>
<td>xabiira/xabiir-aat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(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.¹⁹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun/Forms</th>
<th>Arabic/Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arrangement/s</td>
<td>II. tartilb/tartilb-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negotiation/s</td>
<td>III. mufaawad/mufaawad-aat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 CaCaaCiC pattern. See section 3.2.3.2, subsection (4.1.4), in this chapter.
announcement/s  IV.  'i'laan/  'i'laan-aat

tension/s  V.  tawattur/tawattur-aat

exchange/s  VI.  tabaadul/tabaadul-aat

reflection/s  VII.  in'ikaas/ in'ikaas-aat

discovery/ies  VIII.  iktishaaf/iktishaaf-aat

investment/s  X.  istithmaar/istithmaar-aat

Verbal nouns from quadrilateral roots:
mumbling/s  I.  hamham/hamham-aat

decline/s  II.  tadahwur/tadahwur-aat

serenity/ies  IV.  iTmi'naan/iTmi'naan-aat

The *nisba* of derived form verbal nouns, when functioning as a noun referring to nonhuman entities, also takes the sound feminine plural, e.g., 'reserve/s' *iHtiyaaTiyy*  *iHtiyaaTiyy-aat*  الاحتياطيَّات.

(4) Active (AP) and passive (PP) participles of Form I that do not denote human beings, even though they may be masculine in the singular. Note that some Form I participles have an alternate broken plural form.

Examples:

plan/s  1 PP:  mashrurn'/  mashrurn'-aat~mashaari'i

manuscript/s  1 PP:  maxTuuT/maxTuuT-aat^20  مخطوطة

implication/s  1 PP:  madhnuul/madhnuul-aat  مدلول/مدولات

topic/s  1 PP:  mawDuur'/  mawDuur'-aat~mawaaDii'

creature/s  1 PP:  maxluuq/maxluuq-aat  مخلوق/مخلوقات

revenue/s  1 AP:  'aa'id/  'aa'id-aat  عائد/عائدات

import/s  1 AP:  waarid/waarid-aat  وارد/ورادات

duty/ies  1 AP:  waajib/waajib-aat  واجب/واجبات

being/s  1 AP:  kaas'in/kaas'in-aat  كائن/كائنات

menu/s; list/s  1 AP:  qaa'imqa'a'im-aat ~ qawaa'im  قائمة/قائمة-قانون

^20 The singular occurs both as maxTuuT مخطوطة and maxTuuTa مخطوطة.
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

(5) Active (AP) and passive (PP) participles of the derived verb forms (II–X) and quadriliterals if they do not refer to human beings. These nouns may be either masculine or feminine in the singular.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>II PP:</th>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>volume/s</td>
<td>mujallad/mujallad-aat</td>
<td>موَلاً/مَلاً</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foundation/s</td>
<td>mu’assasa/mu’assas-aat</td>
<td>مؤسسة/مؤسسة</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drug/s</td>
<td>muxaddir/muxaddir-aat</td>
<td>مدخّر/مخر</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>note/s</td>
<td>muddhakkira/muddhakir-aat</td>
<td>مذكرة/مكر</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>establishment/s</td>
<td>munsha’a/munsha’a-aat</td>
<td>منشأة/منشأ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ocean/s</td>
<td>muHiiT/muHiiT-aat</td>
<td>محيطات/محيطات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change/s</td>
<td>mutaghayyar/mutaghayyar-aat</td>
<td>متغیر/متغيرات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>synonym/s</td>
<td>mutaraadif/mutaraadif-aat</td>
<td>متراضفات/متراضات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slope/s</td>
<td>munHaDar/munHaDar-aat</td>
<td>منحضر/منحضرات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conference/s</td>
<td>mu’tamar/mu’tamar-aat</td>
<td>مؤتمر/مترامات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>level/s</td>
<td>mustawan/mustaway-aat</td>
<td>مستوى/مستويات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>settlement/s</td>
<td>mustawTan/mustawTan-aat</td>
<td>مستوطنة/مستوطنات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hospital/s</td>
<td>mustashfan/mustashfan-aat</td>
<td>مستشفى/مستشفيات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swamp/s</td>
<td>mustanqa’mustanqa’-aat</td>
<td>مستنقع/مستنقعات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>camp/s</td>
<td>mu’askar/mu’askar-aat</td>
<td>معسكر/معسكراً</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explosive/s</td>
<td>mufarqi’mufarqi’-aat</td>
<td>مفرقع/مفرقات</td>
<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</th>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>teacher/s (f.)</td>
<td>mudarrisa/mudarris-aat</td>
<td>مدرسة/مدرسة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>citizen/s (f.)</td>
<td>muwaaTina/muwaaTin-aat</td>
<td>مواطن/مواطنن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supervisor/s (f.)</td>
<td>mushrif/mushrif-aat</td>
<td>مشرف/مشتقات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specialist/s (f.)</td>
<td>mutaxaSSis/mutaxaSSis-aat</td>
<td>متخصصة/متخصصات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consumer/s (f.)</td>
<td>mustahlika/mustahlik-aat</td>
<td>مستهلكة/مستهلكات</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(6) With most (but not all) loanwords borrowed directly from a foreign language into Arabic.²¹

computer/s kumbiyunutir/kumbiyunutir-aat
telephone/s talifiun/talifiun-aat
taxi/s taaksi/kaksiy-aat
dollar/s duulaar/duulaar-aat
hormone/s hurmuun/hurmuun-aat
virus/es fiiruns/fiiruns-aat
liter/s liitir/liitir-aat
lord/s Imurd/Imurd-aat²²

(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 (/-tin/, not /-uun/).

sixty/sixties sittiina/sittiin-aat
seventy/seventies sab’tina/sab’tin-aat
ninety/nineties tir’tina/tir’tin-aat

(8) Feminine proper names even if they do not end in taa’ marbuuTa:

Zeinab/s zaynab/zaynab-aat
Amira/s ’amiira/’amiir-aat

(9) Names of the letters of the alphabet:

’aalif/s ’aalif/’aalif-aat
raa’/s raa’/raa’-aat
waaw/s waaw/waaw-aat

²¹ Some examples of borrowed nouns with Arabic broken plurals are:

bank/s bank/bunuk
ton/s Tann/’aTnaan
million/s milyun/malaaytin
mile/s mile/’amyaal
meter/s mitr/’aamtaar

²² As in majiis-u luurdaat-i ‘The House of Lords.’
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

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. All months make their plural with -aat.

April/s  nisaan/nisaan-aat
July/s    tammuuuz/tammuuuz-aat
Ramadan/s ramaDaan/ramaDaan-aat
Shawwal/s shawwaal/shawwaal-aat
December/s disambir/disambir-aat

Feminine adjectives that stand on their own as substantives: for example, the feminine relative or nisha adjectives (adjectives ending in -iyya). Adjectives take the sound feminine plural when referring strictly to female human beings.

Yemeni/s (f.)  yamaniyya/yamaniyy-aat
Tunisian/s (f.) tuunisiyya/tuunisiyy-aat
Arab/s (f.)    ‘arabiiyya/ ‘arabiiyy-aat

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.

airport/s  maTaar/maTaar-aat
orbit/s    madaar/madaar-aat
field/s    majaal/majaal-aat
animal/s   Hayawaan/Hayawaan-aat
activity/ies nashaaT/nashaaT-aat
decision/s qaraar/qaraar-aat
spice/s    bahaar/bahaar-aat
security, guarantee/s Damaan/Damaan-aat
bath/s     Hammaam/Hammaam-aat
current/s  tayyaar/tayyaar-aat

For complete sets of the Arabic names of months in the lunar and solar calendars see Ryding 1990, 409.

Also ‘aanshiTa. أنشطة.
waterfall/s

shallaal/shallaal-aat

shallاال/شلالات

call/s

nidaaُ/nidaaُ-aat

نداة/نداات

folder/s

milaff/milaff-aat

ملف/ملفات

location/s

maHall/maHall-aat

محل/محلات

3.2.2 The sound masculine plural (jam‘ mudhakkar saalim) جمع مذكر سالم

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.  

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. 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.) muraaqib-uuna

مراقبون

observers (gen./acc.) muraaqib-iina

مراقبين

surgeons (nom.) jarraaH-uuna

جراحون

surgeons (gen./acc.) jarraaH-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 musaa‘id-uuna

مساعدون

the assistants al-musaa‘id-uuna

المساعدون

with assistants ma’a musaa‘id-iina

مع مساعد

with the assistants ma’a l-musaa‘id-iina

مع المساعد

Exceptions are very few and include, for example, ‘arD/أرضٍ ‘araaD-in ‘ارضٍ ‘ارض| Arā`īn ‘ارضین. The noun ‘arD has a more common plural, however: ‘araaD-in ‘ارض| ‘ارضین.

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-xaarif-i
Palestinians abroad

muwaaTin-uu 'uurubbaa l-gharbiyyat-i
the citizens of Western Europe

li-mudiir-ii l-munaZZamaat-i
for the administrators
of the organizations

(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
for their nominees li-murashshaH-ii-him
our delegates manduub-uu-naa
its publishers naashir-uu-haa
our sons ban-uu-naa

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.

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'ul/mas'ul-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: mutafa’a’il/mutafa’a’il-uuna

- **pessimist/s**
  - VI AP: mutasha’a’im/mutasha’a’im-uuna
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

Form VII: rare

Form VIII:

voter/s: elector/s          VIII AP: muntaxib/muntaxib-uuna
listener/s                 VIII AP: mustami /mustami-uuna

Form IX: rare

Form X:

consumer/s                 X AP: mustahlik/mustahlik-uuna
renter/s                   X AP: musta’jir/musta’jir-uuna

(1.3) Quadriliterals:

engineer/s                 QIAP: muhandis/muhandis-uuna
translator/s               QIAP: mutarjim/mutarjim-uuna

(2) Names of professions: Certain nouns in Arabic refer to those who engage in professions or other pursuits. The pattern is CaCCaC (fa’al فعَّال). The masculine form of these nouns takes the sound masculine plural:

baker/s                    xabbaaz/xabbaaz-uuna
hunter/s                   Sayyaad/Sayyaad-uuna
money-changer/s            Sarraaf/Sarraaf-uuna

(3) Alternation with broken plural: Sometimes the sound masculine plural alternates with a broken plural:

son/s                      ibn/ ‘abnaa ~ban-uuna

director/s                 mudiir/ mудaraa ~ mudiir-uuna

(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
European/s                 ‘uurubbiyy/‘uurubbiyy-uunaa

Some exceptions to this include the words for ‘Arab,’ ‘bedouin,’ and ‘foreigner’ which take broken plurals: ‘arabiyy/ ‘arab, ‘arab, ‘badawiyy/‘badawiyy, ‘arab, and ‘ajnabiyy/‘ajnabiyy, ‘ajnabiyy. 28

28 أجنبيّ/أجانب
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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>كهربائيٍ/كهرباءيٍون</td>
<td>electrician/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>إحصائيٍ/إحصائيٍون</td>
<td>statistician/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>سياسيٍ/سياسيٍون</td>
<td>politician/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>فيفيٍ/ريفٍيٍون</td>
<td>country dweller/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كهرابايٍ/كهرابايٍون</td>
<td>kahraba‘iyy/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>إحصايٍ/إحصايٍون</td>
<td>‘iHSaa‘iyy/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>سياسايٍ/سياسايٍون</td>
<td>siyaasiyy/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>فيفيٍ/ريفٍيٍون</td>
<td>riifiyy/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## (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 feminine plural, -uuna for nominative and -iina for genitive/accusative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عشرون</td>
<td>twenty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>سبعون</td>
<td>thirty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أربعون</td>
<td>forty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>خمسون</td>
<td>fifty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ستون</td>
<td>sixty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>سبعون</td>
<td>seventy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ثمانون</td>
<td>eighty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تسعون</td>
<td>ninety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ali Baba and the forty thieves

Bi-musharakat-i thalaath-iina baaHith-an

Bmeshara khi khilanta

If a plural is needed for these terms (forties, fifties), the sound feminine plural is suffixed to the genitive/accusative form of the number (see above 3.2.1.3(7)). For more on numerals, see Chapter 15.

### 3.2.3 The broken plural (jam‘ al-taksiir جمع التكسير)

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.²⁹

For nonnative speakers of Arabic, learning which nouns take which plurals can take some time, but if singulares 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 diptote (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.³⁰

3.2.3.1 TRIPTOTE PATTERN PLURALS (jarn mu'rab جمع معرِب): These broken plural patterns are fully inflectable. They show all three case markers and can take nunciation when indefinite.

(1) Broken plural patterns with internal vowel change only:

(1.1) Plural: CuCuuC (fu'uil فعل) from singular: CaCC (fa'il 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>Right/s</th>
<th>Doubt/s</th>
<th>Art/s</th>
<th>Army/jes</th>
<th>Century/jes</th>
<th>King/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Huqq/Huquq</td>
<td>shakk/shkuuk</td>
<td>fann/funuun</td>
<td>jaysh/juyuush</td>
<td>qarn/quruun</td>
<td>malik/muluuk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²⁹ 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, Lemont 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 IIe et IIIe 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."

A borrowed word that has taken this plural pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bank/s</td>
<td>بنك / بنوك</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.2) **Plural CuCCaaC** (فعّال فعّال) from singular: CaaCiC (فاعل فعال) : This plural, used with the Form I active participle (m.), is used only for human beings.31

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>deputy/ies</td>
<td>نائب / نواب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worker/s</td>
<td>عامل / عمال</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reader/s</td>
<td>قارئ / قراء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guard/s</td>
<td>حارس / حارس - حرسة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rider/s</td>
<td>راكب / ركاب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>student/s</td>
<td>طالب / طلاب - طلبة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.3) **Plural CiCaaC** (فَعْلًا فَعْلًا) from singular CVVC or CVCC (فَعْل، فَعْل، فَعْل، فَعْل) : 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>man/men</td>
<td>رجل / رجال</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mountain/s</td>
<td>جبل / جبال</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sand/s</td>
<td>رمل / رملا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>earthenware jar/s</td>
<td>جرّة / جرار</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basket/s</td>
<td>سلّة / سلال</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.4) **Plural CuCaC** (فعّلًا فعّلًا) from singular CVCCA (فاعّلًا، فعّلًا، فعّلًا) :

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>state/s</td>
<td>دولة / دول</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>room/s</td>
<td>غرفة / غرف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentence/s</td>
<td>جملة / جمل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunity/ies</td>
<td>فرص / فرص</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time period/s</td>
<td>مدة / مدد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>picture/s</td>
<td>صورة / صور</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nation/s</td>
<td>أمّة / أمّ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---
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.’
Plural CuCuC (fu‘ul فعل) from singular: CVVCV(a) (fa‘iil/a) (فعلاءة). 

Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

(1.1) 

fi‘a’al فعل

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Inflection</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Humanness</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Definiteness</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>city/ies</td>
<td>madiina/mudun</td>
<td>مدن</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ship/s</td>
<td>safiina/sufun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>newspaper/s</td>
<td>SaHilifa/SuHuf</td>
<td>صحيفة</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>path/s</td>
<td>Tartiq/Turuq</td>
<td>طريق</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>book/s</td>
<td>kitaab/kutub</td>
<td>كتاب</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foundation/s</td>
<td>‘asaas/ ‘usus</td>
<td>أساس</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plural CiCaC (fi‘al فعل) from singular CiCCa (fi‘la فلمة) or CaCiIC (fa‘iil فعل):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Inflection</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Humanness</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Definiteness</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>value/s</td>
<td>qiima/qiyam</td>
<td>قيمة</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>story/ies</td>
<td>qiSSa/qiSaS</td>
<td>قصة</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idea/s</td>
<td>fikra/fikar</td>
<td>فكر</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charm/s: enchantment/s</td>
<td>fitna/fitan</td>
<td>فنّة</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>team/s</td>
<td>fariiq/firaq</td>
<td>فريق</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plural CaCCaa (fa‘laa فعل) from singular CaCiIC (fa‘iil فعل) or CaCCiC (fa‘‘il فعل): These plural forms go with certain adjectives that are also used as substantives referring to human beings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Inflection</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Humanness</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Definiteness</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dead</td>
<td>mayyit/mawtaa</td>
<td>ميت</td>
<td>موتي</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>killed</td>
<td>qatiil/qatlaa</td>
<td>قتيل</td>
<td>قتلّي</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wounded</td>
<td>jariiH/jarHaa</td>
<td>جريح</td>
<td>جرحي</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sick</td>
<td>mariiD/marDaa</td>
<td>مريض</td>
<td>مرضي</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Plurals with vowel change and affixation of consonant:

(2.1) Plural: ’aCCaaC (’af’aal أفعال) from singular: CVCC (fa‘l فعل) or CVVC (fa‘al فعل) or hollow: CVVC (faal فعل, fiul فول, fiil فيل فعل): 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Inflection</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Humanness</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Definiteness</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dream/s</td>
<td>Hulm/ ’aHlaam</td>
<td>حلم/ أحلام</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tower/s</td>
<td>burj/ ’abraaj</td>
<td>برج/ أبراج</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profit/s</td>
<td>ribH/ ’arbaaH</td>
<td>ربح/ أرباح</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>section/s</td>
<td>qism/ ’aqsaam</td>
<td>قسم/ أقسام</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
thing/s  shay' / 'ashyaa

color/s  lawn/ 'alwaan

error/s  ghalaT/ 'aghlaat

foot/feet  qadam/ 'aqdaam

door/s  baab/ 'abwaab

market/s  suna/ 'aswaaq

bag/s  kiis/ 'akyas

holiday/s  'ilal/ 'a'yaad

Borrowed words that fit the pattern:

film/s  film/ 'afilaam

ton/s  Tana/ 'ataaan

mile/s  miil/ 'amyual

Variants:

day/s  yawm/ 'ayyaam

thousand/s  'alf/ 'aalaaf

(2.2) Plurals of 'paucity': 'aCCuC ('af 'ul أفعل and CiCCa (f i ء فعّلة) 
(jam' al-qilla جمع الكلّة): 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  na.hr/ 'anhuur

month/s  shahr/ 'ashhuur

youth/s  fatan/fitya

(2.2.1) The plural of paucity can be contrasted with jam' al-kathra جمع الكثرة, the 
plural that indicates many:

'anhuur (a few rivers) / 'anhaar-nuuhur (many rivers)

'ashhuur (a few months) / shuhuur (many months)

fitya (a few youths) / fityaah (many youths)

32 The plural 'ashyaa 'things' is dipyte 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 ditypes and dipyte patterns.

33 By virtue of phonological rules that prevent the sequence /yw/ in 'ayyaam, the plural form 
becomes 'ayyaam, with assimilation of the waaw to the yaa'. Likewise, 'a' laaf is realized as 'aalaaf 
in order to avoid the sequence /'a/'). Other plurals of this pattern include 'literature' 'adab/ 
'aadaab and 'vestige' 'athar/ 'aathaar.
(2.3) Addition of nun: Plural: CVCCaAn (fa'laan/fi'laan/fu'laan فعالان):

- country/ies: bilaad/buldaan بَلَادُ/بَلدَان
- neighbor/s: jaar/jiiraan جَارُ/جِيِرٌان
- fire/s: naar/niiraan نَارُ/نَيْرٌان
- worm/s: duuda/diidaan دُوُّدُ/دَيِدٌان
- bull/s: thawr/thiiraan ثُورُ/ثُيْرٌان

(2.4) Addition of taa’ marbuutA: Sometimes a taa’ marbuutA 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 فعالیة). This is often used to pluralize names of groups or professions borrowed from other languages:

- professor/s: ‘ustaadh / ‘asaatidha أَسْتَاذٌ/أَسْتَاذَة
- doctor/s: duktuur/dakaatira دَكْتُورُ/دَكْتَرَة
- philosopher/s: faylusuuff/falaasifa فِيْلُوسُوفٌ/فَلِسْفَة
- Bolshevik/s: bulshifiyy/balaashifa بَلْشَيْفَةٌ/بَلْشَيْفَة
- African/s: ‘ifriqiyy/’afuariqa إِفْرِيقِيٍّ/إِفْرِيقِيٌّا
- pharaoh/s: fir’awn/faraa’ina فَرَاعِيْنَ/فَرَاعِيْنَة
- bishop/s: ‘usqufj’asaaqiqa ‘asaaqif أسْقَفُ/أَسْقَافَةٌ-أَسْقَافٍ

(2.4.2) Plural CaaCa (faala فَالِة): Used with nouns derived from hollow verbs:

- sir/s: sayyid/saada سَيْدُ/سَادَة
- leader/s: qaa’ id/qaada قَانِدٌ/قَادَة

(2.4.3) Plural CuCaat (fu’aat فعَة): Used with active participles of Form I defective verbs:

- infantryman/infantry: maashin/mushaat مَأْشَّةٌ/مَشَاة
- judge/s: qaDIn/quDuat قَاضِيَةٌ/قَضَاءٌ
- reciter/s: raawin/ruwaat رَوَايَةٌ/رُوَايَة

^ PhD: Phonological rules prevent the sequence /-iw-/ in the hypothetical form *jiwraan, and it is realized as jiiuraan, the /j/ sound assimilating the waaw. The same principle applies to naar/niimaan and others.
marksman/-men  raamin/rumaat  رامً/رامة
 dilettante/s; fan/s  haawin/huwaat  هاوً/هواء

(2.4.4) **Plural CaCaCa (fa‘ala 动词) from singular CaaCiC:** This plural often alternates with CuCCaaC.

student/s  Taalib/Talaba~Tullaab  طالب/طلبة - طلاب
servant/s  xaadim/xadama~xuddaam  خادم/خدمة - خدام
guard/s  Haaris/Harasa~Hurraas  حارس/حروسة - حواس

(2.4.5) **Plural ‘aCCiCa (‘af‘ila 动词) from singular CVaaCiC (fa‘aul 动词, fi‘aal 动词):** In this broken plural pattern there is addition of both hamza at the start of the word and taa marbuuta at the end of the word:

carpet/s  bisaaT/‘absTa ~ busuT  بساط/أبيطة ~ بسط
answer/s  jawaab/‘ajwiba  جواب/أجوبة
clothes  libaas /‘albisa  لباس/ألبسة
mixture/s  mizaaj/‘amzija  مزيج/أمزجة
brain/s  dimaagh/‘admigha  دماغ/دممجة

(2.4.6) **Plural CaCaayaa (fa‘ayaa 动词):** This plural is used for certain feminine nouns, especially if they are defective or hamzated. It is invariable, always ending with ‘alif.

gift  hadiyya/hadaayaa  هدية/هدايا
sin  xaTii’a/xTaayya  خطيئة/خطايا
corner  zaawiya/zawaayaa  الزاوية/زوايا

3.2.3.2 **Diptote pattern broken plural (mamnuu من الصرف):** 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‘ (fit‘ala‘ 動词) from singular: CaCiiC (fa‘il 動词):**
This plural is used only for human beings:

prince/s  ‘amiir/ ‘umaraa  أمير/أمراء
president/s  ra‘isis/ ru‘asaa  رئيس/رؤساء
minister/s  waziir/ wuzaraa  وزير/وزراء
leader/s  za‘iim/ zu‘amaa  زعيم/زعماء
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

experts/xabiir/xubaraa’ خبير/خبراء
poor persons/faqiir/fuqaraa’ فقير/قراة

(2) Plural ‘aCCiCaa’ (‘af’ ila’אفعلاء’ فعالاء) from singular CaCiiC (fa’iiilفعل). This broken plural pattern prefixes and suffixes hamza. It is used with humans only:

physicians/TaTibb/‘aTibbaa’طبيب/أطباء
friends/Sadiiq/‘aSdiqaa’صديق/أصدقاء
relatives/qarib/‘aqribaa’ قريب/أقرباء
loved ones/Habiib/‘aHibbaa’ حبيب/أحباء

(3) Plural CaCaaCiC (fa’aaalيلفعل). 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/markaz/maarakiz مركز/مراكز
kingdom/mamlaka/mamaalik ملكة/ممالك
restaurant/maTcam/maTa‘im مطعم/مطاعم
mine/manjum/manajim منجم/مناجم

(3.1.2) Nouns of instrument:
towel/minshafa/manashif منشفة/مناشف
broom/miknaas/makaanis مكناس/مكناس
elevator/miSrid/maSaa‘id مصعد/مصاعد

(3.1.3) Participles: (Form IV AP nonhuman):

problem/mushkila/mashaakil مشكلة/مشاكل

(3.2) Other patterns of triliteral roots with added consonants:
ladder/sulal/salaalim سلم/سلام
foreigner/‘ajnabiyy/‘ajaanti أجنب/أجانب

35 Phonological rules prevent the sequence ‘aTibbaa’, so the medial /i/ shifts and the form becomes ‘aTibbaa’.
middle part/s  ‘awsaT/‘awaasiT

ticket/s  tadhkira/tadhaakir

g fingertip/s  ‘ummula/ ‘anaaamil

(3.3) **Nouns derived from quadriliteral roots:**

frog/s  Dafda‘ /Dafaadi‘

element/s  ‘unSur/ ‘anaaSir

hotel/s  funduq/fanaadiq

dagger/s  xanjar/xanaajir

bomb/s  qunbula/qanaabil

translation/s  tarjama/taraajim

(3.4) **Nouns that are borrowed from other languages, but fit the pattern:**

consul/s  qunSul/qanaaSil

(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/)

program/s  barnuaamaj/baraamij (omission of /n/)

index/es  fihiist/fahaaris (omission of /f/)

(3.6) **Variants on fa‘aalil:**

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 CVCVC or CVCVVCa:

(3.6.1) **Plural CaCaa‘iC (fa‘a‘il: medial hamza insertion:**

newspaper/s  jarida/jaraa‘id

minute/s  daqiqa/daqua‘iq

result/s  natiija/nataa‘ij

church/es  kaniisa/kanaa‘is

garden/s  Hadiiqa/Hadaa‘iq

ode/s  qaSiida/qaaSaa‘id

(3.6.2) **Plural ‘aCaaCiC (fa‘aa‘il: initial hamza insertion:**

place/s  makaan/ ‘amaakin

relative/s  qariib/‘aqarib

---

أوسط/أواست
تذكرة/تذاكر
أنامل/أعمال
ضفادع/ضفادع
عناسر/عناصر
فندق/فنادق
خناجر/خناجر
قنابل/قنابل
ترجمة/ترجمات
قنصال/قناصل
عنكبوت/عناكب
برنامج/برامج
فهرست/فهارس
جريدة/جرائد
دقيقة/دقائق
ناتجة/نتائج
كنيسة/كنائس
حديقة/حدائق
قصيدة/قصائد
مكان/أماكن
 قريب/أقارب
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

(3.6.3) Plural CawaaCiC (fawaa’il فواعل): 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 راتب/رواتب
objection/s maaniɛ / mawaaniɛ مانع/مؤنعن
capital/s faaSimaj / awaaSim عاصمة/واصلم
fruit/s faakiha/fawaakih فاكهة/فاواكح
mosque/s jaamiɛ / jawaamiɛ جامع/جوامع
street/s shaariɛ / shawaariɛ شارع/شواعر
ring/s xaatim/xawaatim خاتم/خواتم
incident/s Haadith/Hawaadith حادث/حوادث
last part/s awaxir/awaaaxir آخر/أوآخر

(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 عاهل/عواهل
pregnant (one/s) Haamil/Hawaamil حامل/حؤامل

(3.6.4) Plural CaCaaCin (fa‘aalin فعالٍ): 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.36

coffeehouse/s maqhan/maqaahin مقهى/مقاه
range/s marman/maraaamin مرمى/مرام
night/s layl/layaalin ليل/ليالي
effort/s mas’aan/masaa’in مساعٍ/مساع

(4) Diptote plural: CaCaaCiiC (fa‘aalin فعالٍ): 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 ‘arDj ‘araadin (‘earth, land’) and yad‘ayaadin يدأيياد (‘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) **Prefix ed hamza**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular CVCCWC</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pipe/s</td>
<td>ُعَبْعُ / ُعَبْعِيِّب</td>
<td>أبوب/أنابيب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>week/s</td>
<td>ُعَاءْبُ / ُعَاءْبِيِّب</td>
<td>أسحوب/أسابيع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legend/s</td>
<td>ُعَنُعُرُ / ُعَنُعِيِّر</td>
<td>أسطورة/أساطير</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fleet/s</td>
<td>ُعَنُعُرُ / ُعَنُعِيِّر</td>
<td>أسطول/أساطيل</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.1.2) **Doubled middle root consonant**:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular CVCCWC</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>window/s</td>
<td>شِبَّاك/شِبَبيك</td>
<td>جبارة/سجاجيد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prayer rug/s</td>
<td>سَاجِدا/سَاجِيي</td>
<td>سجاجيد</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.1.3) **Prefix ed miim**:

(4.1.3.1) **Passive participles**: Form I passive participles serving as substantives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular CVCCWC</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>decree/s</td>
<td>مَرْسَعُ / مَرْسَعِي</td>
<td>مرسوم/مراسيم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>topic/s</td>
<td>مَوْذُع / مَوْذَعِي</td>
<td>موضوع/مواضيع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concept/s</td>
<td>مَفْهُوم / مَفْهَعِي</td>
<td>مفهوم/مفاهيم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>content/s</td>
<td>مَضْمُون / مَضْمَعِي</td>
<td>مضمون/مضامين</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.1.3.2) **Some nouns of instrument**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular CVCCWC</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>key/s</td>
<td>مِفْتَأِي / مِفْتَأِيِي</td>
<td>مفتاح/مفاتيح</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saw/s</td>
<td>مَنْشَأ / مَنْشَعِي</td>
<td>منشار/مناشير</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.1.4) **Prefix ed taa':** Certain Form II verbal nouns as a plural variant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular CVCCWC</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>report/s</td>
<td>تَقَرِير / تَقَارِيي</td>
<td>تقرير/تقارير</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement/s</td>
<td>تَدْبِير / تَدْبِيي</td>
<td>تدبير/تدابير</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>detail/s</td>
<td>تَفْصِيل / تَفْصَيي</td>
<td>تفصيل/تفاصيل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>statue/s</td>
<td>تَمْثِيل / تَمْثَيي</td>
<td>تمثال/تماثيل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drill/s</td>
<td>تَمْرَيِن / تَمْرَييي</td>
<td>تمرين/تمرين</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.2) **Quadriliteral root nouns** (singular pattern: CVCCVC):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular CVCCVC</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>crocodile/s</td>
<td>تَنْسَاي / تَنْسَيي</td>
<td>تماسح/تماسح</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>box/es</td>
<td>صَنَادِيق / صَنَادِيي</td>
<td>صندوق/صناعات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>title/s; address/es</td>
<td>مَعْوَان / مَعْوَيي</td>
<td>عنوان/عناوين</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

orchard/s bustaan/basaatiin
hornet/s zunbuur/zanaabiir
volcano/es burkaan/baraakiin

(4.3) Borrowed words that fit the singular CVCCVC pattern:

million/s milyuun/malaayiin
billion/s bilyuun/balaayiin

(5) Plural CawaaCiiC (fawaa‘il) from singular CaaCuuC (faa‘uul) فاعول: variant from triliteral root with addition of waaw: This fits a triliteral root with two long vowels into a quadriliteral plural:

spy/ies jaasuus/jawaasiis
law/s qaanuun/qawaaniin
nightmare/s kaabhuus/kawaabiiis
dictionary/ies qaamuus/qawaamiis
rocket/s Saaruux/Sawaaariix

3.2.4 Plurals from different or modified roots
A few nouns have plurals with different or slightly variant lexical roots.

woman/women imra’a/nisaa’ ~ niswa ~ niswaan

horse/es Hisaan/xayl

water/s maa’ /miyaah

mouth fam / *afwaah

3.2.5 Plural of the plural: (jamc al-jamc) جمع الجمع
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:

hand/s yad / ’ayd-in/’ayaad-in
wound/s jurH / juruutil/juruuHaat
path/s Tariiq/Turuq/Turuqaat
house/s buyt/buyuut/buyuutaat
pyramid/s haram/’ahraam/’ahraamaat
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

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 ‘iDaafa (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.38

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-’ahraam الأهرام
the joy al-faraH الفرح

4.1.1.2 IT IS SPELLED WITH hamzat al-waSl: Although spelled with ‘alif-laam, and most often transliterated as “al-,” the ’alif 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.\(^{39}\)

to the city \(\text{\'ilaa l-madiinat-i}\) إلى المدينة
in Arabic \(\text{bi-l-\text{\textsuperscript{\texttt{arabiyyat}}}i}\) باللغة
the country’s flag \(\text{\textsuperscript{\texttt{alam}u} l-balad-i}\) علم البلد
The United Nations \(\text{al-'umam-u l-muttaHidat-u}\) الأمم المتحدة

### 4.1.1.3 ASSIMILATION OF \textit{laam}: The nature of the first letter of a noun or adjective determines the pronunciation of \(/al/\). The letters of the Arabic alphabet are divided into two sections, one section whose members assimilate the \(/l/\) sound and another section whose members allow the full pronunciation of \(/l/\) of the definite article. See also Chapter 2, section 8.1.2.

1. **Sun letters (\textit{Huruf shamsiyya})**: 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the leader</td>
<td>\textit{al-za'}iim</td>
<td>الزعيم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the fish</td>
<td>\textit{al-samak}</td>
<td>السمك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the honor</td>
<td>\textit{al-sharaf}</td>
<td>الشرف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the fox</td>
<td>\textit{al-tha'}lab</td>
<td>الثعلب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the wolf</td>
<td>\textit{al-dhi'}b</td>
<td>الذنب</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Moon letters (\textit{Huruf qamariyya})**: Moon letters do not absorb or assimilate the \(/l/\) of the definite article. They are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the leader</td>
<td>\textit{al-za'}iim</td>
<td>الزعيم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the fish</td>
<td>\textit{al-samak}</td>
<td>السمك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the honor</td>
<td>\textit{al-sharaf}</td>
<td>الشرف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the fox</td>
<td>\textit{al-tha'}lab</td>
<td>الثعلب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the wolf</td>
<td>\textit{al-dhi'}b</td>
<td>الذنب</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{39}\) For further discussion of the definite article and \textit{hamza} \textit{al-waSl}, see Chapter 2, section 8.
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
the new center which has been established
It was found in the playground.

أدركت أنه نسي الكلمة.
'adrak-a 'anna-hu nasîya-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 المفاجأت.
I don’t like surprises.
al-qiyaÂ‘at-u l-mufaajaÂ‘at-î.

المهم هو العمل.
The important (thing) is work.
al-muhimm-u huwa l-‘amal-u.

أحب التنظيم في العمل.
I like organization at work.
‘u-Hibb-u l-tanziim-a fii l-‘amal-i.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Arabic Name</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Arabic Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khartoum</td>
<td>al-xarTuum</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>al-‘urdunn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riyadh</td>
<td>al-riyaaD</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>al-‘iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>al-qaahira</td>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>al-kuwayt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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-maaDiy-a
last Tuesday

أيام الجمعة والسبت
'ayyaam-a l-jum'at-i wa-l-sabt-i
on Fridays and Saturdays

بعد ظهر الثلاثاء الحاري
ba'd-a Zuhr-i l-thulaathaa'-i l-jaarii
next Tuesday afternoon

ليل الخميس والجمعه
layl-a l-xamiis-i wa-l-jum'at-i
on Thursday and Friday night

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 masaa'-'i ghad-in
between six and eight o'clock (‘the sixth and the eighth’) tomorrow evening

في السابعة والربع
fii l-sabbi'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.

السفناء العرب
al-sufaraa'-u l-'arab-u
the Arab ambassadors

البحر المتوسط
al-baHr-u l-mutawassiT-u
the Mediterranean Sea

الهلال الخصيب
al-hilaal-u l-xaSiib-u
the Fertile Crescent

الحكاية القديمة
al-Hikaayat-u l-qadiimat-u
the old story

الامين العام
al-'amin-u l-'aamm-u
the secretary general

الكathiir-u min-naa
many of us

الأكبر
al-'akbar-u
the greatest

على الأقل
'aala l-'aqall-i
at least
4.1.2.7 With cardinal numbers in definite phrases:

في السنوات الخمس الأولى

in the next five years

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.

زعماء القبائل

the leaders of the tribes

مدينة دمشق

the city of Damascus

If the annexing noun (the second noun in the phrase) is indefinite, the entire phrase is considered indefinite:

Haqiibat-u yad-in a handbag

Tabiib-u 'asnaan-in a dentist

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

40 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:
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
its capacity
its refining capacity

بدأ مؤتمره الصحافي
bada‘a mu’tamarahu
he began his conference
he began his press conference

في زيارته
fii ziyarat-i-hi
on his visit
on his last official visit

4.2 Indefiniteness

4.2.1 Writing and pronunciation: nunation (tanwiин 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 tanwiин تنوين in Arabic. The suffixed /-n/ sound is not written by using the Arabic letter nun. Instead, it is signaled by writing the short case-marking vowel twice. Therefore, the names of the nunation markers are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dammataani</th>
<th>two Dammas</th>
<th>‘</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kasrataani</td>
<td>two kasras</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fatHataani</td>
<td>two fatHas</td>
<td>/</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  da‘im-an  دائمًا  especially  xuSunSan  خطوًصًا
never  ‘abad-an  أبداً  exactly  tamaam-an  تمامًا

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 ‘alif 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>bayt ‘a house’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1.2 FEMININE SINGULAR INDEFINITE WORD:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘aaSifa ‘a storm’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1.3 BROKEN PLURAL INDEFINITE WORD:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nujuum ‘stars’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</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>kalimaat ‘words’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</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, ﴿rather than two separate Dammas ﴿. 

a schedule  jadwal-un جدول a colt  muhr-un مهر
a steamship  baaxirat-un باخرة a bell  juras-un جرس

(2) Second, the accusative, fatHataan, is often accompanied by an ‘alif. This ‘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 أرناب a saddle  sarj-an سرجا

(2.1) If a word in the accusative ends with a taa’ marbuutta, or a hamza, or preceded by ‘alif, then the ‘alif “chair” is not used and the fatHataan perch right on top of the hamza or taa’ marbuutta:

an evening  masaa’an مساء a melon  baTTixat-an بطيخة
a meeting  liqaa’an لقاء a permit  ‘ijaazat-an إذارة
a breeze  hawaa’an هواء a language  lughat-an لغة

Examples:

He also discovered mistakes. 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:

محمد النبي
muHammad-un-i l-nabiyy-u\(^3\)

Muhammad the Prophet

\(^3\) Wright 1967: 1:22.
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 سفراء better 'aHsan\'-u أحسن

Sound masculine plural:

Engineers muhandis-uuna مهندسون Egyptians miSriyy-uuna مصريون

Dual:

Two states dawlat-aani دولتان two poets shaar\'ir-aani شاعران

Invariable nouns:

Chaos fawDaa فوضى issues qaDaayaa قضاء

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.

في عمر مبكر fi\'i 'umr-in mubakkir-in at an early age


We have achieved adequate progress.

to a new state

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\'-u محمد Salim 'flawless' salliim\'-u سليم

Munir 'radiant' muniir\'-u منير Ali 'exalted' aliyy\'-u علي

5.4.2.2 Uses of the indefinite
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 ‘aHmad, ‘ibraahiim, 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):

immediately  fawr-an

فوراً
a little (bit)  qaliil-an

قليلًا

daily  yawmiyy-an

يوميًا

very  jidd-an

 جداً

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 (‘i’raab إعراب).48 In respect to case

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 ‘i’raab 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 (ارفع, رفع), genitive (جر), and accusative (ناصب). 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., ’/an /; /-in/ ; I/-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

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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 -antil-/antil/, the sound masculine plural suffixes -(a)nina/(dina) and the “live nouns” that inflect, under certain conditions, with long vowels (see section 5.4.1c.). Another partial exception is the word-final ‘a'ilf that appears in written Arabic script on many words as a seat for fathatun, the indefinite accusative marker (e.g., ‘axilin ‘(finally’), ‘alilin ‘(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.

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.

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.”

51 See, for example, the article by Khaldieh (2001) titled: “The relationship between knowledge of i‘raab, lexical knowledge, and reading comprehension of nonnative readers of Arabic.”

53 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 ́jtima`a-`an ma-`a l-muwaZZafiina.
The director held a meeting with the employees.

There are three nouns in this sentence: al-mudiir-u ‘director, manager,’ ́jtima`a-‘an ‘meeting,’ and al-muwaZZafiina ‘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, ́jtima`, 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-muwaZZafiina. 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 nun 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 (الرفع al-raf', الرفع al-marfuu' المرفوع)
The nominative inflection (typically -u or -un, -una 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-fa'āl) 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.

The ministers agreed to strengthen cooperation.

The two sides held official discussions.

The Muslims left it behind them.

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 'ismiyya)

The information is wrong. The palace of the king is huge.
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.\(^{58}\) Certain function words, like mundh-u and Hayth-u have Damma consistently. Other words, such as qabl-u and ba’d-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).

since; ago mundh-u منُّ only Hash-u; fa-Hasb-u حسبُ

where; whereas Hayth-u حيثُ yet ba’d-u بعدُ

at all qaTT-u قَطُّ before qabl-u; min qabl-u قبلَ: من قبلّ

وسعَ الأمريكيون الفارقَ منذُ البداية.

wassa’a l-amiriiky-yuna l-faariq-a mundh-u l-bidaayat-i.

The Americans widened the margin [of points] from the beginning.

في مستشفى حيث تقع قصص حب
fii mustashfan Hayth-u ta-qa’-u qisSaS-u Hubb-in

in a hospital where love stories happen

لَمْ نكشفَ هويَتهم بعدّ

lam tu-kshaf huwiyyaat-u-hum ba’d-u.

Their identities have not yet been revealed.

5.3.1.4 THE VOCATIVE (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 ‘iDaafa construction, in which case it shifts to accusative.\(^{59}\)

يا رشيدُ
yaa rashid-u\(^{60}\)

أيْها السيدات والسادة
‘ayyuhaa l-saayyidaat-u wa-l-saadat-u!

O Rashid!

Ladies and gentlemen!

\(^{58}\) 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.

\(^{59}\) See section 5.3.3.12 subsection (3) of this chapter for examples of the first terms of ‘iDaafa in the accusative after the vocative particle.

\(^{60}\) If the vocative particle yaa (‘O) is used, the following word has Damma, but not nunation or the definite article. If the vocative particle is ‘ayyu-haa (m.) or ‘ayyu-tu-haa (f.), the following word or words have the definite article.
Certain exclamations fall into this category:61

O goodness! ('O peace!') yaa salaam-u! يا سلام! 
What a loss! What a pity! yaa xasaarat-u! يا خسارة!

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.62 For example, a list of vocabulary words out of context:

- monarch ‘aahil-un عاهل
- forbidden mammuu’-un ممنوع
- treaty mu’aahadat-un معاهدة
- The Sudan al-sundaan-u السودان
- The Fertile Crescent al-hilaal-u l-xaSiib-u الهلال الخصيب

5.3.2 Genitive case (al-jarr الجر, al-majruur المجرو، al-xaFD المجض): The genitive inflection (-i or -in, -a [in diptote declensions], -iina [for the sound masculine plural] or -ayni [in the dual]) has three chief functions. It marks:

5.3.2.1 THE OBJECT OF A PREPOSITION: Prepositions are followed by nouns or noun phrases in the genitive case.

- fii l-Zalaam-i 3illa l-yamiin-i إلى اليمين to the right
- min bayruut-a ka-jisr-in HaDaariyy-in من بيروت كجسر حضاري as a cultural bridge
- min-а l-mamaalik-i l-miSriyy-iina fii haadh-ayni l-kitaab-ayni من الممالیک المصریین في هذین الكتبین in these two books

61 Note that exclamations with yaa may also use the preposition li- ‘for’ + a definite noun in the genitive case:

O the poor man! yaa li-l-maskiin-i! يا للمسکین!
How unfortunate! yaa li-l-’asaf-il يا للأسف!

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 (Zart makaan wa-Zart 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.”

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.

5.3.3 Accusative case (al-nasb: المنصوب) The accusative inflection (-u, -an, -in, -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.63 In MSA, it frequently occurs in the following constructions:

5.3.3.1 THE OBJECT OF A TRANSITIVE VERB (al-maf‘uul 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.64

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.”
3.3.2 Locative Adverbs of Both Time and Place (Zurur makan wa-zurur zaman): 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.

5.3.3.3 Adverbial Expressions of Time, Place, and Manner (al-maf’ul fii-hi al-mufa’ul fihi): 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 3Daafa, it does not have nunation.

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).

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).

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.”
سيعود قريبأ إلى بغداد.

sa-ya'ud-u qariib-an 'ila baghdad-u.
He will return to Baghdad soon.

مدة ثماني ساعات ليل الخميس

muddat-a thamaani saa'aat-in 
layl-a l-xamiis-i
[for] a period of eight hours on
Thursday night

5.3.3.4 THE INTERNAL OBJECT OR COGNATE ACCUSATIVE STRUCTURE (al-mat'uul al-muTlaq). 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:

حلت الموضوع حلاً جزئياً.
Hall-at-i l-mawDuu-'a Hall-an jidhriyy-an.
It solved the issue fundamentally.

تدرك عمان إدراكاً كلياً.
tu-drik-u-hu 'ammaan-u 'idraak-an kulliyy-an.
Amman realizes it fully.

ساهموا مساهمة فعالة.
saaham-aa musaahamat-an fa'saalat-an.
They (two) participated effectively.

5.3.3.5 THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL ACCUSATIVE (al-Haal الحال). 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:

دخل الصف متأخراً.

daxal-a l-Saff-a muta'axxir-an.
He entered the classroom late.

رفع يده معترضاً.

rafa'a yad-a-hu mu'tariD-an.
He raised his hand objecting.

يغادرون القاهرة اليوم متوجهين إلى باريس.

yu-ghadhir-uuna l-qahhirat-a liyawm-a mutawajjih-iina 'ila baariis.
They are leaving Cairo today heading for Paris.
အဲမေးရိုင်း ကြောင့် ပြောက်လာသည် ကြောင့်
'alaqa l-wazīr-u kalimat-an naaqil-an taḥiyaat-i l-raʿīs-i.
The minister gave a speech transmitting the greetings of the president.

(2) Using passive participles:

قَفَّزَت مَذْعُورَةَ
qafaz-at madh‘uurat-an.
She jumped, frightened.

(3) Using a verbal noun:

وَقَالَ رَدًا عَلَى سُؤَالٍ
wa-qaal-a radd-an alaa su‘aal-in...
(And) he said, replying to a question...

5.3.3.6 THE ACCUSATIVE OF PURPOSE (al-maf‘uul li-‘ajl-i-hi နေရာကူး (နေရာကူး)) OR (al-maf‘uul la-hu နေရာကူး) in order to show the motive, purpose, or reason for an action. It is usually used with an indefinite verbal noun.

الْقُوَّاتُ تَشْنُ حَمْلةً بِحَكَمٍ عِنْدَ أَسِلْحَةٍ
The forces are launching a campaign searching for weapons.

خلال حفلة استقبال أقاموها تكريماً له
xilaal-a Haflat-i stiqbaal-in ‘aqaam-uu-haa takriim-an la-hu
during a reception they gave in his honor

شهدت مختلف المدن إضراباً واسعاً تضامناً مع العمالة
shahad-at muxtialif-u l-mudun-i ‘iDraab-an waasi‘-an taDaamun-an ma‘a l‘ummaal-i.
Various cities witnessed a widespread strike in solidarity with the workers.

5.3.3.7 THE ACCUSATIVE OF SPECIFICATION (al-tamyiiz ကြိယာများ). 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.

نُعَلِنَ ذاكُ قَوْلُ وَفَعْلَ
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').


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, 1:545) there are thirteen of these verbs, the most common in MSA are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lays-a</td>
<td>to not be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saar-a</td>
<td>to become</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baat-a</td>
<td>to become</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'aSbaH-a</td>
<td>to become</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zall-a</td>
<td>to remain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

68 See Chapter 15 for further discussion of numerals and counting.
69 “The al-nawaasik” 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-nawaasik 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, 1:543ff. and 630ff. has thorough descriptions of the nawaasik 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 1:593ff. for more on these particles.
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

baqiy-a to remain, to stay بقى

daama and maa daama to continue to be دام + ما دام

maa zaal-a to continue to be; to still be; to not cease to be مازال

‘amsaa to become أمسى

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.

The author of the book is not a historian. يلات الحاحدة يلات البلد.

kaan-a juz’-an min haadhaa l-Hulm-i. كان جزءاً من هذا الحلم.

It was a part of this dream. يلات يومياً يلات اليوم.

kaan-at ‘akbar-a ‘aaSimat-in ‘uuurubbiyyat-in. كانت أكبر عاصمة أوروبية.

It was the largest European capital.

al-Sinaa’at-u l-sha‘biyyat-u maa zaal-at Hayyat-an.
Folk handicraft is still alive.

(2) ‘inna and her sisters (‘inna wa-‘axawaat-u-haa إن وأخواتها):

‘inna ‘verily; indeed; that’ إن

‘anna ‘that’ أن

laakinna ‘but’ لكن

li-‘anna ‘because’ لأن

la‘alla ‘perhaps’ لعل

These particles are subordinating conjunctions which require that the subject of the subordinate clause (also called the complement clause) be in the accusative case.73

73 For more on ‘inna and her sisters, see Chapter 19 on subordinating conjunctions.
قالت إن أحدًا لا يستطيع أن يوقفهم.

ُةَنَّىَنْٰوَأَحَدَٰ۰ٰ لَا يُسْتَطِيعُ أَن يَوْفِقُهُمِ

\( qāl-a \ 'i\nn\(a \ 'aHad-an \ lla\a\a\a yā-staTii‘-u \ 'an \ y\a\a\a w\a\a\a q\a\a\a f\a\a\a a-hum. \)

It said that no one could stop them.

أن الزراعة لغةٌ عالمية

ُنَّىَنْٰلَأَنَّٰ أَلْفَجَعَتْ لَهُٰٰ تٰاٰلٰامٰيٰٰعٰٰ-ٰٰ

that agriculture is a world language

لكن قليلين من الباحثين

لَكْنَ قَلِيْلِيَنِّ مِنَ الْبَاحِثِيِّنَ

but few of the researchers

لا ينتمون إلى الباحثين

لَأَنَّ الْسِّنْتَيْنِ أَلْخَيْرَتَيْنِ كَانَا مِنْ أَفْضِلِ السَّنَوَاتِ

because the last two years were among the best years

(3) قانة و أخواتها (قانة و أخواتها): The verb قانة ‘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" (AnGehelescu 1999, 132). Hasan breaks this category down into two parts: "\( a\f\a\a\a aal al-quluub\)" or "\( a\f\a\a\a aal qalbiyya\)" (verbs of perception or cognition) and "\( a\f\a\a\a aal al-taHwiil\)" (verbs of transformation).\(^{75}\) Hasan gives complete lists; here are some examples.\(^{76}\)

(3.1) Verbs of perception:

to suppose, believe قانة\( \)

أَنْ أَظْنَ أَظْنَ زَيَدُ أَذَاٰهَاٰ

\( 'a-Zann-u \ Zayd-an \ dhaahib-an. \)

I believe Zayd is going.\(^{78}\)

to consider, deem \( 'add-a \)

to perceive, deem, see \( ra\a\a\a a \)

to find, deem \( wajad-a \)

to consider \( i\a\a\a t\a\a\a b\a\a\a r\a\a\a a \)

\(^{74}\) 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 قانة and her sisters (1987, II:10). Note also the discussion in Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughi 1990, 34-36.

\(^{78}\) Example from Bohas, Guillaume, and Kouloughi 1990, 34.

\(^{79}\) The verb \( i\a\a\a t\a\a\a b\a\a\a r\a\a\a a \) ‘to consider’ is not included in older lists of \( a\f\a\a\a aal al-quluub\), 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.
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

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.

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 make: ja'al-a جعل
- to take, adopt (as): ittaxadh-a اتخذ
- to leave: tarak-a ترك

They took the river [as] borders of the region.

He left the door open.

In this construction the noun is devoid of the definite article or nunation. It carries only the accusative marker fatHa.

Don’t mention it. ('There is no thanking for a duty.')

There is no excuse for its elimination.

See also Chapter 37, section 2.1.6.
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. No matter what their function in a sentence, these compound numbers always have both parts marked with fātHa:

\[
\text{ثمنه خمسة عشر درهما.} \quad \text{في الغرف التسع عشرة} \\
\text{thaman-u-hu xamsat-a ˈashi-r-a dirham-an.} \quad \text{fī l-ghurafi l-tisʿ-aj ˈashi-rat-a} \\
\text{Its cost is fifteen dirhams.} \quad \text{in the nineteen rooms}
\]

\[
\text{يبلغ طوله ثلاثة عشر متراً.} \\
\text{ya-blughu Tuul-u-hu thalaathat-a ˈashi-r-a mitr-an.} \\
\text{Its length reaches thirteen meters.}
\]

5.3.3.11 **AS THE COMPLEMENT OF VERBS OF “SEEING”**: Verbs that denote appearing or seeming also take accusative complements.

\[
\text{كان يبدو شخصية بارزة في مجتمعه} \\
\text{kaan-ya-bduu shaxsiyyat-an baarizat-an fī mujtamaʿ-l-hi.} \\
\text{He had seemed [like] a prominent personality in his society.}
\]

\[
\text{تبدو أصغر بكثير من عمرها.} \\
\text{ta-bduu ˈaṣghar-a bi-kathiir-in min ˈurni-haa.} \\
\text{She appears much younger than her age.}
\]

\[
\text{يبدو عتيقا جداً.} \\
\text{ya-bduu ˈattiq-an jidd-an.} \\
\text{It looks very ancient.}
\]

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:

1. **kam + accusative singular noun**: A singular accusative, indefinite noun is used after the question word kam ‘how much, how many?’

\[
\text{kam faSl-an qaraʿ-aj?} \quad \text{kam ghurfat-an fī l-funduq-i?} \\
\text{How many chapters did you (f.) read?} \quad \text{How many rooms [are there] in the hotel?}
\]

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.
Exclamation of astonishment: *maa 'af'al-a!* (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.*

Exclamation of astonishment:

*maa 'af'al-a!*  
*maa 'ajmal-a l-manZar-a!*

How lovely the view is!

The noun may be replaced by a pronoun suffix:

*maa 'ajmal-a-lu!*

How lovely it is!

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 'ilDaafa or noun construct, or if the noun has a pronoun suffix:

*ya 'abd-a llaah-i!*

O Abdallah! (lit: 'servant of God')

*ya 'arb-a bilaad-ii!*

O, earth of my country!

*ya 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:

*Abaana al-dhi fi le-samawaat-i . . .*

* 'ab-'aa-naa llaadhi fi l-samawaat-i . . .*

Our Father who [art] in heaven . . .

Nouns following exceptive expressions (al-istithnaa) 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.

\[
\text{حضر الجميع إلا رشيداً.} \\
\text{HaDar-a l-jamii‘u’ illaa rashiid-an.}
\]

Everyone came except Rashid.

\[
\text{تكلم مع كل الطلاب إلا ياسمين.} \\
\text{takallam-tu ma’a kull-i l-Taalibaat-i ‘illaa yaasamiin-a.}
\]

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.:

\[
\text{الساعة الخامسة إلا ربعاً} \\
\text{al-saa‘at-u l-xaamisat-u ‘illaa rub‘-an.}
\]

It is 4:45 (‘five [o’clock] less a quarter [of an hour]’).

\[
\text{الساعة السابعة إلا ثلثاً} \\
\text{al-saa‘at-u l-saabi‘at-u ‘illaa thuith-an.}
\]

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 1975, II:161–248; Wright 1967, II:44–129 and in Arabic, Hasan 1987, II:3–430.

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 declension 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:

1 three-way inflection (called “triptote” in many Arabic grammars)
2 dual

\[^{84}\text{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 undclinable substantives (32).}

\[^{84}\text{For ease of reference in this book, I have allotted declensional status not only to singular and broken plural noun stems, but also to words that incorporate suffixes denoting dual and plural number, since they inflect for case and definiteness in different ways.}\]
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 Dammass/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/qasir-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

the secret/a secret  
al-sirr-i/sirr-in

the ship/a ship  
al-safiinat-i/safiinat-in

(2.2) Adjective in the genitive case:

short (def.)/short (indef.)  
al-qaSiir-i/qaSiir-in

new (def.)/new (indef.)  
al-jadiid-i/jadiid-in

(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

the secret/a secret  
al-sirr-a/sirr-an

the ship/a ship  
al-safiinat-a/safiinat-an

the winter/a winter  
al-shitaa'-a/shitaa'-an

(3.2) Adjective in the accusative case:

short (def.)/short (indef.)  
al-qaSiir-a/qaSiir-an

new (def.)/new (indef.)  
al-jadiid-a/jadiid-an

5.4.1.2 DECLENSION ONE PARADIGMS:

(1) Singular masculine noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'house' bayt بيت</th>
<th>Definite:</th>
<th>Indefinite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-bayt-u</td>
<td>بيت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-bayt-i</td>
<td>بيت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-bayt-a</td>
<td>بيت</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(2) Plural noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'houses' buyuut بيوت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definite:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-buyuut-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-buyuut-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-buyuut-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) Feminine singular noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'ship' safiina سفينة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definite:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-safiinat-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-safiinat-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-safiinat-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4) Plural noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'ships' sufun سفن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definite:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-sufun-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-sufun-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-sufun-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(5) Masculine singular adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'short' qaSiir قصير</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definite:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-qaSiir-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-qaSiir-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-qaSiir-a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(6) Broken plural adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Definite:</th>
<th>Indefinite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td></td>
<td></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 (‘iDaafa‘) or when it has a pronoun suffix.

The five nouns are:

- father, ʿab
- mother, fam
- brother, ʿax
- possessor, dhuu
- father-in-law, Ham

(1) The five-noun paradigms: ‘father’ ʿab ʾab

(1.1) As an independent word:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Definite:</th>
<th>Indefinite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>ʿab-u</td>
<td>ʿab-u-n ʾab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>ʿab-i</td>
<td>ʿab-i-n ʾab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>ʿab-a</td>
<td>ʿab-an ʾab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.2) With pronoun suffix: -haa ‘her father’:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Definite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>ʿab-uu-haa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>ʿab-ii-haa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>ʿab-aa-haa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(1.3) As first part of ‘iDaafa: ‘the father of Hasan’:

| Case       | ‘ab-uu Hasan-in | أبو حسن
|------------|----------------|--------
| Nomative   |                |        
| Genitive   | ‘ab-ii Hasan-in| أبي حسن
| Accusative | ‘ab-aa Hasan-in| أبا حسن

Examples:

اصبح أباً.  
ابن يوسف
‘aShul-a  ‘ab-an.  
He became a father.  
Father Joseph

ذهب إلى بيت أبيها.  
سأت أخاه.

dhahab-at  ila buyt-i ‘ab-ii-haa.  
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.\textsuperscript{88} Technically, these nouns are considered to exhibit all three cases; it is just that the genitive and accusative have exactly the same form.\textsuperscript{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 MASCLINE 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

\textsuperscript{88} Sometimes, in this latter category, the combined genitive/accusative inflection is referred to as the “oblique” or essentially, non-nominative case marker.

\textsuperscript{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-muthannaa)* 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)  
  -ان
- `ayni` (genitive/accusative)  
  -ين

(1.1) **Masculine dual noun:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'two houses' bayt-aani</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-bayt-aani</td>
<td>bayt-aani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-bayt-ayni</td>
<td>bayt-ayni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-bayt-ayni</td>
<td>bayt-ayni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.2) **Feminine dual noun:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'two cities' madiinat-aani</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-madiinat-aani</td>
<td>madiinat-aani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-madiinat-ayni</td>
<td>madiinat-ayni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-madiinat-ayni</td>
<td>madiinat-ayni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.3) **Masculine dual adjective:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'big' kabiir-aani</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-kabiir-aani</td>
<td>kabiir-aani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-kabiir-ayni</td>
<td>kabiir-ayni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-kabiir-ayni</td>
<td>kabiir-ayni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(1.4) Feminine dual adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>جرسان</th>
<th>من مركزين</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jaras-aani</td>
<td>min markaz-ayni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two bells</td>
<td>from two centers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>عاصفتان كبيرة</th>
<th>في مدينةين كبيرة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'aaSifat-aani kabiirat-aani</td>
<td>fiî madiinat-ayni kabiirat-ayni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two big storms</td>
<td>in two big cities</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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>بيدانه</th>
<th>مع مرشحي الحزب</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bi-yad-ay-hi</td>
<td>ma'^a muraʃ̱shaH-ay-i l-Hizb-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in his two hands</td>
<td>with the two nominees of the party</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

وحضر اللقاء عميدا كليتي الطب والهندسة.

wa-HaDar-a Hiqaa'^a 'amiid-aa kulliyyat-ay-i l-Tibb-i wa-l-handasat-i.

The two deans of the schools of medicine and engineering attended the meeting.

(2) Declension three: The sound masculine plural (*jamir* mudhakkar saalim)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>جمع مذكر سالم</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wa-Handar-a Hiqaa'^a 'amiid-aa kulliyyat-ay-i l-Tibb-i wa-l-handasat-i.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 \-al\) 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.

correspondents (nominative) \(\text{muraasil-uuna} \) مراسلون

Muslims (nominative) \(\text{muslim-uuna} \) مسلمون

Muslims (genitive/accusative) \(\text{muslim-iina} \) مسلمين

(2.1) Sound masculine plural noun:

| 'citizens' \(\text{muwaat} \text{-uuna} \) مواطنون |
| --- | --- |
| Definite: | Indefinite: |
| Nominative | \(\text{al-muwaat} \text{-uuna} \) المواطنون | \(\text{muwaat} \text{-uuna} \) مواطنون |
| Genitive | \(\text{al-muwaat} \text{-iina} \) المواطنين | \(\text{muwaat} \text{-iina} \) مواطنين |
| Accusative | \(\text{al-muwaat} \text{-iina} \) المواطنين | \(\text{muwaat} \text{-iina} \) مواطنين |

(2.2) Sound masculine plural adjective:

| 'many' \(\text{kath} \text{ii} \text{-uuna} \) كثيرون |
| --- | --- |
| Definite: | Indefinite: |
| Nominative | \(\text{al-kath} \text{ii} \text{-uuna} \) الكثيرون | \(\text{kath} \text{ii} \text{-uuna} \) كثيرون |
| Genitive | \(\text{al-kath} \text{ii} \text{-iina} \) الكثيرين | \(\text{kath} \text{ii} \text{-iina} \) كثيرين |
| Accusative | \(\text{al-kath} \text{ii} \text{-iina} \) الكثيرين | \(\text{kath} \text{ii} \text{-iina} \) كثيرين |

Examples:

\(\text{muraaqib-uuna rasmiiy} \text{-uuna} \) مرآقبون رسميون

\(\text{min-a l-muthaqaf} \text{-iina l- mu'tadil-iina} \) من المثقفين المعتدلين

official observers from the moderate intelligensia
(2.3) **Noun-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.

| مراقبو الوفد | من متخرجِي الجامعة |
| muraaqib-uu l-wafd-i | min mutaxarrij-ii l-jaami'at-i |
| companions of the delegation | from the graduates of the university |

ستطلب من ناخبِيه التصويت.

su-ta-Tlb-n min naaxib-ii-hi l-taSwiit-a.
It will ask its electors to vote.

(3) **Declension four:** The sound feminine plural (*jam* ُـُـُُْْـُْْ saalim جمع مؤنث سالم). 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:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'elections’ intixaabaat</th>
<th>انخابات</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definite:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-intixaabaat-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-intixaabaat-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-intixaabaat-i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

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 مصريات</th>
<th>Definite:</th>
<th>Indefinite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-miSriyyaat-u</td>
<td>miSriyyaat-u-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-miSriyyaat-i</td>
<td>miSriyyaat-i-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-miSriyyaat-i</td>
<td>miSriyyaat-i-n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of feminine plural accusative/genitive:

أجري محادثات مصريات.
He held talks.

لا سنا summarizes.
We are not Yemeni (f.pl.).

يفتح مجالات واسعة.
It opens wide fields.

يجري اتصالات مع جميع الأطراف.
yajrii ttiSaalaat-in ma’-a jamii’-i l-'arabiyyaat.
He is in contact with ('implementing contacts') with all sides.

دخلن الصف منا خرات مصريات.
They (f.) entered the classroom late.

رابطة النساء العربيات.
the Arab women’s club

5.4.2.2 DECLENSION FIVE: DIPTOTE (al-mamnuu’ min-a l-Sarf الممنوع من الصرف): 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.

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></th>
<th>'desert' SaHraaٌ صحراء</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Definite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-SaHraaٌ-ع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-SaHraaٌ-ي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-SaHraaٌ-أ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.2) Plural diptote noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>'presidents' ru'asaaٌ رؤساء</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Definite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-ru'asaaٌ-ع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-ru'asaaٌ-ي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-ru'asaaٌ-أ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.3) Singular masculine adjective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>'red' 'aHmarٌ أحمر</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Definite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-'aHmarٌ-ع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-'aHmarٌ-ي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-'aHmarٌ-أ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1.4) Singular feminine adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>'red' Hamraaٌ حمراء</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Definite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-Hamraaٌ-ع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-Hamraaٌ-ي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-Hamraaٌ-أ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.5 Plural diptote adjective:

| 'foreign' 'ajaanib أجانب |
|---|---|
| Definite: | Indefinite: |
| Nominative | al-'ajaanib-u | أجانب | أجانب |
| Genitive | al-'ajaanib-i | أجانب | أجانب |
| Accusative | al-'ajaanib-a | أجانب | أجانب |

Examples of diptotes in context:

أربعة خناجر
"arba'at-u xanaajir-a
four daggers a green salad

بيت أبيض
bayt-un 'abyaD-u
a white house to the city of Baghdad

سيؤدي إلى علاقة أوثق بينهما.
sa-yu-'addii 'ilaa alaaqat-in 'awthaq-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.

2.1 Diptote by pattern:

2.1.1 Diptote plural patterns: Certain noun and adjective plural patterns are inherently diptote, including:

(a) fu`alaa ﬂعالاء

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns:</th>
<th>Adjectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ministers wuzaraa’</td>
<td>poor fiqaraa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presidents ru’asaa’</td>
<td>strange ghurabaa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>princes ‘umaraa’</td>
<td>honorable shurafa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaders zu`amaa’</td>
<td>generous kuramaa’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

91 See also section 3.2.3.2. in this chapter.
(b) *fa'aalil* فعاليل

Nouns:                        Adjectives:                   
spices; herbs  *tawaabil*    foreign  *'ajaanib*        أجانب
restaurants  *maTaa'im*      relative(s)  *'aqaarib*       أقارب
offices  *makaatilib*      greatest  *'akaabib*      أكابر
peppers  *fulaasil*        فلائل

(c) *fa'aalil* فعاليل

Nouns:                        Adjectives:                   
crowds, throngs  *jamaahiir*          جماهير
topics  *mawaadi'il*         مواضيع
legends  *'asaaTiiir*           أساطير

(d) *'af'ilaa* أفعالاء with variant *'afi'laa* أفعالاء for geminate roots.

Nouns:                        Adjectives:
friends  *'aSdiqaa*             أصدقاء dear; strong  *'a'ilzzaa*  أعزاء
few   *'aqillaa*              أقلاء beloved  *'aHibbaa*  أحباء
doctors  *'aTibbaa*             أطباء

(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. For both the masculine and feminine forms of the elative are diptote:

(a.1) Masculine singular comparative adjective *'af'al* أفعال:

better, preferable  *'afDal*  أفضل  green (m.)  *'axDar*  أخضر
happier  *'as'ad*  أسعد  blue (m.)  *'azraq*  أزرق
fewer; less  *'aqall*  أقل  yellow (m.)  *'aSfar*  أصفر

(a.2) The feminine singular adjective used for colors and physical traits (*fa'laa* أفعالاء):

red  *Hamraa* حمراء  blonde  *shaqraa*  شقراء
blue  *zarqaa* زرقاء  deaf  *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 -\textipa{aa} after the root consonants. Nouns of the 
\textipa{fa'laa}' pattern. These words are usually feminine in gender, e.g.,

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
\text{desert} & \text{\textipa{SaHraa}'} & \text{beauty;} & \text{\textipa{Hasnaa}}' \\
\text{Hasnaa} & \text{\textipa{Hasnaa}} & \text{\textipa{Hasnaa}} & \text{\textipa{Hasnaa}} \\
\text{Afaf} & \text{\textipa{Afaf}} & \text{\textipa{Afaf}} & \text{\textipa{Afaf}} \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

(2.2) \textbf{Diptote by nature or origin}: Certain categories of words fall into the diptote camp by virtue of their etymology or meaning.

(2.2.1) \textbf{Most feminine proper names}, e.g.,

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
\text{Fatima} & \text{\textipa{faaTima}} & \text{\textipa{faaTima}} & \text{\textipa{faaTima}} & \text{\textipa{faaTima}} \\
\text{Aida} & \text{\textipa{'aa'ida}} & \text{\textipa{'aa'ida}} & \text{\textipa{'aa'ida}} & \text{\textipa{'aa'ida}} \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

(2.2.2) \textbf{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.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
\text{Damascus} & \text{\textipa{dimashq}} \\
\text{Baghdad} & \text{\textipa{baghdaad}} \\
\text{Egypt} & \text{\textipa{miSr}} \\
\text{Mecca} & \text{\textipa{makka}} \\
\text{Tunis} & \text{\textipa{tuunis}} \\
\text{Beirut} & \text{\textipa{bayruut}} \\
\text{Lebanon} & \text{\textipa{lubnaan}} \\
\text{Tigris} & \text{\textipa{dijla}} \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Examples:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
\text{from Damascus} & \text{min \textipa{dimashq-a} من نظام} \\
\text{in Tunis} & \text{fii \textipa{tuunis-a} في تونس} \\
\text{to Egypt} & \text{\textipa{zilaa miSr-a} إلى مصر} \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Also, other non-Arab place names.\textsuperscript{95}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
\text{Madrid} & \text{\textipa{madriid} مدريد} \\
\text{Paris} & \text{\textipa{buariis} باريس} \\
\text{Istanbul} & \text{\textipa{istaambaruul} إسطنبول} \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{95} In MSA, names of places in other parts of the world, such as \textipa{nyaa nyuurk} (New York), \textipa{waash-in'tuun} (Washington), or \textipa{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  \(\text{al-ribaaT}\)  
- Khartoum  \(\text{al-xarTuum}\)  
- Cairo  \(\text{al-qawahira}\)  
- Kuwait  \(\text{al-kuwayt}\)

**Examples:**

- min-a l-qawahirat-i  من القاهرة
- fii l-xarTuum-i  في الخرطوم
- ilaa l-kuwayt-i  إلى الكويت

(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 Qur'ān.

- Suleiman, Solomon  sulaymaan  سليمان
- Jacob; James  ya'qub  يعقوب
- Jonah; Jonas  yuunus  يوشع
- Abraham  'ibraahiim  إبراهيم

(2.2.3.b)  **Derived from verbs rather than adjectives:**

- Ahmad 'I praise'  'a-Hmad-u  أحمد
- Yazid 'He increases'  ya-ziid-u  يزيد

5.4.3  **DECLENSION SIX: DEFECTIVE NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES** (‘asmaa’ naaqiSa  الأسماء ناقصة; al-ism al-manquuS  الاسم 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 kasras 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>'lawyer' muHaam-in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single defectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>judge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plural defectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'cafes' maqaah-in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definite:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single defectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>judge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suburbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

97 Active participle from Form III defective verb Haamaalya-Haamii, 'to defend, protect.'
98 Pattern CaCaacC.
99 In this (y-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).
Noun inflections: gender, humanness, number, definiteness, and case

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 'alif maqSuura.

5.4.4.1 SINGULAR INDECLINABLE NOUN:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'hospital' mustashfan</th>
<th>مَسْتَشْفَى</th>
<th>مستشفى</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-mustashfaa</td>
<td>المستشفى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-mustashfaa</td>
<td>المستشفى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-mustashfaa</td>
<td>المستشفى</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.4.2 PLURAL INDECLINABLE NOUN:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'villages' quran</th>
<th>قرَىَْ</th>
<th>قرى</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-quraa</td>
<td>القرى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-quraa</td>
<td>القرى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-quraa</td>
<td>القرى</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

For a detailed explanation of the phonological rules applying to indeclinable nouns and adjectives, see Abboud and McCarus 1983, 11:14–19.

Singular quraa قرية.
5.4.4.3 FURTHER EXAMPLES:

(1) Nouns of place:
- coffeehouse: *maqhan* مقهى
- goal, range: *marman* المرمى
- stream, course: *majran* مجرى

(2) Common nouns:
- stick, cane: *‘aSan* عصا
- villages: *quran* قرى

(3) Verbal nouns
- effort: *mas‘an* مسعى
- meaning: *ma‘nan* معنى

(4) Passive participles of derived verb forms (II–X):
- a level: *mustawan* مستوى
- a crossroad: *muqtaDan* مقتضى
- a hospital: *mustashfan* مستشفى

(5) Examples in context:

"nuqil-a ʿilaa *mustashfaa* l-jam‘at-i l-ʿamīriyyat-i."
He was taken to the hospital of the American University.

"ta-ribīt-a thalaath-a *quran* kabiirat-in."
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 'alif maqSuura':

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>'complaint' shakwaa</th>
<th>شكوٍ</th>
<th>shakwaa</th>
<th>شكوٍ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-shakwaa</td>
<td>الشكوٍ</td>
<td>shakwaa</td>
<td>شكوٍ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-shakwaa</td>
<td>الشكوٍ</td>
<td>shakwaa</td>
<td>شكوٍ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-shakwaa</td>
<td>الشكوٍ</td>
<td>shakwaa</td>
<td>شكوٍ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.5.2 INVARIABLE NOUN ENDING WITH 'alif Tawiila':

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>'gifts' hadaayaa</th>
<th>هدايا</th>
<th>hadaayaa</th>
<th>هدايا</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-hadaayaa</td>
<td>الهدايا</td>
<td>hadaayaa</td>
<td>هدايا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-hadaayaa</td>
<td>الهدايا</td>
<td>hadaayaa</td>
<td>هدايا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-hadaayaa</td>
<td>الهدايا</td>
<td>hadaayaa</td>
<td>هدايا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.5.3 SINGULAR INVARIABLE ADJECTIVE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>'higher, highest' ^a^laa</th>
<th>أعلى</th>
<th>^a^laa</th>
<th>أعلى</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-^a^laa</td>
<td>الأعلى</td>
<td>^a^laa</td>
<td>أعلى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-^a^laa</td>
<td>الأعلى</td>
<td>^a^laa</td>
<td>أعلى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-^a^laa</td>
<td>الأعلى</td>
<td>^a^laa</td>
<td>أعلى</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.5.4 PLURAL INVARIABLE ADJECTIVE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>'sick' marDaa</th>
<th>مرضي</th>
<th>marDaa</th>
<th>مرضي</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>al-marDaa</td>
<td>المرضي</td>
<td>marDaa</td>
<td>مرضي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>al-marDaa</td>
<td>المرضي</td>
<td>marDaa</td>
<td>مرضي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>al-marDaa</td>
<td>المرضي</td>
<td>marDaa</td>
<td>مرضي</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 maq-Suura suffixed after the root consonants, chiefly with patterns fu'laa, fi'laa and fa'laa:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Modern Standard Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gift; benefit</td>
<td>jadwaa جَدْوَى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candy, sweet</td>
<td>Halwaa حَلْوَى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chaos</td>
<td>fawDaa فَوْضَى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>memorial</td>
<td>dhikraa ذَکْرَى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anniversary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*wa-haadhaa bi-l-iDaafat-i ilaa baqaayaa l-mashaakil-i.* And this [is] in addition to the rest of the problems.

*He saw the world [as] beautiful.* It is one of the most important establishments.

(2) **Singular adjectives**

(2.1) **fu'laa ُفَعْلَى:** The feminine singular superlative adjective has the form fu'laa, which puts it into this inflectional class. If the final 'alif is preceded by a yaa", it becomes 'alif Tawilla.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Modern Standard Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>finest</td>
<td>Husnaa (f. of al-'aHsan) حَسْنَى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>best</td>
<td>middle, wusTaa ْوُسُتَّى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>great</td>
<td>kubraa (f. of 'akbar) كُبْرَى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greatest</td>
<td>'uluya عَلْيَأ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Aسماء الله الحسنى التسعة والتسعون*  'asmaa'-u ilaah-i l-Husnaa l-tis'at-u wa-l-tis'muna
the ninety-nine attributes ("the finest names") of God

*يَمْثَلُ حَضْوَةٌ كُبْرَى إِلَى الْأَمَامْ* yu-maththil-u xuTwat-an kubraa 'ilaa l-amaam-i.
It represents a great step forward.

*خلال العصور الوسطى* xilaal-a l-'suur-i l-wusTaa during the Middle Ages
The comparative/superlative adjective from defective roots has the form ‘af’aa, which puts it also into this category.

The feminine form of ‘first’ ‘uulaa: This is a feminine adjective; it usually follows a feminine noun.

The feminine form of ‘other’ ‘uxraa

Invariable plurals: Included in this set of words are a number of noun and adjective plurals, such as the following:

Nouns:
- Halaawaa
- zawaayaa
- qaDaayaa
- buqaayaa

Adjectives:
- kaslaa
- ghaDaabaa
- naSaaraa
- qa’ilaa
- marDaaa
- jarHaa

عدد ضحايا الزلزال
‘adad-u DaHaayaa l-zilzaal-i
the number of victims of the earthquake
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 /-aad/ are also invariable in their inflection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreign Nouns</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>ٽناداةٽ</td>
<td>cinema</td>
<td>ٽنيمااٽ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>ٽرانساةٽ</td>
<td>potato</td>
<td>ٽبتعااٽ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>ٽوريياةٽ</td>
<td>music</td>
<td>ٽموسيقىٽ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera</td>
<td>ٽاميراٽ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Invariable in their inflection:

- في زيارة لفرنسا: في جنوب إسبانيا
- السينما الحديثة: في أنهار إفريقيا
Construct phrases and nouns in apposition

1 The construct phrase or 'iDaafa

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 ‘iDaafa (‘annexation; addition’). As Beeston explains, “The link between a noun and an entity which amplifies it is termed by the Arab grammarians ‘iDaafa ‘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.1 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 ‘iDaafa unit in a sentence structure. The second, or annexing noun, is called the muDaaf ‘ilay-hi.2 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 ‘iDaafa 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: Daabrii-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'-il-i

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.

---

3 Reeston refers to the “semantic polyvalency of the annexation structure” (1970, 46).
4 Hoels 1995, 166-67 (after Reeston 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  
most of the seats  
the first part of the month  
the best conditions  
the end of the line  
two-thirds of the members  

Indefinite:

every day  
a quarter of a riyal  
any attempt  
four daggers  
a thousand pages  

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 (masdar), the name of an action:

the crowing of the rooster  
the squeaking of the door  
the departure of the minister  
the arrival of the queen  

1.1.4.1 ACTION, AGENT, OBJECT: In this variant of the agent-relationship ‘iDaafa, where the object of the verbal action is mentioned in addition to the doer of the action, then the object follows the ‘iDaafa construction, and is in the accusative case (as object of the underlying transitive verb):

Maghādara al-wāziir al-‘āSIMAT-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 (msdar), or an active participle (ism-ul-fa‘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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definite:</th>
<th>Indefinite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the raising of the flag</td>
<td>the raising of the flag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the protection of infants</td>
<td>the protection of infants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the solution of the problems</td>
<td>the solution of the problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the regaining of the initiative</td>
<td>the regaining of the initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entering the church</td>
<td>entering the church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>criticizing Orientalism</td>
<td>criticizing Orientalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>riding horses</td>
<td>riding horses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.1.5.2 First term active participle: In the second type of object-relationship ʼiDafa, the first term is an active participle denoting the doer of an action:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definite:</th>
<th>Indefinite:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the decision-makers</td>
<td>the decision-makers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>companions of the delegation</td>
<td>companions of the delegation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the two leaders of the campaign</td>
<td>the two leaders of the campaign</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indefinite:
- an assistant minister; musaa‘id-u waziir-in
- undersecretary
- a shoemaker Saani‘u ẓahdiyyat-in
- an anteater ẓaakil-u naml-in

1.1.6 Compositional relationship
In this structure, the second noun of the construct expresses the nature or composition of the first:

Definite:
- the railway (‘road of iron’) sikkat-u l-Hadiid-i
- bouquets of flowers baaqaat-u l-zuhuur-i

Indefinite:
- a chain of mountains silsilat-u jibaal-in
- lentil soup shuurbat-u ‘adas-in
- a bunch of grapes ‘unquud-u ‘inab-in
- a kindergarten (‘garden of children’) rawDat-u ẓaTfaal-in

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 ẓiDaafas.
- a stone’s throw marmaa Hajr-in
- [for] a period of two days muddat-a yawm-ayni
- to a distance of ten meters ẓila‘ masaafat-i ẓaashrat-i ẓamaat-ar-in
- a kilo of bananas kiiluu mawz-in

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
Indefinite:
- a cup of coffee: finjaan-u qahwat-in
- a pack of gum: 'ulbat-u 'ilkat-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: Taa' irat-u 'inqaadh-in
- greeting cards: ba'Taaqaat-u tahni'at-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 'iDaafa, and are inflected independently, not necessarily in the genitive.
- the book “The Thousand and One Nights” (الكتاب “ألف ليلة وليلة”)
- the expression “jihad” (الفظ “الجهاد”)
- a lecture entitled “The Middle East and Its Challenges” (محاضرة بعنوان "الشرق الأوسط وتحدياته")
- the film “The Sound of Music” (فلم "لحن السعادة")

1.1.11 Clause relationship
A clause in its entirety may occasionally form the second term of an 'iDaafa. For purposes of clarity, the boundary between first term and second term is indicated by a plus sign (+) in the Arabic transliteration:
- if the situation remains as it is: fii waqt-i + kaan-a kull-u shay'-in mu'radd-an li-taHqiq-i taqaddum-in
- in case the situation remains as it is: fii Haal-i + stamarr-a l-waD-u 'alaa maa maa huwa 'alay-hi
Construct phrases and nouns in apposition

In a time [when] it fully realizes the truth

1.2 Rules of the noun construct (i2Daala 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:

مشكلة الشرق الأوسط معقدة
mushkilat-u l-sharq-i l-awaṣaT-i mu̇aqqadat-un.
The problem of the Middle East is complex.

1.2.1.2 FIRST TERM OF CONSTRUCT IS ACCUSATIVE:

حضر حفلة وضع الحجر الأساس
HaDaRa Haflat-a waD-lHajr-i l-lasas-i.
He attended the party for the laying of the cornerstone.

1.2.1.3 FIRST TERM OF CONSTRUCT IS GENITIVE:

هي على استعداد للعب دور نشيط
hiya ʿalaal stiḍdaḍ-in li-laʿb-i daw-r-in nashiT-in.
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.

وزيرا العدل والإعلام
wazir-aa l-ʿadl-i wa l-iʿlaam-i
the two ministers of justice and information

مصرف المخدرات
muharrab-uu l-mukhaddiraat-i
drug smugglers (‘smugglers of drugs’)
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’naa haadhaa
- all (of) this: kull-u haadhaa
- the result of that: natiijat-u dhaalika
1.2.2.3 SECOND TERM HAS PRONOUN SUFFIX:

- his birthplace: masqaT-u ra’s-i-hi
- marketing their (f.) production: taswiIq-u ʾintaaq-i-hinna
- bearing their responsibilities: taHammul-u masʾuuliyyaat-i-haa
- raising his level: raf ʾu mustawaʾ-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
jii siyaasatay-i l-difaaʾ-i wa-l-tijaarat-i
in the two policies of defense and trade

جراح الأنف والأذن والحنجرة
jaRRaH-u l-ʾanf-i wa-l-ʾudhn-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 ʾiDaafa must follow the entire ʾiDaafa. Modifiers for the first term agree with it in gender, number, case, and definiteness.

- طبيب أسنان جيد
  - Tabiib-u ʾasnaan-in jayyid-un
  - a good dentist (‘doctor of teeth’)

- أركان الإسلام الخمسة
  - ʾarkaan-u l-iʿslaam-i l-xamsat-u
  - the five pillars of Islam

- جواز السفر المسروق
  - jawaaz-u l-safar-i l-masruq-u
  - the stolen passport

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  - the five pillars of Islam

- جواز السفر المسروق
  - jawaaz-u l-safar-i l-masruq-u
  - the stolen passport

7 Technically this should be ‘flaa maTaari ʾabii Zabiyy-i l-duwaliyy-i,’ with inflection of ʾab 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.

*fiī mintaqatī l-shāriqī l-‘awsatī*  
in the region of the Middle East

ملحق Encrypt  
*mulHaq-ū l-shu‘ūnī l-thaqaafīyyat-ī*

cultural affairs officer (‘attaché’)

إسعاف الدفاع المدني
*‘is‘aaf-ū l-difaa‘-ī l-madaniyy-ī*

civil defense ambulance

لبنة أسس جديدة وسلامة
*li-bīna‘-ī ‘usūs-in jadiidat-in wa-saliimat-in*

to build secure new foundations

*fiī ftītaḥ-ī l-ma‘rīDī l-duwaliyy-ī*

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.

مجمع اللغة العربية الأردني
*majma‘-ū l-lughat-ī l-arabiyyat-ī l-urduniyy-u*

the Jordanian Arabic Language Academy  
(literally: ‘academy (of) the-language the-Arabic the-Jordanian’)

رئيس مجمع اللغة العربية الأردني السابق
*rā‘ lis-ū majma‘-ī l-lughat-ī l-arabiyyat-ī l-urduniyy-ī l-saabiq-ū*

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, *haadhaa l-qarn-ū* ‘this century’).\(^8\) However, when a noun as first term of a construct is modified by a demonstrative pronoun, that pronoun follows the entire

\(^8\) For further discussion of demonstrative pronouns, see Chapter 13.
Construct phrases and nouns in apposition

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:

(Tagalog)

 قيمة هذه المخدرات
qiimat-u haadhihi l-muxaddiraat-i
the value of these drugs

قلم طائرات
shams-u dhaalika l-'ahd-i
the sun of that time

تدمير تلك الفيروسات
tadmiir-u tilka l-fiiruusaat-i
the destruction of those viruses

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

تعيين وزير الداخلية
ta'jfin-u wazir-i l-daaxilyyat-i
the appointment of the minister of interior

جميع أفراد الأسرة
jamii'-u 'afraad-i l-'usrat-i
all the members of the family
1.5.2 Construct with four nouns

اجتاحال زرع شجرة أرز
illihfaad-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 mushkilat-i ‘idmaan-i l-mukhaddiraat-i
for handling the problem of drug addiction

تحت سماء جنوب فرنسا
tallat-u 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

تطبيق جميع قرارات مجلس الأمن
ta’bihiq-u jamii-i qaraaraat-i majlis-i l-‘amri
the application of all of the resolutions of the Security Council

سرقة جواز سفر أحد اللاعبين
sarqaat-u jawaazi safar-i ‘alHad-i l-laabit-iina
the theft of the passport of one of the athletes

وزراء نفط دول مجلس التعاون
wuzaraa-u nifl-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 'iDaafa 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 ‘iDaafa and refer back to it by means of a resumptive pronoun suffix.

Joint annexation requires that the first term of the JiDaafa 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 JiDaafa and refer back to it by means of a resumptive pronoun suffix.

Seen in the second row are the companions and assistants of the delegation ('the companions of the delegation and its assistants').

Seen in the second row are the companions and assistants of the delegation ('the companions of the delegation and its assistants').

In relation to the professors and students of history ('the professors of history and its students')

Amidst the enthusiasm and cheers of the members of the conference ('the enthusiasm of the conference members and their cheers')

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:

The mosques and castles of the city

In the lakes and rivers of Africa

The growth and development of the Arabic language

Respecting the values and customs of other cultures
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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.⁹

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.

impermissibility  ‘adam-u jawaaz-in
nonexistence    ‘adam-u wujuud-in
instability      ‘adam-u stiqraar-in
insincerity      ‘adam-u jiddiyat-in
discomfort       ‘adam-u rtiyaal-in
displeasure      ‘adam-u rDaa’-in

Examples:

من المهم عدم تقديم الكثير من التنازلات.
min-a l-muhimm-i  ‘adam-u taqdiim-i l-kathiiri min-a l-hanaazulaati.

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.
17.1.2 *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 sumuw-wu l-'amir-i

His Highness the Crown Prince sumuw-wu waliy-i l-'ahd-i

His Majesty the King jalaalat-u l-malik-i

His Majesty the Sultan jalaalat-u l-Sultan-i

His Royal Highness SaaHiib-u l-sumuw-wu l-malikiyi

His Eminence SaaHiib-u l-samaaHat-i

His Excellency the Minister ma'aaalii 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

It mentioned the same thing. at the same time.

---

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) | ra's-u maal-in |
| Administrative officer        | qaa'im-u maqaam-in |
| (of a town or village)        | qaa'imaqaam |

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: xams-u mi'at-in
- nine hundred: tis'-u mi'at-in

1.8 Avoiding the construct phrase or i'Daafa

Sometimes an i'Daafa 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 i'Daafa construction. It is a stylistic option.
ظهر العدد الجديد من المجلة.
Zahara l'adad-u haddii-u min-a l-majallat-i.
The new issue of the magazine appeared.

حضروا سباقا للخيل.
HaDaruu sibaq-an li-l-xayl-i.
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.

**في قديم الزمان**
*fii qadiim-i l-zamaan-i*
*in olden times*

**لمجرد إثبات**
*li-mujarrad-i 'ithbaat-in*
*for mere confirmation*

**في مختلف المدن**
*fii muxtalf-i l-mudun-i*
*in various cities*

**لإرضاء مختلف الأذواق**
*li-'irDa'a-l-muxtalf-i l-`adhwaaq-i*
*in order to please various tastes*

**في صناعات الأنشطة**
*fii shatta-l-`anshih-l-tat-i*
*in various activities*

1.9.2 The adjective or “false” *iDaafa* (**iDaafa ghayr Haqiqiya** إضافة غير حقيقية)
The “false” or “unreal” *iDaafa*, also called the “adjective” *iDaafa*, 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 *iDaafa* 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 المشاكس الطويل القامة
al-rajin-u l-mutaqqaf-u l-Tawiil-u l-qamati
the cultured, tall (‘tall of height’) man

(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 nunation, 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 يرفع المستوى زور البحرين.
He is the first high-level American official to visit Bahrain.13

تسمى أشجاراً دائمة الخضرة.
tu-sammaa ‘ashjaaran daa’imat-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.
1.9.2.2 Adjective *ʾiDaafa* as Predicate of Equational Sentence: When serving as the predicate of an equational sentence, the first term of the adjective *ʾiDaafa* 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. (Indeed) chess is Indian in origin.

This is hard to bear.

1.9.3 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 *ʾiDaafa*, it cannot have the definite article. The second term of the *ʾiDaafa* 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>unsuitable</td>
<td><em>ghayr-u munaasib-in</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indirect</td>
<td><em>ghayr-u mubaashir-in</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>untrue</td>
<td><em>ghayru Sahlil-in</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insufficient</td>
<td><em>ghayru kaaf-in</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-Arab</td>
<td>*ghayru <em>arabiy-y-in</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undesirable</td>
<td><em>ghayru marghuub-in fii-hi</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unexpected difficulties: *Suʾuqaat-un* *ghayr-u mutawaqqaʾat-in* in unscrupulous (‘non-noble’) ways
Hasab-u’arqaam-in ghayr-i rasmiiyat-in
according to unofficial figures

2 Nouns in apposition (badal دل)

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Apposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>King Fahd</td>
<td>al-malik-u fahd-un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Emperor Constantine</td>
<td>al-imbiraTuur qusTanTiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Prophet Muhammad</td>
<td>al-nabiiyy-u muHammad-un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen Nur</td>
<td>al-malikat-u nuur-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Joseph</td>
<td>al-’ab-u yuusuf-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Faris</td>
<td>al-’ustaadh-u faaris-un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonel Qadhdaafi</td>
<td>al-‘aqiid-u l-qadhdaafiyy-u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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‘iyya for ‘apposition,’ and Hasan (1987) refers to nouns in apposition as tawaab‘ (literally: ‘followers’).
Bayn nubah 'Ammi al-hizb al-wataniyy-l
among deputies [who are] members of the national party

Sittatalib al-dul'l-ahcima bayn fii l-alaqaat-i.
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from the mother company</td>
<td>min-a l-sharikat-l fii l-ummi-l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the sister [country] Jordan</td>
<td>fii l-'urdunn-l l-shaqqiq-l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my friend, Amira</td>
<td>Sadiqat-ii 'amiirat-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the creator god</td>
<td>al-rabb-u l-xaaliq-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She carried her brother Samir.</td>
<td>Hamal-at 'ax-aa-haa samir-an.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>today, Sunday</td>
<td>al-yawm-a l-`aHad-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the guest minister</td>
<td>al-waziir-u l-Dayf-u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 tamyiz 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`niit 'I mean,' or 'axuSS-u 'I specify,'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>we, the Arabs</td>
<td>naHnu l-`arab-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we, the people of the Gulf</td>
<td>naHnu l-xaliijy-ina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we, the Americans</td>
<td>naHnu l-`amriliyy-ina</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.\(^{15}\)

\[
\text{بالأسلوب نفسه} \\
\text{bi-l-‘usluub-i nafs-i-hi} \\
\text{in the same way}
\]

between the Arabs themselves like the Qays and the Yamanis

2.3.1 Quantifier noun ‘idda (عدد)

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 \(\text{fii mudun-in ‘iddat-in}\)  
- in several regions \(\text{fii manaatiq-a ‘iddat-in}\)  
- in several languages \(\text{bi-lughaat-in ‘iddat-in}\)  
- several years ago \(\text{mundhu sanawaat-in ‘iddat-in}\)  

\[
\text{في مدن عدّة} \\
\text{في مناطق عدّة} \\
\text{بلغات عدّة} \\
\text{منذ سنوات عدّة}
\]

And this is an alternative structure to using the quantifying nouns as the first term of an ‘I’dhaa, e.g., kull-u l-wuzaraa‘u kull-u-hum, or nafs-u l-fikrat-i ‘the same idea’ versus al-fikrat-u nafs-u-haa.

There are several women who have become eminent in this field.

\[
\text{wa-hunaaka sayyidaat-un ‘iddat-un baraz-na fii haadhuu l-majaal-i}. \\
\text{There are several women who have become eminent in this field.}
\]

\(^{15}\) This is an alternative structure to using the quantifying nouns as the first term of an ‘I’dhaa, e.g., kull-u l-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*  
*fii makaan-in maa*  
في مكان ما

*some day*  
*yawm-an maa*  
يوما ما

*somewhat; to a certain extent*  
*naw’-an maa*  
نوعا ما

لماذا تحب كاتبا ما؟  
li-maadhaa tu-Hibb-u *kaatib-an maa*?  
بعد فتح بلما ما

*Why do you like a certain writer?*  
*after conquering a certain country*  
*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* '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.'

- everything: *kull-u shay'-in*
- every one: *kull-u waalHiid-in*
- every day: *kull-a yawm-in*

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.'

- all possible aid: *kull-u l-musaa'adat-i l-mumkinat-i*
- all of this/that: *kull-u haadhaa*

---

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، مع كل قضياء الشرق الأوسط
fī kull-i l-Zururf-i ma'a kull-i qDaayaa l-sharq-i l-awsat-i
in all circumstances with all the problems of the Middle East

بهدف 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 كل من ‘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
fī kull-in min wa-shiinTun wa-'ammaan-a bi-l-tanaawub-i
in both Washington and Amman, alternately

في كل من فرنسا والجزائر
fī kull-in min faransaa wa-l-jazaa’i
in both France and Algeria

In each installment is a new story.

1.1.5 kull-un الكل ‘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-itaqfiT-a Suwar-an hunaaka.
Everyone wants to take pictures there.

1.2 jamii’ جميع ‘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
taifbiq-u jamii’-i qaraaraat-i majlis-i l-amm-i
the application of all the decisions of the security council

إلى جميع إخوانهم
Taawaal-at jamii’-a ’awjuh-i l-ma’trifat-i ’ilaa jamii’-i ’ixwaan-i-him
it rivaled all aspects of knowledge 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

- both of the delegations kilaa l-wafid-ayni
- in both worlds fii kilaa l-‘aalam-ayni
- with both of them (m.) ma‘a kilay-himaa

1.3.2 Feminine

- during both of the periods fii kiltaa l-fatrat-ayni
- in both cases fii kiltaa l-Haalat-ayni
- with both his hands bi-kiltay yad-ay-hi
- Both of them (f.) are affixes. kiltaa-humaa zaa’idat-u
- by both of them (f.) bi-kiltay-himaa

1.4 kaaffa ‘totality; all’
The noun kaaffa is used as the first term of a construct phrase to express totality:

- كاففة اتجاهاتها
kaaffat-u ttijaahat-i-haa
- كاففة شؤون الوزارة
kaaffat-u shu‘uun-i l-wizaarat-i
- all of its inclinations
- all the affairs of the ministry

وجه التهنيئة إلى كاففة أفراد البعثة.
waffjah-a l-tahni‘at-a ‘ilaa kaaffat-i ‘afraad-i l-bi‘that-i.
He directed congratulations to all the members of the delegation.

- كاففة الخدمات الأساسية.
ta-tawaffar-u kaaffat-u l-xidamaat-i l-’asaasiyyat-i.
All the basic services are provided.

2 Expressions of limited number, non-specific number, or partiality
There are several ways to express partial inclusion in Arabic.
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 number 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

نجموا بعض الشيء.
najaH-uu 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 خطأ.
ya-raa ba’D-u-hum fii dhaalika xa‘la‘-an.
Some of them see in that a mistake.

2.1.3 Reciprocal بعض: 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.

تعيش 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-haa‘ib-inna ba’D-u-hum fawq-a l-ba‘D-i
the acrobats standing on top of each other

وعلى المواطنين أن يعرفوا بعضهم بعضًا معرفة جيدة.
It is necessary for citizens to know each other well.

أعتقد أنهما منفصلان كثيرا عن بعضهما البعض.
I think that they (two) are very separate from each other.
2.2 biD<sup>c</sup> and biD<sup>a</sup> '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<sup>c</sup> and biD<sup>a</sup> are often numerals or terms of measurement:

2.2.1 With masculine noun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Term</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ya-4uTallab-u biD&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; 'asaabii-a</td>
<td>It requires several weeks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.2 With feminine noun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Term</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>akthar-u min biD&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;-i mi'aat-i l'-amthilat-i</td>
<td>more than several hundred examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yu-'alliq-u 'ala biD&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;-i mi'aat-i l'-aSwaat-i</td>
<td>It hangs on several hundred votes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 'idda عدّة '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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Term</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>imtahan-a 'ahl-u l-madiinat-i 'iddat-a mihan-in</td>
<td>The people of the city practiced several trades.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Term</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jaa'-a haan'-ulaa' i l-murabb-uuna min 'iddat-i duwal-in 'arabiyyat-in</td>
<td>These educators came from several Arab countries.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3.2 In apposition with a noun

When 'idda is in apposition with a noun, it carries the same case as the noun.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Term</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fii mudun-in 'iddat-in</td>
<td>in various cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fii manaaTiq-a 'iddat-in</td>
<td>in several regions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are several stories about what happened.

2.4 *shattaa* ‘various, diverse; all kinds of’
This word, the plural of *shattii* ‘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 الولاية
*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* عدد من ‘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 والمربين العرب
*da‘wat-a* ‘adad-in *min-a* l-‘asaatidhat-i wa-l-murabbiina l-‘arab-i
the invitation of a number of Arab professors and educators

حضر 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* كثير من ‘many’
To indicate a large but indefinite number, these phrases are used.

يذكر كثير من الناس
*ya-tadhakkar-u kathiir-un *min-a* l-naas-i.
Many (‘of the’) people remember.

أماמנו الكثير من الفرص والكثير من التحديات
*‘amaam-a-naa l-kathiir-u *min-a* l-furaS-i wa-l-kathiir-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 al-maziid min (literally ‘the increase of’) is often used to express this concept of “more of.”

للمزيد من الأراضي الزراعية
li-l-maziid-i min-a l-‘araadii l-zira‘iyyat-i

for more agricultural lands

لتحقيق المزيد من الإنجازات في جميع القطاعات
li-taHqiiq-i l-maziid-i min-a l-‘injaaazaat-i fii jamii‘i l-qli‘Ta‘aa‘aat-i

to realize more production in all sectors

تعهدت بتقديم المزيد من الأموال للبنوك.
	ta‘ahhad-at bi-taqdiim-i l-maziid-i min-a l-‘amwaal-i li-l-bunuuk-i.

It pledged support for more money for banks.

3.2 ’Most of’: mu‘Zam and ‘akthar أكثر

3.2.1 mu‘Zam

The expression ‘most of’ is often accomplished with the word mu‘Zam as the first term of an ‘iDaafa:

حصل على معظم المقاعد.
HaSal-a ‘alaa mu‘Zam-i l-maqaa‘id-i.

It obtained most of the seats.

في معظم السفارات العربية
mu‘Zam-u l-sifaaraat-i ‘arabiyyat-i

most of the Arab embassies

3.2.2 ‘akthar أكثر ‘more; most’

The elative adjective ‘akthar ‘more; most’ may also be used to express ‘most’ as first term of an ‘iDaafa. The following noun is definite, may be singular or plural, and is in the genitive case.
Noun specifiers and quantifiers

3.3 Expression of “majority”
The Arabic superlative adjective ‘aghlab, the derived noun ‘aghlabiya, or the active participle ghalaib are all used to express the concept of “majority.”

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 ba‘D 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 ba‘D or ‘aghlab).

4.2 Agreement with specified noun
The agreement may be with the noun that is the second term of the ‘iDafa. 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 ba‘D and kull.
ta-humma kull-a ʿarabiyy-in muqim-in fil-balad-i

it concerns every Arab residing in the country

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.

In the following sentences using ʿabīd, the adjective following the plural noun is plural, but the verb is third person masculine singular, in agreement with the quantifier.

some American critics believe (‘believes’) 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

To express the concept of “the same” Arabic uses the word nafs (pl. ʿanfus ~ nufus), either as the first term of an ʿiDaafa, 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

تعمل جميعها على نفس المنوال.

They all work the same way.

5.1.1.2 IN APPosition

يردد العبارة نفسها.

He repeats the same expression.

5.1.2 dhaatiyy

‘self’

In certain expressions the term dhaatiyy is used to delineate the concept of self, e.g.,

النقد الذاتي

al-naqdi-u l-dhaatiyy-u

self-criticism

5.2 Expression of ‘any; whichever’ ‘aayy/ ayya + noun

The noun ‘aayy is used as the first term of an ‘iDaafa to express the concept of “any” or “whichever.” If the noun following ‘aayy is feminine, ‘aayy may shift to ‘ayya أية, but this does not always happen. The noun following ‘aayy is indefinite and in the genitive case. It is normally singular, but is sometimes plural.

5.2.1 Masculine form of ‘aayy + noun

5.2.1.1 ‘aayy + MASCULINE SINGULAR NOUN

يعارضون أي تدخل

laday-yu l-qudrat-u ‘ala-a ‘amal-i ‘aayy-i shay’in.

they oppose any intervention

I have the ability to do anything.

من أي مكان تقريباً

min ‘aayy-i makaan-in taqrib-an

from almost any place

For more on the pronoun dhaat and its usage, see Chapter 12, section 4.
5.2.1.2 *'ayy* + FEMININE SINGULAR NOUN:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>لَآَيَّ دوَلَة</td>
<td>for any state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لَآَيَّ مِحاوَالَة</td>
<td>for any attempt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

in case of any complaint

امسال عن معنى أي كلمة

5.2.2 Feminine *'ayya* + noun

When the noun being specified is feminine, the feminine form, *'ayya* آية may be used:

في أية قائمة لأكبر علماء الدنيا

fii *'ayyat-i qa'immat-in* li-َاكاَباَبْرِي أُلَامَمَاْ-ِي الدُّنْيَا

on any list of the greatest scholars in the world

لَن يجدوا أية مشاكل.

lan ya-jid-un *'ayyat-a mashaakil-a*

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.

أيْ كَانَ لُونَهَا

*'ayy-an kaan-a lawn-u-haa*

whatever its color is

أيْ مِنِ المرشِحيِن

*'ayy-un min-a l-murashshaiH-ayni*

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':

لاَمْ يَسْتَطِعُ أَيْ مِنْهَا.

lam ya-staTi *'ayy-un min-haa.*

None of them could.
Adjectives: function and form

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

الرياضيون العرب
al-riyaDy-yuUna l-’arab-u
Arab athletes

فوز سهل
fawz-un sahl-un
an easy win

القومية العربية
al-qawmiyyat-u l-’arabiyyat-u
Arab nationalism

الهلال الخصيب
al-hilaal-u l-xaSiib-u
the Fertile Crescent

في دور سياسي
fii dawr-in siyaasiyy-in
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 bii’aat-i-haa l-Tabii’iyyat-i
in their natural environments

هويته الثقافية
huwiyyat-u-lhu l-thaqaafiiyyat-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 predicking a quality or attribute to the subject.

The harvest is abundant (‘is an abundant one’).

The list is long (‘is a long one’).

The story is charming.

I am fortunate.

3 Adjectives as substantives

Adjectives may serve as substantives or noun substitutes, just as they sometimes do in English:

Where the old mixes with the new.

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 taa’ marbuuTa. 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.

| طقس غائم | في الوقت المناسب |
|———|———|
| Taqs-un ghaa’im-un | fī l-waqt l-munaasib-i |
| cloudy weather | at the proper time |

| الاحترام المتبادل | المفتش العام |
|———|———|
| al-Ifiiraam-u l-mutabaadal-u | al-mufattish-u l-aamm-u |
| mutual respect | the inspector general |

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
fii 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

زوّار رسميون
zuwwaaar-un rasiyy-uuna
official visitors

خبراء نفطيون
xubraraa'-u nifTiyy-uuna
oil experts

من الفنانين اليونانيين
min-a l-fannaan-ina l-yuunaaniyy-ina
from the Greek artists

الأمراء الروس الآخرون
al-`umaraa-`u l-rusu-`u l-`aaxar-uuna
the other Russian princes

تسعة أشخاص جدد
gis`at-u 3ashxaas-in judud-in²
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 مهندسا جديدا`
`ishruuna muhandis-an judiid-an
twenty new engineers
4.1.4.1 WITH FEMININE SINGULAR NOUNS:

الحكاية القديمة
al-Hikaayat-u l-qadiimat-u
the old story

نصيحة مجانية
naSitHat-un majaaaniyyat-un
free advice

الجبهة الإسلامية القومية الحاكمة
al-faBhat-u l-'islaamiyyat-u l-qawmiyyat-u
l-Haakimat-u
the ruling national Islamic front

4.1.4.2 WITH NONHUMAN PLURAL NOUNS: “DEFLECTED” AGREEMENT

Nonhuman plural nouns require feminine singular agreement. Case and definiteness are in strict agreement.

الأمم المتّحدة
al-'amam-u l-muttaHhidat-u
the United Nations

الولايات المتّحدة
al-wilaayaat-u l-muttaHhidat-u
the United States

نتائج أولية
nataat-iy-u 'awwaliyyat-un
preliminary results

ثلاث أفكار رئيسية
talaath-u 'ajkaar-in ra'iisiyyat-in
three main ideas

التدخلات المسيحية
al-taqaallfdd-u l-masiiHiyyat-u
the Christian traditions

القوات المسلحة
al-quwwaat-u l-musallaHat-u
the armed forces

4.1.5 Feminine dual adjectives

Feminine dual nouns are modified by feminine dual adjectives.

سفينتان كبيرتان
safiinat-aani kabiirat-aani
two big ships.

خلال السنوات الماضيتين
xilaal-a l-sanat-ayni l-maaDiyat-ayni
during the last two years

الدولتان العظميان
al-dawlat-aani l-'uZmaay-aani
the two super powers ('states')

4.1.6 Feminine plural adjectives

Feminine plural adjectives modify feminine plural nouns only if the nouns refer to human beings:

See the article by Belnap and Shabeneh 1992 for discussion of the history and nature of deflected agreement in Arabic.
4.1.7 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’:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>مادة حمام</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maaddat-un xaam-un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raw material</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>المواد الحمام</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-mawadd-u l-xaam-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the raw materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.4.2 THE ADJECTIVE maHD ‘PURE’ (WITH EXCEPTIONS):5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>لغة عربية محضة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lughat-un ‘arabiyyat-un maHD-un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pure Arabic language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.4.3 CERTAIN ADJECTIVES THAT APPLY STRICTLY TO FEMALE ANATOMY, SUCH AS “PREGNANT”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>إمرأة حامل</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>imra’at-un Haamil-un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a pregnant woman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Adjective inflection for comparative and superlative (ism al-tafDiil 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’ān, 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 ‘iDaafa as maHDat-un wa-ghayr-u 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, pre-eminence, 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: ‘af’al أفضل
Arabic adjectives derived from Form I triliteral roots inflect the comparative through a pattern shift. No matter what the original or base pattern of the adjective, the comparative pattern shifts to ‘aCCaC (‘af’al أفضل), and it is diptote. 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>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saghiir 'aSghar</td>
<td>small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ba’id</td>
<td>far</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'ab’ad</td>
<td>farther</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kathiir 'akthar</td>
<td>more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hasan</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘aHsan</td>
<td>better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kabiir 'akbar</td>
<td>big</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thaqil</td>
<td>heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘athqal</td>
<td>heavier</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>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tawiil ‘aTwal</td>
<td>tall; long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jayyid</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ajwad</td>
<td>better</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 See, for example, Abboud and McCarus 1983, part 1:340-45. Also Blachère and Gaudefroy-Demombynes 1975, 97 “L’elatif 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 ya'a', keep that consonant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tayyib</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'aTyab</td>
<td>better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sayyi</td>
<td>bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'aswa'</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 'af'al, the form is 'afall, أَفْال, 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>qaliil</td>
<td>little; few</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'aqall</td>
<td>less; fewer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haamm</td>
<td>important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'ahamm</td>
<td>more important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ajadd</td>
<td>hot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'aHarr</td>
<td>hotter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1.5 DEFECTIVE ROOTS: Comparative adjectives from defective roots have the form 'af'aa. The final root consonant (whether waaw or ya'a') becomes 'alif maqsura:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'aalin</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'a'laa</td>
<td>higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ghaniyy</td>
<td>rich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'aghnaa</td>
<td>richer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qwiiyy</td>
<td>strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'aqwaa</td>
<td>stronger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ahl</td>
<td>sweet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'ahlla</td>
<td>sweeter</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 min 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>'better'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>'aHsan-a</td>
<td>'better'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>'aHsan-a</td>
<td>'better'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2.2 **EXAMPLES OF COMPARATIVE ADJECTIVE IN CONTEXT:**

*ta-bluu 'aSghar-a min 'umr-i-haa.*

She appears younger than her age.

*‘akthar-u min xams-i mi‘at-i diraasat-in ‘ilmiyat-in.*

more than 500 scientific studies

*‘akthar-u min niSf-i l‘anwaa‘-i l-ma‘rufat-i.*

more than half the known species

*‘ahamm-u mimmaa sabaq-a-hu.*

more important than what preceded it

*haadhaa ‘aqall-u mimmaa na-Htaaf-u ‘ilay-hi.*

This is less than we need.

*ta-Dumm-u ‘akthar-a min sabc-i mi‘at-i mashhad-in.*

It contains more than 700 scenes.

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*:
She started to take a greater role.

to a wider and more spacious horizon

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></th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>f. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>empty</td>
<td>أجواف</td>
<td>جوفة</td>
<td>جوف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silly, stupid</td>
<td>أحمق</td>
<td>حمقاء</td>
<td>حمق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ُأخوار</td>
<td>ُعوراء</td>
<td>ُأخور</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

كيس أجواف

It seems like a silly idea.

an empty bag

(1) ‘Other’: ُأخر أخر and ُعوراء أخرى

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></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>أخرى</td>
<td>أخرون</td>
<td>أخريات</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ُأخر</td>
<td>ُعورآ</td>
<td>ُأخور</td>
<td>ُعورآ أخت</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

مثل أي شعب آخر

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 "blackier," 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'akthar</td>
<td>more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'ashadd</td>
<td>stronger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'aqall</td>
<td>less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This intensifying word is then joined with a noun in the indefinite accusative case, a structure called tamyiiz or 'accusative of specification.'8

كان أكثر تعاطفاً مع العرب.
kaan-a 'akthar-a ta'aaTuf-an ma'a l-`arab-i.
He was more favorably disposed toward the Arabs.

يمكن أن يجعله أكثر تفاهمًا للموقف.
yu-mkin-u 'an yaf'al-a-hu 'akthar-a tafaahum-an li-l-mawqif-i.
It might make him more understanding of the situation.

هي أكثر مسؤولية منك.
hiya 'akthar-u mas'nuliyyat-an min-ka.
She is more responsible than you.

See Chapter 11, section 6 for more on the tamyiiz construction.
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 أَفْل. 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 'aDaafa. Moreover, it has a feminine form as well: fu'laa فَلْيَا. 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>الأَكْبَرُ al-'akbar</td>
<td>الكِبْرِى al-kubraa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smallest</td>
<td>الأَصْغَرُ al-'asghar</td>
<td>الصَّغْرِى al-Sughraa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greatest</td>
<td>الأَعْظَمُ al-'a'Zam</td>
<td>الأَعْظَمِى al-'a'Zamaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highest; supreme</td>
<td>الأَلْفِ al-'a'lla</td>
<td>الأَلْفِى al-'a'llyya</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'al-uuna, or CaCaaCiC (fa'aal الفاعل), a diptote plural pattern. The plural of the feminine superlative is CuCCayaat (fu'layaat فَلْيَاات).
Adjectives: function and form

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:

- المـنـسـبـة، الـفـظـة، الـقـصـوـى
- الدـبـ الـأـكبر
- الجـزـء، الـأـهمـيـة
- بعد أـزـمة السـيـاسيـات

(1.1) Fixed expressions with the superlative: Sometimes, especially in set phrases, Arabic uses a superlative expression where English would use an ordinary adjective:

- المـنـسـبـة، الـفـظـة، الـقـصـوـى
- الدـبـ الـأـكبر
- الجـزـء، الـأـهمـيـة
- بعد أـزـمة السـيـاسيـات

- النـاس، الـفـظـة، الـقـصـوـى
- الدـبـ الـأـكبر
- الجـزـء، الـأـهمـيـة
- بعد أـزـمة السـيـاسيـات

الشرق الأدنى

الشرق الأوسط

الشرق الاوسط

الشرق الأعلى

الأمم المتحدة

ال(pixel)

في الدولتين العظميين

في أية قائمة لأكبر علماء الدنيا

on any list of the greatest scholars in the world
Central ('most central') and South America
al-iskandar al-‘akbar-u
Alexander the Great ('the greatest')

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.

It is the biggest airport in Canada.
He obtained the title of ‘best Arab player.'

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.

He held the title of ‘best Arab player.'
Adjectives: function and form

(4) With pronoun suffix: A superlative adjective may occur with a pronoun suffix.

فأغلبهم من المهاجرين المسلمين.
fa-'aghlab-u-hum min-a l-muhaajir-iina l-muslim-iina.
Most of them are Muslim emigrants.

أغلبهم ليس مؤرخاً.
'aqhalab-u-hum lays-a mu'arrix-an.
The majority of them are not historians.

(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.

أخطر ما في الأمر
'axTar-u maa fi l-'amr-i
the most dangerous [thing] in the affair

أغرب ما في هذا الأمر
'aghhrab-u maa fi haa'dhaa l-'amr-i
the strangest [thing] in this affair

(6) With definite article by itself: In certain expressions, the superlative adjective occurs alone, with the definite article.

خمسة أشخاص على الأقل
xamsat-u 'ashxaan-in 'alaa l-'aqall-i
five people at least

لفترة وجيزة على الأقل
li-fatrat-in wa'ijizat-in 'alaa l-'aqall-i
for a brief period at least

5 The adjective 'iDaafa, the “false” 'iDaafa

(‘iDaafa ghayr Haqiiqiyya إضافة غير حقيقية)
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-lajnat-u l-barlamaaniyyat-u l-waasi’at-u l-nafiudh-i
the widely influential parliamentary committee ('wide of influence')

هذا الفيلسوف العميق التفكير
haadha l-faylusuuf-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 Zuruuf-in baalighat-i l-‘ahammiyyat-i
in circumstances of extreme importance

قدر متوسط الحجم
qidar-un mutawassiT-u l-Hajm-i
a medium-sized pot

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 huulaundiyy-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 -yy (m.) or -yya (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-waSf,* *al-Sifa,* and *al-na't* referring to qualities, attributes, and epithets. 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 trilateral 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. Some of the more commonly occurring adjectival patterns include the following. Whereas the masculine plural patterns vary widely, the feminine plural, when used, is usually the sound feminine plural.

#### 1.1 The CaCiiC or *fa‘īl* فعل 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 *-aatl*) apply to groups of female human beings. Some of the more frequently occurring adjectives are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>far, distant</th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>bū‘īd</em></td>
<td><em>bū‘īd-an‘a~ bū‘ād-ad</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large, big</td>
<td><em>kabiir</em></td>
<td><em>kabiir-un‘a~ kibaar</em></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 *fa‘īl* pattern come nouns such as *wazīr* ‘minister,’ *jaliid* ‘ice,’ and *sa‘īr* ‘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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>small</td>
<td>صغير</td>
<td>صغراء، صغار</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nice; pleasant</td>
<td>لطيف</td>
<td>لطفاء، لطاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>great</td>
<td>عظيم</td>
<td>عظام، عظاء، عظاء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generous</td>
<td>كريم</td>
<td>كرام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poor</td>
<td>فقير</td>
<td>فقراء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weak</td>
<td>ضعيف</td>
<td>ضعفاء، ضعفاء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little; few</td>
<td>قليل</td>
<td>قليلون، قليل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new</td>
<td>جديد</td>
<td>جدود</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.1.1 With passive meaning

When derived from a transitive verb root, the fa‘īl 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>wound</td>
<td>جريح</td>
<td>جرحا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>killed</td>
<td>قتيث</td>
<td>قتلا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.2 The CaCCiC or fa‘ee’il نَّعال 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>sayyi</td>
<td>جيد</td>
<td>جيدا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jayyid</td>
<td>قيم</td>
<td>قيم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qayyim</td>
<td>طيب</td>
<td>طيب</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.3 The CaCiC or faʿil فعل pattern
Adjectives of this pattern also, if applied to human beings, usually use the sound plurals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>جشع</th>
<th>تعب</th>
<th>وسع</th>
<th>خشن</th>
<th>عطر</th>
<th>مرن</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jashi</td>
<td>taʿīb</td>
<td>wasīx</td>
<td>xashin</td>
<td>′aTir</td>
<td>marīn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greedy</td>
<td>tired</td>
<td>dirty</td>
<td>coarse</td>
<td>fragrant</td>
<td>flexible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

سياسي جشع
siyasiyy-un jashi-un
a greedy politician
a flexible policy

1.4 The CaCC / CuCC or faʿl / fuʿl فعل / فعل pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hefty, huge</td>
<td>ضخم</td>
<td>Daxm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>free</td>
<td>حر</td>
<td>Hurr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not usually used to refer to humans:

صلب
jamm sahl Sulb
plentiful easy hard, firm

1.5 The CaCaC or faʿal فعل pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>حسن</td>
<td>Hasan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle, medial</td>
<td>وسط</td>
<td>wasat′</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.6 The CaCCaaN or faʿlaan فعل للان pattern
This pattern is for the most part, diptote in the masculine singular. It can have rather complex plural and feminine patterns, although none of these occurred in

---

13 The MiCAS grammar (1965, 44) states for instance, that kuslaan is diptote, but it is not noted as such in Wehr (1979, 969), although Wehr notes zaʿlaan, ghulbaan, and ʿaTshaan as diptote. Wright (1967, I: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’suana</td>
<td>na’saان-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>كسلانة</td>
<td>كسلاني</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kaslaan</td>
<td>kaslaana</td>
<td>kaslaان ~ kasla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>angry</td>
<td>زعلان</td>
<td>زعلانة</td>
<td>زعلانون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>za’laan</td>
<td>za’laana</td>
<td>za’laان-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>angry</td>
<td>غضبان</td>
<td>غضايى</td>
<td>غضايى جياب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ghaDaaan</td>
<td>ghaDaab</td>
<td>ghiDaab ~ ghaDaabaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hungry</td>
<td>جوعان</td>
<td>جوعى</td>
<td>جياع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jaw’aan</td>
<td>jaw’aa</td>
<td>jiyaان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thirsty</td>
<td>عطشان</td>
<td>عطشى</td>
<td>عطاشى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘atshaan</td>
<td>‘atsha</td>
<td>‘Taash ~ ‘aTshaa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.7 The CaCCaaC or fa‘caal فعال pattern
This pattern denotes intensity of a quality and takes sound plurals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>جذاب</th>
<th>مجَان</th>
<th>رحال</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fa‘caal</td>
<td>jadhdhaab</td>
<td>majjaan</td>
<td>raHHaal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effective</td>
<td>attractive</td>
<td>free of charge</td>
<td>roving, roaming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Quadriliteral root adjective patterns
The CaCCuuC or fa‘luul pattern from quadriliteral roots:

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>بحبوح</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baHbuuH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>merry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{15}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP I:</th>
<th>AP I:</th>
<th>AP I:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>زائر</td>
<td>هام</td>
<td>عالٍ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zaa'ir</td>
<td>haamm</td>
<td>'aal-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>visiting</td>
<td>important</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP II:</th>
<th>AP III:</th>
<th>AP III:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مبكر</td>
<td>مماثل</td>
<td>مناوب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mukabbir</td>
<td>mumaathil</td>
<td>munaawib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>magnifying</td>
<td>similar</td>
<td>on duty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP IV:</th>
<th>AP IV:</th>
<th>AP IV:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>منشمس</td>
<td>ممطر</td>
<td>ممل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mushmis</td>
<td>mumTir</td>
<td>munill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sunny</td>
<td>rainy</td>
<td>boring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP V:</th>
<th>AP V:</th>
<th>AP V:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>متتوفر</td>
<td>متأخر</td>
<td>متزايد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mutawaffir</td>
<td>muta’axxir</td>
<td>mutazaayid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abundant</td>
<td>late</td>
<td>increasing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP VI:</th>
<th>AP VII:</th>
<th>AP VII:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>متقاعد</td>
<td>منعزل</td>
<td>منكمش</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mutaqaa’id</td>
<td>mun’azil</td>
<td>munkamish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>retired</td>
<td>isolated</td>
<td>introverted; shrunk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP VIII:</th>
<th>AP VIII:</th>
<th>AP X:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مختلف</td>
<td>محترم</td>
<td>مستمر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nuxtalif</td>
<td>muhtarim</td>
<td>mustamirr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>different</td>
<td>respectful</td>
<td>continuous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP X:</th>
<th>AP IV:</th>
<th>AP IV:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مستحيل</td>
<td>مكافح</td>
<td>مطمئن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mustallil</td>
<td>mukfahirr</td>
<td>muTmar’inn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impossible</td>
<td>dusky, gloomy</td>
<td>calm, serene</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{14} See also Wright 1967, 1:143-45.
\textsuperscript{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:

المرة القادمة
al-marrat-\textit{a} l-\textit{qaadimati}-\textit{a}
the next time

وزير الاقتصاد السابق
wuz\textit{firi}-\textit{u} l-\textit{haqt}\textit{a} l-\textit{saabiq}-\textit{u}
the former Minister of the Economy

Form IV:

النسائم المنعشة
al-\textit{nasa}a' \textit{i}m-\textit{u} l-\textit{mun}\textit{''ishat}-\textit{u}
the refreshing breezes

Form V:

درس متقدمة
\textit{di}r\textit{nu}s-\textit{u} \textit{mu}t\textit{aqaddimati}-\textit{u}
advanced lessons

3.2 Passive participles as adjectives

These participles usually take sound plurals when referring to human beings.

\begin{tabular}{lll}
PP I: & مُذْرعُ & مَعْرُوف
ma'\textit{rn}uf & mabru\textit{uk} & mu\textit{''aqqad} \\
known & blessed & complicated \\

PP II: & مَصْصُور & مَصْصُور
mu\textit{saawwar} & mufa\textit{D达尔} & mu\textit{''awrad} \\
illustrated & preferred; favorite & desired \\

PP IV: & مَدْمَج & مَدْمَج
mu\textit{d}maj & mura\textit{ad} & mu\textit{''ta}\textit{x} & \\
compacted & desired & elected \\

PP VIII: & مَحْتَل & مَحْتَل
mu\textit{H}ta\textit{l} & mustaw\textit{raad} & musta\textit{''aaar} \\
occupied & imported & borrowed \\

Quad. & مَطْفَع & مَطْفَع
mu\textit{frin}f\textit{aH} & muz\textit{arkaSh} & & \\
flattened & embellished & & \\
\end{tabular}
Adjectives: function and form

Examples:

Form II:
السلمون المدخن
al-salmuun-u l-mudaxxan-u
smoked salmon

Form IV:
قصر مدمج
qurS-un mudmaj-un
compact disk

Form VIII:
الأراضي المحتلة
al-araaDi’i l-nuHtailat-u
the occupied lands

Form X:
أسماء مستعارة
‘asmaa'-un musta’aarat-un
pseudonyms (‘borrowed names’)

4 Derivation through suffixation: relative adjectives (al-nisba 

Converting a noun, participle, or even an adjective into a relative adjective through suffixation of the derivational morpheme -iyy (feminine -iyya) is an important derivational process in MSA and is actively used to coin new terms. The words used as stems for the nisba suffix can be Arabic or foreign, singular or plural. For the most part, their plurals are sound, except where noted.

4.1 Nisba from a singular noun

Examples:
القطب الجنوبي
al-quTb-u l-januub-iyy-u
the south pole

حل جزئي
Hall-un juz’-iyy-un
a partial solution
4.1.1 **taa’ marbuuta** deletion

If the base noun ends in taa’ marbuuta, the taa’ marbuuta is deleted before suffixing the *nisba* ending:

- political: سياسى
  syiyyas-iyy (from siyyasa, سياسة ‘politics, policy’)
- artificial: صناعى
  Sinaa’-iyy (from Sinaa’a ‘craft; industry’)
- cultural: ثقافى
  thaqaaff-iyy (from thaqaaffa ‘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: صحراوى
  SaHraa-w-iyy (from SaHraa’ ‘desert’ root: s-H-r)
- semantic: معنى
  ma’naw-iyy (from ma’nan ‘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: استوائي
  istiwaya’-iyy (from istiwaya’ ‘equator’ root: s-w-)
- final: نهایى
  nihaa’-iyy (from nihaa’ ‘end’ root: n-h-y)

## Arabic

العالم الإسلامي
al-‘aalam-u *l-*islaam-iyy-u
the Islamic world

الكتاب المركزي
al-maktab-u *l-*markaz-iyy-u
the central office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-’aalam-u *l-*islaam-iyy-u</td>
<td>the Islamic world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-‘aalam-u *l-*islaam-iyy-u</td>
<td>theoretical and applied sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-maktab-u *l-*markaz-iyy-u</td>
<td>the central office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-’aalam-u *l-*islaam-iyy-u</td>
<td>the Islamic world</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
--------------------------------------------------
4.1.4 Stem reduction

Sometimes the form of the base noun is reduced:

ecclesiastical, church-related كنسيَّة
kanas-iyy (from kaniisa كنيسة ‘church’)
civic, civil مدنِي
madan-iyy (from madiina مدينة ‘city’)

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’ marbuutah:

tax-related ضراتيَّة
Darura’-ib-iyy (singular Dariiba ضريبة)
journalistic صحفيَّة
SuHuf-iyy (singular SaHifa صحيفة)
documentary وثائقيَّة
wathaa’ iq-iyy (singular wathiiqa وثيقة)

Examples:

نَظَرَ صَحِيفَة النِسَاةَ
Fiifiilm-in wathaa’ iq-iyy-in
in a documentary film

شرْبَة مَكْرَمَة
al-diraaasaat-u l-nisawiyyat-u
women’s studies

4.3 Nisba from a participle or adjective

مُوسِعٌ
mawsuu’-iyy
comprehensive

أوَلِيٌّ،
’awwal-iyy16
preliminary

16 A variant on the nisba adjective based on the stem أَوَل ‘first’ is the additional form

‘awwalawiyya, with an inserted /-aw/ between the stem and the nisba suffix, as in ضرورةَ أوَلَيْويَة ‘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'at 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>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-'urdunn</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>al-suudaan</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Jordanian</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Sudanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-kuwayt</td>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>al-yuunaan</td>
<td>Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>Kuwaiti</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Siin</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>tunis</td>
<td>Tunisian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Tunis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faransaa</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>farans</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.2 Cities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>al-qaahiru</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>baghdaad</td>
<td>Baghdad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairo</td>
<td>Cairene</td>
<td>Baghdad</td>
<td>Baghdadi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bayruut</td>
<td>Beirut</td>
<td>baghdaad-iyy</td>
<td>Baghdad-iyy</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>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>najd-iyy</td>
<td>from Nejd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hijaz-iyy</td>
<td>from Hijaz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xaliij-iyy</td>
<td>from the (Arabian) Gulf</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-\textit{nisba} masculine plurals, but revert to the \textit{nisba} form in the feminine plural. See also section 4.15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>m. sg.</th>
<th>m. pl.</th>
<th>f. pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>'arab-iyy</td>
<td>'arab</td>
<td>'arabiyy-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurdish</td>
<td>kurd-iyy</td>
<td>'akraad</td>
<td>kurdiiyy-aat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>turk-iyy</td>
<td>turk ~ 'atraak</td>
<td>turkiyy-aat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6 \textit{Nisba} from bilateral nouns

Nouns with only two root consonants usually insert a \textit{waaw} before the affixation of the \textit{nisba} suffix. The \textit{waaw} is preceded by \textit{fatHa}:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fraternal</th>
<th>Paternal</th>
<th>Manual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'axa-w-iyy</td>
<td>'aba-w-iyy</td>
<td>yada-w-iyy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the bilateral noun has a \textit{taa' marbuutu} suffix, that is deleted when the \textit{waaw} is added:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual</th>
<th>Centigrade; percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sana-w-iyy</td>
<td>mi'ta-w-iyy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

- شعور أبوي: \textit{shur'a-wu-un 'abawiyy-un}  
  paternal feeling

- MENA  
  ميناء قناة يدوية: \textit{mi'ta-at u qunbulat-in yadawiyyat-in}  
  a hundred hand grenades

- الانتشار والحوار الأخوياً: \textit{al-tashaawur-u wa-l-Hiwaar-u l'-axawiyy-u}  
  consultation and \textit{fraternal} conversation

- النسبة المئوية للمسلمين: \textit{al-nisbat-u l-mi'tawiyyat-u li-l-muslimiina}  
  the \textit{percentage} of Muslims
4.7 Nisbas from quadrilateral nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>عسكري</th>
<th>قومزي</th>
<th>كهربائي</th>
<th>جمهوري</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'askar-iyy</td>
<td>qirmitz-iyy</td>
<td>kahrabaq-iyy</td>
<td>jumhuur-iyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>military</td>
<td>crimson red</td>
<td>electrical</td>
<td>republican</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.8 Nisbas from quinquilateral nouns

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 diibluumaasiyy:

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:

chemical كيميائي
kiimyaa-w-iyy (from kiimyaa 'chemistry')

musical موسيقي
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:

cinematic, film سينمائي
siinamaa-iyy (from siinamaa سينما 'movies, cinema')

4.9.3 Intact stem

The foreign noun stem may be left intact and suffixed with -iyy:

أرشيفي
'arshifiyy

برميلي
barmil-iyy

كارنفالي
karntifaal-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:

- ديناميك كلاسكي
  - dinaamik-iyy
  - ‘utuumaatik-iyy
  - kilaasiiik-iyy
  - dynamic
  - automatic
  - classic

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:

- استراتيجي
  - istiraatiij-iyy
  - ‘akaadliim-iyy
  - silkuulnuj-iyy
  - strategic
  - academic
  - psychological

4.11 Nisbas from particles and pronouns
Prepositions, adverbs and other particles may also have a nisba suffix:

- بني
  - bayn-iyy
  - inter- (in compounds)

- كمي
  - kamm-iyy
  - quantitative

- كفي
  - kayf-iyy
  - qualitative; discretionary

- خلفي
  - xalf-iyy
  - rear; hind

- ذاتي
  - dhaat-iyy
  - self- (in combinations)

Examples:

- يجلسن في المقاعد الأمامية
  - ya-jlis-na fii l-maqa‘id-i l-‘amaamiiyyat-i.
  - They (f.) sit in the front seats.

- تحقيق الاكتفاء الذاتي
  - talHqiiq-u l-iktifaa‘i l-dhaatiyy-i
  - achieving self-sufficiency

- قدام خلفيتان
  - 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’

شَرَقْ أَوْسَطٍ ُ

*sharq* *’awsaT-iyy* (from *الشَرَقُ الأوَسْطَِْ* ‘the Middle East’)

**Examples:**

النَّسَمَةُ الشَرَقِيَّةُ   لِلْأَسْوَاقِ الشَّرَقِيَّةِ

*al-niZaam-u l-sharq-u l-*‘awsaT-iyy-u    *’lla l-*‘aswaaq-i l-*sharq-i l-*‘awsaTiyyat-i

the **Middle Eastern** system to Middle Eastern markets

‘never-ending; everlasting’

لا *نَهَائِيَّةً* لِلْإِنْهَا

*laa nihaa-iyy* (from *لَا نَهَأَتْ* ‘there is no end’)

عبر تَغْيِيرَتِهِ الْلَّا نَهَايَيَّةُ

ُعَبْرَ تَغْيِيرَتِهِ الْلَّا نَهَايَيَّةُ

*’abra taghayyuraat-i-hi* *laa 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*

رَأْسَالِيَّةُ

*ra’smaal-iyy* (from *رَأْسَ مَالَ* *ra’s maal* ‘capital’)

*amphibian*

بَرْماَنِيَّةُ

*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*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>فوْصْوِيَّةً</th>
<th>قِبْكَمْبْرِيَّ</th>
<th>قِبْتَارِيْخِيَّ</th>
<th>قِبْمَلِيَّاتِيَّ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>faw-Sawt-iyy</em></td>
<td><em>qab-kambr-iyy</em></td>
<td><em>qab-taariix-iyy</em></td>
<td><em>qab-millaad-iyy</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Before Christ (BC) | prehistoric | Precambrian | supersonic |

\(^{17}\) For more in-depth discussion of compounding in Arabic, see Ali 1987, Emery 1988, and Shivtiel 1993.
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>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>university students</td>
<td>تَلَّاَبٍ جَامِعِيَّٰنَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oil experts</td>
<td>مَهْمَّرَةٍ صِنَافِيَّٰنَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animal bones</td>
<td>عَظَامُ حَيْوَانِيَّةٍ</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>عَربيَّ</td>
<td>عَرَب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bedouin</td>
<td>بَدْوِيَّ</td>
<td>بَدو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>يَهُودِيَّ</td>
<td>يَهُود</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berber</td>
<td>بَرْبَريَّ</td>
<td>بَرْبَر</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>أَجْنَبٍ</td>
<td>أَجْنَبٍ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>نَصَارِيَّ</td>
<td>نَصَارِيَّ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurdish</td>
<td>كُرْدِيَّ</td>
<td>أَكْرَاد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>تُراکَيْ</td>
<td>تَرَاکَيْ/تَرَک‌کَیْ</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 فيلم in the masculine singular, CaCCaa’ or fa‘laa’ فيلم in the feminine singular, and CuCC or fu‘l فيلم in the plural. 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>sawdaa</td>
<td>سوداوات</td>
<td>sawdaawaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘aswad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blue</td>
<td>أزرق</td>
<td>zarqa</td>
<td>زرقاوات</td>
<td>zarqawaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘azraq</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brown</td>
<td>أسمر</td>
<td>samraa</td>
<td>سمراوات</td>
<td>samraawaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘asmar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>green</td>
<td>أخضر</td>
<td>xuDr</td>
<td>خضراوات</td>
<td>xuDrawaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘axDar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red</td>
<td>أحمر</td>
<td>Hamraa</td>
<td>حمراوات</td>
<td>Hamraawaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘aHmar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>أبيض</td>
<td>bayDa</td>
<td>بيضاوات</td>
<td>bayDaawaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘abyaD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yellow</td>
<td>أصفر</td>
<td>Safraa</td>
<td>صفراوات</td>
<td>Safraawaat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘aSfar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></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’ 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

bitTaaqaat-u "amiirkaan ikstisris"-lu

green American Express cards
5.1.1 Masculine phrases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>الحوت الأزرق</td>
<td>the blue whale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Huut-u l'-azraq-u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>البحر الأحمر</td>
<td>the Red Sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-baHr-u l'-aHmar-u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.2 Feminine phrases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>جبنة بيضاء</td>
<td>White Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jubnat-un bayDa'a^2-u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>سلطة خضراء</td>
<td>a blue suit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salaTat-un xaDra'a^2-u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>في القائمة السوداء</td>
<td>in the black list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fii l-qaa'imat-i l-sawdaa^2-i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.3 Plural phrases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>المسلمون السود</td>
<td>Red Indians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-muslim-uuna l-suud-u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>القبعات الزرق</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-qubba'aat-u l-zurq-u</td>
<td>the blue berets (UN troops)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>نساء سمراوات</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nisa'a^2-un samraawaat-un</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Physical feature adjectives

The "af' al pattern is used to denote not only color but also certain physical characteristics:

19 Although the word qubba'at 'berets' is technically nonhuman, the reference is to human beings.
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item name</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ashes</td>
<td>رماد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orange</td>
<td>برتقالي</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Adjectives: function and form

<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>بنيٌ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>violet</td>
<td>بنفسجٍ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bronze</td>
<td>برونزٍ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item name</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ورديٍ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>بنيٍ-iyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>بنفسسجٍ-iyy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>برونزٍ-iyy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inflection of these *nisba* adjectives follows the general rules for *nisbas*: adding a *taa' marbuut* 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></td>
<td>الْبَرْنُزْ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>قَدَّ / فَنْدُوزٍ ~ أَنْفَذََّ</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:

- **beige**: بيج
- **mauve**: موف
- **turquoise**: تركواز
- **turquoise**: تُركواز

#### 6 Non-derived adjectives

Rarely, an Arabic adjective is non-derived and simply exists on its own, without relation to a productive lexical root:

- **gigantic, super**: عَمَلَقَةٍ / عَمَلَاقٍ / عَمَلَاقَةٍ / عَمَلَاقَةٍ
Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>لالزواحف العملاقة</th>
<th>نموذج فد</th>
<th>al-zawaaHif-u l-'imlaaqat-u</th>
<th>nāmuudhaj-un fadh-un</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the giant reptiles</td>
<td>a unique example</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Compound adjectives

In order to express complex new concepts, compound (two-word) adjectival expressions are sometimes used in MSA. They occur primarily as adjectival 'iDaaflfs, or, for negative concepts, as adjectives in construct with the noun ghayr.

7.1 The active participle muta‘addid متعدد 'numerous'

To express the concept of "multi-" as the first component of an Arabic compound, the AP muta‘addid is normally used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>متعدد الطراف</th>
<th>متعدد الاستعمالات</th>
<th>muta‘addid-u l-‘aTraaf-i</th>
<th>muta‘addid-u l-isti‘maalaat-i</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>multilateral</td>
<td>multi-use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>متعدد الأنظمة</th>
<th>متعدد الجنسيات</th>
<th>muta‘addid-u l-‘anZimat-i</th>
<th>muta‘addid-u l-jinsiyyaat-i</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>multi-system</td>
<td>multinational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>لبرنامج المساعدات المتعضدة الجنسيات</th>
<th>ل programas de la ayuda mutli-</th>
<th>li-barnaamaj-i l-musaa‘adaat-i l-muta‘addidat-i l-jinsiyyaat-i</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>for the program of multinational assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>تتخذ الشركات المتعضدة الجنسيات خطوات.</th>
<th>تتخذ الشركات المتعضدة الجنسيات خطوات.</th>
<th>ta-ttaxidh-u l-shariikaat-u l-muta‘addidat-u l-jinsiyyaat-i xutuwaat-in.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The multi-national companies are taking steps.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>في هذه القضية المتعضدة الجوانب</th>
<th>في esta situación mutli-</th>
<th>fi fi haadhihi l-qadliyyat-i l-muta‘addid-i l-jawaanib-i</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in this multi-sided issue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 'iDaaflf, ever have the definite article. The second
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.

Examples:

المواد الخام غير المتجردة
al-mawaadd-u l-xaam-u ghayr-u l-mutajaddidat-i
non-renewable raw materials

بطريقة غير قانونية
bi-turuq-in ghayr-i qaanuuniyyat-in
by illegal means

dفعات غير المشروعة كالمشروع مثل
al-dafa‘aat-u ghayr-u l-mashru‘at-i ka-l-rashaawii mathal-an
illegal payments such as bribes, for example

اتفاقية غير مقرسة
ittifaqiyyat-un ghayr-u muqaddasat-in
an unholy agreement

غير قابلة للتزوير
ghayr-u qaabilat-in li-l-tazwiir-i
non-counterfeitable
Adverbs and adverbial expressions

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 فصلة ‘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.

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 دائمًا ‘always,’ jidd-an جدًا ‘very’) or with phrases (‘ilaa Hadd-in ma‘a إلى حد ما ‘to a certain extent,’ ‘aajil-an ‘soon or later’). Arabic adverbials also include grammatical structures such as the cognate accusative (al-maf‘ul al-muTlaq المفعول المطلق) and Haal حال ‘circumstantial’) phrases.

In Arabic, few words are adverbs in and of themselves; but there are some (such as faqil فقط ‘only’ or hunaa هنا ‘here’). Most words that function as Arabic adverbs are adjectives or nouns in the accusative case (e.g., ‘alHyaan–an أحيانا ‘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 Adverb, 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.”
277

Arabic, noun the degree the a

J

the maf

intensity

mathal-an the

J

Jo)

Basic JUufc J

sometimes

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terms

'commonly

Adverbs

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certain

flexible

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u;

degree

sentence,

form

invari-

divided

the

Within

This

There

ghad-an غداً ‘tomorrow;’ al-yawm-a ‘today’ (اليوم); some adverbials occur with a

Damma ending (e.g., ba‘d-u بعد ‘yet’) and at least one ends consistently in kasra (‘ams-i

أمس ‘yesterday’). Still other adverbial expressions are compound words consisting

of a noun and a demonstrative suffix, e.g., yawm-a-dhaak يومذاك ‘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-mawDuu‘-i.

There [are] today, for example, disagreements about the subject.

The first adverb is the locative hunaaka هنالك, ‘there is/are’; the second is the
time adverbial l-yawm-a اليوم ‘today’; the third is mathal-an مثلا ‘for example’;

and the fourth is the locative adverb Hawl-a حول ‘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-

‘ajl-Lhi مفعول لأجله) and the accusative of specification (tamyiiz تمييز).

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 sukuun. In terms of its placement in a sentence, it

\footnote{In discussing the Arabic morphological category of adverb, Wright (1967, 1:282) 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 n; 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.

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.

1.2.2 kathiir-an ‘much; a lot; greatly’

This is much more important than what preceded it.
Adverbs
and adverbial expressions

Ibn-i musaafir-un wa-‘anaa ‘a-shitaq-u ‘ilay-hi kathiir-an.
My son is traveling and I miss him greatly.

1.2.3 *muTlaq-an* مطلقا ‘absolutely’
لا أستطيع التكلم مطلقا
laa ‘a-staTii-u l-takallum-u *muTlaq-an.*
I absolutely cannot speak.

1.2.4 *qaliil-an* قليلًا ‘a little bit; a little’
أنهم قليلًا.
‘a-fham-u qaliil-an.
I understand a little.

1.2.5 *tamaam-an* تمامًا ‘exactly; completely’
يجب عليها أن تدعم الاتفاق تمامًا.
ya-jib-u ‘alay-haa ‘an ta-d’am-a l-ittifaaq-a *tamaam-an.*
It must support the agreement completely.

1.2.6 *xuSuS-an* خصوصا ‘especially’
خصوصا في ما يتعلق بالموارد
*xuSuS-an* fii maa ya-tallaq-u bi-l-mawz-i
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
fii ‘anHaa‘-i l‘aalam-i ‘ajma’-a
in all parts of the world

1.2.8 Repeated noun of measurement4
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* الحالة الجامدة, ‘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-DabîТ بالضبط 'exactly, precisely'

maa huwa l-hadaf-u min-haa bi-l-DabîT-i?
What is the aim of it precisely?

1.3.2 bi-kathiir-in 'by a great amount; much'
This expression is usually used in the context of comparison or contrast.

ta-bduu 'aSghara bi-kathiir-in min 'umri-haa.
She seems much ('by a great amount') younger than her age.

1.3.3 laa siyyamaا لا سيماا 'especially; particularly'
This phrase literally means 'there is nothing similar.'

l-aayyam-a l-mushmisat-a especially on sunny days

1.3.4 li-l-ghaayat-i للغاية 'extremely; to the utmost'

kaan-a l-waD'U sayyi'-an li-l-ghaayat-i.
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, ill:195-96.
1.3.5 'ila Hadd-in maa إِلَى حَدّ مَا 'to a certain extent; kind of; sort of'
'ila Hadd-in kabiir-in إِلَى حَدّ كِبْرٍ 'to a great extent'

سِياسَة إِلَى حَدّ كِبْرٍ.
say-yu-saa'id-u 'ila Hadd-in kabiir-in.
It will help to a great extent.

1.3.6 ba-'D-a l-shay'-i بعض الشيء 'somewhat'
نُجحا بعض الشيء.
najaH-uu ba-'D-a l-shay'-i.
They succeeded somewhat.

1.3.7 'akthar-a min-a l-laazim أَكْثَرُ مِن الْلَّازِمِ 'too; over-; too much; more than necessary'
ربما كنت واثقا من نفسى أكثر من اللازم.
rubba-maa kii-tu waathiq-an min nafs-il 'akthar-a min-a l-luzuum-i.
Perhaps I was overconfident.

1.3.8 'alaa l-'aqall-i على الأقل 'at least'
الفترة وجيزة على الأقل
li-fatrat-in wajiizat-in 'alaa l-'aqall-i
for a brief time, at least

في هذه المرحلة على الأقل
fiH haadhihi l-marHalat-i 'alaa l-'aqall-i
at this stage, at least

1.3.9 wa-Hasb-u وحسب 'only; that’s all'
لا تقتصر على حدود قطر وحسب.
laa ta-qtaSir-u 'alaa Hudnud-i qaTara wa-Hasb-u.
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* مُكَّتا ‘thus; and so; in such a way’
This adverb of manner indicates both comparison and consequence.

مُكَّتا كانت تتخلل 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.

مُكَّتا يحرف الأوربيون لفظ ‘الجهاد’ ويترجمونه خطأً
*haakadhaa* yu-Harrif-u l-'uurubbiyy-uuna lafZ-a 'l-jiihaad-u’
wa-yu-ta tarjim-uuna-hu xalT-an.
Thus do the Europeans distort the expression “jihad” and translate it literally.

2.1.2 *ka-dhaalika* كذلک ‘likewise; as well; also’
وكذلک المقشَّات التي ما زالت مستعَمَّلة
*wa-ka-dhaalika* l-miqashshaat-u llatif maa zaal-at musta’malat-an
and likewise the brooms which are still used.

يستعد كذلک لتصوير فيلم
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.


الن منسي أيضاً
*lan na-nsa’aba’d-an.*
We will never forget.

اذكرها بصرياً
*‘a-dhkur-u-haa baSriyy-an.*
I remember it visually.

على أن يدفع منه دينار إضافية
*‘alay-hi ‘an ya-dfa’-a mi’at-a dinara-hu ‘Daafat-an.*
He has to pay 100 dinars in addition/additionally.

إنهما جميعاً نعمل من أجل السلام
*‘anna-naa jamii’-an na-‘mal-u min ‘ajh-l l-salaam-i*
that we are working together for peace.
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.7

سأله هامساً
sa’al-a-hu haamis-an.
He asked him, whispering.

وترك المكتب مسراً
wa-tarak-a l-maktab-a musri’-an.
He left the office quickly/in a hurry.

قد ارتكب هذه الجريمة منفرداً
qad'I rtakab-a haadhnihi l-jariimat-a munfarid-an.
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:

وافتتح المؤتمر ممثلًا رئيس الجمهورية.
wa-fiataH-a l-ru’tamar-a mumaththil-an ra’iis-a l-jumhuuriyyat-i.
He opened the conference representing the president of the republic.

يكتب متهمًا بعض المسؤولين.
yalektub-u muttahim-an ba’D-a l-mas’ul-iina.
He writes accusing some officials.

2.3.1.2 Occasionally, a passive participle is used in the Haal structure:

قفزت مزعورةً
qafaz-at madh‘uunrat-an.
She jumped, frightened.

---

2.3.1.3 An adjective may also be used in the circumstantial accusative structure.

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:

'alqaa kalimat-an niyaabat-an 'an-i l-safiir-i.
He gave a speech in place of ('substituting for') the ambassador.

wa-faaq-ta la-la-a su'ad-in... wa-ta 'i iq-an 'alaal-Haadith-i...
he said, responding to a question... commenting on the incident...

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":

ya-'mal-u muHarrir-an 'adabiyy-an.
He works as a literary editor.

2.3.1.6 Haal CLAUSE WITH waaw او (waaw al-Haal اواو الحال): 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.

wu-fiuji'-a wa-huwa ya-qTa'-u 1-HaTab-a.
He was surprised while he was cutting wood.

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., maSdars; 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.

وضمى يقول ... *شاهده برش طلاء*.

*wa-madāa ya-quul-u*  
*shaahad-at-hu ya-rushsh-u talāa'-an.*

He went on, saying ... *She saw him spattering paint.*

لا تترك *تنظر*.

*laa ta-truk-u-ka ta-ntaZir-u.*

It does not leave you waiting.

2.3.2 The cognate accusative: *al-maf'ūl 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:

تدرك ذلك إدراكاً كلياً.

*tu-drik-u dhaalika *idraak-an kulliyy-an.*

It realizes that fully.
yu-shaarik-u fit-haa mushaarakt-an fa‘aalat-an.
He is participating effectively in it.

li-Hall-i l-mawDuu‘-i Hall-an jidhriyy-an
to solve the problem fundamentally

He was extremely happy at that.

It is necessary for citizens to know each other well.

2.3.3.2 VERBAL NOUN IN ‘iDafa: The cognate accusative structure may also have
the verbal noun as the second term of an ‘iDafa construction whose first term is
a qualifier or quantifier in the accusative case:

ya-xtalif-u kull-a l-ixtilaaf-i.
It differs completely.

‘a-shkur-u-ka ‘amiiq-a l-shukr-i ‘ala‘a 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 waHd-a وحَدَةٌ + PRONOUN SUFFIX ‘ALONE, BY ONE’S SELF: The adverbial
expression 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.

li-l’amiiir-i l-abbaasiyy-i waHd-a-hu
for the Abbasid amir alone

huwa waHd-a-hu l-marji‘-u l-SaaliH-u.
He alone is the competent authority.
Adverbs and adverbial expressions

2.3.4.2 PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES: A prepositional phrase may function as manner adverbial.

1. **bi-** or **fīi** في: The preposition *bi-* is often used with a noun to modify a verb phrase by describing the manner in which an action takes place.

   - **'aHabb-a-haa bi-junun-in.** He loved her madly.
   - **yu-nZur-u 'ilay-haa bi-Samt-in.** He looks at her in silence/silently.
   - **rafìDát-i 'i-nashruuf-tha bi-shiddat-in.** It refused the plan forcefully.
   - **ta'aal-a bi-sur'át-in!** Come quickly!

   When indicating manner, *bi-* or *fīi* are sometimes prefixed to a noun such as *Suura* ‘manner,’ *Tariiq* ‘way,’ or *shakl* ‘form’ followed by a modifier that provides the exact description of the manner:

   - **bi-haadhaa l-shakl-i l-waasi'i** in this extensive way
   - **fīi shakl-in 'asaasiyy-in** in a fundamental way
   - **bi-Suurat-in 'aammat-in** generally
   - **bi-Suurat-in Hamaasiyyat-in** enthusiastically
   - **bi-Suurat-in fawriyyat-in** immediately
   - **bi-Tariiqat-in ghayri mubaashrat-in** indirectly
   - **bi-Tariiqat-in qa'amummiyyat-in** in illegal ways

2. Other prepositions may also occur in manner adverbial phrases:

   - **al-qaraar-u sa-yu-ttaxadh-u fīi kull-i qaDiyat-in 'alaa ufiraad-in.** Decision will be made on each issue individually.
   - **ta-drus-u fīi l-naktabat-i ka-l-'aadat-i.** She is studying in the library, as usual.
3 Place adverbials

3.1 One-word adverbs of place

3.1.1 hunaa هنَا and hunaaka هنَاكَ '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 هنَاكَ '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 هنَاكَ indicating slightly greater distance is hunaalika هنَاكَلَ 'over there.'

3.1.1.1 hunaa هنَا 'HERE'

عندما جاءنا إلى هنا
'hunaa ya-bda‘-u l-Hulm-u.
When we came here
Here begins the dream.
أعيش هنا مع أسرتي.
Я живу здесь с семьей.
I live here with my family.

3.1.1.2 hunaaka هنَاكَ 'THERE' (SPATIAL LOCATIVE)

لن تظل هنا إلى الأبد.
yu-riid-u ‘an ya-S‘ad-a ‘ilaa hunaaka.
He wants to go up there.

3.1.1.3 hunaaka هنَاكَ 'THERE IS; THERE ARE' (EXISTENTIAL LOCATIVE)

هناك أربعة مكاتب سياحية.
hunaaka ‘arba‘-at-u makaatib-a siyaaHiyyat-in.
There are four tourist offices.

فهناك اتفاق فلسطيني إسرائيلي.
There is a Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

ينبغي أن تكون هناك علاقة حسن جوار.
yu-nbaghii ‘an ta-kum-a hunaaka ‘alaqaqat-u Husn-i jiwaar-in.
There ought to be a good neighbor relationship.

3.1.1.4 hunaalika هنَاكَلَ: This variant of hunaaka is very similar in meaning although sometimes it indicates a more remote distance (actual or figurative).

كانت هناك فكرة لدخول مجلس الشعب.
kaan-at hunaalika fikrat-un l-duxxul-l majlis-i 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. 

\[\text{fa-thammat-a qiym-un muxtajfat-un} \quad \text{we-thammat-a 'ulamaa}^2\text{-u ya'taqid-unna 'anna} \quad \text{and there are different values} \quad \text{for there are scholars who believe that} \ldots\]


\[\text{ليس في الأمر فمة صقر أو حمام}.
\]

laysa fi l'amri thammat-a Suqur-an 'aw Hamaa'im-u.

There are neither hawks nor doves in the matter.

هل فمة إضافات إلى ذلك؟

\[\text{hal thammat-a '}\text{iDaafat-un 'i}a\text{a dhaalika}?
\]

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.

\[\text{في كلية حيث تدرس} \quad \text{حيث القديم يختلط مع الحديث}
\]

fi kulliyat-in Hayth-u tu-darris-u Hayth-u l-qadiim-u ya-xtaliT-u ma'ca l-Hadiith-i

in a college where she teaches where the old mixes with the new

حيث تشرنب الطريق

Hayth-u ta-shra'ibb-u l-Tariiq-u

where the road stretches

3.2 Accusative adverbial of place

A noun may be marked with the indefinite accusative in order to indicate direction or location.

هل سرت يميناً أو شملاً؟

\[\text{hal sirta yamiin-an 'aw shimaal-an}?
\]

Did you go right or left?

3.3 Locative adverbs or semi-prepositions (Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zamaan)

These adverbs are actually nouns of location marked with the accusative case, functioning as the first term of an 'iDaaja, with a following noun in the genitive, or with a pronoun suffix. The location may be spatial or temporal. Although close

\[\text{Note that the question word “where?” is different: 'ayna أين} (see Chapter 17, section 1); see also Chapter 18, section 6.1.\]
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.10

بعد أربعة أشهر
*ba’d-a ‘arba’at-i ‘ashhur-in*
after four months

تعيش تحت الماء.
*ta’ilsh-u taHt-a l-maa‘-i.*
They live under water.

3.4 Phrasal adverbs of place
Adverbial expressions of place often occur in the form of prepositional phrases.

بدأ اجتماعاته في القدس المحتلة.
*bada‘-a ‘itima‘a‘-aat-i-hi fii l-quds-i l-uHtalat-i.*
He began his meetings in occupied Jerusalem.

في مقهى على الرصيف
*fii maqha‘an ‘ala‘a l-raSiif-i*
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 ‘ams-i ‘yesterday’
The invariable adverb ‘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.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, I:290. Note that if the definite article is attached to ‘ams, it becomes fully inflectable.
He returned to Cairo yesterday. The two presidents arrived in Muscat yesterday.

dhakara raadynu Sawti-u lhibnaan-a SabaaH-a 'ams-i . . .
the radio [station] “The Voice of Lebanon” mentioned yesterday morning . . .

4.1.1.1 OCCASIONALLY, ‘ams IS USED WITH THE DEFINITE ARTICLE.

kauna dhaaka bi-l-'ams-i.
That was yesterday.

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:

fii gharaat-in naффudh-a-haa ‘ams-i l-‘awwal-a
in a raid it carried out the day before yesterday

4.1.2 al-‘aan-a الان ‘now’
The expression al-‘aan-a is invariable as an adverb, remaining in the accusative even after a preposition:

afaqt al-an
ifaaH-i l-‘aan-a!
Open now!

yu-rfd-anni l-‘aan-a jadwal-a ‘a’maal-in
mushtarik-an.
They (two) now want a shared agenda.

wa-Zahara 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 ‘yet; still’
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 adverbiale en -u qui n’est pas le nominatif” (Lecomte 1968, 90). Similar forms such as qabl-u ‘before,’ jawq-u ‘above,’ and taliH-u ‘beneath’ also exist, with the restriction that they may not occur as the first term of an ‘iDaafa. On this topic see also Fleisch 1961, 1:280, and Chapter 16, section 3.4.3.
Their identities have not yet been revealed.

It's date has not yet been set.

It has still reached very few Egyptian households. (It still hasn't reached but a few Egyptian households.)

Fî-maa ba'd-u 'LATER': The idiomatic expression fî-maa ba'd-u means 'later; later on.'

Then put it later in your book.

Both of these expressions denote sequential action. Note that thumm-a invariably ends with fatha.

After that he transferred to work in the university.

Specific times or time nouns are marked for the accusative. They may be definite or indefinite.

 هل سنتدخل أو لا نتدخل أبدًا؟

Shall we interfere or never interfere?

And finally she came to Cairo.

They were always in touch with her.
The President inspects work sites tomorrow.

The committee will hold two meetings yearly.

On a visit to Indonesia that lasts a week

The seminar lasts one day.

Its use changed at the onset/beginning of the last century.

He said at that time that they were on the verge of arriving at the agreement.

That day they spoke about the event.
4.3.1.3 sanat-a-dhaaka ستنتاك ‘THAT YEAR’
‘aam-a-dhaaka عامذاك
The discovery of America that year was the great event.

Haqqaq-at ‘aam-a-dhaaka sab’at-an wa-‘ishriina bilyuu-n-a duulaar-in.
It realized that year 27 billion dollars.

4.3.2 -‘idhin تذ – expressions
These are more common in literary Arabic than in day-to-day journalistic prose.

ba’d-a-‘idhin ‘بعدَنِ ‘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:

ysaa layl-an wa-naaar-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-ha haaddhihi l-sanat-fi tawqii-i mithl-i haadhaa l-ittifaaq-i.
It succeeded this year in signing such an agreement.

ja‘-uun fajr-a yawm-i l-‘aqiraa-i.
The day at dawn on the day of balloting.

al-yawm-a l-‘aHad-a l-sa‘at-a l-Haadiyat-a ‘ashrat-a Saba‘H-an
today, Sunday, at 11:00 in the morning
He was arrested within minutes.

to a session that will be held in the parliament building next Wednesday

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:

'awwal-an  'firstly'
thaaniy-an  'secondly'
thaalith-an  'thirdly'

'awwal-a l'amr-i  'at first; the first thing'

6 Adverbial accusative of specification (al-tamyiiz التمييز)
This form of adverbial accusative is used to label, identify, or specify something previously referred to in the sentence. 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.”

haadhaa l-balad-u l-Tayyib-u 'arD-ati wa-naas-an wa-thaqaafat-an
this good country [in terms of] land, people, and culture

naqal-a malikat-u-haa 'asiirat-an 'ilaa ruumaa.
He transported its queen to Rome [as] a prisoner.

taHakkum-u l-gharb-i qtiSaadiyy-an wa-'askariyy-an
the dominance of the west economically and militarily

wa-natijat-u dhaaliika muHarrik-un 'akthar-u kafa'at-an.
The result of that is a more efficient motor.

See also Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.7.
6.1 Other uses of tamyīz

The accusative of specification is also used with the following quantifying expressions:

6.1.1 The interrogative quantifier kamُكم ‘how much, how many’

The noun following kamُكم is in the accusative singular.

 кудаهلاً في صفك؟
kam تألیب-an fī Safī-ka?

 كم فلماً شاهدتم؟
kam film-an shaahad-tum?

 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

 عن سبعة عشر نانیاً
'an sab'at-a ِ'ashara naa'ib-an

 عشرون قرشاً
'ishruuna qirsh-an

 from seventeen representatives
twenty piasters

 أكثر من خمسة وخمسين فيلماً
'akthar-u min xamsat-in wa-xamsiina fiilm-an

 أكثراً من معنون وخمسين فيلماً
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

 قد تكون أكثر أهمیةً
qad tu-kuun-u 'akthar-a

 ‘اَحَمْمِییْیَت-an.
'ahammiyyat-an.

 It might be more important.

 (‘greater in terms of importance’)

 من أجل شرق أو غرب أكثر استقراراً
min 'af-l-i sharq-in 'awsaT-a 'akthar-a staqraar-an

 هو أكثر دهاء بكثير.
huwa 'akthar-u daaha'-an bi-kathiir-in.

 for the sake of a more stable Middle East

 He is more shrewd by far.

7 Adverbial accusative of cause or reason (al-maf'ul li-`ajl-i-hi المفعول لأجله،
al-maf'ul la-hu 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

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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.

taqdiir-an li-juhud-i-hi in appreciation of his efforts

tamhiid-an li-Haalat-i-him . . . in preparation for their transfer

نتيجة للمجز الذي سيطر على الحكومة

natiijat-an li-l-ajz-i lladhii sayTar-a ‘alaa l-Hukuumat-

as a result of the incapacity that dominated the government

بدأ عملية التمشيط بحثاً عن رجال المقاومة.

bada’-a ‘amaliyyat-a l-tamshiit-i bafHth-an ‘an rijaal-i l-muqaawamat-i.

It started a combing operation to search for ('men of') resistance.

بحث تطوير العلاقات خدمة لمصلحتهما المشترك.

buHth-a taTwiir-u l-‘alaaqaat-i xidmat-an li-maSlHaHat-i-hima l-mushtarakat-i.

Development of relations was discussed in order to serve their [two]

shared interest.

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’

‘pardon; you’re welcome’

‘welcome’

‘hello’

shukr-an

‘afw-an

‘ahl-an wa-sahl-an

marHab-an

شكرًا

عقواً

أملاًوسهلا

مرحبًا
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>انا</td>
<td>نحن 'we' naHu-n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'I' *anaa</td>
<td></td>
<td>'we' naHu-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>انت 'you' *anta</td>
<td>انتُما 'you two' *antumaa</td>
<td>انتُم 'you' *antum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>انت 'you' *anti</td>
<td></td>
<td>انتُن '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 'antum and hum end with sukun, 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 Danma, based on a principle of vowel harmony with the previous vowel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Third person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>'he' huwa</td>
<td>'they two' humaa</td>
<td>'they' hum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>'she' hiya</td>
<td>hum</td>
<td>'they' hunna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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.

2 When preceded by the conjunctions wa- or fa-, the third person singular pronouns huwa and hiya may lose their first vowel, thus becoming wa-hwa and wa-hya.
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.

huwa xabīr-un fī l-shu‘ūn-l-sharq-l-‘awsaT-i.

He is an expert in Middle Eastern affairs.

1.1.3 Predicate of 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.

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 المزعزع هو الأسعار.

al-shay‘-u l-waHliid-u l-muz‘ij-u

huwa l-‘as‘aara.

The important thing is the prices.

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.
The Muslim is the Turk.

These are the atmospheres prevailing in the party.

### 2 Suffix personal pronouns (Damaa'ir muttaSila ضمائر متصلة)

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 /-ni/.

### 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><strong>First person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>عِي 'my' /ii</td>
<td>َنا 'our' /naa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>كُل 'your' /ka</td>
<td>َكُم 'your' /kum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>كُل 'your' /ki</td>
<td>َكُن 'your' /kun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>هُم 'their' /hum ~ -hi</td>
<td>ُهُم 'their' /hunna ~ -hima</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>هُا 'her' /haa</td>
<td></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. 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

---

Note that all the pronoun suffixes except /-it 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.

احفظوا على نظافة مدينكم!
Haafiz-u `alaa naZaat-i madinat-i-kum!
Keep your (m. pl.) city clean (‘preserve the cleanliness of your city’!)

| عن إذنك | من فضلك |
| 'an 'idhn-i-ki | min faDl-i-ka |
| with your (f.) permission | please (‘of your kindness’) |
| (when requesting something) |

في محفظتك
fii miIlfaZat-i-ka
in your (m. sg.) wallet

من شمالها إلى جنوبها
min shimaal-i-haa 'ilaal jumuub-i-haa
from its north to its south

كل ريال من دخلنا
kull-u riyaaal-in min daxl-i-naa
every riyal of our income

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 | على كتفيه |
| fii mudhakkiraat-i-hi | 'alaa katif-ay-hi |
| in his notes/diary | on his [two] shoulders |

| أكرما والديهما | بسيارةهم |
| 'akram-aa waalid-ay-himaa | bi-sayyaaraat-i-him |
| They [two] honored their [two] parents. | in their cars |
by marketing their (f. pl.) production from their pockets

2.1.2 Plural pronoun suffix helping vowel
The masculine plural pronoun suffixes, -kum and -hum/-him, end with a sukūn, 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

It deals with their latest films.

It deals with their foreign policy from their latest films.

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.

He began his news conference.

He began his new film on his last official visit in your inside pocket

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عوناناهما</td>
<td>their two titles</td>
<td>sa-ya-Tlub-u min naaxib-ii-hi l-TaWii-ti.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>بيديها</td>
<td>with her two hands</td>
<td>kaan-a malja’an li-mut’ab-ii-nya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أحمد مستشاريه</td>
<td>one of his advisors</td>
<td>min ‘aSwaat-i mu’ayyid-ii-nya.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mu’alim-iyya</td>
<td>my teachers (nominative</td>
<td>my teachers (nominative and genitive/accusative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and genitive/accusative)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mu’alim-iyya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 -aya.

---

7 This is due to incompatibility between the vowels /-uu/ and /-ii/, which do not combine in MSA.
my two parents (nominative) my [two] parents (genitive/accusative)

My parents are Egyptian.

I went with my parents.

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 'ab-ii
my brother 'ax-ii
my father-in-law Ham-ii
my mouth fiyya

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</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person</td>
<td>خَا</td>
<td>خَا</td>
<td>خَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'me'-nii</td>
<td>'us'-nii</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person</td>
<td>كُمْ</td>
<td>كُمْ</td>
<td>كُمْ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>'you'-ka</td>
<td>'you'-kuma</td>
<td>'you'-kum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 Alternates with the variant word stem for 'mouth,' fam, as fam-ii. 플으.
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 (-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.

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.

هنك 306 A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>لَكُنَّكُنَّ 'you'-'kunna</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person Masculine</td>
<td>هَـمَهَـم 'they'-'humaa~him</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>هَـمَهَـم 'them'-'him</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>هَـمَهَـم 'them'-'humaa~him</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>أشكوك</td>
<td>I thank you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>نعى تبیر هم</td>
<td>We consider them stars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>وجدتها</td>
<td>I found it!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اختاري</td>
<td>You (pi.) left us!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>إصداري</td>
<td>Don't (f. sg.) use it!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>عذرني</td>
<td>لا تستخدمها!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>انتظرا</td>
<td>أريد أن أساعدكما</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>انتظرا</td>
<td>I want to help you two.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Full form + pronoun suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘istaqbal-naa-hum</td>
<td>‘aqna‘-uu-haa</td>
<td>‘alhab-naa-hu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We met them.</td>
<td>They persuaded her.</td>
<td>I heard it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Present tense:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Full form + pronoun suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ya-Hmil-u-haa</td>
<td>yu-qaddis-uuna-hu</td>
<td>We loved him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He is carrying it.</td>
<td>They venerate it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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>Pause form</th>
<th>Full form + pronoun suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>policy</td>
<td>سياسة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>their policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>سياستهم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>problem</td>
<td>مشكلة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>her problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>مشكلتها</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>world</td>
<td>عالم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>our world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>عالمنا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conference</td>
<td>مؤتمر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>his conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>مؤتمره</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we waited</td>
<td>انظرننا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we waited for him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>انظرنناه</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2.2 Object pronoun carrier: \( \text{‘iyaa-} \)

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, \( \text{‘iyaa-} \), and object pronouns can be attached to it.\(^9\)

### 2.2.2.1 VERB THAT TAKES DOUBLE ACCUSATIVE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>أهديني إياها أهل صديقي</th>
<th>أعطيني إياه</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( 'ahdaan-)</td>
<td>( 'iyyaa--haa )  ( 'ahi-n-u )  ( Sadi--q--ii ).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My friend’s family presented it to me ('sent-me it').

\( \text{‘a} '\text{li-\-n\-ii} '\text{‘iyaa-\-hu} \).

Give (f.) it [to] me ('give me it').

### 2.2.2.2 STYLISTIC CHOICE: In the following example, the writer could have said \( \text{‘tahaddath-\-a ma} '\text{‘iyaa-\-hu} \) but he chose a more classical turn of phrase, using the expression \( \text{wa} '\text{‘iyaa-\-hu} \) instead. In this case, \( \text{waa} \) is a connector which takes the accusative case (\( \text{waaw al-} '\text{‘iyaa} \)) on a following noun, signifying concomitance or accompaniment.\(^10\) Since a pronoun object is needed here, \( \text{waa} \) is followed by \( '\text{‘iyaa-\-hu} \).

\( \text{‘tahaddath-\-a \text{wa} '\text{‘iyaa-\-hu} \text{muTawwil-\-an} \).}

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 \( '\text{‘iyaa-} \). 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 \( 1 + 2 + 3 \): \( '\text{‘ayyu-\-tkhu} \) je te l’ai donné; depuis l’époque classique, le second pronom s’affixe toujours à une particule-outil \( '\text{‘iyaa-} \)."

\(^10\) For more on \( \text{waaw al-} '\text{‘iyaa} \) see Baalbaki 1986 and Wright 1967, II:83–84.

\(^11\) Note, however, that the prepositions \( \text{Hattaa, ku-}, \) and \( \text{mundh-} \) do not take pronoun objects.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>يتم &quot;me&quot; -نًـ نًـ نًـ</td>
<td>نا &quot;us&quot; -نًـ نًـ نًـ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>كك &quot;you&quot; -ka</td>
<td>كك &quot;you two&quot; -kumaa</td>
<td>كك &quot;you&quot; -kum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>كك &quot;you&quot; -ki</td>
<td></td>
<td>كك &quot;you&quot; -kunna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>هما &quot;him&quot; -هـ نًـ نًـ نًـ</td>
<td>هما &quot;them&quot; -نًـ نًـ نًـ</td>
<td>هما &quot;them&quot; -نًـ نًـ نًـ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>هما &quot;her&quot; -هـ نًـ نًـ نًـ</td>
<td></td>
<td>هما &quot;her&quot; -هـ نًـ نًـ نًـ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3.1 One-letter prepositions: \textit{bi} and \textit{li}-:

2.3.1.1 \textit{bi} - + PRONOUN SUFFIX: Pronoun suffixes with \textit{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 \textit{bi} - and shift their -\textit{u} vowel to -\textit{i}:

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>أهلا بك.</td>
<td>ثقتنا بهم</td>
<td>لا بأس به</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'ahl-an bi-ka.</td>
<td>thiqat-u-naa bi-him</td>
<td>lla ba's-a bi-hi</td>
<td>('there is no harm in it')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome to you.</td>
<td>our confidence in them</td>
<td>not bad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3.1.2 \textit{li} - + PRONOUN SUFFIX: The preposition \textit{li} - 'to, for' shifts its vowel to -\textit{a} whenever it has a pronoun suffix, except for the long vowel suffix -\textit{ii} 'me,' which supercedes any short vowel:

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>الشرف لنا.</td>
<td>لك سعر خاص.</td>
<td>هذينا لكم.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-sharaf-u la-naa</td>
<td>la-ka si`r-un xaaSS-un.</td>
<td>hanni`-an la-kum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The honor is ours ('to us'). For you, a special price. Congratulations to you (pl.).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لا معنى له.</td>
<td>لاا ما هـ نًـ نًـ نًـ</td>
<td>أرسلوا لي طردا.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laa ma'naa la-hu.</td>
<td>'arsal-tuu l-It Tard-an.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is meaningless ('there is no meaning to it'). They sent [to] me a package.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لا يكن لهم أي اتصال.</td>
<td>la-hum 3`ay-y-ittiSaal-in.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They did not have any contact ('there was not to them any contact').</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3.2 Two-letter prepositions: *fī, min, ‘an*

2.3.2.1 *fī* + PRONOUN SUFFIX: The preposition *fī* '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*. In writing it is sometimes hard to tell the difference between *fī* 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:

*أذَابُ الحَزْنِ فِيَْلَ هَالْهَا اِلْحَزْنِ عِنْدَهَا فِيَْلَ هَالْهَا اِلْحَزْنِ عِنْدَهَا فِيَْلَ هَالْهَا اِلْحَزْنِ عِنْدَهَا فِيَْلَ هَالْهَا اِلْحَزْنِ عِنْدَهَا فِيَْلَ هَالْهَا اِلْحَزْنِ عِنْدَهَا فِيَْلَ هَالْهَا اِلْحَزْنِ عِنْدَهَا Fī-hi shams-un jabaliyyat-un.*

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*.

*أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَونَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَونَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَونَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَونَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَونَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ أَحْسَن مَنْيَ كَثِيرَوْنَ مُنْهِمُ Aḥsān-u min-nii kathiir-uuna min-hum better than me many of them* إِثْنَانَ مَنْهَا hiya 'akthar-u mas'uniyyat-an min-hu. ithnataani 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*.

*هَل سَأَلْتُمْ عَنِّي؟* *الإِلْعَانُ عَنَّهَا* hal sa’al-tum *‘an-nii?* al-‘i’aan-u *‘an-hu.* Did you (pl.) ask about me? the announcing of it

*ما قَيلَ وَما سُيَقَالُ عَنْهُمْ maa qiil-a wa-maa sa-yu-qaal-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><strong>First person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'alay-ya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'alay-naa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>'alay-ka</td>
<td>'alay-kumaa</td>
<td>'alay-kum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>'alay-ki</td>
<td></td>
<td>'alay-kunna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>'alay-hi</td>
<td>'alay-himaa</td>
<td>'alay-him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>'alay-haa</td>
<td></td>
<td>'alay-hinna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

كان عليّ. al-salam 'alay-kum. 
it was [incumbent] on me. Peace [be] upon you.

كانت الأوضاع أفضل مما هي عليه الآن. kaan-ati l-'awDaa'ni 'afDal-a mimmaa hiya 'alay-hi l-'aan-a. 
The conditions were better than what they are ('on it') now.

2.3.3.2 'ilaa + PRONOUN SUFFIX

يَنظر إليها. 'ilay-haa. 
He looks at her.

أنا أشتهِق إليه. 'anaa 'a-shhtaaq-u 'ilay-hi. 
l miss him ('I yearn for him').
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').

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.

أثارحملة من الانتقادات ضدّه. 2 thehaara Hamlat-an min-a l-intiqaadaat-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

عندٌ مشكلة ‘ind-ii 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.

يستطيعون أن يفرضوا أنفسهم على المستوى العالمي. ya-staTii-uuna ‘an ya-friD-un ‘ansus-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, l:265-66 for greater detail on the Classical Arabic forms of this pronoun.
4.1 Masculine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>dzu dhuu</td>
<td>dzu dhawaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>dji dhii</td>
<td>dji dhaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>dz dhaa</td>
<td>dz dhaay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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).
He described the talks as worthwhile ('of worth').

Sources that have a relationship with the subject

He said that the results will be of importance.
Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns (‘asmaa’ al-‘ishaara) 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’ ها 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</td>
<td>هذته</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>haadhaa</td>
<td>haadhiihi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dual</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nominative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>هذان</td>
<td>هانان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>haadh-aani</td>
<td>haat-aani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genitive/accusative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>هذين</td>
<td>هايتين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>haadh-ayni</td>
<td>haat-ayni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plural</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>هؤلاء</td>
<td>هؤلاء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>haa’ulaa’i</td>
<td>haa’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, 1:264-70; Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 80-81; Thatcher 1942, 53-55; Blachère and Gaudefrey-Demombynes 1975, 200-203.
2 Demonstrative of distance: ‘that; those’ دِلْكُ dhaalika

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>دِلْكُ</td>
<td>تَنَّكَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dhaalika</td>
<td>tilka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>أولُكَ</td>
<td>أولُكَ</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:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ناجح في ذلك} & \quad \text{على رغم ذلك} \\
\text{najaH-afii dhaalika} & \quad \text{'alaa raghmi dhaalika} \\
\text{He succeeded in that.} & \quad \text{despite that}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{حدث عن ذلك كله} & \quad \text{لكن هذا لا يكفي.} \\
\text{Haddath-a 'an dhaalika kull-i-hi.} & \quad \text{laakinn-a haadhaa laa ya-kfii.} \\
\text{He spoke about all that.} & \quad \text{But this is not enough.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{معنى هذا} & \quad \text{أقول هذا عن خبرة عملية.} \\
\text{ma'naa haadhaa} & \quad \text{'a-quul-a haadhaa 'an xibrat-in 'amalyyat-in.} \\
\text{the meaning of this} & \quad \text{I say this from practical experience.}
\end{align*}
\]

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:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{هاadhaa} + \text{the-definite article} + \text{noun} = \text{هاadhaa} \text{Hawn-u} \\
\text{‘this-the-color’} = \text{this color}
\end{align*}
\]
Like 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.

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.

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:

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:

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.

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.

```
haadhaa huwa l-kitaab-u.
This is the book.

tilka hiya l-ajwaar-u l-saa'idat-u fii l-Hizb-i.
Those are the atmospheres prevailing in the party.
```

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.

```
haadhihi l-marrat-u l-'uulaa llatii ya-staqabil-u fii-haa l-ra'iis-a.
This is the first time that he met the president.

kaan-at tilka l-marrat-a l-'uulaa llatii ghadaara fii-haa qaryat-a-hu.
This was the first time he had left his village.
```

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

ذلك الشوفينية وذلك التعصب وذاك الانغلاق
tilka l-shuuffihiyyat-u wa-dhaalika l-ta'aSSub-u wa-dhaaka l-'inghilaaq-u
that chauvinism, that tribalism, and that obscurity

كأن 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. waa-thuddhaa yawm-a-dhaaka. The event ended that day.

واوحدثوا يومذاك. wu-thuddath-u yawm-a-dhaaka. They spoke that day.

واوطل كتابه أذان تيارة من الاهتمام.
wu-'aTlaaq-a kitaab-u-hu 'aan-a-dhaaka tayyaar-un min-a l-ihtimaam-i. His book evoked a current of interest at that time.

اكتشف أمريكا سنتذاك كان الحدث الكبير.
iiktishaaf-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 ذات

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 وارنة.
qabl-a 'an ta-'rif-a dhaat-a yawm-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 دولتكم.
haa hiya dawlat-u-kum.
This is your country. Here is your country.

4.4 Locative demonstrative pronouns: hunaa هننا, hunaaka هناك and hunaalika هناك '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.
Demonstrative pronouns

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 هنا 'here'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>هنَا في المدينة</td>
<td>Hunaa fî l-madîliindat-î here, in the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>هل أخذت المفتاح من هنا؟</td>
<td>Hal 'axadhi-ta l-miftaah-ta min hunaa? Did you take the key from here?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مستحيل أن نجد أحدا هنا</td>
<td>[It is] impossible to find ('that we find') anyone here.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.2 Locative hunaaka هناك ‘there’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>الظاهرة هناك</td>
<td>Al-Taa'irat-u hunaaka. The plane is over there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لا بد أن يكون هناك بعد خمس دقائق</td>
<td>Laa badda 'an 'a-kwaan-u hunaaka ba'da xamsi daqaa'iq-a. I have to be there in five minutes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.3 Existential hunaaka وهناك and hunaalika هناك ‘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 hunaalika is also used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>وهناك أولويات أهم</td>
<td>Fa-hunaaka 'awwalawiyyaat-un 'ahamm-u. There [are] more important priorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>هناك مثلا القصور</td>
<td>Hunaalika mathal-an-i l-qiSuur-u. There [are], for example, castles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>وهناك روايات عدة Uma حدث للملكة</td>
<td>Fa-hunaaka riwaayaat-un 'iddat-un 'ammaa Hadath-a li-l-malikat-î. There [are] several stories about what happened to the queen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relative pronouns relate an element in a subordinate relative clause (in Arabic, *al-Sila* الصلة) to a noun or noun phrase in the main clause of a sentence. The Arabic relative pronoun (*al-ism al-mawSuul* 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>alladhii</td>
<td>allatii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dual</strong></td>
<td>alladhaani</td>
<td>allataani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nominative</strong></td>
<td>alladhayni</td>
<td>allatayni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genitive/Accusative</strong></td>
<td>alladhiina</td>
<td>allaatii ~ allawaati</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-* /الـ/. 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

\[ \text{hiya llatii 'arsal-at-l 'dukruwa.} \]
She is the one who sent the doctor.

\[ \text{wa-huwa lladhii waDa'-'a l-mismaara l-'axiira.} \]
And he is the one who put [in] the last nail.

\[ \text{al-markaz-u l-jadid-u lladhii 'uqiqim-a fii l-madiinat-i} \]
the new center which has been established in the city

2.2 Dual relative pronoun

In the dual, the relative pronoun agrees not only in gender and number with its antecedent, but also in case.

\[ \text{al-burj-aani lladhaani laa ya-zaal-aani qaa'im-ayni} \]
the two towers which remain standing

\[ \text{li-l-zawj-ayni lladh-ayni ya-ntaZir-aani Hadath-an sa'iid-an} \]
for the couple who are awaiting a happy event

\[ \text{fii l-jalsat-ayni llatayni n'aqad-ataa 'ams-i} \]
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.

\[ \text{al-siyyaaH-u llaadhiina ya-Sil-uuna kull-ayawm-in} \]
the tourists who arrive every day

\[ \text{al-niswat-u llawaatii 'urghim-na 'alaa l-'ixlaa'-'i bi l-quwwat-i} \]
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.

fiī ziyaarat-in li-dimashq-a ta-staghriq-u `usbu'-'an
on a visit to Damascus [which] lasts a week

عَثْرَتْ عَلَى هِيْكِلٍ عَظِيمٍ فَقُدّ رَأْسُهُ.
She came upon a skeleton [which] had lost its head.

وَأخِيرًا يَظَهَّرُ كَرْجُلٌ يَمْتَلِكُ الشَجَاعَةَ.
Finally, he appears as a man [who] possesses courage.

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),” al-kitaab-u llaadhii qara'-naa-hu
الكتاب الذي قرأناه.

This substitute pronoun is called in Arabic the `aa'idل (‘aa'id دَائِمٌ or raaji‘‘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
al-makaan-u laadhii 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).

The aid which it has offered (it) to Afghanistan

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.
He sells it to whomever needs it.

He was the first [person] who saw the moon.

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.

ما بين النهرين
maa bayn-a l-nahrayni
Mesopotamia (‘that which is between two rivers’)

ما لا نهاية
maa laa nihaayat-a
infinity (‘that which has no end’)

فلم يحدث ما حدث في الشام.
fa-lam ya-Hdath maa Hadath-a fii l-shaam-i.
What happened in Syria has not happened [here].

ما قبل وما سيقال عنه.
maa qii-a wa-maa sa-yu-qaal-u ‘an-hn.
What has been said and what will be said about it.

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

هذا ما أقصده بالضبط.
haadthaa maa ‘aqsid-a-hu bi-l-DabTi.
This is exactly what I mean (it).

شكروه على ماقدمه.
shakara-hn ‘ala maa qaddam-a-hu.
He thanked him for what he offered (it).

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.
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:

 فلاً وضحت ما تقصدها .
fa'-awDaH-at maa ta-qSid-u-hu.
So she explained **what** she meant (it).

**Us fa-'awDaH-at maa ta-qSid-u-hu.**
So she explained **what** she meant (it).

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:

**He really knows what he wants.**

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:

لماذا تحب فنانانا ما؟
l-i-maadhaa tu-Hibb-u fanmaan-an maa?
Why do you like a certain artist?

**Why do you like a certain artist?**
5.7 mimmaa مَمَا
The contracted phrase mimmaa (min + maa) may be used instead of the simple maa when referring to a preceding situation or condition:

mَمَا أَمْنُ لَهُ اِتْصَالًا دَائِمًا
mimmaa 'amman-a la-hu ttiSaal-an daa' im-an
which guaranteed him a permanent connection

مَا يُؤْدِي إِلَى إِعْطَاءِ المَجلَةِ طَابِعًا أَدِبِيًا
mimmaa yu-'addii 'ilaa 'i'Taa'-'i l-majallat-i Taabi'-an 'adabiyy-an
which leads to giving the journal a literary character

مَا يُعْنِي أَنْ كَلَّةِ الْمَشْرُوعُ
mimmaa ya-'nii 'anna kalfat-a l-mashruu-'i
which means that the cost of the project

5.8 bi-maa fii + pronoun ‘including’
This common idiomatic expression includes the indefinite pronoun maa:

بِمَا فِيْهِ اِتْصَالَاتٌ مَعُ جَمِيعِ الْأَطْرافِ بَما فِيهَا حُكُومَةِ إِسْرَايْلِ
yu-jrii ttiSaalat-in ma'-a jaHiili-'i l-'aTraafi bi-maa fii-haa Hukuumat-i 'israa'iil-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 (ال الأعداد)(al-'a'daad)

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>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zero</td>
<td>Sifr</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>صفر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>wuuHid</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>واحد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two</td>
<td>ithnaan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>اثنان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three</td>
<td>thalaatha</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>ثلاثة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four</td>
<td>'arba'a</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>أربعة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five</td>
<td>xamsa</td>
<td>5</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 Numerical “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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerals</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>six</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>٦</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seven</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>٧</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eight</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>٨</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nine</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>٩</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ten</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>١٠</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

- **fii waqt-in waaHid-in** بِهِدَفِ ۱ لِحَدَتِ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵ ۶ ۷ ۸ ۹ ۱۰
- **bi-hadaf-ayni muqaabil-‘a hadaf-in waaHid-in** بِهِدَفِ ۱ لِحَدَتِ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵ ۶ ۷ ۸ ۹ ۱۰

at one time  ٨

with two goals as opposed to one goal

- **hal li-‘a’dhna l-balad-i ۱ ‘akthar-u min-i l-‘a’da min waaHid-in?** هل لِهِدَفِ ۱ لِحَدَتِ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵ ۶ ۷ ۸ ۹ ۱۰
- **Does this country have more than one name?**

before he lightened the penalty to one year only

- **qabl-a ۱ an yu-xaffif-a l-‘uquubat-a ۱ ilaa sanat-in waaHidat-in faqaT** قبل أن يخفف العقوبة إلى سنة واحدة فقط

- **1.1.2 ‘One of’: ‘aHad أحمد and ‘iHdaa إحدى أَحْدٍ**

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

---

4 However, waaHid min is also occasionally found for the expression of “one of”:

- **al-min ‘a’mul-‘a l-balad-un waaHidat-in min ‘aqall-i manaaTiq-i l-fazaa’ir-i sukkaan-an.**
  The entire region is one of the lowest-populated in Algeria.

- **‘uud waaHid-in min ‘ahamm-i l-funun-in l-mu’aaSirat-i**
  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:

في أحد مستشفيات جدة

'ahad-i mustashfayaat-i jiddat-a in one of the hospitals of Jidda

أحدهم أصيب.

'aHad-u-hum 'uSiib-a. One of them was hit.

1.1.2.2 'iHdaa: The feminine numeral 'iHdaa is invariable in case:

低い مدن المنطقة

'iHdaa mudun-i l-muHaawalaat-i one of the cities of the region

إحدى مهام هذه المحاولات

'iHdaa mahaamm-i haadhihi l-Hajnat-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 إن أحداً لا يستطيع أن يوقفهم.

qaad-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* اثنان and *ithnataan* اثنان

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>ithnatayni</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accusative</td>
<td>اثنين</td>
<td>اثنين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>ithnayni</em></td>
<td><em>ithnatayni</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-muthannaa* 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.

- دخل الملكان.
  *daxal-a l-malik-aani.*
  The two rulers entered.
  (Here, referring to a king and queen.)

- وقَد وَجَد طَابِقَان بَنْيَا من الحِجَارَة.
  *wa-qad wujld-a Taabaq-aani buniy-aa min-a l-Hijaarat-i.*
  Two floors were found built of stone.

- بَيْن الْبَلَدَيْن.
  *bayn-a l-balad-ayni*
  between the two countries

- تَحْلِيم يَوْمَانِين.
  *ta-lmil-u bi-taw‘am-ayni.*
  She is pregnant with twins.
1.2.1.2 FEMININE DUAL


أَمَامَا الْمَدِينَتَانِ الْآخَرِيَانَ
‘ammāa l-madīnat-aani l-‘uxray-aani
as for the other two cities

الدوْلَتَانِ العَظِمَيْنَ
al-dawl-aani l-‘uZmay-aani
the two super powers

خلَالِ السَّنتَيْنِ المَاضِيَتَيْنِ
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:

عنوَاانَا الْكِتَابِيِنَ
‘unwaan-aa l-kitaab-ayni
the [two] titles of the two books

أَعْضَاءُ هَاتِينِ اللَّجْنَيْنِ
‘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:

فيَ كَتَيْبِ الْثَّورَ
fii kitf-ayni l-thawr-i
in the two shoulders of the bull

فيَ وَادِيَ نُهْرِ دَلْجَةَ وَالْفَرَاتِ
fii waadiit nahr-ay 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.

فَاثِنَانِ مِنْهَا تُعْتَبِرُانَ مَعَالًا لِلَمَعَارِضَةِ
fa-thnataani min-haa tu-tabaraaani ma‘qil-an li-l-mu’taaraDat-i.
(For) two of them [cities] are considered a stronghold for the opposition.

تَضَمُّ مَمثَلِيْنَ أَثَنِينَ عَنْ كُلِّ جَانِبِ
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
مَمَثَلِيْنَ because in unvoweled Arabic script it looks identical to the plural,
mumaththil-ina مَمَثَلِيْنَ.
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.

in both cases fii kiltaa l-Haalat-ayni في كلتا الحالتين
with both his (two) hands bi-kiltaa yad-ay-hi بكلاهما يديه
both of them (m.) kilaa-humaa كلاهما
with both of them bi-kil-ay-himaa بكليهما

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‘ marbuuta, and if the singular noun is feminine, the numeral will be in the masculine form.

The numerals three to ten are as follows:

<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>‘arba‘</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>thamaaniya</td>
<td>thamaanin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tis‘</td>
<td>tis‘a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ashra</td>
<td>‘ashara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 The numeral ‘eight’ thamaanin, is defective in the masculine gender (the feminine form, ending in taa‘ marbuuta, 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 thamaaniya. 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' marbuṭa is usually used. For example:

\[
\text{wa`ad, istan, thalaath-un!} \quad \text{One, two three!}
\]

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 "iDaafa 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

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ثلاث مخطوطات} & \quad \text{thalaath-u maxTuuTa-in} \quad \text{(singular maxTuuTa مخطوطة)} \\
\text{three manuscripts} & \\
\text{ثلاث قصائد} & \quad \text{thalaath-u qaSaa'id-a} \quad \text{(singular qaSiida قصيدة)} \\
\text{three odes} & \\
\text{نقرأ ثلاث مقابلات} & \quad \text{na-qra'-(u thalaath-a muqaabalaat-in} \quad \text{(singular muqaabala مقابلة)} \\
\text{We are reading three interviews.} & \\
\text{ثلاث آبار عميقه} & \quad \text{thalaath-u 'aabaar-in 'amiiqat-in} \quad \text{(singular bi'r بئر)}^6 \\
\text{three deep wells} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

---

*The singular of “well” (bi'r) looks masculine but is actually cryptofeminine.*
five times a day

within six working groups

for a period of eight hours

They stole nine cars.

(2) Masculine noun = feminine numeral form

four daggers

five dirhams

at the rate of six kilometers per second

It added that seven persons were detained.

to a distance of ten meters

We have three basic needs.
Numerals and numeral phrases

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لثلاثة مواسم متناوبة

li-thalaathat-i mawaasim-a mutataaliyat-in (singular mawsim مَوْسِم)
for three successive seasons

يستقبل أربعة سفراء جدد

yu-staqbil-u ’arba‘at-a sufara‘-a judud-in. (singular safiir سفیر)
He welcomes four new ambassadors.

خمسة مؤتمرات دولية

xamsat-u mu’tamaraat-in duwaliyyat-in (singular mu’tamar مؤتمَر)
five international conferences

(4) 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.

في أهم أربع مدن

fil ‘aham-mi ’arba‘-i mudun-in
in the most important four cities

(5) 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 ثلاثة

min xilaal-i jalasaat-in thalaath-in (singular jalsa جَلِسَة)
through three sessions

خلال عقود ثلاثة

xilaal-a ‘uquud-in thalaathat-in (singular ‘aqd عَقَد)
during three decades

(6) Indefinite numeral followed by min ‘of’: When indicating a specific num-
ber 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

yu-Dumm-u ’arba‘at-an min wuzara‘-i l-nifT-i.
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
‘ARKAN-u l-‘ISLAAM-i l-XAMSAT-u (singular rUKU ركن)
the five pillars of Islam

tوالعقود الثلاثة الأخيرة
TIWAAL-u l-TQIQQD-i l-THALAATHAT-i l-AXIIRAT-i (singular ‘AQD عقد)
during the last three decades

وزراء النفط الستة
wUZARA‘-u l-NIFT-i l-SITTAT-u (singular wAZIIR وزير)
the six oil ministers

(2) Feminine noun: With a noun that is feminine in the singular, the masculine form of the numeral is used:

الجوانب الأربع الأصلية
al-JIHAAAT-u l-‘ARBA‘-u l-SLIYYAT-u (singular JIHA جهة)
the four cardinal directions

dقاوات القلب الخمس
DAQQAAAT-u l-QALB-i l-XAMS-u (singular DAQQA دقة).
the five heartbeats

في القارات الخمس
FIJ l-QAARRAAT-i l-XAMS-i (singular QARRA قارة)
on the five continents

بين ممثلي هذه الصحافة السبع
bAYN-u mumaththil-ii haadhiihi l-SUHUF-i l-SAB‘-i (singular SAHiifa صحفة)
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
bAYN-u ‘ALWAAN-i l-YAF-i l-SAB‘AT-i l-MA‘RUUFAT-i (singular LAWN لون)
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:


gapموا عشرات الأرقام القياسية.

HaTam-uu  ṣāḥaraat-i l-‘arqaam-i l-qiyāsiyyat-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” (ṣāḥar or ṣāhra).

Eleven: The numeral eleven is invariable in case, being accusative at all times. The first component of the compound number is the word ʾāHād (m.) أَحْدَ or ʾiḥdaa (f.) إِحْدَ, rather than the word waalHā. 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>أَحْدَ عُشْر</td>
<td>إِحْدَى عُشْرَة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ʾāHād-a</td>
<td>ʾiḥdaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ṣāḥara</td>
<td>ṣāhraat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twelve nominative</td>
<td>اثْنَا عُشْرَ</td>
<td>اثْنَتَا عُشْرَة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ithn-aa</td>
<td>ithnat-aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ṣāḥara</td>
<td>ṣāhraat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twelve genitive accusative</td>
<td>اثْنَي عُشْرَ</td>
<td>اثْنَتَي عُشْرَة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ithnay</td>
<td>ithnatay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ṣāḥara</td>
<td>ṣāhraat-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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminine Eleven or Twelve</th>
<th>Feminine Counted Noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thaman-u-haa *ihdaa 'ashrat-a liirat-an.</td>
<td>Its price is eleven liras/pounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buniy-at qabl-a *ihdaa 'ashrat-a sanat-an.</td>
<td>It was built eleven years ago.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thaman-u-haa thnat-aa 'ashrat-a liirat-an.</td>
<td>Its price is twelve liras/pounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buniy-at qabl-a thnat-ay 'ashrat-a sanat-an.</td>
<td>It was built twelve years ago.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4.1.2 MASCULINE NOUN = MASCULINE ELEVEN OR TWELVE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine Eleven or Twelve</th>
<th>Masculine Counted Noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thaman-u-haa *ahad-a 'ashar-a dirham-an.</td>
<td>Its price is eleven dirhams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buniy-at qabl-a *ahad-a 'ashar-a 'aam-an.</td>
<td>It was built eleven years ago.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thaman-u-haa thn-aa 'ashar-a dirham-an.</td>
<td>Its price is twelve dirhams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buniy-at qabl-a thn-ay 'ashar-a 'aam-an.</td>
<td>It was built twelve years ago.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Expression</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>حضر السفراء الأحد عشر.</td>
<td>The eleven ambassadors came.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>حضر السفراء الأثنان عشر.</td>
<td>The twelve ambassadors came.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Expression</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>يستقبل السفراء الأحد عشر.</td>
<td>He is welcoming the eleven ambassadors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>يستقبل السفراء الأثنين عشر.</td>
<td>He is welcoming the twelve ambassadors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4.2.2 FEMININE DEFINITE NOUN:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Expression</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>حضرت الأستاذات الإحدى عشرة.</td>
<td>The eleven professors (f) came.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>حضرت الأستاذات الأثنين عشرة.</td>
<td>The twelve professors (f) came.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Expression</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>يستقبل الأستاذات الإحدى عشرة.</td>
<td>He is welcoming the eleven professors (f).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>يستقبل الأستاذات الأثنين عشرة.</td>
<td>He is welcoming the twelve professors (f).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
1.5.1 Indefinite counted noun

بَلْغُ طُولُهُ ثلَاثَةَ عَشْرَةُ مِثْرَاً
yu-blugh-u Tuul-u-hu thalaathat-a 'ashar-a mitr-an.
Its length reaches thirteen meters.

فازَوا بِأَرْبَعِ عَشْرَةٍ مُدَبِّلَةً
faaz-uu bi-'arba'-a 'ashrat-a
miidaalyyat-an.
They won fourteen medals.

ثَمَنُ الْجِرِيَادْ خَمْسَةُ عَشْرَةٍ دَيْنَالَةً
thaman-u l-jariidat-i xamsat-a 'ashar-a riyaal-an.
The cost of the newspaper is fifteen rials.

يَضُمُّ تَسْعَ عَشْرَةً شَفَّٰفاً
yu-Dumm-u tis'-a 'ashrat-a shaqqat-an.
It contains nineteen apartments.
Numerals

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.

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, -una 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>Number</th>
<th>Arabic Form</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>twenty</td>
<td>‘ishrūna/‘ishriina</td>
<td>عشرون/عشرين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thirty</td>
<td>thalaathuuna/thalaathiina</td>
<td>ثلاثون/ثلاثين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forty</td>
<td>‘arba‘una/‘arba‘iina</td>
<td>أربعون/أربعين</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the adjective agrees strictly with the counted noun and is singular, although the meaning is plural.

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.

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 ‘‘ishrāni‘‘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

A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

fifty xamsuuna/xamsiina خمسون/خمسين
sixty sittuuna/sittiina ستون/ستين
seventy sab‘uuna/sab‘iina سبعون/سبعين
eighty thamaanuuna/thamaaniina ثمانون/ثمانين
ninety tis‘uuna/tis‘iina تسعون/تسعين

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 عشرينات
thirties thalaathiinaat ثلاثينات
forties ‘arba‘iinaat أربعينات
fifties xamsiinaat خمسينات
sixties sittiinaat ستينات
seventies sab‘iinaat سبعينات
eighties thamaaniinaat ثمانينات
nineties tis‘iinaat تسعينات

13 Because the word xamsuuna here is followed by the preposition min, the counted noun is not governed by the numeral, but is plural.
**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 waא*ד| waא*דא or the form א*דא| א*דאא.

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><strong>twenty-one</strong></td>
<td><strong>twenty-one</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>واحٌد وعشرٌون</td>
<td>واحٌد وعشرٌون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waa٤٤د-un wa-‘ishruuna</td>
<td>waא*ד-at-un wa-‘ishruuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ا٤٤د وعشرٌون</td>
<td>א*ד ועשרוون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>א*דא-un wa-‘ishruuna</td>
<td>א*דאא wa-‘ishruuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>twenty-two</strong></td>
<td><strong>twenty-two</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ا٤٤ن وعشرٌون</td>
<td>א*נהאא והשר רונ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ithnaani wa-‘ishruuna</td>
<td>ithnataani wa-‘ishruuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ا٤٤ن وعشرٌون</td>
<td>א*נהאא והשר רונ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ithnayni wa-‘ishruuna</td>
<td>ithnatayni wa-‘ishruuna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>لمدة واحد وعشرين يوماً</th>
<th>لمدة إحدى وعشرين سنة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>li-م٤د-٤٤د-in wa-‘ishriina yawm-an</td>
<td>li-م٤د-٤د-un wa-‘ishriina sanat-an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for a period of twenty-one days</td>
<td>for a period of twenty-one years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>لمدة إحدى وعشرين صفحة</th>
<th>لمدة إحدى وعشرين أسبوعاً</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f٤٤ل ithnatayni wa-‘ishruina SafHat-an</td>
<td>f٤٤ل ithnayni wa-‘ishriina ‘usbuu'-an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in twenty-two pages</td>
<td>for twenty-two weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 nunciation, 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:

بعد أربع وعشرين ساعة

ba‘d-u ‘arba‘-in wa-‘ishriina

sa‘at-an

after twenty-four hours

تأثيسوا في ثمان وعشرين لعبة

tanaafas-uu fi‘ 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:

علياً بابا والأربعون لسناً

‘aliyy baabaa wa-l-arba‘uuna l-ISS-an

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

طول الثلاثين سنة الماضية

Tiwaal-a l-thalaathiina sanat-an-i

l-maaDiyat-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 منة and منة. It is a feminine noun and remains feminine at all times. When used with a counted noun, it goes into an 'addafa 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 nun-drop when it goes into an 'addafa with a following counted noun:
one hundred

منة

mi’u

two hundred

مئتان

(nominitive)

mi’at-aani

منتنن

(accusative/genitive)

mi’at-ayni

1.7.1 Counting in even one and two hundreds

منة كيلومتر شرق عدن

mi’at-u qunbulat-in yadawiiyat-in sharg-a ‘adan-a

100 hand grenades

100 hand grenades

mi’at-u aaliiyat-in sharq-a ‘adan-a

for a period of 100 days

mi’at-aa fils-in bi-mi’at-ay dunlaar-in

200 fils (a unit of currency)

for 200 dollars

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 المئات

sibaaq-u l-mi’at-i mitr-in

the hundred-meter race

بطل المئات

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 fi’l mi’at-i or bi-l-mi’at-i is used:

منة بالمئة

mi’at-un bi-l-mi’at-i

100 percent

بملكة خمسة عشر في المئة من الشركة.

yu-mlik-aani xamsat-a ‘ashar-a fi’l-mi’at-i min-a l-sharikat-i.

The two of them own 15 percent of the company.

في نحو تسعين في المئة من البلديات الريفية

fii nauh-w-l tis’ina fi’l-mi’at-i min-a h-baladiyyat-i l-rifiiyyat-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>four hundred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five hundred</td>
<td>five hundred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>six hundred</td>
<td>six hundred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seven hundred</td>
<td>seven hundred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eight hundred</td>
<td>eight hundred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nine hundred</td>
<td>nine hundred</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following counted noun is genitive, singular, and indefinite:

1.7.3.1 INDEFINITE COUNTED NOUN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>أربع منة مليم</th>
<th>من خمس منة متر مكعب</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>400 millemes</td>
<td>from 500 cubic meters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

في غضون خمس منة ساعة دراسية

jīl ghuDuun-i xams-i mi’at-i saa’at-in diraasiyyat-in
during 500 study hours

1.8 Complex numerals with hundred

When counting in the hundreds, the word mi’a comes first joined to the second part of the numeral by the conjunction wa-‘and.’ For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One word</th>
<th>Two words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>107  منة وسبعة</td>
<td>119  منة وتسعة عشر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mi’at-un wa-sabt’at-un</td>
<td>mi’at-un wa-tis’at-a ‘ashar-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a hundred and seven</td>
<td>a hundred and nineteen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One word</th>
<th>Two words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>150  منة وخمسون</td>
<td>275  منين وخمسة وسبعون</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mi’at-un wa-xamsuuna</td>
<td>mi’at-aani wa-xamsat-un wa-sab’uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a hundred and fifty</td>
<td>two hundred and seventy-five</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

('two hundred and five and seventy')
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:

بُنيت قبل مئة وسبعة أعوام.

buniy-at qabīl-u 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:

They came from 150 countries.

وصلت سرعة الرياح إلى مئة وسبعين كيلومترا في الساعة.

waSal-lat sur‘at-u l-riyahati ‘ilaa mi’at-in wa-sab‘iina kilummitr-an fī l-saa‘at-i.

The wind speed reached 170 kilometers an hour.

1.8.2 Plural “hundreds”: mi‘aat

The word mi‘u 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.

أُغلقت مئات المدارس.

‘ughliqat mi‘aat-u l-madaaris-i.

Hundreds of schools were closed.

أُكثر من بضع مئات من الأمثلة.

‘akthar-u min biD‘-i mi‘aat-i min-a l-amthilat-i

more than several hundreds of examples

ويعتبر المئات منهم.

wa-yajtimi‘u l-mi‘aat-u min-hum.

Hundreds of them are meeting.

مئات الأطفال اللبنانيين

mi‘aat-u l-al‘Tfaal-i l-lubnaaniyyiina

hundreds of Lebanese children
1.9 Thousands
The word for thousand in Arabic is 'al phận، plural aalaaf ألاف. It is a masculine noun and is counted as any other masculine noun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic Number</th>
<th>Arabic Word</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>'alف</td>
<td>Thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>'alفا一千/الفيين</td>
<td>Two千</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>ثلااثة آلاف</td>
<td>Three thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>أربعة آلاف</td>
<td>Four thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>خمسة آلاف</td>
<td>Five thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>ستة آلاف</td>
<td>Six thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>سابعة آلاف</td>
<td>Seven thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>ثمانية آلاف</td>
<td>Eight thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>تسع آلاف</td>
<td>Nine thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>عشرة آلاف</td>
<td>Ten thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>إحدى عشر ألفا</td>
<td>Eleven thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>إثنين عشر ألفا</td>
<td>Twelve thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>خمسة عشر ألفا</td>
<td>Fifteen thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>عشرون ألفا</td>
<td>Twenty thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>خمسة وعشرون ألفا</td>
<td>Twenty-five thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>مئة ألف</td>
<td>One hundred thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>مئتين ألف</td>
<td>Two hundred thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>475,000</td>
<td>أربعة مئتان وخمسة وسبعون ألفا</td>
<td>Four hundred seventy-five thousand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.9.1 Counting in thousands
When used for counting, the numeral 'alphan/الفيين 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 مشتثة:
'ammaa 'ad-ad-ifsanaad-qal-fay-yabluh-u 'arba'at-a 'aalaaf-i munsha'at-in.
As for the number of hotels, it reaches 4,000 establishments.
More than 11,000 athletes came.

More than 13,000 books

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

١٠٠١ ليلة وليلة

‘ال ألف ليلة وليلة

‘اللف忐INES ودللات-EN

‘ال ألف ليلة وليلة

2002 nights

٢٠٠٢ ليلة وليلتان

‘ال الفلفالات-إين ودللات-إين

1.10 Reading years in dates

Because Arabic has two words for ‘year,’ ‘aam (masculine) and sana (feminine), the numbers in year dates can vary in gender. When reading year dates, the word for ‘year’ (either ‘aam or sana) precedes the numeral expression and is in an ‘iDaafa with it, so that the date itself is the second term of the ‘iDaafa and is in the genitive case.

Because of the reverse gender rule, if the masculine noun ‘aam is used, then any 3-10 digit is feminine, and if the feminine noun sana is used, then any 3-10 digit is in the masculine.

In general, either the phrase ‘in the year’ fii ‘aam-i or fii sanat-i is used, or the word ‘aam-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 سبع مئة وأحد عشرة
fii sanat-i sab'-i mi’at-in wa-’iHdaa ‘ashrat-a

سنة سبع مئة وأحد عشرة
sanat-a sab'-i mi’at-in wa-’iHdaa ‘ashrat-a

1.10.1.2 USING ‘aam’:

في عام سبع مئة وأحد عشر
fii ‘aam-i sab'-i mi’at-in wa-’aHad-a ‘ashar-a

عام سبع مئة وأحد عشر
‘aam-a sab'-i mi’at-in wa-’aHad-a ‘ashar-a

1.10.2 'in the year 1956'

1.10.2.1 USING sana

في سنة ألف وتسعة مئة وسبت وخمسين
fii sanat-i ‘alf-in wa-tis'-i mi’at-in wa-sitt-in wa-xamsiina

سنة ألف وتسعة مئة وسبت 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 وتسعة مئة وسبت وخمسين
fii ‘aam-i ‘alf-in wa-tis'-i mi’at-in wa-sittat-in wa-xamsiina

عام ألف وتسعة مئة وسبت وخمسين
‘aam-a ‘alf-in wa-tis'-i mi’at-in wa-sittat-in wa-xamsiina

1.10.3 'in the year 1998'

1.10.3.1 USING sana

في سنة ألف وتسعة مئة وثمان وتسعين
fii sanat-i ‘alf-in wa-tis'-i mi’at-in wa-thamaanin wa-tis’iina

سنة ألف وتسعة مئة وثمان 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
fī ‘aam-i ḏal-f-in wa-tis‘i-i mi‘at-in wa-thamaaniyat-in wa-tis‘iina

عام ألف وتسعة مئة وثمانية وتسعين
‘aam-a ḏal-f-in wa-tis‘i-i mi‘at-in wa-thamaaniyat-in wa-tis‘iina

1.10.4 ‘in the year 2001’

1.10.4.1 USING sana

في سنة ألفين وواحدة
fī sanat-i ḏal-fayni wa-waHidat-in

سنة ألفين وواحدة
sanat-a ḏal-fayni wa-waHidat-in

1.10.4.2 USING ‘aam

في عام ألفين وواحد
fī ‘aam-i ḏal-fayni wa-waHid-in

عام ألفين وواحد
‘aam-a ḏal-fayni wa-waHid-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” (milyuun مليون) and “billion” (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 ‘iDaafa with the following noun, which is genitive singular.

انتجا الولادات المتّحدة من النفط يقارب مليون برميل يوميًا.

The oil production of the United States approaches a million barrels daily.

عشرون مليون مشترك
‘ishruuna milyuun-a mushtarik-in

بليونى دولار
bi-bilyuun-ay duulaar-in

twenty million participants for two billion dollars

يتجاوز تكلفتها ثلاثة مليارات دولار.
yu-tajaawaz-u thaman-u-haa thalaathat-a balaayiin-i duulaar-in.

Their cost exceeds three billion dollars.

منة مليون دولار ليست مستغربة.
mī‘at-u milyuun-i duulaar-in lays-at mustaghrabat-an.

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

أولى

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 'awaa'il) 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.

وفقاً لأول إحساء للسكان

in conformity with the first statistics of the population

كان أول من ألقى كلمة.

He was the first to give a speech.

بدأ أول زيارة له اليمن.

He started his first trip to Yemen.

وقد كانوا أول رياضيي من الخليج يشاركان 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’:

يُعتبر الأول من نوعه.

It is considered the first of its kind.
The first of them dealt with the political situation.

اللقب هو الأول بين الألقاب الخمسة: 
al-laqab-u huwa l-'awwal-u bayn-a l'alqaab-i l-xamsat-i.

The title is the first of ('among') the five titles.

2.1.1.3 PLURAL OF 'awwal: 'awaa'il: The word 'awwal has a plural, 'awaa'il, which can mean 'the first [ones], the 'earliest [parts],' or the 'most prominent.'

كان من أوائل الدول العربية: 
kaan-a min 'awaa'il-i l-duwal-i l-arabiyyat-i.

It was among the most prominent Arab countries.

2.1.2 'uulaa: 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:

للمرة الأولى
li-l-marrat-i l-'uulaa
for the first time

القناة الأولى
al-qanaat-u l-'uulaa
channel one

('the first channel')

الرحلة الجوية الأولى
al-riHlat-u l-jawwiyyat-u l-'uulaa
the first air trip

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine/Feminine</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>second</td>
<td>thaaniya</td>
<td>thaaniya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>third</td>
<td>thaalitha</td>
<td>thaalitha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fourth</td>
<td>raabi‘a</td>
<td>raabi‘a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fifth</td>
<td>xaamisa</td>
<td>xaamisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sixth</td>
<td>saadisa</td>
<td>saadisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seventh</td>
<td>saabt‘a</td>
<td>saabt‘a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eighth</td>
<td>thaamin</td>
<td>thaamin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ninth</td>
<td>taasi‘a</td>
<td>taasi‘a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tenth</td>
<td>aashira</td>
<td>aashira</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.

مرّة ثانية
marrat-an thaaniyat-an
a second time; another time

انتهى أمس في لندن المؤتمر الثاني
intahaa ’amsi fii hundun-a l-uun'tamar-u l-thaanii.
The second conference ended yesterday

في معظم القسم الثاني من الكتاب
fii mu’Zam-i l-qism-i l-thaanii min-a l-kitaab-i
in most of the second part of the book

نجح في محاولته الثالثة
najaH-a fii muHaawalat-i-hi l-thaalithat-i.
He succeeded on his third try.

14 The masculine form of the word for ‘second’ thaani (pl. ihnaanin) 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).
The company ranks fourth worldwide ('occupies the fourth rank').

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:

جِئَ لَهُ ثانية زيارة
fī Thaani ziyaarat-in la-hu
on his second visit

ثالث المشروعات التجريبية مشروع ري
thaaliTh-ı l-mashruu’át-ı l-tajriibiyyat-ı mashruu’-u rayy-ın.
The third of the experimental projects is an irrigation project.

يصبح ثالث عداء فقط يحمل اللقب العالمي
yu-Sbih-u thaaliTh-a ‘addaa’-in fī qaTaYa-ı Hmīl-u Haqab-ı l’-aαlamiyy-a.
He becomes only the third runner to hold the world championship.

2.2.2 Ordinals as nouns: thaanin/thaanii
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.

فِي الثانِي مِن أَيَّار
fī l-thaanii min ‘ayyaara
on the second of May

As a unit of time measurement, “second” in Arabic is feminine thaaniya ثانية with a broken defective plural, thawaanin ثوان.

بِسَرَة سِتَّة كِيلوُمِتَرات فِي الثانِيَة
bi-sur’-È-i sittat-i kiluumitraat-in fī l-thaaniiyat-ı
at the rate of six kilometers per second

أخذَت ذهبية مسجَّلة ١٠.٧٥ ثوان
’āHraz-at dhahabiyyat-an musajjilat-an 10.75 thawaanin.
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” ‘ashara 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>11th</td>
<td>al-Haadiy-a 'ashar-a</td>
<td>eleventh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th</td>
<td>al-thaaniy-a 'ashara</td>
<td>twelfth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th</td>
<td>al-thaalith-a 'ashar-a</td>
<td>thirteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th</td>
<td>al-raabi 'ashar-a</td>
<td>fourteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th</td>
<td>al-xaamis-a 'ashar-a</td>
<td>fifteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th</td>
<td>al-saadis-a 'ashar-a</td>
<td>sixteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th</td>
<td>al-saabi 'ashar-a</td>
<td>seventeenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th</td>
<td>al-thaamin-a 'ashar-a</td>
<td>eighteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th</td>
<td>al-taasi 'ashar-a</td>
<td>nineteenth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

المعرض السنوي الحادي عشر

al-ma‘raD-u l-sanawiyy-u l-Haadiy-a 'ashar-a

the eleventh annual exhibition

في دورتها الخامسة عشرة

fii dawrat-i-haa l-xaamisat-a ‘ashrat-a

in its fifteenth session
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 عشرون) 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.

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 حاد in (def. Haadii حادي (حادي) is used to indicate ‘first’ in tens compounds.
2.5 Hundredth
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.

الذكرى الحادية والستون
al-dhikraa l-Haadiyat-u wa-l-sittuuna
the sixty-first anniversary

His ranking was hundredth.

3 Other number-based expressions

3.1 Fractions
With the exception of the word for “half” (niSn تَصِصْ) تَصِصْ, fractions are of the pattern fu‘l فعل /’af‘aal أفعال, 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 Form</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a half</td>
<td>niSn /’anSaaf</td>
<td>a half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a third</td>
<td>thulth / athlaath</td>
<td>a third</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a fourth, a quarter</td>
<td>rub‘ /’arbaa</td>
<td>a fourth, a quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a fifth</td>
<td>xums / axmaas</td>
<td>a fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a sixth</td>
<td>suds / asdaas</td>
<td>a sixth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a seventh</td>
<td>sub /’asbaa</td>
<td>a seventh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an eighth</td>
<td>thumn /’athmaan</td>
<td>an eighth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a ninth</td>
<td>tus /’atsaa</td>
<td>a ninth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a tenth</td>
<td>‘ushr /a’shaar</td>
<td>a tenth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

نصف أُنْصِاف
niSn تَصِصْ
half of the known species

نصف قرن من الزمن
niSn qarn-in min-a l-zamaan-i
half a century of time

ربع ريال
rub‘ /’riyaal-in
a quarter of a rial

منذ قرن
mundh-u rub‘ /’i qarn-in
a quarter of a century ago
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
fii l-niSf-i l-thaanii min-a l-qarn-i l-‘ishriina
in the second half of the twentieth century

كانت نحن نقولنا أقل في الربع الأول
kaan-at thiqat-u-naa bi-‘ansus-i-naa ‘aqall-a fii l-rub‘-i l-‘awwal-i.
Our self-confidence was less in the first quarter.

3.1.2 Special functions of niSf
The term niSf may also function as the equivalent of “semi-” or “hemi-”:

في الاجتماع نصف السنوي
fii l-jtima‘-i niSf-i l-sanawiyy-i
in the semi-annual meeting

وينصف الشمالي
niSf-u l-kurat-i l-shimaaliyy-u
the northern hemisphere

And niSf also indicates the half-hour, as does English “thirty”:

حتى العاشرة والنصف صباحاً
Hatta l-aashirat-i wa-l-niSf-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” (saa‘a
ساعة) may or may not be mentioned, but the ordinal numeral is in the feminine
form, agreeing with that noun.

في الساعة الثامنة
fii l-saa‘at-i l-thaaminat-i
at eight o’clock (‘at the eighth hour’)

اليوم الأحد 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: rub‘, thulth, and niSf:
في السابعة والربع من مساء غد
fi‘l-saabi‘at-i wa-l-rub‘-i mi‘n masaa‘-i ghad-in
at seven-fifteen (‘and the quarter’) tomorrow evening

في السابعة إلا ربعاً من مساء غد
fi‘l-saabi‘at-i ‘ilaa rub‘-an mi‘n masaa‘-i ghad-in\(^{16}\)
at 6:45 tomorrow evening (the seventh [hour] less a quarter)

في الخامسة والثالث مساء أسمس
fi‘l-xaamisat-i wa-l-thulth-i masaa‘-a ‘ams-i
at 5:20 (‘five and the third’) yesterday evening

في الخامسة إلا ثلثا مساء أسمس
fi‘l-xaamisat-i illaa thulth-an masaa‘-a ‘ams-i
at 4:40 (‘five less a third’) yesterday evening

في العاشرة والنصف مساء اليوم
fi‘l-‘aashirat-i wa-l-miSf-i masaa‘-a l-yawm-i
at ten-thirty (‘ten and the half’) this evening (‘the evening of today’)

The word for minute is daqiqa. In telling time, it is also used with an ordinal numeral:

الساعة الرابعة والدقيقة الخامسة
al-sa‘a‘at-u l-raabi‘at-u wa-l-daqiqat-u l-xaamisat-u
4:05 (‘the fourth hour and the fifth minute’)\(^{17}\)

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>Day</th>
<th>Arabic (Nominative)</th>
<th>Arabic (Adverbial)</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-thulaaathaa‘</td>
<td>الثلاثاء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>al-‘arbi‘aa‘</td>
<td>الأربعاء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>al-xamiis</td>
<td>الخميس</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>al-jum‘a(^{18})</td>
<td>الجمعة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>al-sabti(^{19})</td>
<td>السبت</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{16}\) The exceptive particle ‘illaa (‘less,’ ‘minus,’ ‘except for’) takes the following noun in the accusative case. The following noun may be definite or indefinite.

\(^{17}\) For further examples of telling time, see Abboud and McCarus 1985, Part 1:301-303 and Schultz et al. 2000, 212-13.

\(^{18}\) 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-thulaathaa‘-a l-maadiy-a
last Tuesday

الثلاثاء الجاري
al-thulaathaa‘-a l-jaariy-a
next Tuesday

3.3.2 In an ‘iDaafa with the word yawm or ‘ayyam (‘day/days’)

يوم الخميس
yawn-a l-xamiis-i
on Thursday

أيام الأحد
‘ayyaam-a l-‘aaHaad-i
on Sundays

اليوم السبت وحدها
‘ayyaam-a l-sabt-i waHd-a-haa
only on Saturdays

3.3.3 In apposition

في القاهرة صباح خا حناثين
fi l-qaahirat-i SahaaH-a ghad-in-i l-ithnayn-i
in Cairo, tomorrow morning, Monday

اليوم الأحد
al-yawn-a l-‘aHad-a
on Sunday

اليوم الأول
al-yawn-a l-‘aHad-a
on 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 فعالي pattern and the mufta‘al مفعَّل (PP II) pattern.

3.4.1 thuna‘iyy ثنائي ‘bilateral; two-sided’

معاهدات ثنائية مع دول أخرى
mu‘aahadaat-un thuna‘iyyat-un ma‘-a diwal-in ‘uxraa
bilateral agreements with other countries

استعراض الجانبان العلاقات الثنائية بين القطرتين.
ista‘raDa-l-jaanib-aani l-‘alaqaat-i l-thuna‘iyyat-a bayn-a l-quTr-ayni.
The two sides reviewed the bilateral relations between the two countries.

3.4.2 thulaathiyya ثلاثي ‘tripartite; trilateral’; thulaathiyya ثلاثية ‘trilogy’

اللجنة الثلاثية في جنيف
al-lajnat-u l-thulaathiyat-u fi l-jinil
the tripartite committee in Geneva

أفعال ثلاثية
‘af‘aal-un thulaathiyat-un
triliteral (lexical) roots
Egypt signed in the year 1978 a tripartite/trilateral agreement

He is working now to complete his trilogy.

3.2.3 *rubaa’iyy* رُباعِيّ ‘quadrilateral; four-part’

أفعال رباعية

*’af‘al-un rubaa’iyyat-un*

quadrilateral verb roots

3.2.4 *mufa‘al* مُفَعَّل

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>مثلث</th>
<th>مربع</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *muthallath* triangle (n.); threefold (adj.) | *murabbaُ* square (n. and adj.)

ثلاثة آلاف وأربيع مئة وثلاثون كيلومتراً مربععاً

thalaathat-u ’aalaaf-in wa-arba‘i-in mi’at-in wa-thalaathuuna kiiluumitr-an *murabbaُ-an*

3,430 square kilometers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>مسدس</th>
<th>مسدس لعبة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *musaddas* six-shooter, gun, revolver; also: hexagonal | *musaddas-un lu’bat-un* toy gun

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* أُوااخير if it refers to nonhuman entities, and *’aaxir-uuna* أُخْرَىْن (m. pl.) or *’aaxir-aat* أُخْرَات (f. pl.) if it refers to humans. It is often used as the first term of an *iDaafa*. 
**Numerals and numeral phrases**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>aaxir-u kalimat-in</code></td>
<td>the last word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>aaxir-u waziir-in li-l-xaarijiyyat-i</code></td>
<td>the last foreign minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>fii 'awaaxir-i 'aadhaar-a l-muqbil-i</code></td>
<td>in the last [part] of next March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>fii 'aaxir-i muqaabalat-in la-hu ma'a l-SaHiifat-i</code></td>
<td>in his last interview with the newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>la'ib-a l-muntaixib-u l-sa'uddiy-yu 'aaxir-a mubaariyaat-i-hi fii l-riyaaD-i.</code></td>
<td>The Saudi team played its last match in Riyadh.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 *aaxir* `akhir; last, final`

The word *aaxir* 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>al-jumlat-u l-'axiirat-u</code></td>
<td>the last sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>waDa'a l-mismaar-a l-p'amii-r-a</code></td>
<td>He put [in] the last nail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>fii l-p'awamu-l-'axiirat-i</code></td>
<td>in the last years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1 *In the accusative indefinite*, it is used as an adverb meaning “finally”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>wa-'aaxiir-an jaa-at l-qaahirat-i.</code></td>
<td>And finally she came to Cairo.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Overview
In Arabic as in English, prepositions refer to a location (e.g., 'at, in' في، ب) or a direction (e.g., 'to, from' إلى ilaa, min من), and the meanings of prepositions can apply to concepts of space ('at school' في المدرسة fii l-madrasat-i) or time ('at five o'clock' في الساعة الخامسة في الساعة الخامسة fit l-saa'at-i l-xaamisat-i).

Prepositions may also be used in abstract or figurative ways ('at least' على الأقل على الأقل 'alaa l-aqall-i; 'by the way' 'الاالااركٌتٌن في rakr-it-in). They may occur in conjunction with verbs to convey a particular meaning (e.g., رحب ب 'to welcome' or '手机版 'an عن عبر عن '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 Huruuf 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 Huruuf 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 زمن
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 زمن '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. These semi-prepositions may take different case inflections or, in some cases, nunciation.

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. If the object of the preposition or semi-preposition is a personal pronoun, it takes the form of a pronoun suffix.

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 الجز)

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-, fi`, min, 'an, 'ilaa, 'ala, Hattaa, and mundhu. One of the distinctive features of this word class is that a true Arabic preposition (Harf al-jarr حرف الجز) 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 fi` ‘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.

---

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.”
3 When the object of the preposition is an invariable or non-inflected word, such as certain demonstrative pronouns or adverbs (e.g., dhaadalika ‘that’ or hunaa ‘here’), it remains invariable, e.g. min hunaa ‘from here,’ or ba‘d a dhaadalika ‘after that.’
2.1.1.1 SPATIOTEMPORAL LOCATION

(1) Space: The use of bi- as a spatial locative (‘in, at, on’)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bi-shaari‘-i l-barakat-i</td>
<td>on Baraka Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi-l-shimaal-i l-'ifriiqiy-i</td>
<td>in North Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi-l-shimaal-i l-'ifriiqiy-i</td>
<td>in North Africa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kull-a ‘aam-in wa-‘antum bi-xayr-in.</td>
<td>Many happy returns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rijaal-un bi-l-malaabis-i l-taqliidiyy-i</td>
<td>men with (wearing) traditional clothes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) Time: An occasion or location in time can be marked with bi-:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kaan-a dhaaka bi-l-‘ams-i.</td>
<td>That was yesterday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi-munaasabat-i ta’yiin-i l-shaykh-i waziir-an li-l-difaa‘-i</td>
<td>on the occasion of the appointment of the sheikh as minister of defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi-dliikraa murnuri thamaanii mi’at-i sanat-in ‘ala‘ wafaat-i Salaah-i l-diin-i</td>
<td>on the 800th anniversary of the death of Salah al-Din</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1.1.2 INSTRUMENTAL bi- (baa’ al-‘aala; baa’ al-isti’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

They cannot go in (by means of) their cars.

The two of them entered the country by ship.

He pulled the door with both his hands.

It was not crowned with success.

Frozen tea with mint

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.

Shayyun muthallaj-un bi-l-ua'naa'-i

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

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.\(^4\)

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,' Tariqa 'way,' or shakl 'form' followed by a modifier that provides the exact description of the manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>سورة مستمرة</th>
<th>بصورة مخيفة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bi-Suurat-in mustamirrat-in</td>
<td>bi-Suurat-in mu'ayyifat-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continuously</td>
<td>frighteningly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>طريق غير قانوني</th>
<th>بهذا الشكل الواسع</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bi-Turuq-in ghayr-i qaumuuniyyat-in</td>
<td>bi-haadhaa l-shakl-i l-waasi'i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in illegal ways</td>
<td>in this extensive way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1.1.5 bi- as prefix for the predicate of a negative copula (\(\text{الخبر المنفي} (al-xabar al-manfiyy)\)): 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:

لكن أحداً منها لم يكن بهذه الأهمية: laakinna 'aHad-an min-haa lam ya-kun bi-haadhihi l-'ahamuniyyat-i. But none of them was of this importance.

ليس في كل الأنحيان بهذا السوء: lays-a fii kull-i l-'alHyaan-i bi-haadhaa l-Suuri'i. 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-:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>سبعة أيام بالأسبوع</th>
<th>منة بالمنة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sab'at-a 'ayyaam-in bi-l-'nsbuu'i</td>
<td>mi'at-u bi-l-mi'at-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seven days a week</td>
<td>a hundred percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

تبدأ من أربعة سنوات بالدقيقة: ta-bda'-'u min 'arba'at-i sintaat-i bi-l-daqqiqt-i 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 li- ‘to; belonging to; for; for the purpose of’

The preposition 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 li-.

(1) When attached to a noun with the definite article, the ‘alif of the definite article is deleted and the laam of li- attaches directly to the laam of the definite article (e.g., li-haami‘at-i للجامعه).

(2) When li- is followed by a pronoun suffix, it changes its short vowel to fatHa and becomes la- (la-ka لك, la-ki لك, la-hu له, la-kumaا لكاما, la-humaا لهما, la-naa لنا, la-kum لكم, la-kunna لكما, la-hum لهم, la-hunna للهن) except with the first person singular pronoun suffix, -ii, which is suffixed directly to the laam (لني ‘to me, for me’).

2.1.2.1 PURPOSE, CAUSE, REASON, OR MOTIVATION: ‘IN ORDER TO, FOR THE PURPOSE OF; DUE TO, BECAUSE OF’ (laam al-ta’liil لام التدليل): This use of 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 ta’liil” (Ryding-Lentzner 1977, 132).

(1) Intention:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{لدعم مرشحهم المحليين} & \\
\text{lv-radm-i l-huwwat-i} & \text{lv-da‘m-i murashshaH-ii-him-i I-maHallyyy-lina} \\
\text{(in order) to fill the gap} & \text{in order to support their local candidates}
\end{align*}
\]

(2) Reason:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{لأسباب فنية} & \\
\text{lv-‘asbaab-in fanniiyyat-in} & \text{for (‘because of’) technical reasons}
\end{align*}
\]

2.1.2.2 POSSESSION (laam al-milk لام الملك): MSA does not normally use a verb equivalent to ‘have.’ The preposition li- is usually used instead to predicate the concept of belonging in both concrete and abstract senses. If the predication

\[3\text{To state ownership explicitly, a verb malak-ya-mlik-u is used to mean ‘own’ or ‘possess,’ e.g., ‘al-milk HiSaam-an ra‘y-‘an ‘I own/possess a splendid horse.’}\]

\[4\text{Possession is also expressed by the semi-prepositions luhaa and ‘inda (q.v.), although ‘inda is chiefly used in spoken Arabic.}\]
is other than present tense, an accompanying verb of being or becoming carries the tense.

(1) Present tense:

لا-ك طرد في غرفة البريد.
l-a-ka Tarl-un fi fi ghurfat-li l-bardi-il.
You have a package at the mail room.

المotel حديثة خاصةً.
li-l-manzil-i Hadiiqat-un xaaSSat-un.
The house has a private garden.

(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.

كان لها منزل بديع.
kaan-a la-haa manzil-un 
badii-un.
She had a wonderful house.

لم يكن له أي اتصال بهم.
lam ya-kun la-hu 'ayy-u ttiSaal-in bi-him.
He did not have any contact with them.

وصل الإسلام في أوروبا تاريخ وجدور.
Islam in Europe has acquired roots and history.

وبات لبعضهم شهرة كبيرة.
wa-baat-a li-ba‘D-i-hinna shuhrat-un kabiirat-un.
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.

نا-كاد لا نجد نظيراً له.
na-kaad-u laa na-jid-u na‘ziir-an la-hu.
We can almost not find a counterpart for him.

كانا مخزناً للتوابل.
kaan-at maxzan-an li-l-tawaabil-i.
It was a storehouse for spices.

(1) Time: When used with time expressions li- refers to an extent of time.

للمرة الأولى
li-l-marrat-i l-‘uulaa
for the first time

لفترة وجيزة
li-fatrat-in wajiizat-in
for a brief period

 لمدة ثماني ساعات
li-muddat-i thamaani saa‘aat-in
for a period of eight hours
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.

\[ \text{min-a} \text{ lyamiin-i} \text{ li-l-ysaar-i} \quad \text{fii ziyyarat-in li-lubnaan-a ta-staghriq-u} \text{ 'usbuur'-an} \]

from right to left on a visit to Lebanon [that] will last a week

\[ \text{mab‘uth-u} \quad \text{l-ittiilaaad-i} \quad \text{l-’uurubbiyy-i} \quad \text{li-} \quad \text{amaliyyat-i} \quad \text{l-salaam-i} \quad \text{fii} \quad \text{l-sharq-i} \quad \text{l-} \quad \text{l-awsaT-i} \]

the envoy of the European Union to the process of peace in the Middle East

\[ \text{ya-jlis-u} \quad \text{‘alaa} \quad \text{l-maqad-di} \quad \text{l-mujaawir-i} \quad \text{la-haa.} \]

He is sitting on the seat next to her.

\[ \text{al-Hamd-u} \quad \text{li-llaah-i.} \quad \text{hanii-an la-ka.} \quad \text{maadhaa Hadath-a la-haa?} \]

Praise [be] to God. Congratulations to you. What happened to her?

2.1.2.5 ‘OF’: This is a broad category where li- is used in cases when an ’iDaafa 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.

\[ \text{huwa n‘kaas-an} \quad \text{l-} \quad \text{l-waaq} \quad \text{l-ijtimaa-iyy-i.} \quad \text{wa-qaal-a xatm-an} \quad \text{li-Hadiith-i-hi} \]

he said [in] closing [of] his talk

the political advisor of the president of the republic

\[ \text{al-mustashaar-u} \quad \text{l-siyaasiyy-u} \quad \text{li-ra‘iis-i} \quad \text{l-jumhuuriyyat-i} \quad \text{qaal-afii} \quad \text{kalimat-in la-hu} \]

he said in a speech of his

the secretary general of the League of Arab States

\[ \text{al-} \quad \text{ammiin-u} \quad \text{li-} \quad \text{aamm-u} \quad \text{li-jaami‘at-i} \quad \text{l-duwal-i} \quad \text{l-arabiyyat-i} \]

\[ ^7 \text{William Wright (1967, II: 147-48) considers li- to be “etymologically connected with ‘ilaa (‘to, toward’) and differs from it only in . . . that ‘ilaa mostly expresses concrete relations, local or temporal, whilst li- generally indicates abstract or ideal relations . . . Its principal use is to show the passing on of the action to a more distant object and hence it corresponds to the Latin or German dative.”} \]
2.1.3 The preposition *ka-* كَ ‘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* كَذَا ‘like that, thus; likewise’).

2.1.3.1 DESIGNATION OF FUNCTION: The use of *ka-* كَ in this sense specifies capacity, status or function, equivalent to ‘as.’

هُوَ كَمُؤُنَّٰفٌ عَنِ الإِسْلَامِ‌

*badaa ka-mudaafi‘* كَ ‘anِ l-‘islaam-i.

He appeared as a defender of Islam.

تعَلَّم كُمْرَجِمَتٍ‌

*ta‘mal-u ka-mutarjimat-in.*

She is working as a translator.

تَحْدَث عَنِ الاستِشْرَاقِ كَبِيحِ عَلْمٍ‌

*talHaddath-a كَ ‘anِ l-istishraaq-i ka-baHth-in ilmiyy-in.*

He spoke of Orientalism as scholarly research.

2.1.3.2 SIMILARITY: The preposition *ka-* كَ is used to denote likeness or similarity, equivalent to English ‘like.’

الآمْرُ لِيْسَ كَذَا عَلَىِّ الإِطِلاَقِ‌

*al-‘amr-u lays-a ka-dhaalika كَ ‘alaa l-‘itlaaq-i.*

The situation is not like that at all.

ثُمَّ بِيَنِّ الْأَرْبَعِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ كَقَيْسِيَّٰنِ‌

*thumm-a bayn-a l-‘arab-i ‘anfus-i-him ka-qaysiyyy-ina.*

then among the Arabs themselves like [the] Qays tribe

نَجْمٌ كُعْمِرُ الشَّرِيْفِ‌

*najm-un ka-‘immar-in l-shariif-i.*

a star like Omar Sharif

فِيِ بَلدٍ كَتُونِس‌

*fii balad-in ka-tuunis-a.*

in a country like Tunisia

This preposition does not take pronoun suffixes. If there is a need to use the concept of similarity with a personal pronoun, i.e., “like him,” “like us,” the semi-prefix *mithl-a* كَ is used instead of *ka-:*

ليس هُناك فَنَانَةٌ مِثْلِهَا‌

*lays-a hunaaka fannaanat-un mithl-a-haa.*

There is no artist like her.

2.1.3.3 *ka-maa* كَ ‘AS’: By suffixing *-maa,* the preposition *ka-* كَ becomes an adverbial expression meaning ‘as’ or ‘likewise, as well.’ It is normally followed directly by a verb.
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 mustashfiaa l-nafik-i xaalid-in
at the King Khalid Hospital

عشت في الطابق العلوي
‘ish-tu fii l-Taabaq-i l-ulwiyy-i.
I lived on the top floor.

في القدس المحتلة
fii l-quds-i l-muHtallat-i
in occupied Jerusalem

في الحرم الجامعي
fii l-Haram-i l-jaami‘iyy-i
on the campus (‘the university grounds’)

جلسوا في مقهى على الرصيد
jallas-u fii maqhan ʿalaa i-raSiid-i.
They sat in a café on the sidewalk.

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 هذه المناسبة
fii haadhihi l-munaasabat-i
on this occasion

في حُتَام الفصل الصيفي
fii xitaam-i l-FAshi l-Sayfiyy-i
at the close of the summer season

في الوقت المناسب
fii l-waqt-i l-muHsaab-i
at the right time/proper time

في أول الأمر
fii ḍawwal-i l-amr-i
at first (‘at the first of the matter’)
Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

### 2.2.1.3 Abstract/Figurative Uses of 

The locative meaning of 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>في حالة أي شكوى</td>
<td>in case of any complaint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>في زئارة فرنسا</td>
<td>on a visit to France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دورهم في نشر الإسلام</td>
<td>their role in spreading Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>داخل الأحداث الأخيرة</td>
<td>in the light of recent events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>في مجال الزراعة</td>
<td>in the field of agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>يقضي لياليه في الصلاة</td>
<td>He spends his nights in prayer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.2.1.4 As a Manner Adverbial

In this idiomatic use, 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>في شكل أساسي</td>
<td>in a basic way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>في صورة فورية</td>
<td>immediately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>في شكل غريب</td>
<td>in a strange way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>وترأس الشكل الممكن</td>
<td>in the best way possible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2.1.5 MEANING ‘PER’

وصلت سرعة الرياح إلى مئة وسبعين كيلومترا في الساعة.

The wind velocity reached 170 kilometers an hour/per hour.

بسرعة ستة كيلومترات في الثانية

at the rate of six kilometers per second

خمس مرات في اليوم

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,’ -humaa ‘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 -ii vowel to -i.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>fii + pronoun suffixes</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fiyya</td>
<td></td>
<td>fii-naa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>fii-ka</td>
<td>fii-kum</td>
<td>fii-kum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>fii-ki</td>
<td>fii-kuma</td>
<td>fii-kuma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>fii-hi</td>
<td>fii-hima</td>
<td>fii-him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>fii-haa</td>
<td>fii-hinna</td>
<td>fii-hinna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

لاريب فيه.

laa 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, -humaa, -hum, and -hunna. This Damma shifts to kasra when preceded by a front vowel or fronted semivowel (i or ii or sometimes ya’). 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 sukun, 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

تتحول من سبيء إلى سواءً
*ta-taHawwal-u min sayyi'-in 'ilaa 'aswa'a.*

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 الحمراء
*qiSaS-un min-a l-Hamraa'-'i*

stories of the Alhambra

كلها من هذا النوع
*kull-u-haa min haadhaa l-naw-'i.*

They are all of this type.

وصفوه بأنه جو من الثقة
*waSaf-uu-hu bi-'anna-hu jaww-un min-a l-thiqat-i.*

They described it as an atmosphere of trust.

استنباط أنواعاً متميزة من الصوف
*istanbaT-at 'anwaa'-'an mutamayyizat-an min-a l-Suuf-'i.*

She discovered distinctive types of wool.

ما يحتوي هذا المتحف من كنوز
*maa ya-Htawii haadhau l-mutHaf-u min kunuuz-in*

what this museum contains [in terms] of treasures

2.2.2.3 *min* AS ‘AMONG’

ومن هذه الفنون أيضاً السيرك
*wa-min haadhiihi l-funuun-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.

... وَقُلْتُمْ قَتَاً أَكْثَرَ مِنْ المُتَوَافِقَ

They are spending more time than expected.

باَسْرَعْتُ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ خَمسَ مَنْةٍ دِرَاسَةً عَلْمِيَّةً

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.

من أَمامِهِم

من دون تأخير

مِنْ 'مَااَمِهِمْ

مِنْ دُونٍ تَأْخِيرٍ

فِمِنْ عَامِهِمِ

فِمِنْ دُونٍ تَأْخِيرٍ

نَجِدُهَا مِنْ خَلاَلِ شَرْوَحِهِ

نَجِدُهَا مِنْ خَلاَلِ شَرْوَحِهِ

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.

من المتَوَافِقَ أَنْ نَقْوم بِزِيَارَتِهَا.

It is expected that...

من الطَّبِيعِيَّ أَنْ نَقْوم بِزِيَارَتِهَا.

It is natural that we undertake a visit.

9 See Chapter 11, section 4.1.3, and Chapter 7, section 5.3.1.3.
A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

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 nun in min doubles, so that instead of 'min-ii, the phrase 'from me' or 'than me' becomes mimni 'مني'.

When followed by the pronouns maa 'what, that, whatever,' or man 'whoever,' the nun of min is assimilated to the miim of maa, or man, and doubles, yielding the contractions mimmaa مَمَا 'off/from that, from what' and mimman مَمَّن 'off/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. Its original meaning, according to Wright (1967, 2:143), was as a noun meaning 'side.'

E.g., when it serves as the object of the preposition min (see below).
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 عما, ‘amman عن. Likewise, when suffixed with the first person singular personal pronoun -i, the nuun doubles: ‘annii عن. 

2.2.3.1 ‘an AS ‘ABOUT, REGARDING, OF, CONCERNING’

أصدق تعبير عن الولاء للوطن
‘aSdku‘ ta’hhir-in ‘an-i l-wilaa i li-l-walii-i
the most sincere expression of devotion to the homeland

في برنامج عن دور الجامعة في الاتصال الثقافي
fii barnaamaaj-in ‘an dawr-i l-jaami‘at-i fii l-ittIsaal-i l-thaqafaFiyy-i
in a program about the role of the university in cultural contact

فهنماك روايات عدّة عن ما حدث.
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.

ta-xtalif-u ‘an ghayr-i-haa.
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 yamfin-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 حتى

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, -him, and -hunna shift their vowel from /-u/ to /-i/ and become -hi, -himaa, -him, and -hunna. 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 إلى ‘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:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{عَرْضٌ عَلَى هِيْلٍ عَنْصِرٍ} & \quad \text{عَلَى الْيَابِيسَة} \\
\text{‘ athara ‘alaa haykal-in ‘azmiyy-in.} & \quad \text{‘alaa l-yaabisat-i} \\
\text{He stumbled upon a skeleton.} & \quad \text{on dry land} \\
\text{الرَجَال عَلَى ظُهُورِ الْخِيْل} & \quad \text{على الشاشة} \\
\text{al-rijaal-u ‘alaa Zuhuur-i l-xayl-i} & \quad \text{‘alaa l-shaashat-i} \\
\text{the men on horseback} & \quad \text{on the screen}
\end{align*}
\]

(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.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{عَلَى مَدَارِ الْعَالَم} & \quad \text{عَلَى مَدِينِ يَوْمِينِ} \\
\text{‘alaa madaar-i l-caam-i} & \quad \text{‘alaa madaa yawm-ayni} \\
\text{all year round (‘on the circuit of the year’)} & \quad \text{for (‘during’) two days}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{بعد ثَلَاثَةٍ أَيَّامٍ عَلَى وَقْعَ الْزَلْزَال} & \quad \text{after three days since the [happening of the] earthquake}
\end{align*}
\]

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.’

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{عَلَى أَسَاسٍ غَيْرِ عَنْصِرِيٍّ} & \quad \text{عَلَى مَا أَظْنَ} \\
\text{‘alaa ‘asas-in ghayr-i ‘unSuriiy-in} & \quad \text{‘alaa maa ‘a-Zunn-u . . .} \\
\text{on a non-racist basis} & \quad \text{in my opinion; as for what} \\
\text{I think}
\end{align*}
\]

السلام عليكم. وعليكم السلام.
al-salaam-u ‘alay-kum. wa ‘alay-kum-u l-salaam-u.
Peace be upon you (pl.). And upon you (pl.) peace.

(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.
Prepositions and prepositional phrases

We have to understand the meaning of sport.

It is up to the state to undertake its role.

We have to begin from zero.

He has to come here.

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).

The preposition "ilaa" to, towards

Note that with many verbs of motion, it is necessary to use "ilaa" with the point of destination.

I came ('to') here because I am confident in my ability.

It ended in a devastating failure.

He translates into his language.

From beginning to end

('from the 'alif to the yaa')
2.3.3 The preposition *Hattaa* حنّى ‘until, up to’

*Hattaa*, although it ends with *‘alif maqSuura* like *‘ilaa* and *‘alaa*, 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 *‘ilaa* ‘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.’

**Examples**

- *Hattaa* ghuruub-i l-shams-i حنّى غروب الشمس until sunset
- *Hattaa* fajr-i ‘ams-i حنّى فجر أمس until dawn yesterday
- *Hattaa* masaa‘-i ghad-in حنّى مساء غد until tomorrow evening
- *Hattaa* masaa‘-i ghad-in حنّى السبعينات من القرن العشرين up to the seventies of the twentieth century
- *Hattaa* fath-i-haa ‘alaa yad-i l-muslim-iina حنّى فتحها على يد المسلمين until it was conquered (‘its conquering’) by the Muslims
- *Hattaa* l-‘ishriina min ‘umr-i-hi حنّى العشرين من عمره until he was twenty years old (‘until the twentieth [year] of his age’)
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’).

*They had been stored in boxes since the war.*

Since the sixties she has assumed a larger role.

Since the beginning of the seventies

*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:

*He had sent him a letter three weeks ago.*

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 predications or with equational predications.

*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 (Huruuf al-jarr حروف الجُرّ)

One-letter prepositions:
- bi-
- li-
- ka-

Two-letter prepositions:
- fii في
- min من
- an عن

Three-letter prepositions:
- 'ilaa على
- 'alaa إلى
- Hattaa حتى
- mundhu منذ

3 Locative adverbs or semi-prepositions (Zuruuf makaan wa-Zuruuf zaman ظروف مكان وظروف زمن)

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. 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-a أمام 'in front of; facing; in the face of; before; to'

The word 'amaam-a refers to a position ‘in front’ or ‘before,’ both spatially and figuratively:

The fact that the case marker may change is considered an indicator of their close relationship to nouns.
Before us are many opportunities and many challenges.

Before me is splendid nature.

Before us are many opportunities and many challenges.

He is responsible to (‘before’) the council.

Idiomatically, ‘amaam-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.

Sometimes, ‘amaam 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.

The noun ‘athnna may be used in the accusative case to indicate ‘during’ or after the preposition fii (in the genitive case), with the same meaning.

during the Gulf Crisis

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.

3.3.3 bayn-a after min

After the preposition min, bayn-a becomes bayn-i, as object of the preposition:

The dispute is between them and (between) a portion of the army.
object. In some cases it might be preceded by a true preposition (usually min or ʿilaa), and its case marker then changes to genitive (final kasra). It still is followed by a noun or pronoun in the genitive case.

3.4.1 Locative baʿd-a
The locative use of baʿd-a includes both time and place.

بعد أربعة قرون
baʿd-a ‘arbaʿat-i quruun-in
after four centuries

بعد ولادة ابنهما
baʿd-a wilaadat-i bn-i-himaa
after the birth of their son

بعد توقيع العقد
baʿd-a tawqiiʿ-i l-ʿaqd-i
after signing the contract

3.4.2 baʿd after a preposition
Preceded by a true preposition, baʿd inflects in the genitive:

في بعد الظهر
fii baʿd-i l-Zuhri
in the afternoon

3.4.3 baʿd-u
If there is no noun or pronoun following baʿd, it is considered an adverb. In this case, devoid of a noun or pronoun object, baʿd changes its final vowel to Damma.13 In this adverbial role, the final Damma is invariable. The expression baʿd-u is used chiefly as an adverbial of time in negative clauses, meaning ‘[not] yet.’

لم يحدد موعده بعد.
lam yu-Haddad mawʿid-uhu baʿd-u.
Its date has not yet been set.

3.4.3.1 THE EXPRESSION fii-maa baʿd-u ‘LATER’

سأطلنك ل فيما بعد.
saʿ-ʿu-talfin-u la-ka fii-maa baʿd-u.
I will telephone you later.

Do it later.
iʿmal-haa fii-maa baʿd-u.

13 The final Damma on baʿd-u and on certain other semi-prepositions (qaḥl-u, taḥl-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 qaḥl-u; min taḥl-u); (2) it cannot be on the first term of an ʿDaafa, 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 داخِل ‘inside, within’
The semi-preposition daaxil-a refers to a location inside or on the interior of something:

داخِل الدولة الإسلاميّة
inside the Islamic state

لَيْمَّا دَخَلَ الحُدُود
to be locked inside the borders

3.5.1 After a true preposition
After a true preposition, daaxil- inflects for the genitive case.

فِي دَخَل الأَسْفَنْج
on the inside of the sponge

3.6 Didd-a ضّد ‘against; versus’

بِشْرَتِ حِرَاباً ضَدَّ الدُّولَة التُّركَيْكَيْة
He is launching a war

كُلٌّ شَيْءٌ ضَدِّي
against the Turkish state.

3.7 Dimn-a ضَمْن ‘within; inside; among’

ضَمْن قُوَّاتِ الْأَمْمِ المُنْتَخِبَة
within the powers of the United Nations

أَرَاضٍ كَانَ يَجِبُ أَنْ تُكْونَ ضَمْن هَذِهِمْ
lands [which] should have been [included] within their portion

3.8 duun-a بِدَون ‘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 nin or bi- as a compound prepositional phrase meaning ‘without.’

3.8.1 duun-a

استِخْمَال بَعْضِهَا بَوْنَ بَعْضِهَا الأَخْرَ
using some of them without the others
3.8.2 *min duun-i*

السلام غير ممكن من دون هذا البلد.
al-salaam-u ghayru mumkin-in *min duun-i haadha l-balad-i.*
Peace is not possible without this country.

من دون هرض رسم دخول
*min duun-i farD-i rasm-i duxuul-in*
without imposing an entrance fee

3.8.3 *bi-duun-i*

قهوة بدون كافيين
*gahwat-un *bi-duun-i ‘kaafiin*
decaffeinated coffee (‘without caffeine’)

يبقى تعليمها بدون هدف.
*ya-bqaa ta’liim-u-haa *bi-duun-i *hadaf-in.*
Teaching it remains aimless
(‘without a goal’).

3.9 *fawq-a* فوق ‘above; upon; on top of; over’

يسير على عجلات فوقها.
*ya-siir-u ‘alaa ‘ajalaat-in *fawq-a-lhu.*
It goes along on wheels [which are] above it.

على الأرض فوقها
*‘alaa l-‘arD-i *wa-fawq-a-haa*
on the earth and over it

ما فوقه وما تحته
*maa fawq-a-lhu wa-maa tahTh-a-lhu*
what is above it and below it

 فوق سطح منزله
*fawq-a saTH-i manzal-i-hi*
on [top of] the roof of his house

3.10 *fawr-a* فور ‘immediately upon; immediately after; right after’

نقل إلى مستشفى الجامعة فور إصابته.
*naqil-a ‘ilaa mustashfaa l-‘jaami’at-i *fawr-a *iSaabat-i-hi.*
He was transported to the university hospital right after being hit.

3.11 *Hasab-a* حسب ‘according to; in accordance with’

حسب نص القرار
*Hasab-a naSS-i l-‘qarar-i*
according to the text of the resolution

3.12 *Hawl-a* حول ‘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

American intervention around the world

حوَلِ الوضع في الشرق الأوسط

about the situation in the Middle East

حوَل موضعيَّة 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’

‘ibbaan-a l-shita‘-i
during the winter

3.15 ‘ithr-a ‘right after; immediately after’

‘ithr-a jtimaa‘-i-him
right after their meeting

3.16 ‘izaa‘-a ‘facing; in the face of’

‘izaa‘-a l-qDaayaa l-mSiyyat-i
in the face of Egyptian problems

3.17 ladaa ‘at, by; upon; to; having’

This locative adverb denotes possession and proximity. Like ‘ilaa and ‘alaa, it changes its final ‘alif maqSuura to 'aay’ when it has a personal pronoun suffix. See model inflectional chart of ‘alaa + pronoun suffixes, Chapter 12, section 2.3.
3.17.1 *ladaa* showing possession:

With a particular use of *ladaa* is to denote the country to which an ambassador is designated.

*Saifiru l-yaabaan ladaa l-sa‘uniyyat-i*

the ambassador of Japan to Saudi Arabia

*Saifir-u qubruS-a ladaa miSr-a*

the ambassador of Cyprus to Egypt

3.17.2 *ladaa* as *‘to; at; with’*

A particular use of *ladaa* is to denote the country to which an ambassador is designated.

*wa-ladaa rafD-i-him dhaalika*

and upon their refusal of that

*ladaa ‘awdat-i l-safiir-i ’ilaa tuunis-a*

upon the return of the ambassador to Tunis

3.17.3 *ladaa* as *‘upon; at the time of’*

*wa-ladaa rafD-i-him dhaalika*

and upon their refusal of that

*ladaa ‘awdat-i l-safiir-i ’ilaa tuunis-a*

upon the return of the ambassador to Tunis

3.18 *ma‘-a* مع *‘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

*ma‘-a l-a‘qaarib-i wa l-a‘sidiqaa-i*

with relatives and friends

*ma‘-a ’alHarri l-tamanniyaat-i*

with warmest wishes

---

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,’ *tasaawa ma‘-a ‘to equate with,’ *ta‘aawun-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‘-hi ‘he left him,’ showing that *ma‘-a* can sometimes be the object of another preposition. Sibawayhi 1970, 1:177.
3.18.2 Possession
A sense of immediate possession (on or near a person) is conveyed by ma'a.

معاً الكنز داخل العلبة

met-a-haa l-kanz-u daaxiil-a l-ulbat-i.
She has the treasure inside the box.

معد كبريت؟

ma'-ka kilbrit-un?
Do you have matches?

3.18.3 Use of ma'an معًا as 'together'
To convey the meaning of 'together' ma'a takes an adverbial indefinite accusative ending -an:

living together in Jerusalem

al-'aysh-u ma'-an jii l-quds-i

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).

مثل أيّ شعب أخر

mithl-a 'ayy-l sh'a*b-in 'aaxara
like any other people

مثل دواء قوي

mithl-a dawa'a' in qawiyy-in
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.'
This year he succeeded in signing such an agreement.

He cannot work in such an atmosphere.

Things such as these have their resonance.

This semi-preposition has either a directional meaning of ‘toward’ or a figurative use of ‘approximately, about.’

To equip it with about thirty planes

After a preposition or another semi-preposition, naHw- takes the genitive case:

by approximately three billion dollars

after about nine centuries

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- before; prior to; ago

It was seized [a few] days ago.

before swimming to the sea

the night before last
3.21.2 qubayl-a 'a little before, just before'
This is a diminutive form of qabl-a that denotes a short period of time.

قبيل العودة إلى الكويت

just before moving to Sidon

3.21.3 qubaalat-a 'opposite; facing'

في مياه المحيط الأطلسي قبالة إيرلندا

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.

They won by two goals to one ('as opposed to one').

3.21.5 min qibal-i من قبل 'on the part of; by'

It meets with acceptance on the part of female citizens.

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 'almost; close to'

قارةة ثلاثة عشر مليون دولار

close to thirteen million dollars

3.22.2 qurb-a 'near; close to; in the vicinity of'

في جنوب تركيا قرب الحدود السورية

in southern Turkey near the Syrian border[s]
3.23 *siwaa* سويٌّ '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.
*laa ya-raa siwaa sabiil-in waalHiid-in.*
He sees only one way ('he does not see but one way').

ليس معهما سوى مترجمهما.
*lays-a ma’-a-lhumaa siwaa mittarjimay-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.

عثر عليها تحت التراب.
‘athara ‘alay-ha taHt-a l-turaab-i.
He discovered it under the ground.

تحت إشراف الأمم المتحدة
taHt-a ’ishraaf-i l-uumam-i l-muttaHidat-i
under the supervision of the United Nations

3.25 *Tiwaal-a* طوال ‘during; for’

طوال السنوات الماضية
*Tiwaal-a l-sanawaat-i l-maaDiyat-i*
during past years; in years past
during/for more than four decades

3.26 *tujaah-a* تجاه ‘facing, opposite, in front of; towards’

سلوك الغرب تجاه الشرق
*suluuk-u l-gharb-i tujaah-a l-sharq-i*
the behavior of the West towards the East

3.27 *waraa’-a* وراء ‘behind; in back of’

توجه المسلمين وراءهم.
*tarak-a-hu l-muslim-uuna waraa’-a-lhum.*
The Muslims left it behind (them).

ظل يسعى وراء هدفه.
*Zall-a ya-s’aa waraa’-a hadaf-i-hi.*
He continued to pursue/run after his goal.
3.28 wasُ-ْتَ-اُنْ ‘in the middle of; in the midst of; among’

wasُ-ْتَ-اُنْ َل-مَاذِيْنُ-ا ‘in the middle of the city’

wasُ-ْتَ-اُنْ ِةُدَرُوُبُ-ا ‘among these alleyways’

3.29 xَلْفَ ‘behind; in back of’

ما ْيَكُنْ خَلْفُهَا ‘must be behind’

nَمَا يَا-كُمْنُ-ا َخَلْفَ-اُنْ ِهَا تُقْبَ ‘that which is hidden behind it of truths’

حَثَ مُخْتَبِي ْلَنْ-ا ْل-سِّتَاارِر-اُنْ ‘He is hidden behind a curtain.’

3.30 xَارِيْجَ ‘outside; outside of’

داَخِلُ أُوْبِيْكَ وَخَارِجَهْ ‘inside OPEC and outside of it’

‘إِلَى أَسَواقٍ خَارِجَةِ َالْمَلْمَلَكَةِ ‘to markets outside the kingdom’

3.31 xَلِاَلَ ‘during’; مِنْ خَلِاَلِ ‘from through’

The word xَلِاَلَ-ا ْعُسْرُ-ا ْوُسْتَا ‘during the Middle Ages’

خَلَالَ درَاسَة مُطاَلَة ‘during an extended study’

أَصْبِحَ جَمِيلًا مِنَ خَلَالَ َالْفَنَّ ‘It was made beautiful through art.’

3.32 ْأَبْرَ-ا عَرَبْ ‘across, over’

وَيَمْتَدُ عَرَبْ قَارَأَتْنِينَ ‘across decades of time’

wَاَيَا-مُتْأَدِي ْأَل-أَقَرَأِر-ْأَيْنِ ‘It extends across two continents.’

ْأَبْرَ-ا ْنَقْوَد-ْيَنْ مِنْ-ا ْل-زَأَمْ-يَنْ ‘across decades of time’

3.33 ْأَقِب-َْ ‘right after, immediately after’

عَقَبُ إِلاَّتَانَ ‘that was right after a high-level intervention’

‘أَقِب-َ-ْيَلَان-اُنْ-ا ‘immediately after her announcement’

dِحَالِيَة ‘أَقِب-َ-ْيَلَان-اُنْ ‘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’

‘ind-a ‘on the part of; in the opinion of’

The lack of understanding on the part of many of my readers

‘ind-a ‘on the part of; in the opinion of’

Islam for them (‘in their opinion’) equates with extremism.

3.34.2 Location in time

‘ind-a ‘at the time of his arrest

It is necessary to stop at his [place].

3.34.3 Location in space

‘ind-a ‘near the seashore at ebb tide

They have friends.

3.34.4 Possession

‘ind-a ‘have a problem with that man.

‘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 'ind-a-maa ‘WHEN’

كان في العشرين من عمره عندما وصل إلى لندن.
kaan-fi l-‘ishriina min ‘umr-i-hi ‘ind-a-maa waSal-a ‘ilaal landan.
He was twenty years of age when he arrived in London.

عندما انخفض مستوى البحر
‘ind-a-maa nxafaD-a mustawaal baHr-i
when the sea level receded

عندما نزلوا إلى الشارع
‘ind-a-maa nazal-im ‘ilaal l-shaari‘i
when they came down into the street

3.34.5.2 ‘ind-a-idhin ‘AT THAT POINT IN TIME; THEN’

بدأت عنديب في عمل بعض الرسوم.
bada‘at ‘ind-a-idhin fil ‘amal baD-l l-rusuum-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 ‘an or ‘anna. For more on subordinate clauses, see Chapter 19. Here are two examples:

كأنك تأكل السمك
ka-‘anna-ka ta‘kul-u l-samak-a
as though you were eating fish

وصفوه بأنه جو من الثقة.
waSaf-uu-hu bi-‘anna-hn jaww-un min-a l-thiqat-i.
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:

- ًّا 'where'
- ًّا 'which; what'
- ًّا 'how much; how many'
- ًّا 'how'
- 'why'
- 'what'
- 'what'
- 'who/whom'
- 'when'
- 'introduces yes/no question'
- 'introduces yes/no question'

1 ًّا 'where'

The question word ًّا is invariable, even after a preposition. It always ends with َىُهِأ. ١

لىأ، يا صديق؟ ًّا من أين أنا؟ ًّا هي اللجان الوصارية؟
ًّا، يا صديق؟ ًّا، يا صديق؟ ًّا هيا هيا هيا هيا هيا هيا؟
Where to, Sir? Where are you from? Where is it, the ministerial committee?

١ Note that the question word ًّا is not used as the locative adverb 'where.' To express an idea such as "at a university where he teaches," the adverb ًّا is used for 'where': ًّا ًّا ًّا ًّا ًّا ًّا ًّا. See Chapter 11, section 3.1.3 for more on ًّا.
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.’

أينما كنت

*‘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., *أيهم؟* ‘*ayy-u-hum*? ‘which of them?’). It takes the full set of three case endings, depending on its function and placement in the sentence.

لأي دولة تذهب؟

*Aَيْ* من المرشحين؟

li-*‘ayy-i dawlat-in* ta-dhhab-u?

*‘ayy-un min-a l-murashshahayni?

To which country are you going?

Which one of the (two) candidates?

أي أرنم؟

*‘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.

كم نوعاً من الأسماك تعرفين؟

كم درساً أكملت؟

*kam nawait-an* min-a l-‘asmaak 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* + 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:

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.
Questions and question words

4 kayf-ا كييف 'how'
The interrogative word kayf-ا is invariable in case. It always ends with fatHa. It may be followed by a verb or by a noun.

كيف الحال؟
kayf-ا Haaal-u?
How are you? ('How is the condition?')

كيف ظريف؟
kayf-ا 'araf-ii?
How did you (f.) know?

5 li-maadhaa لمنا؟ '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.'

لماذا تحب السباحة؟
li-maadhaa tu-Hibb-u 1-sibaal-Hat-a?
Why do you like swimming?

لماذا اتجهت إلى التمثيل؟
li-maadhaa ttaajah-ta 'ilaa l-tamthil-i?
Why did you turn to acting?

فلمماذا لا تترك الأمور على طبيعتها؟
fa-li-maadhaa laa ta-truk-u l-umusra 'alaa Tabii'at-ha?
So why don’t you leave matters as they ('naturally') are?

6 maa ما and maadhaa ماذا '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.

ما اسمك؟
maa sm-u-ka?
What [is] your (m.) name?

ما رأيك؟
maa ra'yi-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.').
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:

ما هي المهمة الأولى؟

*maa hiya l-mahammät-u l-‘uulaa?*
What is the first task (‘What is it, the first task’)?

ما هي أهم مشاكل التلوث؟

*maa hiya ‘ahamm-u mashaakil-i l-talawwuth-i?*
What are the most important problems of pollution? (‘What are they, the most important problems of pollution’)?

### 6.2 *maadhaa* ماذَا ‘what’

The question word *maadhaa* is used mainly with verbs:

ماذا جرى؟

*maadhaa jaraa?*
What happened?

ماذا يعمل أهلك؟

*maadhaa ya-f’al-u ‘ahl-u-ka?*
What [will] your family do?

ماذا تتعتقد؟

*maadhaa ta-‘tuqād-u?*
What do you think?

ماذا تأكل؟

*maadhaa ta-‘kul-u?*
What does it eat?

### 6.2.1 *maadhaa* as pronoun

Sometimes *maadhaa* is used like a relative pronoun meaning ‘that which,’ or ‘what’:

لا أفهم ماذا تقول.

*laa ‘afham-u maadhaa ta-qul-u.*
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.

ماذا عن القادة الآخرين؟

*maadhaa ‘an-i l-qaadät-i l-‘aaxar-ūna?*
What about the other leaders?
7 man من ‘who; whom’
This word is used both as an interrogative pronoun and as an indefinite pronoun. Because it ends in sukun, it needs a helping vowel, kasra, if it precedes a consonant cluster.

من هو؟
man huwa?
Who is he?

من الرئيس السابق؟
man-i l-ra' iis-n l-saabiq-n?
Who is the former president?

8 mataa متى ‘when’
The question word mataa is also invariable, ending in ‘alif maqSura. Note that mataa is used only as an interrogative, not as a connective adverb meaning ‘when.’

متى وجدته؟
mataa wujad-ta-hu?
When did you find it?

متى وصلت؟
mataa waSal-at?
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

هل أنا كمبيوتر؟
hal ‘anaa kumbyuutir?
Am I a computer?

هل روعي الرأي العام؟
hal runt’iy-ya l-ra’y-ya l‘aamm-a?
Was public opinion taken into account?

هل بالإمكان أن نبدأ؟
hal bi-l-imkaan-i ‘an na-bda-‘a?
May we begin?

هل أخذت الزجاجة من هنا؟
hal ‘axadh-ta l-zujaajat-a min hunaa?
Did you take the glass from here?
9.2 'a-\-i

This 'alif plus hamza is prefixed to a word, but not if the word begins with 'alif:

أليس كذلك؟
'a-lays-a ka-dhaalika?
Isn’t that so?

أهذا سمير؟
'a-haadhua samii-r-an?
Is this Samir?

9.2.1 'a-laa

Negative yes/no interrogatives are usually prefaced with 'a-laa:

لا يعني تعصبًا؟
'a-laa ta'ani ta'assub-an?
Doesn’t it mean bigotry?

لا يعني تقهقرًا؟
'a-laa ya- nun taqahqur-an?
Doesn’t it mean regression?
Connectives and conjunctions

Connectives - words or phrases that connect one part of discourse with another - are a pervasive feature of MSA syntax.\(^1\) Arabic sentences and clauses within a text are connected and interconnected by means of words or phrases (such as wa- '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."\(^2\) 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 syntetic, 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 (Huruf 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 ‘anna 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 non-native 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” (Huruf '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-'aTf وواو العطف)
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 Iqaahirat-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'iis-i al-munawwara I'mm-ld-aTf-i ...I ...
(And) the two presidents arrived in the capital yesterday ...

6 These include what Al-Batal refers to as Huruf muhimala 'inoperative particles,' Huruf zaatida 'redundant or augmentative particles,' and Huruf al-'aTf'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'iyya, '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 Schiffirin (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."
...\[\text{And} \] there are scholars who believe that ...\[\text{And} \] Kurdish sources indicate that ...\[\text{And} \] the coordinating conjunction \textit{wa-} functions as an additive term within sentences to link clauses, phrases, and words. In particular, Arabic uses \textit{wa-} in lists where in English a comma \textit{would} be used to separate each item. The items in the list retain the case determined by their role in the sentence. Among them are Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Oman, the (‘State of’) the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

It relates to the problems of Iraq, The Sudan, Libya, Somalia, Bosnia, Kashmir, and Chechnia.

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’ (\textit{faa‘ al-sababiyya}), a contrastive meaning ‘yet; but,’ a slight shift in topic ‘and also; moreover,’ or a conclusive meaning, ‘and therefore; in conclusion.’\(^9\) Beeston refers to it as “the most interesting of the ambivalent functionals” (1970, 98).

\(^9\) 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 \textit{fa-}, with examples taken from literary contexts.
It may start a sentence in a text or it may knit elements together within a sentence.

فهم ما زالوا مشتمِين بأحداث الإنتفاضة.
fa-hum maa zaal-tu muhtamm-iina bi-'al1daath-i l-intifaaDat-i.
Yet they are still interested in the events of the uprising.

وإذا لم يبلغ الآخر، فإنه يتجاهل.
wa-'idhha lam ya-'Lghi l'-aaxar ... fa-'inna-hu ya-tajuahal-u-hu.
If he doesn't abolish the other . . . (then) he ignores it.

فتحت الباب فانفتح.
fataH-tu l-baab-a fa-nfataH-a.
I opened the door and [so] it opened.

ما دام خارجة من الشرعية، فإن المقاطعة مستمرة.
maa daam-at xaarifat-an min-a l-shar'iyyat-i, fa-'inna l-mu quaTa'at-a mustamir rat-un.
As long as it remains outside the law, (then) the boycott will continue.

3 Contrastive conjunctions
These conjunctions indicate contrast in semantic content between two parts of a sentence.

3.1 bal '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

ورجمت هذه الكتب إلى الثلاثينية بل كتب معظمها بحرف عبريّة.
wu-turjim-at haadalhi l-kutub-u 'llaH Haati iniyyat-i bal kutil-a mu'Zam-u-haa
bi-Huruuf-in 'ibriyyat-in.
These books were translated into Latin, but [actually] they were mostly written
in Hebrew script ('letters').

ليس في الأمر تَما صفور أو حماة بل هناك توزيع واسع للأدوار.
lays-a fi l-'amr-i thammat-a Suqur-un 'aw Hamaa'tim-u bal hunaaka tawzii'-un
waasi'-un li-l-'adwaari.
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-ma‘a ‘inna-ma‘a (‘but; but moreover; but also, rather’
This connective word has both confirmational and contrastive components to its meaning.\(^{11}\)

11 لَمْ تَكُنْ تَسْجَبِلًا فَقْطَ وَأَنَّا هُوَ اِنْتِكَاسُ لِلْوَاقِعِ الْإِتِیَامِيِّ
It was not only documentation, but moreover a reflection of social reality.

4 Explanatory conjunctions

4.1 ‘ay ‘ay ‘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.

أَيُّ كَلْ مَا هُوَ وَاقِعٌ
‘ay, kull-u maa huwa waaqi‘iyy-un
that is, everything that is real

5 Resultative conjunctions

5.1 ‘idh ‘idh ‘since,’ ‘inasmuch as’
This small word is a resultative particle that introduces a clause providing a rationale or reason for the main clause.

حقَّقَ الحَزْبُ الْجَهَمْوِيَّ الحَاكِمُ نَصْرًا سَاحِقًا عَلَى منافسِهِ إذ حَصَلَ عَلَى مَعْظُومِ المَقَاعِدِ
Haqqaq-a l-Hizb-u l-jumhuuriyy-u l-Haakim-u naSr-an saaHiq-an ‘alaa munaafis-il-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 ‘idd ‘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.

إِنَّ لِمَانَا يُتَوَجَّبَ عِلَيْنَا
‘idhan li-maadhaa ya-tawajjab-u ‘alay-naa
Then why do we have to...

إِنَّ هُنَاكَ منْهِجٌ
‘idhan hunaaku manhaj-aan
Thus, there are two methods...

\(^{11}\) See al-Warraki and Hassanean 1994, 59–63 for further discussion.
Connectives and conjunctions

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.

It'll be a big cat, then!

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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. 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.'

**Examples**

*Hayth-u tu-danis-u* Hayth-u l-qadiim-u ya-xtaliT-u ma-`a l-Hadiith-i

where the old mixes with the new

in a college where she teaches

Hayth-u l-qadiim-u ya-xtaliT-u ma-`a l-Hadiith-i

where the old mixes with the new

in a college where she teaches

Hayth-u l-qadiim-u ya-xtaliT-u ma-`a l-Hadiith-i

where the old mixes with the new

in a college where she teaches

Hayth-u l-qadiim-u ya-xtaliT-u ma-`a l-Hadiith-i

where the old mixes with the new

in a college where she teaches

6.2 Adverbial conjunctions of purpose: *mustashfan* *Hayth-u* 'in order to'

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).

**Examples**

*fii l-sa`uudiyat-in Hayth-u ya-`mal-u ma-`a sharikat-in duwaliyaat-in*

in Saudi Arabia where he works for an international company

*fii l-sa`uudiyat-in Hayth-u ya-`mal-u ma-`a sharikat-in duwaliyaat-in*

in Saudi Arabia where he works for an international company

*fii l-sa`uudiyat-in Hayth-u ya-`mal-u ma-`a sharikat-in duwaliyaat-in*

in Saudi Arabia where he works for an international company

*fii l-sa`uudiyat-in Hayth-u ya-`mal-u ma-`a sharikat-in duwaliyaat-in*

in Saudi Arabia where he works for an international company

*fii l-sa`uudiyat-in Hayth-u ya-`mal-u ma-`a sharikat-in duwaliyaat-in*

in Saudi Arabia where he works for an international company

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 ksanaAT-i l-maadiyat-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: 'ayna. 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 Zurūuf, 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 ba’d-a l-Harb-i ‘after the war,’ قبل سنة 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 ‘while; whereas’
This connective word has both a temporal meaning ‘while, during the time that,’ and also a contrastive meaning of ‘whereas.’

ضبطوا بينما كانوا يستهلكون المخدر.
DubiT-mu bayn-a-maa kaa-an ya-stahliik-umn nu mu-xaddir-a. They were arrested while they were consuming the drug.

فكانت الثقافة العربية رسمية بينما ظلت اللاتينية العامة لغة للناس.
fa-kaan-at-i l-thaqaaqat-u l-’arabiyyat-u rasmiiyyat-an bayn-a-maa Zall-at-i Haaatiiniyyat-u l’-aammat-u lughat-an li-l-naas-i. Arabic culture was official whereas vernacular Latin remained a language of the people.

6.2.2 ba’d-a-maa ‘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 بعدما وقعت على الثلج
ba’d-a-maa shaahad-a-hu ’aHad-n l-maarrat-i ba’d-a-maa waqa’-at ’alaal l-thalj-i after one of the passers-by saw him after she fell on the ice

بعدما قدم للرئيس تعازيه
ba’d-a-maa quddim-a l-l-’aayat-i ta’azii-li after his condolences had been presented to the president
6.2.3 *ba’d-a ‘an* ‘after’
The expression *ba’d-a ‘an* means essentially the same as *ba’d-a maa* when describing a situation that has taken place in the past. The phrase *ba’d-a ‘an*, when referring to an event that has already taken place, is followed by a clause with a past tense verb.\(^{15}\)

The expression *ba’d-a ‘an* means essentially the same as *ba’d-a maa* when describing a situation that has taken place in the past. The phrase *ba’d-a ‘an*, when referring to an event that has already taken place, is followed by a clause with a past tense verb.

6.2.3 *ba’d-a ‘idhin* ‘after that; then; subsequently’
This compound expression is equivalent in most situations to the adverbial conjunction *thumma* (see below 6.2.8):

6.2.4 *Hiin-a-maa* *‘when; at the time when’*

6.2.5 *‘ind-a-maa* ‘when; at the time when’

\(^{15}\) When referring to a non-past situation, or a hypothetical situation, *ba’d-a ‘an* is followed by a verb in the subjunctive mood. For example:

*سرَدَتْ* بعد أن ناقَلَتْ

*سنَآدرُسْ* *ba’d-a ‘an na-‘kul-a.*

We will study after we eat.
6.2.6 ‘ind-a-‘idhin عِنْدَنَّـهُ ‘then; at that point in time; at that time’

وَلاِبَ عَنْدَنِـهِ مِنْ طُرُقُ قَضَىَ الْإِنْسِحَابِ َ
wa laa bdd-a ‘ind-a-‘idhin min TarH-i qaDiyyat-i l-insilHaab.
Rejection of the issue of withdrawal was inevitable at that point.

6.2.7 qabl-a ‘an قبلَ أنْ ‘before’ + subjunctive ‘before’

Contrasting with ba’-d-a ‘an, qabl-a ‘an refers to an action anterior to the action in the main clause. The verb after qabl-a ‘an is in the subjunctive mood, even if the main clause reference is past tense.

وَسَلَتُ قِوَاتُ الْأَمِنِ إِلَىِ المَطَارِ قِبْلَ أَنْ َ
waSal-at qwwa-at-u l-’amn-i ‘ilaa l-maTaar-i qabl-a ‘an ya-hbuT-a.
The security forces arrived at the airport before he landed.

قِبْلَ أَنْ تُحْرَقَ الْحَرْبُ َ
qabl-a ‘an tu-mazziq-a-hu l-Harb-u
before war tears it apart

6.2.8 thumm-a ثمْ ‘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.

ثُمَّ ضَعَهَا فِي مَا بَعْدُ فِي صَندوقٍ َ
thumm-a Da’-haa fii-maa ba’d-u
fii Sanduuq-in.
Then put it in a box later.

ثُمَّ أَنْشَدُوا الْتَشْيِدُ الْوَطَنِيِّ َ
thumm-a ‘anshad-uu l-nashiid-a
l-waTanily-y-a.
Then they sang the national anthem.

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.

كَمَا ذَكَرْتُ الْمَتَدْحِيَّةُ َ
ka-maa dhakar-a l-mutaHaddith-u
the spokesman likewise mentioned

كَمَا فَعَلُوا الْسَّنَةِ الْمَاضِيَةِ َ
ka-maa fa’al-uu l-sanat-a l-maaDiyat-a
just as they did last year

6.3.2 mithl-a-maa مِثْلَمَا ‘like; just as; as’

مِثْلَمَا يَقُولُ أَهْلِيَ َ
mithl-a-maa ya-qul-u ‘ahl-ilii...
as my family says...
6.4 Adverbial conjunction of equivalence: *qadr-a-maa*  
‘as much as; just as; as . . . as’

\[\text{إنَّ أمامنا كثيراً من الفرص قدرنا أمامنا من التحديات.}\]

*i=na* ّamaam-a-naa kathiir-an min-a ّfuraS-i *qadr-a-maa* ّamaam-a-naa min-a ّataddiiyaat-i.

There are [just] as many opportunities before us as there are challenges.

6.5 Adverbial conjunction of reference or attribution: *Hasab-a-maa*  
‘according to; in accordance with; depending on’

This conjunction links one clause to another clause, expressing a relationship of reference or attribution.\(^\text{16}\)

\[\text{وحسبما تقول الأسطورة . . .}\]

wa-*Hasab-a-maa* ta-quul-u l-*usTuurat-u* . . .

according to what legend says . . .

\[\text{حسبما جرت تسميتها آنذاك}\]

*Hasab-a-maa* jarat tasmiyat-haa ّaan-a-dhaaka

in accordance with its naming at that time

6.6 Adverbial conjunctions of potential or possibility

6.6.1 *rubba-maa*  
‘perhaps; maybe; possibly’\(^\text{17}\)

\[\text{ربما كان كثيرون منهم مسجلين.}\]

*rubba-maa* kaan-a kathiir-unna min-hum musajjal-iina.

Perhaps many of them were registered.

\[\text{ربما لهذا السبب . . .}\]

*rubba-maa* li-haadhaa l-sabab-i . . .

perhaps for this reason . . .

\[\text{ربما كنت واقعاً من نفسي أكثر من اللزوم.}\]

*rubba-maa* kun-tu waathiq-an min nafs-iI ّakthara min-a 1-huzum-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 *i=na* and her sisters.
7.1 ‘aw ‘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.

‘an qaṣd-in ‘aw min ghayr-i qaṣd-in
on purpose or not on purpose
They want him dead or alive (‘alive or dead’).

7.2 ‘am ‘أ ‘or
This disjunctive indicates an exclusive option; one or the other, but not both or all. Because it ends with sukūn, it sometimes needs a helping vowel, kasra.

الحن أم الكلمة 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 طلابةً
‘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:

لا يدر أشيئ أضحك.
lam ya-dri ‘a -ya-shtam-u ‘am ya-DHak-u.
He didn’t know whether to curse or laugh.

7.3 ‘immaa . . . ‘aw ‘إما . . . أو ‘إما . . . ‘immaa . . . wa-‘immaa إما . . . إما . . . ‘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 إما أن يكون شاملًا أو لا يكون أبدًا.
This peace is either inclusive, or it is not at all.

إما أن تكونوا معتنًا وامًا مع الإرهاب.
‘immaa ‘an ta-kuum-u ma‘a-ma’ta 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 “formulaicity.” 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). It is a way of opening a statement with a generic or general observation, just as “It is ...” may be used in English.

\[
\text{wa-min-a l-mutawaqqas-i 'an ... } \quad \text{min-a l-mumkin-i 'an ...}
\]

It is expected that 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 “formulaicity.”

\[
\text{min-a l-muhimm-i 'adam-u taqdiim-i l-kathiir-i min-a l-tanaazulaat-i.}
\]

It is important not to offer too many concessions.

\[
\text{wa-ma'luum-un 'anna ... } \quad \text{wa-l-mustaghrab-u 'anna ...}
\]

It is known that the strange [thing] is ...

8.1.1 Starters without min

Sometimes participle or adjective starters are used on their own, without min, but usually preceded by wa.

\[
\text{wa-ma'luum-un 'anna ... } \quad \text{wa-l-mustaghrab-u 'anna ...}
\]

It is known that 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 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: ‘ammaa . . . fa- . . . ‘as for . . . ’
This expression denotes a shift in topic from the previous sentence. It is in two parts, the first word, ‘ammaa, signaling the new topic, and the second, fa-, 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 fa- in this case fills the same function as the punctuation mark in English. Since ‘ammaa introduces a new sentence and a new topic, the noun following is in the nominative case, as subject of the sentence.

‘ammaa l-qism-u l-mutarjam-u fa-mutanawwa‘-un jidd-an.
As for the translated part, it is very diverse.

‘ammaa l-isra‘iiliyy-uuna . . . fa-ya-quul-uuna . . .
as for the Israelis, they say . . .

‘ammaa l-muxadramat-u, fa-qad ja‘at raabi‘at-an.
As for the old-timer, she came in fourth.

8.3.2 Addition: ‘ilaa dhaalika ‘in addition to that; moreover; furthermore’
This phrase is a shortened version of bi-l-‘IDaafat-i ‘ilaa dhaalika ‘in addition to that’:

‘ilaa dhaalika ‘akkad-a l-saHaafiyy-u . . .
Moreover, the journalist affirmed . . .
In addition to that, the occupation forces continued operations...

8.3.3 Statement of contents: \textit{jaa'\textquotesingle-a fii} جاء في/\textit{wa-jaa'\textquotesingle-a fii} واجة في

The expression \textit{jaa'\textquotesingle-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.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{wa-jaa'\textquotesingle-a fii} l-bayaan-i \textit{'anna}...
\item \textit{wa-jaa'\textquotesingle-a fii} naSS-i l-mashruu\textquotesingle-i...
\end{itemize}

(And) the declaration stated that...

(And it came in the text of the plan stated that...)
Subordinating conjunctions: the particle \textit{inna} and her sisters

1 Introduction
This group of particles, referred to as \textit{inna wa-`axawaat-u-haa} إن وأخواتها and her sisters, are part of the class of Arabic words that are referred to as nawaasix نواسخ, or words that cause a shift to the accusative case.\textsuperscript{1} The members of this particular group are usually used as subordinating conjunctions, connecting two clauses, although \textit{inna} itself may also be used at the beginning of a sentence.

These particles include:\textsuperscript{2}

- verily, indeed; that \textit{inna} إن
- that \textit{anna} أن
- but \textit{laakinna} لكن
- because \textit{li`anna} لأن
- perhaps \textit{la`alla} لعل

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.

\textsuperscript{1} For more on the nawaasix, see Chapter 7, section 5.3.3.8. Arabic grammars refer to particles that require the accusative as \textit{Huruuf mushabbiha bi-l-fi`il} '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" (\textit{fawaamil}), and both have similar effects on a following noun or noun phrase. As Anghelescu states, "it must not be forgotten that \textit{inna}, as well as other members of the al-nawaasikh class, resemble verbs in their capacity to 'act' (\textit{amal}), or to govern, according to the Arab grammarians" (1999, 136).

\textsuperscript{2} The subordinating particle \textit{zain} 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 \textit{zain} 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.

'ınna l-'aamaal-a taHawwal-at 'illa ʿawhaam-in.

(Indeed), the hopes have turned into delusions.

na-'taqid-u 'anna l-ziraa'at-a lughat-un ʿaalamyyat-un.

We believe that agriculture is a world language.

ًلاكن الحاصل عكس ذلك
wa-laakinna l-HaasSil-a 'aks-u dhaalika

but the actuality is the reverse of that

رغم أن انتِجاهاات إيجابية أخذت تنبعت
raghm-a 'anna tijaabaḥaat-in 'iijaabiyyat-an ʿaxadh-at ta-nbaʾith-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

لاكين هناك حيوانات أخرى
laakinna humaaka Hayawaanaat-in ṭuxraa

but there are other animals

لكن هناك بعض النقوش
laakinna humaaka baʾD-a l-nuquush-i

but there are some inscriptions

ذكَر أن لديه المستندات الرسمية
dhakar-a 'anna lāday-li l-mustanadaat-i l-rasmiyyat-a.

He mentioned that he has the official documents.

(‘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.

\[ \text{ٌإِنَّا نَتَمَنَى لُكَمْ عِيدًا مِبَارَكًا.} \]

\[ \text{ً} \text{يَنَامِنَ ٌلَكُمْ عِيَادًا مِبَارَكًا.} \]

(Indeed), we wish you a blessed holiday.

أدرك أنه نسي اسمها.

\[ \text{ٌأَدْرَكَ أَنَّهُ نَسَى اسْمَهَا.} \]

He realized that he had forgotten her name.

1.5 Equational clause

If the clause after ٌيَنَامِنَ or one of her sisters is an equational sentence, the subject is a pronoun or a noun in the accusative case, but the predicate (لَعْبَ) is in the nominative case.

\[ \text{ٌإِنَّ الْعَلَمُاتِ خَاطِئَةُ} \]

ٌيَنَامِنَ ٌثَقَيلُ جَدًّا!

(Indeed,) it is very heavy!

لا تَعَرِقُ إِلَى الْسَّلَامَ لَأَنَّهَا مَكَانٌ خَطْرٌ.

لا تَعَرِقُ إِلَى الْسَّلَامَ لَأَنَّهَا مَكَانٌ خَطْرٌ.

Don’t run to the stairs because they are a dangerous place.

1.6 With invariable pronoun or noun

Sometimes ٌيَنَامِنَ or one of her sisters may be followed by an invariable noun or pronoun, in which case there is no overt accusative marker.\(^4\)

\[ \text{ٌإِنَّ هَذِهِ جَرَأَيْةٌ بَشِعَةً.} \]

ٌيَنَامِنَ ٌحَادِيْحِي ٌجَارِيِّمَةٌ بَشِعَةٌ.

(Indeed,) this is a repugnant crime.

لكِنَّ هَذَا لَا يَكْفِي.

لاَكِينَهَا ٌحَادِحَا ٌلاَّ يَكْفِي.

But this is not enough.

1.7 With buffer pronoun: ٌدَمِيْرُ الْشَّأْنِ

Occasionally in MSA a subordinate clause may be preceded by a /-hu/ pronoun after the subordinating particle (e.g., ٌأَنَّهُ ٌأَنَّهُ) 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 ٌدَمِيْرُ الْشَّأْنِ ٌthe pronoun of the fact or “pronoun which anticipates a whole subsequent clause.”\(^5\)

\(^4\) According to traditional Arabic grammatical theory, the accusative marking is there in a “virtual” sense (مَعَدَادَةٍ), even though it does not appear on the word.

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

\[\text{‘inna l-aamaal-a taHawwal-at ’ilaa ’awhaam-in.}\]

(Indeed,) hopes have turned into delusions.

\[\text{‘inna-nii u’akkid-u ‘anna \ldots}\]

(Indeed,) I affirm that .

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

\[\text{wa qaal-a ‘inna-hu naaqash-a haadha l-mawDuu \ldots}\]

He said that he had discussed this topic.

\[\text{qaal-a l-mudarrib-u ‘inna-hu raaD-in.}\]

The coach said that he was satisfied.

\[\text{qaal-a ‘inna l-siyaasiyy-iina ya-staxdim-unna muSTalaHaat-in diiniyyat-an.}\]

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,’

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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, iftakar-a ‘think’ or ‘believe,’ and also with verbs of communicating such as dhakara ‘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.

لا أظن أن المسربات كانت ودية.
I do not think that the plays were bad.

ذكر أن العرب أعطوها اسمها.
He mentioned that the Arabs gave it its name.

واصفوه بأنه جو من الثقافة.
They described it as being (that it is) an atmosphere of trust.

وتشير مصادر كردية إلى أن العدد الحقيقي قد يصل إلى ألف شخص.
Kurdish sources indicate that the true number may reach a thousand persons.

لقد أردنا أن نبت للجميع أننا فريق جيد.
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 complète 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 Anghelescu 1999, 138 on ‘anna, especially as compared with ‘an; and Cantarino 1975, Il: 234–35 and Ill: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.

وَكَأ نُهُ مَتْقَوَنَ فِي الْوَاقِعِ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْء
wa ka-’anna-naa muttafiq-uuna fii l-waaqi’-i ‘alaa kull-i shay'-in
as though we actually agreed on everything

كَانِهُ مَدْرَجٌ رُومَّانِيّ
ka-’anna-hu mudarraj-un ruumaniyy-un
as though it were a Roman amphitheater

2.4 laakinna ‘but’
This particle introduces a clause that contrasts with the previous clause.

لا يُسَتِّ لِبَانِيَةٍ، وَلَكِنْ هِي سَعُدَتْ فِي لِبَانِ
lays-at lubnaaniyyat-an, wa-laakinna-haa sa’id-at fii lubnaan-a.
She is not Lebanese, but she was happy in Lebanon.

لَكِنْ هَذِهِ الْمَسَاجِدِ مَحْتَلَةٌ
laakinna haadhihi l-masajid-a muhallat-un
but these mosques are occupied

وَلَكِنْ الْتَجْرِيبَةُ تَقْلُقْني
wa-laakinna l-tajribat-a tuqliq-u-nii
but the experiment disturbs me

لَكِنْ الْبِرَانِامُ يَبْقَى فِي الْكَمْبِيُوْتْر
laakinna l-baranaamaj-a ya-bqaa fii l-kumbyuutir
but the program remains in the computer

2.4.1 laakin / wa-laakin ولكن ‘but’
This variant of laakinna, written without the shadda or fatHa on the nun, 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.

وَلَكِنْ يَجِبْ وَضُعُ ضَوْابِطٍ وَمَراقبَةٍ
wa-laakin ya-fib-u waD'-u DawaabiT-a wa-muraqabat-in
but it is necessary to put [into effect] regulations and surveillance

2.5 li’anna ‘لَأَنْ ‘because’
This subordinating particle is followed by a clause that gives a rationale or reason.

لَأَنْ هِي اسْتَحْقَاقٌ دِيمُوقْراطيّ
li-’anna-haa stihqaq-un
diimuuratraTiyy-un
because it is a democratic right

لَأَنْ هَا تَتَحَدَّثُ عَنْ هُمُومِي
li-’anna-haa ta-taHaddath-u ‘an
hummuun-ii
because she speaks about my concerns
because the last two years were among the best years

2.6 la‘alla / wa-la‘alla ‘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.
Verb classes

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), an active participle (ism fa‘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'; c-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/ (yu‘) 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. 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: SaHiH ‘sound’ and mu’tall ‘weak.’ Sound roots are ones that do not contain either waaw or yaa’; “weak” roots contain waaw or 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.

1.1 Regular (sound) triliteral root (al-fi’l al-SaHiH 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. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General meaning</th>
<th>Root consonants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hear</td>
<td>س-م-ع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reveal</td>
<td>ك-ش-ف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work</td>
<td>ع-م-ل</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 Geminate verb root (al-fi’l al-muDa’af
الفعل المضعف)
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Root consonants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>respond, reply</td>
<td>ر-د-د</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cause</td>
<td>س-ب-ب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solve</td>
<td>ح-ل-ل</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 kitaab al-‘ayn. For more on this, see Sara 1991.
5 For an analysis of the nature of geminate root morphology, see Moore 1990.
1.3 Hamzated verb root (al-fi'i al-mahmooz الفعل المهموم)
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>
<th>example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>take</td>
<td>٢-x-dh</td>
<td>ء-خ-ذ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eat</td>
<td>٢-k-l</td>
<td>ء-ك-ل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ask</td>
<td>s-٢-l</td>
<td>س-٢-ل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>begin</td>
<td>b-d-٢</td>
<td>ب-د-٢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read</td>
<td>q-r-٢</td>
<td>ق-ر-٢</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4 Roots with semi-consonants

1.4.1 Assimilated verb root (al-fi'i al-mithaal الفعل المثال)
"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>
<th>example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arrive</td>
<td>w-S-l</td>
<td>و-ص-ل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be abundant</td>
<td>w-f-r</td>
<td>و-ف-ر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>find</td>
<td>w-j-d</td>
<td>و-ج-د</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be dry</td>
<td>y-b-s</td>
<td>ي-ب-س</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4.2 Hollow verb root (al-fi'i al-ajwaf الفعل الأجوف)
"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 'alif, 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 'alif. 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 'alif.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>root</th>
<th>example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>say</td>
<td>q-w-l</td>
<td>ق-و-ل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be</td>
<td>k-w-n</td>
<td>ك-و-ن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sell</td>
<td>b-y-٣</td>
<td>ب-ي-ع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>live</td>
<td>٣-y-sh</td>
<td>ع-ي-ش</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.4.3 Defective verb root (al-fi‘l al-naaqiṣالفعل 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: ك-ف-ي
- forget: ن-س-ي
- complain: ش-ك-و
- appear: ب-د-و
- build: ب-ن-ي

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: ج-ي-ه
- see: ر-أ-ي
- follow: و-ل-ي
- intend: ن-و-ي

1.5 Quadriliteral verb root (al-fi‘l al-rubaa‘iيالفعل 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 onomatopoeic, that is, derived from particular sounds or repeated motions.

- crystalize: ب-ل-و-ر
- dominate: س-ي-ط-ر
- obstruct: ع-ر-ق-ل
- flutter: ر-ف-ر-ف
- whisper: و-س-و-س
- hum: ؤ-م-ه-م
- shake, quake: ز-ل-ز-ل
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form II:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to unite</td>
<td>waHHada</td>
<td>وَحَدِيَء</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to appoint</td>
<td>'ayyana</td>
<td>عَيْنَي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form V:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to adopt</td>
<td>tabannaa</td>
<td>بَنِيَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form II quadriliteral:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to center</td>
<td>tamarkaza</td>
<td>تَمَرَكَزُ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Verb derivation patterns: 'awzaan al-li'1

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.

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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: ُعَلَمُ أَمْرٍ وَأَفْعَالٌ مُضِيْدَة

Arabic has a verb grid, or template of ten derived “forms” into which any triliteral verb root may theoretically fit.\(^7\) 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 ُعَلَمُ أَمْرٍ produce verbs having to do with knowledge: Form I ُعَلَمُ أَمْرٍ means ‘to know, to be informed’ Form II ُعَلَمُ أَمْرٍ means ‘to teach’ (cause someone to know), Form IV ُعَلَمُ أَمْرٍ means ‘to inform’ (cause someone to be informed), Form V ُعَلَمُ أَمْرٍ means ‘to learn, to study’ (cause one’s self to know). The triconsonantal sequence ُعَلَمٍ is common to all these lexical items.

The base form, or Form I is referred to in Arabic as ُعَلَمُ أَمْرٍ, literally the ‘stripped’ form; meaning the morphologically simplest form. All other forms (II-X) are referred to as ُعَلَمُ أَمْرٍ. literate, ‘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.\(^8\)

Quadriliteral verbs have a more restricted grid of four possible templates or forms into which they fall.

---

\(^7\) 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 ُحَمْزَة, mais d'une forme dérivée IV à préfixe ُس- qui a existé dans d'autres langues sémitiques (ex. assyrien tardif).”
2.2.1 Conventions

2.2.1.1 FORMS AND MEASURES (‘awzaan أوزان): 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 f-ع-ل فعل) keyed into particular morphological patterns. The base form is mujarrad ‘stripped, bare’ and the derived forms are maziil ‘augmented’ on the model of a particular pattern, for example.

انتخب» على وزن افتتعل
“intaxab’aka wazn-i ift’a’al;
i.e., intaxab ‘he elected’ is on the model of ift’a’al;

تَجْنَبُ» على وزن تفعَل
“tajannab’ala 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 Arabic\(^9\)). 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

The verbal noun, or maSdar, 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: \( f^\cdot c^\cdot l \) (faa’ - ‘ayn - laam)

In order to exemplify patterns or prosodic templates in Arabic, a model root \( f^\cdot c^\cdot l \) is used so that any pattern can be referred to or expressed by fitting into it. 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 faa’, any medial consonant by ‘ayn, and any final root consonant by laam. The Form IV verb ‘arsala (‘to send’) would be said to be on the pattern of ‘af’ala (‘alaa wazn ‘af’al-a على وzn أفْلٌ); the verb kataba (‘to write’) is on the pattern of fa’al-a (‘alaa wazn fa’al-a على وzn أفْلٍ), 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 tarjama (‘to translate’) would be said to be on the pattern of fa’al-a (‘alaa wazn fa’al-a على وzn أفْلٍ).

The use of the root \( f^\cdot c^\cdot l \) 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 \( f^\cdot c^\cdot l \) 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.

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10 The lexical root \( f^\cdot c^\cdot l \) has the base meaning of ‘doing’ or ‘making.’
11 The letters/phonemes of the model root are referred to in Arabic as Huruf al-miizaan al-Sarfiyy, ‘the letters of the morphological measure.’ As described by Abd al-Latif et al., “Abd al-Latif et al., ‘Nahruf al-thalathat-u mushakkalat-an bi-Huruf-i al-kallimat-i al-muraadi wa 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 VII 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 kata\text{\textbar t} (katab\text{\textbar at}) 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 -kt\text{\textbar b} carries partial information: third person. The suffix on the present tense stem carries more information: therefore the suffix -\text{\textbar una} (as in ya-kt\text{\textbar b-una}) 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 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.

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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 quadrilateral 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>complete</td>
<td>'akmal-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meet</td>
<td>iftama‘-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use</td>
<td>istaxdam-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-ktub-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-kmil-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-jtami‘-</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.”

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 al-muādī, denoting actions completed at the time to which reference is being made; and the Imperfect المضارع al-muḍārī, for incompletely actions.”

⁵ For a thorough and lucid discussion of Arabic verb aspect and tense see Blachère and Gaudefroy-Demombymes 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, 1:51).

⁶ 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 exp. in the past” (my italics).
1.2.3 The present tense (the imperfect): al-muDaari المضارع

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. In MSA, thirteen present tense inflectional forms are used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present tense stem -ktub 'write'</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>a-ktub-u</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a-ktub-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. ta-ktub-u</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ta-ktub-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. ta-ktub-liu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ta-ktub-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. ya-ktub-u</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ya-ktub-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. ta-ktub-u</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ya-ktub-na</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.

---

7 The term muDaari' literally means 'resembling.' This term was adopted because of the fact that the present tense mood markers on the verb (the suffixed Duamma of the indicative and the faitla 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.

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  
I write; I am writing  
we study; we are studying  
they (m.) translate, are translating  
they (f.) meet; they are meeting

Examples:

I write; I am writing  
I write; I am writing  
we study; we are studying  
they (m.) translate, are translating  
they (f.) meet; they are meeting

1.2.4 **Future tense:** al-*mustaqbal*

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.

Sa- is understood.  
Sa- is understood.  
It will help to a great extent.  
I'll think about that.  
The decision will be taken.  
They will represent their country.

1.2.5 **Past tense:** al-*maadii*

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>
<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><strong>Singular</strong></td>
<td>katab-(tu)</td>
<td></td>
<td>katab-(naa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dual</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plural</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>m.</strong></td>
<td>katab-(ta)</td>
<td>katab-(tuma\a)</td>
<td>katab-(tum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>f.</strong></td>
<td>katab-(ti)</td>
<td>katab-(tuma\a)</td>
<td>katab-(tun\a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>m.</strong></td>
<td>katab-(a)</td>
<td>katab-(aa)</td>
<td>katab-(u)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>f.</strong></td>
<td>katab-(at)</td>
<td>katab-(ata\a)</td>
<td>katab-(na)</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 “otoise” 'alif.\(^9\) It is simply a traditional spelling convention. It is deleted if the verb has a pronoun object suffix, e.g.,

\[\text{كتبوا} \quad \text{katab-uu} \quad \text{they wrote} \]

\[\text{استخدموا} \quad \text{istaxdam-uu} \quad \text{they used} \]

\[\text{ووصفوه} \quad \text{waSaf-uu-hu} \quad \text{They described} \]

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.
HAawal-a ʿinaaadh-a Hayaat-i rajul-in.
He tried to save a man’s life.

ʿaad-at min ʿijaazat-in.
She returned from a vacation.

سلمو بياناً.
sallam-uu bayaaan-an.
They (m.) delivered a statement.

شكرًا لكل ما فعلتموها.
shukran li-kull-I maa faʿal-tum-uu-hu.11
Thank you for everything you (m.pl.) have done.

Non-past action: Depending on the context, the Arabic past tense may also be used to convey other meanings.12 For example:

واصلنا تقريباً.
wasaal-naa taqriib-an.
We are almost there (lit. ‘we have almost arrived’).

بارك الله فيك.
baarak-a llaah-u fi-i-ka.
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.13 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 -um 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. renovations that haven't been completed for two years

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:

ٍعُقْدُ الْجَمْعِ
‘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-/ 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:

ٍعُقْدُ الْجَمْعِ
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.

2.1.1.2 PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE MEANING WITH PRESENT TENSE AND mundhu': When a state or action begins in the past and continues into the present, with specific reference to the length of time that the state or action continued, the present tense is used in Arabic although the past perfect progressive is used in English. In equational sentences the present tense is expressed without a verb. This meaning occurs most frequently with the particle mundhu-u ‘since; for; ago.’ (See also Chapter 16, section 2.3.4.)

(1) Verbal sentences:

أعيش هنا منذ خمس سنوات.
‘a‘fiish-u hunaa mundhu xams-i sanawaat-i
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.

Its trade has been based on export and import for a long time.

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

*كان السفير قد وصل مساء الجمعة.*

*kaan-a l-safiir-u (qad) waSal-a masaa2-a l-jum`at-i.*

The ambassador had arrived Friday evening.

*كُان العلماء توافدوا إلى مدينة بغداد.*

*wa-kaan-a l-ulamaa2-u tawaafad-uu * ila madiinat-i baghdaad-a.*

The scholars had flocked to the city of Baghdad.

*كان محامون أمريكيون شاركوا.*

*kaan-a muHaam-uuna *amriiyy-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* ‘it preceded that’ before the main verb:

*سبق أن التقى مراراً قادة الأكراد.*

*sabaq-a *an-i ltaqaa marraaraan qaadat-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.

She had not requested protection.

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:

...and if not, it will have failed in its role...

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.\(^\text{15}\) 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 emphasizes 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.\(^\text{16}\)

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.\(^\text{17}\) 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-ْو 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.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{قد} & \text{ تحفظت أخيراً} & \text{ولقد وجدته في الصندوق.} \\
\text{qad taHaqqaq-at} & \text{تَحَفَّضت} & \text{wa-la-qad} & \text{وَلَقَد} & \text{wa-jad-tu-hu} & \text{فَي} & \text{l-Sanduuq-i.} \\
\text{It} & \text{was finally / has finally been realized.} & \text{And} & \text{(then) I found it in the box.} \\
\text{قد ارتكب هذه الجريمة منفرداً} & \text{قد ارتكب هذه الجريمة منفرداً} & \text{قد ارتكب هذه الجريمة منفرداً} \\
\text{qad-i} & \text{رَتَكَبَ} & \text{haadhihi} & \text{l-jartiimat-a} & \text{munfarid-an.} & \text{(Indeed) He committed / has committed this crime on his own.} \\
\text{ولذلك فقد حافظوا على المخطوطات} & \text{ولذلك فقد حافظوا على المخطوطات} & \text{ولذلك فقد حافظوا على المخطوطات} \\
\text{wa-li-dhaalika} & \text{هاذَة} & \text{HaafaZ-uu} & \text{a-l-} & \text{l-maxTuirTaat-i.} & \text{And therefore they (indeed) kept the manuscripts.}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{15}\) 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-ta alay-lay-in ‘idhna daxal-at ‘alaa l-maDaari, waHarf-ta taqlil-in ‘idhna 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).
He said "(Indeed) we have agreed with the Israelis."

"La-qad ‘urad-naa 'an nu-thbit-a li-l-jamii‘-i ‘anna-naa fariiq-un jayyid-un."
We (indeed) wanted to prove to everyone that we are a good team.

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.\(^\text{18}\) 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.

"Lam ya-jib shay‘-an. fa-qad ghariq-a fii nawn-in ‘ammiq-in."
He did not answer anything, having fallen into a deep sleep.
(Kouloughli 1994, 274)

2.5.2 qad with present (imperfect) tense = possibility
Used with the indicative present tense, qad implies possibility.

"Bal qad ya-kunn-u hunaaka thalj-un."
There might even be snow.

"Qad ya-tabaadar-u ‘ilaah dihnh-i-ka."
It might cross your mind.

"Qad ta-ttaxidh-u ‘ashkaal-an muxtaliifat-an."
They may adopt different shapes.

"Qad ta-kunn-u ‘akthara ‘ahamiyyat-an."
It might be of greater importance.

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.

\(^{18}\)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, ll:106). These include verbs such as *kaad-a/yaa-kaad-u* ‘to almost [do something]; be on the point of [doing something]’ and *‘awshak-a yuushik-u* ‘to be on the verge’ of doing something.

**Verbs of appropinquation**

They indicate proximity or nearness to an action, but not quite the achievement of it, referred to by Wright as verbs of “appropinquation” (1967, 11:106).

**Example:**

The sun had almost risen.

**Translation:**

The subject was almost erased from Arab memory.

**Example:**

The curtain had hardly been dropped.

**Translation:**

Sometimes, *kaad-a* or *‘awshak-a* are followed by the subjunctivizing particle *‘an*, in which case the following verb is in the subjunctive:

**Example:**

Sometimes, with *‘awshak-a*, a verbal noun may be used instead of a following verb:

**Translation:**

They almost believed in the existence of a conspiracy (‘belief verged’).

**Example:**

Used in the negative, the implication of *kaad-a* is that an action has just barely taken place, usually translatable as ‘hardly,’ or ‘scarcely.’

**Example:**

**Translation:**

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: \( ja'\text{f}a\text{a} \) (literally ‘to make’)
- to start: \( 'a\text{x}a\text{d}h\text{a} \) (literally, ‘to take’)
- to start: \( bada'\text{a} \) (literally, ‘to begin’)
- to set about: \( Sa\text{a}r\text{a} \) (literally, ‘to become’)\[9mm]

\( 'a\text{S}b\text{a}\text{H}\text{a} \)

It started to attract attention.\[5mm\]

Since the sixties it has started to assume a larger role.

2.6.3 Verbs of continuation

These verbs, when used as auxiliaries, convey the concept of continuing an action or a state:

- \( ba\text{a}t\text{-a} \)


Bأانت البلاد تُعرف به اليوم.

\( ba\text{a}t\text{-i} l-hila\text{a}d\text{-u} tu-\text{'raf-u} bi-hi l-ya\text{w}m\text{-a} \)

The country is still known by it today.

- \( Z\text{a}l\text{-a} \)


ظل بُرَدَّة العبارة.

\( Z\text{a}l\text{-a} yu-\text{raddid-u} l-\text{'ibaarat-a} \)

He kept repeating the expression.

\( Z\text{a}l\text{-a} ya-s\text{'aa} \text{waraa}'\text{a} hadaf-i-hi \)

He continued to pursue (‘after’) his goal.

- \( m\text{a}a\text{a} zaal\text{-a} \)


ما زال الأمر لا يزال تحتاج إلى كثير من الجهد.

\( al-\text{yu}\text{muur-u} laa ta-\text{zaal-u} ta-Htaaj\text{-u} '\text{laa kathiiir-in min-a} l-jahd-i} \)

Matters still require much effort.

- \( m\text{aDa}a \)


مضى يشتهى الخضار.

\( w\text{a}-m\text{aDa}a yu-\text{sltiri} l-xDaar-a} \)

He went on to buy vegetables.
baqiya

بقيت القضية تتفاوت وتهداً.

*baqiya-at-i l-qadiyyat-u ta-tafaqam-u wa-ta-hda'-u.*

The problem kept getting dangerous and [then] subsiding.

2.6.4 Simultaneous verbal action (al-Haal

الحال)

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:

... ومَى يَقُولُ ...  

*wa-maDaa ya-quul-u ...*

He continued, saying ...

With different subject:

... شاهدها ترش طلاء...  

*shaahad-a-haa ta-rushsh-u Tilaa'-an.*

He saw her spattering paint.

... لا تتركك تنتظر...  

*laa ta-truk-u-ka ta-ntaZir-u.*

It doesn’t leave you waiting.

\(^{20}\) On the *Haal* حَال 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 مُجَرَّد: '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: faʿal-a فعل, faʿil-a فعل, faʿul-a فعل.

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-ʿnii).

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.\footnote{Traditional Arabic grammar divides verb roots into two major classes: (1) \textit{SaHiiH} ‘sound’ and (2) \textit{mu’tall} ‘\textit{mutfal}’ ‘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.} Paradigm charts for all Form I root types are located at the end of this chapter.

\section*{2 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}. The Form I verbs are presented here by their stem types, which fall into three groups.\footnote{Certain roots may have more than one stem in the past. Sometimes this indicates a meaning difference, sometimes not. For example, \textit{shamal-afya-shmal-u} ‘to contain, include’ and also \textit{shamil-afya-shmal-u} with the same meaning.} 

\subsection*{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 \textit{/a/}, \textit{/u/}, or \textit{/i/}, so there are three subgroups within this class. Occasionally, the present tense may show two different stem vowels.

\subsubsection*{2.1.1 \textit{fa‘al-a/ ya-fa‘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.\footnote{For more analysis of the Form I stem-vowel alternation see McCarthy 1991, esp. pp. 69–70, and see also McOmber 1995, 178–85.}

\begin{itemize}
  \item to gather, to collect \textit{jama‘-a/ya-jma‘-u}
  \item to open; to conquer \textit{fataH-a/ya-faTah-u}
  \item to go \textit{dhahab-a/ya-dhhab-u}
  \item to grant \textit{manaH-a/ya-mnaH-u}
  \item to remove, take off \textit{xala‘-a/ya-xla‘-u}
\end{itemize}

\subsubsection*{2.1.2 \textit{fa‘al-a/ ya-fa‘al-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.

\begin{itemize}
  \item to return, to go back \textit{raja‘-a/ya-rja‘-u}
  \item to dig \textit{Hafar-a/ya-Hfar-u}
\end{itemize}
to carry  Hamal-a/ya-Hmil-u  حمل / حمل

to know  'araf-a/ya-'rif-u  عرف / عرف

to acquire, possess  malak-a/ya-mlik-u  ملك / ملك

2.1.3 fa‘al-a/ ya-f‘ul-u

The past tense stem vowel is fatHa, the present tense stem vowel is Damma.

to rub  farak-a/ya-fruk-u  فرك / فرك

to leave  tarak-a/ya-truk-u  ترك / ترك

to request, ask for  Talab-a/ya-Thub-u  طلب / طلب

to study  daras-a/ya-drus-u  درس / درس

to transfer  naqal-a/ya-nqul-u  نقل / نقل

2.2 Past tense stem vowel is kasra: fa‘il-a/ ya-f‘al-u

When the past tense stem vowel is kasra, the present tense stem vowel is normally fatHa.

to drink  sharib-a/ya-shrab-u  شرب / شرب

to do, make; to work  ‘amil-a/ya-‘mal-u  عمل / عمل

to know  ‘alim-a/ya-‘lam-u  علم / علم

to hear  sami‘-a/ya-sma‘-u  سمع / سمع

2.3 Past tense stem vowel is Damma: fa‘ul-a/ ya-f‘ul-u

This Form I stem has Dammus 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  thaqul-a/ya-thqul-u  ثقيل / ثقيل

(adjective: ‘heavy’ thaqil

(kabur-a/ya-kbur-u  كبير / كبير

(adjective: ‘big, great’ kabir)

to be good  Hasun-a/ya-Hsun-u  حسن / حسن

(adjective: ‘good’ Hasan)

2.4 Examples of Form I sound verbs in context

َبَعْثَ اللَّيْلَةَ عَلَى الْجِبَالِ.  يدفعون الثمن.
ya-hTil-u l-thalj-u ‘alaa l-jibaal-i.  ya-dfa‘-uuna l-thaman-a.
Snow falls on the mountains.  They are paying the price.
Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

A number of representatives attended the meeting. It opened the door.

3 Geminate verb root (al-\textit{fi}'al-muDa'af)\(^4\)

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 ‘rada\(d\)-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’).\(^5\) 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 (\textit{-tu, -ta, -ti, -tuma, -naa, -tuna, -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 \textit{-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 \textit{fa’al-a} /ya-\textit{f’ul-u} (a/u) \(\rightarrow\) \textit{la’l-a} /ya-\textit{lu’l-u}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>to show, indicate</th>
<th>dall-a/ya-dull-u</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>past tense split stem:</td>
<td>dalal-tu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present tense split stem:</td>
<td>ya-dlul-na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^4\) The technical Arabic term for “doubled” is given as \textit{muDa’af} in ‘Abd al-Latif et al. (1997, 140) and as \textit{muDa’af} by Wright 1967 (1:69).

\(^5\) 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  
\[\text{past tense split stem: } HaT\text{T}-a/ya-HuT-tu \]
\[\text{present tense split stem: } ya-HuT-tu \]

3.2.2 \( fa\'al-a/ya-fa\'il-u \) (a/i) \( \rightarrow \) \( fa\'l-a/ya-fa\'l-u \)

be small, few; diminish  
\[\text{past tense split stem: } qal-l-a/ya-qil-l-u \]
\[\text{present tense split stem: } ya-qil-l-na \]

to be complete  
\[\text{past tense split stem: } \text{tamm-a/ya-timm-u} \]
\[\text{present tense split stem: } ya-tmim-na \]

3.2.3 \( fa\'il-a/ya-fa\'il-u \) (i/a) \( \rightarrow \) \( fa\'l-a/ya-fa\'l-u \)

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.\(^6\)

to want; to like  
\[\text{past tense split stem: } wad-d-a/ya-wadd-u \]
\[\text{present tense split stem: } ya-wdad-na \]

to continue, keep doing (s.th.)  
\[\text{past tense split stem: } Zal-l-a/ya-Zall-u \]
\[\text{present tense split stem: } ya-Zlal-na \]

3.1 Examples of Form I geminate verbs in context

tâm ġ l-ittifaaq-u.  
Sayyaarat-un \( \text{ta-murr-u } fi\l i-shaari}^{	ext{c-t}} \)  
The agreement was completed.  
a car passing by in the street

radd-at \( \text{alaa su}^{	ext{t}}\text{aal-in.} \)  
K\( \text{ayf-a } \text{ta-timm-u } \text{t}^{	ext{c}}\text{amal}^{	ext{c-yya}}\text{u-ta-l-xlaa}^{	ext{c-t}} \text{-}\)  
She responded to a question.  
How are the evacuation operations accomplished?

\(^6\) Wehr (1979) gives both the citation form and the split-stem form for this stem type of doubled verb.
4 Hamzated verb root (al-li‘l al-mahmuuz)  
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  
to take ’axadh-a/ya-xudh-u  
أَكَلٌ  /  يَأَكُلُ  /  يَآخَدٌ  /  يَآخُدُ

4.2 Hamza-medial Form I verbs  
to ask (s.o. s.th.)  
सळ /  यसळ  
sa‘al-a/ya-s’al-u  
الَّامُ /  يَلَامُ

to repair, to bandage  
la‘am-a/ya-l’am-u  

4.3 Hamza-final Form I verbs  
to begin bada‘-a/ya-bda‘-u  
to read qara‘-a/ya-qra‘-u  
 وقد /  يَقَرَّا  
بَدَأٌ /  يَبْدَأُ

Examples of Form I hamzated verbs in context:

‘alay-naa ‘an na-bda‘-a min-a l-Sifr-i.  
fī Bayrūt bīdātī.  
We have to begin from zero.  
In Beirut starts the magic of the East.

5 Assimilated verb root (al-li‘l al-mithaal)  
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.  

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  
to be wajab-a/ya-jib-u  
جَبَ /  يَجِبُ  
ecessary

Wright 1967 (1:78-81) provides an extensive analysis of this verb type in Classical Arabic.
5.1.2 fatHa/fatHa

to fall  waqa'c-a/ya-qa'c-u  وَقَعُ / يَقَعُ  to put  waDa'c-a/ya-Da'c-u  وَضَعُ / يَضَعُ

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'. They behave as regular or sound verbs.

5.2.1 kasra/fatHa

to ache, hurt  waji'c-a/ya-wja'c-u  وَجَعُ / يَجَعُ
to like, love  wadd-a/ya-wadd-u8  وَدُ / يَودُ

5.2.2 Damma/Damma

to be wide  wasu'c-a/ya-wsu'c-u  وَسَعُ / يَوسُعُ

5.2.3 yaa'-initial

to be easy  yasir-a/ya-ysir-u9  يَسِرُ / يَبِيسُ
to wake up  yaqiZ-a/ya-yqaZ-u10  يَقِطُ / يَبِقَطُ

Examples of Form I assimilated verbs in context:

يلعب أن يتوقف.

ya-jib-u ُان ta-tawaqqa-fa.

They must stop (‘it is necessary that they stop’).

وصفوها.

waSaf-uu-haa.

They described her.

وصل الرئيس إلى تونس أمس.

waSal-a l-ra'iiis-u ْلِلآا tuunis-a ْلَامُسِ.

The president arrived in Tunis yesterday.

6 Hollow root (al-fi' al-ajwaf)

الفعل الأجواف

Hollow verbs are ones in which the second root consonant is actually a semi-consonant: either waaw or yaa’. These two semi-consonants undergo various mutations, turning into ‘alif, 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’ is not present and is replaced by ‘alif. However, to look up one of these words

8 This verb is geminate as well as assimilated. Phonotactic rules prevent the initial waaw from becoming assimilated in this case.

9 Also yasir-a/ya-ysir-u ‘to be small; to be easy.’

10 Also ya-quZ-a/ya-yquZ-u.
in a dictionary, one must know what the medial root consonant is, either waaw or 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: waaw, yaa’, or ‘alif.

6.1 Hollow-waaw
These verbs have waaw as their medial radical. The stem vowel in the past tense is ‘alif when it is long and 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 waaw when long and Damma when short. The third person feminine plural is used to exemplify the short stem.

to say  qaul-u (qul-tu)/ya-qul-u (ya-qul-na)

to visit  zaar-u (zur-tu)/ya-zuur-u (ya-zur-na)

6.2 Hollow yaa’
These verbs have yaa’ as the medial radical. The stem vowel in the past tense is ‘alif when it is long and 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 yaa’ when long and kasra when short. The third person feminine plural is used to exemplify the short stem.

to live  ‘aash-u (‘ish-tu)/ya-‘ish-u (ya-‘ish-na)

to sell  ba‘a‘-u (bi‘-tu)/ya-bi‘-u (ya-bi‘-na)

6.3 Hollow ‘alif
These verb roots have either medial waaw or yaa’ but do not show it in the present tense, using ‘alif instead. The stem vowel in the past tense is ‘alif when it is long and 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 ‘alif when long and fathla when short. The third person feminine plural is used to exemplify the short stem.

to sleep  naam-u (nim-tu)/ya-naam-u (ya-nam-na)
(root: n-w-m)

to fear  xaaf-u (xif-tu)/ya-xaaf-u (ya-xaf-na)
(root: x-w-f)

to obtain  naal-u (nik-tu)/ya-naal-u (ya-nal-na)
(root: n-y-l)
6.3.3 Examples of Form I hollow verbs in context

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Examples of Form I hollow verbs in context.

Ya-'iish-u marHalat-an-i ntqaalityyat-an.
It is living [through] a transitional stage.

La 'afham-u maadhaa ta-quul-u.
I don’t understand what you are saying.

7 Defective verb root (al-fi‘l al-naaqis) (الفعل الناقص)

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

to appear, to seem badaa/ya-bduu

to hope; wish; request rajaa/ya-ruu

to call, invite da‘aa/ya-d‘uu

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

to build banaa/ya-bnii

to be sufficient kafaa/ya-kfii

to walk mashaa/ya-mshii

7.2.2 -ya/-aa verbs

to remain baqiy-a/ya-bqaa

to forget nasiy-a/ya-nsaa

to encounter laqiy-a/ya-lqaa

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  
\[ \text{sa}'aa/ya-s'aa} \]

7.2.4 -ya/-ii verb

to be near; to follow; to govern  
\[ \text{waliy-a/ya-lii} \]

7.3 Examples of Form I defective verbs in context

\[ \text{ta-nmuu bi-buT-in. A number of voters complained.} \]

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  
\[ \text{jaa}'-a (ji'-tu)/ya-jii'-u (ya-ji'-na)} \]

8.2 Hamzated and defective

to come  
\[ \text{ataa/ya-''tti} \]

8.3 Assimilated and defective (al-fi'/al-lafiif al-mafruuq)

These roots have waaw or yaa in the first and third root consonants.

\[ \text{to perceive, be aware of} \]

\[ \text{wa''aa/ya-''ii} \]

\[ \text{to be near; to follow; to govern} \]

\[ \text{waliya/yalii} \]
8.4 Hollow and defective (al-fi`l al-laffi al-maqruun 
الفعل اللفيف المقرون)
Where a root is both hollow and defective, the medial root semi-consonant 
(usually waaw) appears as a regular consonant:

to intend nawaal/yawii 
(\root{n-w-y})
to narrate rawaaal/yawii 
(\root{r-w-y})

8.5 Examples of Form I doubly weak verbs in context

\ll{(sa-taraal) li`annii rukuub\-a}
\ll{(l-xayl\-i) He has to come here.}
because I am fond of riding horses

9 Verbal nouns of Form I

Form I verbal nouns have many variations of pattern.\textsuperscript{12} 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. \textquotesingle{}Abd al-Latif, \textquotesingle{}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:

\textbf{fa`l}

\ll{(support da`m d`aum jumping qafz)}

\textsuperscript{12} Beeston states (1970, 35): \textit{“Morphologically, the verbal abstracts which match primary verbs have unpredictable word-patterns, and constitute lexical items.”} \textquotesingle{}Abd al-Latif, \textquotesingle{}Umar and Zahran declare that \textit{“The verbal nouns of the base form are many and varied and cannot be known except by resorting to language [reference] books” ma\textsuperscript{saad\textsuperscript{a}} ra\textsuperscript{a} l-thula\textsuperscript{a}th\textsuperscript{a}y\-i kath\textsuperscript{a}rin\-i wa\-mutanaw\textsuperscript{a}ru\-c\textsuperscript{a}n laa lu\textsuperscript{a} t\textsuperscript{a}n\-\textsuperscript{a}n il\textsuperscript{a}\textsuperscript{a}\textsuperscript{a} bi\textsuperscript{a}t\textsuperscript{a}n\-\textsuperscript{a}\textsuperscript{a} l\textsuperscript{a}a\textsuperscript{a}\textsuperscript{a} \textsuperscript{a}ili\textsuperscript{a}b\textsuperscript{a}h\textsuperscript{a}t\textsuperscript{a} (1997, 83).}
9.2 Form I geminate root verbal nouns

Common verbal noun patterns for Form I geminate verbs include:

**fa‘āl**
- 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‘uula**
- heroism: buTuula
- flexibility: muruuna

**fi‘aal**
- mixture: mizaaj
- scope, sphere: niTaaq

**fi‘aala ~ fa‘aala**
- writing: kitaaba
- studying: diraasa
- splendor: fuxaama
- happiness: sa‘aada

**fu‘laan ~ fi‘laan**
- forgiveness: ghufraan
- loss; losing: fiqdaan

**maf‘il ~ maf‘ila**
- logic: manTiq
- knowledge; knowing: ma‘rifa

**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
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fa‘al
number 'adad عدد reason sabab سبب

fa‘uula
necessity Daruura ضرورة

fa‘aala
indication dalaala دالة

fi‘la
paucity qilla قلة

9.3 Form I hamzated verbal nouns
fa‘l, fu‘l, fi‘l
command 'amr أمر part juz’ جزء
light; brightness Daw’ ضوء burden 'ib عبء

fu‘aal
question su‘aal سؤال

fi‘aala , fa‘aala
reading qira‘a قراءة beginning badaa‘a/bidaaya بداية

fu‘uul
growth nushuuّ نشوء refuge lujuu لجوء

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  وجدان

mafa'la
  wishing, wanting  mawadda  مودة

9.5 Form I hollow root verbal nouns

Common hollow verb verbal noun patterns include:

fa'il

- victory  fawz  فوز
- sleep  nawm  نوم

fa'la

- revolution  thawra  ثورة
- return  'awda  عودة

fa'il: 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  عود

fi'aal and fi'aala: 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, setting up  qiyaam  قيام  mathematics;  riyada  رياضة
  (root: q-w-m)
- visit  ziyaara  زياره  increase  ziyada  زيادة
  (root: z-w-r)

fa'laa

- chaos; disorder  fawDa  فوضى

fa'alan

- flying  Tayaraan  طيران  flooding  fayaDaan  فيضان

mafaal ~ mafiil ~ mafila: These are mitmii masdars.

- destiny  maSiir  مصر  obtaining  manaal  مثال
- livelihood  ma'fisha  معيشة  procession  masilra  مسيرة

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; ٌائف oblivious nafy نَفَيْ
kindness

fa‘aal ~ fi‘aal; In this verbal noun pattern, the final root semi-consonant shifts to hamza.

building binaa‘ بناء space faDaa‘ فضاء
singing ghinaa‘ غِنَاء meeting liqaa‘ لقاء

fi‘ala
building binaaya بناء protection Himaaya حماية

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, ‘uluww عَلْوُ growth numuww نمو
altitude

fa‘laa: Because these nouns terminate with an added /-aa/ suffix, they are feminine in gender.

piety taqwaa تَقاوٌ complaint shakwaa شكؤ

fi‘laan ~ fu‘laan
aggression; ‘udwaan عدوان forgetting; nisyaan نسيان
hostility

maf‘an (maf‘al معفعل)
meaning ma‘nan معنى effort; striving mas‘an معنى

9.7 Form I doubly weak or 'mixed' verb roots

9.7.1 Hollow and hamzated

maf‘il:
coming maji‘ مَجِّي

9.7.2 Defective and hamzated

fa‘l
opinion ra‘y رأي

fu‘la
seeing ru‘ya رؤية
9.7.3 Hollow and defective
fi‘la and fa‘al: In these verbal noun patterns, the medial waaw assimilates to the yaa³, yielding a double yaa³:

\[
\text{intent } \text{niyya} \quad \text{ironing } \text{kayy} \quad \text{키}
\]

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, dawaa³  
- remedy  

9.8 Form I verbal nouns in context

قبل السباحة إلى البحر نحتاج إلى مجهر لرؤيته.

qabl-a l-sibaHat-i ‘ilaa l-baHri
before swimming to the sea

We need a microscope to see it.

ما معني هذا؟

qiyaam-u dawlat-i qaamun-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 baHthi/  
  - qawaa³id  

Kuttaab  

For more information on AP morphology and syntax, see Chapter 6 on participles. Examples are provided to illustrate how various root types fit into the pattern. The items are categorized as either noun or adjective, but many have both noun and adjective functions.

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.
Adjectives:

former  saabiq  سابِقٌ  empty  faarigh  فَارِغٌ

10.1.2 Geminate root: faaEE

In the active participle of the geminate root, the usual form of the AP is faaEE, 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  جَافِ  hot  Haarr  حَارِ

important  haamm  هَامٌ  urgent, pressing  maass  مَاسٌ

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’  قَارِئٌ / قِرأَ

accident; emergency  Taari’a/Tawaari’

refugee  laaji’/laaji’uuna  لاجِئٌ / لاجِئَونَ

Adjective:

final; last  3’aaxir15/’awaaxir~’aaxir-uuna  أَخْرُ / أَخْرَ / أَخْرَ أَخْرُونَ

calm, peaceful  haadi’

10.1.4 Assimilated root: faa’il

Assimilated roots are regular in Form I active participle formation.

Noun:

mother  waalida/aat  والِدَةٌ / وَالِدَاتُ  import/s  waarid/aat  وَاردٌ / وَارِدَاتِ

15 The plural *mawaadd* is the form that the plural pattern *fawaad’il* takes in geminate nouns because of the phonological restriction on sequences that include a vowel between identical consonants. *mawaadd → mawaadd. It is diphtote (CaCaCIC pattern).

15 From the hamzated root ‘x-r; the initial *hamza* followed by the long /aal/ of the faa’il pattern creates /’aal/, spelled with ‘alif madda.
father waalid/-uuna والد / والدُون duty; homework waajib/-aat واجب / واجبَات

Adjective:
wide, broad waasiء واسع dry; arid yaabis يابس

10.1.5 Hollow root: faa’il
Hollow roots of Form I have hamza between the long /aa/ and the short /ij/ of the AP pattern.

Noun:

visitor/s zaa’ir/zuwwaar زائر / زوار fluid; liquid/s saa’il/sawaa’il سائل / سائلَات being/s kaa’in/-aat كانَات / كَانَات circle/s; department/s daa’ira/dawaa’il دائرة / دوافِر

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 / قَضاة corner/s zaawiyaa/zawaayaa راوية / رَوَايات club/s naadin/‘andiya~nawaad-in نادِ / نَادِيات ـ نوادِ pedestrian/s; infantry maashin/mushaat ماسِ / مَسَات

Adjective:
walking maashin ماسِ last; past maaDin ماضِ remaIning baaqin باقِ كافِ

10.1.7 Examples of Form I AP in context

في حاجة ماسة إلى المساعدة في حاجة ماسة إلى المساعدة
al-mashaari‘u l-baaqiyat-u fi Haajat-in maassat-in ـَلَاا l-musaa‘adat-i the remaining projects in urgent need of help
The base form triliteral verb

قوافل أيام زمان
qawaafil-u s'ayam-i zamaan-in

الثلاثاء الجاري
al-thulaathaa'-'u l-jaarii

تuesday
this ('current')

the caravans of yesteryear

في جلسة طارئة
fi jalsat-in Taari'at-in

at an emergency session

ظلت في غيابية نامة.
Zall-at fi ghaybuubat-in taammat-in.

She remained in a complete coma.

10.2 Form I passive participle (PP): maf'uuul مَفْعُول

The maf'uuul 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-mashaarri~

prisoner/s masjuun/-uuna

group/s majmuu'~aat

Adjective:

famous mashhuur مشهور
reserved mahljuuz مَحْجُور

blessed mabruuk مُبَرُوك
audible masmuu~ مَسْمَوع

10.2.2 Geminate root

Noun:

yield: marduud مردود
return manuscript/s maxTuuT/ aat

Adjective:

lucky maHzuuZ مَحْزُوًز
beloved maHbuub مَحْبُوب

10.2.3 Hamzated root

Noun:

official mas'uuul مَسْؤُول
readable maqruu~ مَقرَوٌ

Adjective:

taken ma'xuuudh مَآخُوذ
peopled ma'huul مَاوُل
10.2.4 Assimilated root

Noun:
- topic, mawDuūr مَوْضُع
- subject

Adjective:
- present; mawjūd مُوجَد
- inherited mawruūth مَورَث

10.2.5 Hollow root

In the hollow root, the mafʿuul pattern becomes mafʿuul for roots whose middle radical is waaw, and mafiil for roots whose middle radical is yaa1:

- blamed maluum (I-w-m)
- sold mabīt (b-y-)

10.2.6 Defective root

In the defective root, the mafʿuul PP pattern becomes mafʿuw for roots whose final radical is waaw and mafiyy for roots whose final radical is yaa1:

Adjective:
- invited madʿuw (d-c-w)
- stuffed maHshuww مُحْشَوٌ

forgotten mansiyy (n-s-y)
spoken maHkiyy مَحْكَيٌ

10.2.7 Examples of Form I PP's in context

| طاولة محاوزة | من مصادر موثوق بها |
| Taawilat-un mahljuuzat-un | min maSaadir-a mawthuuq-in bi-haa |
| a reserved table | from trusted sources |

| تمر مكبوسة | خططها مفروه |
| tumuur-un makbuusat-un | xaTT-u-haa maqruuʿ-un. |
| pressed dates | Her handwriting is legible. |

| محسوٌ بالقش | العربية المحكية |
| maHshuww-un bi-l-qashsh-i | al-faрабیyyat-u l-maHkiyyat-u |
| stuffed with straw | spoken Arabic |

16 In spoken Arabic this PP is often converted to maHshiyy, used especially when referring to stuffed meat or other food items.
Form I: The base form triliteral verb

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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Jxi</th>
<th>AP: فاعل</th>
<th>PP: مفعلون</th>
<th>VN: فعل</th>
<th>'to do; to make'</th>
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**Form I Geminate root: دَلَّ , يَدَلُّ AP: دِلَّ PP: مِّدَلَّ VN: دَلََّةٌ 'to indicate'**

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**Note:** The table continues with similar entries for other forms and syntactic cases.
Form I: The base form triliteral verb  

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**Form I Hamza-initial root: أَكَلُُّ ِبَأَكَلُُّ AP: أَكَلُُّ PP: مَأَكُولٌ VN: 'to eat'**
Form I hamza-medial root: سَأَلَّ، يُسَأَلُ | AP: | مسؤول | VN: | سُوَّالُ | ‘to ask’

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Form I: The base form triliteral verb  

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| أنا | أقرأ | قرأ | قرأت | قَرِئَتْ | قرأ | قرأت |
| أنت | أقرأ | قرأ | قرأت | قرأت | قرأ | قرأت |
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| مُ-هر | قرأ | قرأ | قرأ | قرأ | قرأ | قرأ |
| مُ-ها | قرأ | قرأ | قرأ | قرأ | قرأ | قرأ |

Form 1 hamza-final root: قرأ، يقرأ  AP: قارئ PP: مَقْرَؤُونَ VN: قراءة ‘to read’
### Form I Assimilated root: وضع، وضع

**AP:** وضع
**PP:** وضع
**VN:** وضع ‘to put, to place’

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### Form I: The base form triliteral verb

**Root:** زرّار • بَبِور • مَزَور

**VN:** زِيارة • 'to visit'

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**AP:** زرّار | **PP:** بَبِور | **VN:** زِيارة • 'to visit'
Form I Hollow Medial yaa root: بّيَعَ • بّيِعُهُ • بّيِعُهَا • بّيِعُهُمَّةَ 'to sell'

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### Form I: The base form triliteral verb

AP: خَافَ *خَافَ*  
PP: مَخْوَفُ *خوفُ*  
VN: حَفَّ *خوفَ*

**Root:** خَافٌ, يُخَافٍ  

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**Meaning:** *to fear*

*Note:* The table shows the verb forms for the triliteral root خَافٌ, يُخَافٍ in Form I.
### Form I Defective root (waaw): دعَعَ/ دعُوَةَ / دَعَاءَ 'to call, invite'

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* For these forms, the vocalization may vary depending on the specific context or dialect.
### Form I: The base form triliteral verb

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#### AP: بَنِيَّ— بنَئٍ، بِنيٍّ

#### PP: مَكَّيٍّ— مَكُّٔ، مِكَّٔ

#### VN: بناء ‘to build’

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Form I Defective (-iy/-aa): AP: نسيتُي, ينسيتُي PP: نسيتُي, ينسيتُي VN: 'to forget'
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- This verb has a replacive form for the imperative.
### Form I Doubly weak root:  
\( رَأَيِ ، بَرَيِ )

**AP**: رأى  
**PP**: متيني  
**VN**: رأى ‘to see’

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### Form I Doubly weak: 

**AP**: وَعَ جِيِ، یُعِیِ  
**PP**: مُوعَیِ، وَعَ جِیِ  
**VN**: وَعیِ، یُعیِ  'to perceive'

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Note: The table shows the conjugation of the verb in different tenses and moods in Arabic.
Form I Hollow, defective root: نَويّا، يَنويّ 'to intend'

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| أنتم | أَنْتُمْ | نَويّا | نَويّا |
| هم | هُمْ | نَويّا | نَويّا |

AP: نَويّا, PP: نَويّا, VN: ‘to intend’
Form II

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: fa-ra-l-a  فعل / yu-fa-ril-u  فعل

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 (kassar-a ‘to smash, to shatter’). Form II may also be denominative, used to form verbs out of nouns (e.g., Sawwar-a ‘to photograph’ from Suura, ‘picture’). 1

1.3 Transitivity

Form II is normally transitive but may sometimes be intransitive. 2 It may also be doubly transitive, taking two direct objects (e.g., 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 Damma and the present tense stem vowel is kasra (yu-darris-u).

---

1 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:

- to unite: waHHad-a/yu-waHHid-u (وَحِدُ / يَوَحِدُ) (from ‘one’ waHHid)
- to head: ra’s-arayn-ra’sis-u (رَأسٌ / يَرْأسُ) (from ‘head’ ra’s)
- to name: sammaayi/yu-sammii (سَمَيٍ / يَسْمَي) (from ‘name’ ism)

2 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.).
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: $C_1aC_2C_3aC_2^*$ in the past tense and $yuC_1aC_2C_3iC_2^*$ 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 ‘alif as the hamza seat in the past tense, and 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 ‘alif to waaw.

- to delay: ‘ajjal-a/yu-‘ajjil-u
- to establish, found: ‘assas-a/yu-‘assis-u
- to affirm: ‘akkad-a/yu-‘akkid-u
- to affect: ‘aththar-a/yu-‘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).

\[ \text{to appoint as head} \; \text{ra’}’as-a/\text{yu-ra’}’is-u \]

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‘-un-haa ‘they congratulated her’).

\[ \begin{array}{ll}
\text{to free} & \text{barra‘-a/yu-barrti-u} \\
\text{to congratulate} & \text{hanna‘-a/yu-hanni-u} \\
\text{to hide} & \text{xabba‘-a/yu-xabbi-u} \\
\text{to heat, warm} & \text{dajji‘-a/yn-dajfi-u} \\
\end{array} \]

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.

\[ \begin{array}{ll}
\text{to sign, endorse} & \text{waqqa‘-a/yu-waqqi‘-u} \\
\text{to stop, halt} & \text{waqqaf-a/yu-waqqif-u} \\
\end{array} \]

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.

\[ \begin{array}{ll}
\text{to create} & \text{kawwan-a/yu-kawwin-u} \\
\text{to change} & \text{ghayyur-a/yu-ghayyr-u} \\
\text{to photograph} & \text{Sawwar-a/yu-Sawwir-u} \\
\text{to appoint} & \text{‘ayyan-a/yu-‘ayyin-u} \\
\end{array} \]

7 Defective roots in Form II

Defective roots, where the final radical is either waaw or yaa‘, behave as -aaj-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.
to cover  
ghaTTaa/yu-ghaTTii

to pray  
Sallaay/yu-Sallii

to sing  
ghannaay/yu-ghannii

to sacrifice  
DaHHaa/yu-DaHHii

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.)  
°addaad/yu-°addii

8.2 Hamzated and hollow

to help, aid (s.o. or s.th.)  
°ayyad-d/yu-°ayyid-u

8.3 Hollow and defective

to greet; keep alive; grant long life  
Hayyaa/yu-Hayyi

9 Examples of Form II verbs in context

Allah yuslmuk.
allaah-u yu-sallim-u-ka.
(May) God keep you safe.

yu-hanni°-u l-ra’i’is-a l-jaddid-a.
He congratulates the new president.

nafrab bukm.
nu-raHHiib-u bi-kum.
We welcome you.

pafrab hikra.
DaHHay-tum kathiir-an.
You (pl.) have sacrificed much.

aSda’r-a buyaan-an naddad-a fihi bi-stimraa’ l-IlHtillaal-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‘iil تَفَعِّيلَ; occasionally taf‘illa تَفَعِّيلة. Variations on Form II verbal nouns also include taf‘aal تَفَعِّال and taf‘ila تَفَعِّلة.

3 For an extensive list of Form II verbal noun variants in Classical Arabic see Wright 1967, l:115–16.
10.1 Sound/regular root

| arrangement      | tartiib | ترتيب | statue           | timthual | تمثال         |
| reminder: souvenir | tadhkaar | تذكار | experiment       | tajriba  | تجربة         |

10.2 Geminate root

| repetition       | takraar | تكرار | renewal          | tajdiid | تجديد         |

10.3 Hamzated root

| founding         | ta’siis | تاسيس | visa             | ta’shiira | تأشيرة      |
| congratulating   | tahni’a | تهنئة | heating          | tadfi’a  | تدافئة       |

10.4 Assimilated root

| unification      | tawHiid | توحيد | clarification    | tawDiiH | توضيح       |

10.5 Hollow root

| creation         | takwiin | تكوين | appointing       | ta’yiin | تعين          |
| photographing    | taSwiir | تصوير | change           | taghyiir | تغيير        |

10.6 Defective root

| naming           | tasmiya | تسمية | covering         | taghtiya | تغطية        |

10.7 Doubly weak

Here are a few examples of doubly weak Form II verbal nouns.

10.7.1 Hamzated and defective

| carrying out; performing | ta’diya | تأدية |

10.7.2 Hamzated and hollow

| assistance | ta’yiid | تأيد |

10.7.3 Hollow and defective

| greeting, salutation | taHiyya | تحية |

10.8 Borrowing from Form I

Occasionally a Form II verb uses a verbal noun derived from Form I:

| singing     | ghinaa’ | غَناء | praying, prayer | Salaat | صلاة |
10.9 Examples of Form II verbal nouns in context


tadfi’at-un markaziyyat-un

central heating


ta’yiin-u li-iwaa’-i mudiiiran li-daa’irat-i

appointing the general as director of the department


taqriir-u maSiir-i-hi

self-determination (‘deciding its future’)

al-taghyiiraat-u l-siyaasiyyat-u

political changes

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): mufa’iil مَفَعُول

11.1.1 Sound/regular root

coordinator; munassiq منسق smuggler muharrib مُهَرِّب

inspector mufattish مفتتش drug/s muxaddir-faat مخدرات

11.1.2 Geminate root

editor muHarir محرر analyst muHallil محلل

11.1.3 Hamzated root

muezzin mu’adhdhin مؤذن congratulating muhanni مهنئ

11.1.4 Assimilated root

connecting muwaSSil موصل

11.1.5 Hollow root

distinctive mumayyiz مميز creator: mukawwin مكون

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 kasmitayn:

praying\(^4\) muSall-in مُصَلّ singer/singing mughann-in مُغَنِّ

\(^4\) Also, ‘person in prayer.’
11.1.7 Examples of Form II active participles in context

- **فُي عمر مبكر** | منسقّ نشاطات الأمم المتحدة
  *fī 'umr mubakkir-in*
  *mu'nassiq-u nashā'aTaat-i l-'umam-i*

- **at an early age** | the coordinator of UN activities
  *l-muttaHidat-i*

- **مُهَرِّبُ المخدرات** | محلل التّوَّن السياسيّة العسكرية
  *muharrib-uu l-mukhaddir-aat*
  *muHallil-u l-shur'uu-n-i l-siyāasiyyat-i l-askariyyat-i*

- **drug smugglers** | political-military affairs analyst
  *(smugglers of drugs)*

- **العربية المنظمة** | المنظمة الأقطار العربيّة المصدرة للنفط
  *munaZZamat-u l-'aqTaar-i l-'arabiyyat-i l-muSaddirat-i li-l-nafT-i*

- **for Arab oil-exporting countries**

11.2 Form II passive participle (PP): *muFA 'al*

11.2.1 Sound/regular root

- **volume; tome** | مُجَلَد
  *mujallad*
  *muqadd*

- **complicated** | مُعَفَّق
  *mu'aqqad*
  *muwiąz*

- **triangle** | مُتَلَّك
  *muthallath*
  *mukab*

- **cubic; cubed** | مُعَفَّق
  *muka'ab*

- **square** | مُرَبِّع
  *murabba'
  *mussalāH*

- **armed**

12.2 Assimilated root

- **employee** | موظِّف
  *muwaZZaf*
  *muwaffaq*

- **successful; lucky**

12.3 Geminate root

- **shattered** | مُفَكَّك
  *muFakkak*
  *muHaddad*

- **set, delineated**

12.4 Hamzated root

- **nationalized** | مُؤَمِّم
  *mu'ammam*
  *mu'assasa*

- **foundation**

12.5 Hollow root

- **illustrated** | مُصوّر
  *muSawwar*
  *mu'ayyan*

- **appointed, designated**

12.6 Defective root

The passive participle of defective roots ends with 'alif maqṣura and is inflected as an indeclinable noun or adjective (declension seven).

- **educated, raised** | مُغطَّى
  *murabbān*
  *munāqṣībān*

- **covered** | مغطَّى
  *mughuTīn*

- **preserves, jam**
### 11.2.7 Examples of Form II passive participles in context

#### مجمع مفصل
mu'jam-un mufassal-un  
*a detailed lexicon*

#### القواعد المفصلة
al-quwwa't-u l-musalla'hat-u  
*the armed forces*

#### في موعد محدد
fi maw'lid-in muhaddad-in  
*at a set time*

#### مصادر مؤممة
maSaaliH-u mu'ammamat-un  
*nationalized interests/assets*

#### قاموس مصور
qaamus-un mu'sawwar-un  
*an illustrated dictionary*

#### السفير المعين
al-safiir-u l-mu'tayyan-u  
*the ambassador-designate*

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**Form II Sound root:**  
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Form II Geminate root: قرر، يقرر  
AP: مقرر  PP: مقرر  VN: مقرر  'to decide'
Form II *hamza-initial root*: تَأَجَّلَ "to delay"

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Form II hamza-final root: **هَنَّاءٍ، يَهِنَّى**

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Active: فعَلٌ
Passive: رِيَاطِنٌ

`to congratulate'
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Perfect</th>
<th>Imperfect</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Perfect</th>
<th>Imperfect</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Form II  Defective root: غطي، يغطي  AP: مغطي  PP: مغطي  VN: مغطي  'to cover'
Form III triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: faa' al-a فاعل / yu- faa'il-u فاعل
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 $C_1aC_2aC_3$ in the past tense and $-C_1aC_2iC_3$ 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:

- to experience  maaras-a/yu-maaris-u مارس / يمارس
- to defend     daafa'a/yu-daafi'u دافع / يدافع
- to assist, help saa'ad-a/yu-saa'id-u ساعد / يساعد
- to observe    raaqab-a/yu-raaqib-u راقب / يراقب

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.) \( \text{raasaal-} \{\text{yu-}\text{raasil-u}\} \)
- to share with (s.o.) \( \text{shaarak-} \{\text{yu-}\text{shaarik-u}\} \)
- to deal with (s.o., s.th.) \( \text{'aalaj-} \{\text{yu-}\text{'aalij-u}\} \)
- to compete with (s.o.) \( \text{saabaq-} \{\text{yu-}\text{saabiq-u}\} \)

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 \( \text{shadda} \) and one where they are written separately, with an intervening \( \text{fatha} \). The following stem patterns occur: \( \text{C}_{1}\text{aaC}_{2}\text{C}_{2}- (\text{faa-}^c) \) and \( \text{C}_{1}\text{aaC}_{2}\text{aC}_{2}- (\text{faa}^a-^c) \) in the past tense, and \( \text{yu-C}_{1}\text{aaC}_{2}\text{C}_{2}- (\text{yu-faa}^{e-}^c) \) or \( \text{yu-C}_{1}\text{aaC}_{2}\text{iC}_{2}- (\text{yu-faa}^{i-}^c) \) in the present.²

- to punish \( \text{qaaSaS-} \{\text{yu-qaaSiS-u}\} \)

4 Hamzated roots in Form III
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 Form III, initial \text{hamza} merges with the long vowel \( \text{-aa} \) of the first syllable in the past tense and it written as one \( \text{'alif} \) with \text{madda}. In the present tense, initial \text{hamza} sits on a \text{waaw} seat because it is preceded by the \text{Damma} of the person-marking prefix:

- to censure, to blame \( \text{'aaxadh-} \{\text{yu-}\text{'aaxidh-u}\} \)
- to consult \( \text{'aamar-} \{\text{yu-}\text{'aamir-u}\} \)

4.2 Medial \text{hamza}
The medial \text{hamza} sits aloof in the past tense of Form III.³ In the present tense it sits on a \text{yuwa} seat because it is followed by a \text{kasra}.

² See Wright 1967, 1:71 for further discussion of this variation.
³ This is because it is situated after a long vowel \( /\text{aa}/ \) and before a short vowel \( /\text{a}/ \). It would have an \( \text{'alif} \) seat, but the general rule is that two \( \text{'alifs} \) cannot follow each other in Arabic script, so the \text{hamza} here floats aloof.
to match; to be suitable for  
laa‘am-ayu-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.

to surprise  
faaja‘-ayu-faaji‘-u

to reward; to be commensurate with  
kaafa‘-ayu-kaafi‘-u

5 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.

to agree with  
waaafaq-ayu-waafiq-u

to face, confront  
waaajah-ayu-waajib-u

6 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.

to answer  
jaawal-ayu-jaawib-u

to try, attempt  
Haawal-ayu-Haawil-u

to consult with  
shaawar-ayu-shaawir-u

to be gentle with  
laayan-ayu-laayin-u

7 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  
nuudaa‘ayu-nuadii

to compete (with)  
baara‘ayu-baarii

to endure, to suffer (s.th.)  
‘aanaa‘ayu-‘aanii
8 Doubly weak roots in Form III
Hollow and defective:

to be equivalent to;  $\text{saawaa}/\text{yu-saawii}$ ساوي

to equalize

9 Examples of Form III verbs in context

\text{tu-HaaDir-u $fii$ jaami’aatin mustaflifat-in.}$ $sa-yu-saafir-u$ ghad-an.
She lectures at different universities. He will travel tomorrow.

\text{fii kutub-i hi $yu^r$-aalij-u l-arwaDa‘a’ti $fii$ l-sharq-l l-awsaT-i.}$
In his books he deals with political conditions in the Middle East.

\text{sa-yu-qaaSiS-uuna-hu.}$ $yu^r$-aanii $min-a$ Hamazzuq-i.
They will punish him. It suffers from fragmentation.

10 Form III verbal noun
The verbal noun of Form III verbs takes two basic forms: $\text{mu'afa'ala}$ and $\text{fi'aaal}$. 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, $\text{muHaawara}$ محاورة
dispute $\text{Hiwaar}$ حوار

Form: Form III kaafaH-a ‘to combat, fight, struggle’

confrontation, $\text{mukaafHa}$ مكافحة
battle $\text{kifaH}$ كفاح

strife $\text{mubaadara}$ مبادرة

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

\text{mu'afa'ala}$ معاولة

lecture $\text{muHaaDara}$ محاضرة
debate $\text{munaaqasha}$ مناقشة

boycott $\text{muqaaTa‘a}$ مقاطعة
initiative $\text{mubaadara}$ مبادرة

review $\text{muuaja‘a}$ مراجعة
conversation $\text{mukaalama}$ مكالمات
10.2 Hamzated root

10.2.1 Hamza initial

The hamza sits on a waaw seat.

The hamza floats aloof by itself and has no chair.

10.2.2 Hamza medial

In these verbal nouns, the hamza floats aloof by itself and has no chair.

10.2.3 Hamza final

In these verbal nouns, hamza sits on 'alif.

10.3 Assimilated root

The assimilated root behaves as a sound root in the Form III verbal noun.

10.4 Hollow root

The hollow root behaves as a sound root in the Form III verbal noun.

10.5 Defective root

In verbal nouns of defective Form III verbs, the second radical is followed by an 'alif and taa marbuut'a.
### 10.6 Examples of Form III verbal nouns in context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>مَكْالَمَةً تَلْيِفْنِيَّةً</th>
<th>مَحَافِظَةٌ صَنْعَاءُ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nūkaalāmat-un</td>
<td>muHāafaZat-u San‘a‘-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a telephone</td>
<td>the province of Sanaa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>بِمَنَاسِبَةِ إِعَادَةِ تَعْبُيِنِ الشَّيْخِ</th>
<th>سَبَاقُ الْحِيْلِ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bi-mūnaaṣabat-i</td>
<td>sībaaq-u l-xayl-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on the occasion of the re-appointment of the sheikh</td>
<td>horse racing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>وزَارَةُ الدِّفاعِ</th>
<th>لَا مَوْاَذِيْزَةٌ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wīzāarat-u l-dīfā‘-i</td>
<td>laa mu‘aaxadhat-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ministry of defense</td>
<td>No offense [intended]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>بَعْدَ مُحاولَاتٍ عَدَّةٍ قَافِلَةٍ</th>
<th>صَرَعُ الأَحْضَارِ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ba‘d-a muHaawalaat-in ʿiddat-in faashilat-in</td>
<td>Sīraa‘-u l-HaDaaraat-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after several failed attempts</td>
<td>culture wars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(‘السُّيِّبَةُ’ إِقْلاِعٍ)</th>
<th>(‘السُّيِّبَةُ’ إِقْلاِعٍ)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 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): mufaa‘il مَفَاعِلٌ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>مَحَافِظَةٌ صَنْعَاءُ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mufaa‘il</td>
<td>mufaa‘il</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 11.1.1 Sound/regular root

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecturer</th>
<th>mūHāadīr مَحَافِظَةٌ صَنْعَاءُ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mufaa‘il</td>
<td>mufaa‘il</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assistant</th>
<th>musaa‘id مُسَاءٍ</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mufaa‘il</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farmer</th>
<th>muzaa‘ir مُزاَّرِعٌ</th>
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</thead>
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<td>mufaa‘il</td>
<td>mufaa‘il</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observer</th>
<th>muraaqaqīb مُراَقِبٌ</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mufaa‘il</td>
<td>mufaa‘il</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 11.1.2 Hamzated root

The final root hamza sits on a yaa‘ because it is preceded by kasra.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surprising</th>
<th>mufaa‘ij مُفَاجِئٌ</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mufaa‘il</td>
<td>mufaa‘il</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 11.1.3 Assimilated root

Assimilated roots behave as sound roots in the Form III AP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citizen</th>
<th>muwaaTin مِوَاطِنٌ</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mufaa‘il</td>
<td>mufaa‘il</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
11.1.4 Hollow root
Hollow roots also behave as sound roots in the Form III AP.

- on duty: *munaawib* مُنَاوِب
- neutral: *muHaayid* مُحَأيِد
- neighboring, adjacent: *mujaawir* مُجاَوِر

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 kasrus in the nominative and genitive cases. See Chapter 7, section 5.4.3.

- lawyer: *muHaamin* مَحَامٍ

11.1.6 Examples of Form III APs in context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic phrase</th>
<th>English translation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>الفنون المعاصرة</td>
<td>contemporary arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-funuun-u l-mu'aaSirat-u</td>
<td>the opposing states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الضابط المناوب</td>
<td>neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-DaabiT-u l-munaawib-u</td>
<td>a neutral country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>على المقعد المجاور</td>
<td>American lawyers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'alaa l-maq'ad-i l-mujaawir-i.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the officer on duty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the adjacent seat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.2 Form III passive participle (PP): *mufaa'al* مَفَاعِل
This particular type of passive participle is infrequent, but does exist:

- blessed: *mubaarak* مُبَارَك

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic phrase</th>
<th>English translation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>شهر رمضان المبارك</td>
<td>the blessed month of Ramadan</td>
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<tr>
<td>shahr-u ramaDaan-a l-mubaarak-u</td>
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Form III triliteral verb  509
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**Form III Sound root:** مساعد

**AP:** مساعد

**PP:** مساعد

**VN:** مساعدة

*to help*
Form III hamza-final root: مُفاجَأٌ، يَفَاجَأٌ، يَفَاجَأٌ ‘to surprise’

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Form III Assimilated root: مواجهة، يواجه، يواجه

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### Form III Hollow root: حاَوِلٌ, يُحَاوِلُ, مُحَاوِلٌ AP: مُحاوَلٌ PP: مُحاوَلٌ VN: مُحاوَلَةٌ 'to try'

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Form III Defective root: نادي، ينادي

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Form IV triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: ʼaf'al-a ﯧﻮ / yu-fr'il-u نﻮ
Form IV is augmented from Form I by the prefixing of hamza plus fatha on the past tense stem. It has the stem pattern ʼaC₁C₂aC₃ 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 ʼaxbar-a, both mean 'to inform'; waqqaf-a and ʼawqaf-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, ʼallam-a means 'to teach' whereas ʼaṭlam-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 ʾiš-.

He will give her the ticket.

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, 1:34–36 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" ʾaẓlam-a/yu-ẓlim-u أظلم / يظلم.

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-ay-n-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-qat‘) and is not deleted when pronounced after a vowel.

2 Regular (sound) triliteral root: *afal-a أَفْعَلَ / yu-f'il-u يَعْفَعْلُ

These verbs are examples of Form IV sound triliteral roots:

- to include, insert: ‘adraj-a/yu-drij-u)
- to disturb, bother: ‘az‘aj-a/yu-z‘ij-u
- to announce: ‘a‘lan-a/yu-lin-u
- to supervise: ‘ashraf-a/yu-shrif-u
- to send: ‘arsal-a/yu-rsil-u
- to please: ‘a‘jab-a/yu-jib-u

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form IV: *afal‘-a أَفْعَلَ / yu-f’el-i يَعْفَعْلُ

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
- to like, to love: ‘aHabb-a/yu-Hibb-u
- to persist in, insist on: ‘aSarr-a/yu-Sirru ‘alaa
- to prepare: ‘a‘add-a/yu-‘idd-u

\(^5\) This has the effect of making unwowed Form IV verbs resemble Form I verbs in written Arabic. For verbs which exist in both forms (for example, Sadar-a/yu-Sdur-u صَدَرُ / يُصَدَّرُ ‘to emanate, come out’ and ‘oSdar-a/yu-Sdur-u صَدَرُ / يُصَدَّرُ ‘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 ‘aaman-ayu-‘min-u
- to rent out, to lease ‘aajar-ayu-‘jur-u

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 ‘as‘al-ayu-s‘il-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:

- to set up, establish ‘ansha‘a / yu-nshi‘u
- to extinguish ‘aTfa‘a / yu-Tfi‘u

5 Assimilated roots in Form IV: ‘af‘al-ayu-fiil-u
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 ‘awDaH-ayu-DiH-u
- to halt, stop ‘awqaf-ayu-qif-u
- to awaken ‘ayqaZ-ayu-qiz-u
- to bring, convey ‘awSal-ayu-Sil-u

‘to cause to arrive’

6 Hollow roots in Form IV: ‘afaal-ayu-fiil-u
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 ‘afaal-ayu-fiil-u. 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** *'adhaa*a ('adhaa*-tu)*
  
- **to manage, administer** *'adaara* ('adar*-tu)*

7 Defective roots in Form IV: *af*aa/ yu-l*ii*  
Defective roots, where the final radical is either waaw or yaa', behave as -aa/-ii verbs in Form IV. 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 /ii/ in the present tense.

- **to eliminate** *'aighaa/yu-lghi*
- **to conduct, to run** *'ajraa/yu-jrii*
- **to throw; to deliver (a speech)** *'alqaa/yu-lqii*
- **to give** *'a*Taa/yu-Tii*

8 Doubly weak roots in Form IV

8.1 Hamza-initial, hollow, and defective

- **to shelter, accommodate** *'aawaa/yu-3wi*  
  
(from *r*-w-y  `to seek refuge'

8.2 Hamza-medial and defective

- **to show (s.o. s.th.)** *'araa/yu-rii*  
  
(`to cause to see')

8.3 Hamza-final and hollow

- **to harm, to hurt** *'asaar*-a/yu-sii*-u*

9. Exclamatory Form IV (ti'al al-ta'ajjub  

A Form IV verb in the citation form (3 m.sg. past tense) may be used in written Arabic preceded by the function word *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 /a/ lengthens to /aː/.

7 This verb in Form IV has lost its root hamza completely and inflects as a defective -aa/-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 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."

ما أجمل البيت!
maa 'ajmal-a l-bint-a!
How beautiful the girl is!

ما ألففهم!
maa 'alTaf-a-hum!9
How nice they are!

10 Examples of Form IV verbs in context

فأوضحت ما تقصده.
fa-'awDaH-at maa l-waqSid-u-hu.
She clarified what she meant.

لا يضيف أشياء جديدة.
laa yu-Dif-u 'ashyaa'-a jadidat-an.
It does not add anything new ('new things').

هناك أفضلية لمن يجيد اللغة الإنكليزية.
There is a preference for whomever is proficient in English.

11 Verbal noun of Form IV: 'if'aal

The verbal noun of Form IV normally has the pattern 'if'aal.

11.1 Sound/regular root

announcement 'iflaan

sending 'irsaaal

disturbance, bother 'iz'aaj

bankruptcy 'iflaas

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 *'if*faal pattern, splitting the doubled consonant:

- perception, *'iHsaas*
- sensation
- injury, harm, *'iDraar*
- preparation, *'i'daad*
- insistence, *'iSraar*

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, *'iimaan* ('instead of *'i'maan*)
- rent, renting, *'iijaar* ('instead of *'i'jaar*)
- establishment, *'inshaa* ('instead of *'inshaa*)
- extinguishing, *'iTfaa* ('instead of *'iTfaa*)

11.3.2 Hamza-final root
In this verbal noun, the hamza sits aol after the *'alif*:

- setting up, *'iDaaH*
- clarifying, *'iiSaal*
- halting, *'iiqaaf*
- stopping, *'iiqaaz*

11.4 Assimilated root: *'ii'aal*

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., *'if*aal becomes *'ii'aal*.

- bringing, conveying, *'iiDaaH*
- awakening, *'iiqaaf*
- administration, *'iidaara*
- repetition, *'i'aada*

11.5 Hollow root: *'ifaala*

The verbal noun of Form IV hollow roots is *'ifaala* ending with *'aat* marbuutTa.

- infliction, *'iSaaba*
- broadcasting, *'idhaa'a*

11.6 Defective root: *'if*aar*

In the Form IV verbal noun of defective verbs, the defective semi-consonant (*waaw* or *yaa*) disappears and is replaced by hamza, i.e., *'if*aal becomes *'if*aar*.

- elimination, *'ilghaa*
- giving, *'i'Taa*
- conducting, *'ifraa*
- delivering (of a speech), *'ilqaa*
11.7 Examples of Form IV verbal nouns in context

Form IV triliteral verb

- in’aash-u ḥaqīṣaād-ī: reviving the economy
- ‘is’aaf-u l-dīfā‘-i l-madānīyy-ī ḥāwriyy-ū: emergency civil defense aid
- lā yirid ʾarṣal ʿamīrīkīyyat-ī ilā il-xārīj-ī: He doesn’t want to send American forces abroad.

- ḥaāwil-ā ʾinqaādh-ā ḥayāta rājūl-ī: He tried to save a man’s life.
- bayt-ūn lī-l-iṣṣār-ī: a house for rent

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): mufrīl

12.1.1 Sound/regular root

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<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
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<td>mūnīrīj</td>
<td>snowy</td>
<td>mūṭhlīj</td>
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12.1.2 Geminate root: mufrīl

The final two consonants of the geminate root are written together, with no intervening vowel. Thus instead of being in the pattern mufrīl, they are of the pattern mufrīl

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<th>English</th>
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<td>insistent,</td>
<td>mūṣīrī</td>
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<td>determined</td>
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12.1.3 Hamzated root

12.1.3.1 Hamz-INITIAL

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<th>Arabic</th>
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<td>faithful</td>
<td>mūrmin</td>
<td>regrettable</td>
<td>mūṣīf</td>
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</table>
12.1.3.2 *Hamza-FINAL*:

founder  

mistaken  

12.1.4 Assimilated root: *muu*il مُعِيل

In this root type, the initial waaw assimilates to the Damma of the miim-prefix and yields a long /-uu-/ as the first vowel.

clarifying  

originator  

12.1.5 Hollow root: *mufii* مُغْيِل

ocean  

broadcaster  

12.1.6 Defective root: *muf*in مُفَعْلٍ

giver: giving  

mufti, giver of formal  

legal opinions  

12.1.7 Examples of Form IV APs in context

بتقدم كل المساعدة الممكنة  

by offering all possible aid  

شيء مؤسف جداً  

a very regrettable thing  

سماحة المفتي  

His Eminence the Mufti  

12.2 Form IV passive participle (PP): *muf*al مُفَعَّل

12.2.1 Sound/regular root

lexicon  

single word  

12.2.2 Geminate root: *mufa*rc مُفَعَّل

The final two consonants of the root fall together, with no intervening vowel.

ready, prepared  


12.2.3 Hamzated root
foundation, establishment; munsha’a منشأة
installation

12.2.4 Assimilated root: mu’al موعل
summary muujaz موجز

12.2.5 Hollow root: mu’aal مهلال
melted, dissolved mudhaab مذاب injured, afflicted muSaab مصاب

12.2.6 Defective root: mu’an مفعّل
abolished; abrogated mulghan ملغى cast off; discarded mulqan ملقى

12.2.7 Examples of Form IV PPs in context
حلقة مفرغة_multipurpose+
Halqat-un mufraqhat-un
a vicious circle (‘a seamless circle’)

فرص مدمج
qurs-un mudmaj-un
a compact disk

الأكسجين المذاب في الماء
al-‘uaksijin-un l-mudhaab-u fii l-maa’i
oxygen dissolved in water
Form IV Sound root: َ屏幕ُ، يُرسلُ  
AP:  مرسل  
PP:  مرسل  
VN:  إرسال  
‘to send’

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Form IV Geminate root: `jju`  
Active AP: أعدّ  PP: اعدّ  VN: اعدّ  ‘to prepare’

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Also: أعدّا  تعددنا  تعددتم  تعددت  يععدون  ينعدون

Also: أعدّا  أعدّا  أعدّا
Form IV hamza-final: 

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<tr>
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<th>English</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>أنا</td>
<td>أنشئ</td>
<td>to establish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>أنتم</td>
<td>تنشئون</td>
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<td>أنتما</td>
<td>تنشئتم</td>
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</table>
Form IV Assimilated root: أورِّضُ، يُوضِّحُ اٌتْوِضحُ، يوضِّحُ 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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Form IV triliteral verb 'to clarify'
Form IV Hollow root: أُذُّع، يَذُّعِي 'to broadcast'

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</table>
### Form IV Defective: 
**إِلْخَاءٌ**، *لَغَي*، **ملَغَي**

*to abolish*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Passive</th>
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| أنا | أَلْغَيْ | أَلْغَيْ | أَلْغَيْ | أَلْغَيْ | أَلْغَيْ | أَلْغَيْ |
| أَنْتَ | لُغُي | لُغُي | لُغُي | لُغُي | لُغُي | لُغُي |
| أَنْتِ | لُغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي |
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| أَنْتُهُ / أَنْتُهَا | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي |

| يَلْغُي | يَلْغُي | يَلْغُي | يَلْغُي | يَلْغُي | يَلْغُي | يَلْغُي |
| هُوَ | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي |
| هِيَ | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي |
| هُمَّ | بَلْغُي | بَلْغُي | بَلْغُي | بَلْغُي | بَلْغُي | بَلْغُي |

| أَلْغَيْنَ | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي |
| أَلْغَيْنَ | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي |
| أَهِنَّ | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي | تَلْغُي |
| أَنْتمُ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ |
| أَنْتمَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ |
| أَنْتُونِ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ |
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| هُمَّ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ | تَلْغُونَ |
Form V triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: tafaṣṣal-a تُفَعِّلُ 
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 tu- is added to the stem.\(^1\)
In the present tense, the subject-marking prefix vowel is fatHa and the two stem vowels are fatHa. Form V verbs thus have the stem patterns taC₁aC₂C₃aC₄ in the past tense and ya-taC₁aC₂C₃aC₄ 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,’ tamazzaq-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’).

---

\(^1\) The prefixed tu-, 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 tu- 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 muTaawa‘a مَطَاوَةٌ ‘obedience, conformity’ or muTawwaf مُتَّاوِفُ ‘obedient, conforming’ – that is, conforming with a particular, lexically related action. Fleisch 1979 states (11:305) “Ce muTaawwaf 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 fatHa and the present tense stem vowel is 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>Action</th>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to breathe</td>
<td>tanaffas-a/ya-tanaffas-u</td>
<td>تنفس / يتنفس</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to move, be in motion</td>
<td>taHarrak-a/ya-taHarrak-u</td>
<td>تحرك / يتحرك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to require</td>
<td>taTallab-a/ya-taTallab-u</td>
<td>تطلب / يتطلب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to speak</td>
<td>takallam-a/ya-takallam-u</td>
<td>تكلم / يتكلم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to get, to receive</td>
<td>tasallam-a/ya-tasallam-u</td>
<td>تسلم / يتسليم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to avoid</td>
<td>tajannab-a/ya-tajannab-u</td>
<td>تجنب / يتجنب</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form V
Geminate roots in Form V have the following stem patterns: taC1aC2aC2aC2 in the past tense and yataC1aC2aC2aC2 in the present. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to hesitate</td>
<td>taraddad-a/ya-taraddad-u</td>
<td>تردد / يتردد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to feel (s.th.); handle,</td>
<td>taHassas-a/ya-taHassas-u</td>
<td>يحسس / يحسس</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>touch (s.th.)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4 Hamzated roots in Form V
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 hamza-initial Form V verbs, the hamza sits on 'alif in both tenses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to be late</td>
<td>ta‘axxar-a/ya-ta’axxar-u</td>
<td>تأخر / يتأخر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be affected (by)</td>
<td>ta’aththar-a/ya-ta’aththar-u bi-</td>
<td>تأثر / يتاثّر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be sorry</td>
<td>ta’assaf-a/ya-ta’assaf-u</td>
<td>تأسّف / يتأسّف</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to be composed (of) \( ta'alaf-a/ya-ta'alaf-u \) 

to contemplate (s.th.) \( ta'ammal-a/ya-ta'ammal-u \)

4.2 Medial hamza

to be at the head; 

to chair

4.3 Final hamza

to get prepared \( tahayya^{2}-a/ya-tahayya^{2}-u \) 

to predict, forecast \( tanabba^{2}-a/ya-tanabba^{2}-u \)

5 Assimilated roots in Form V

Assimilated roots, where the first radical is either \( waa \) or \( yaa^{2} \), are inflected as sound roots in Form V; the \( waa \) or \( yaa^{2} \) remain in both tenses.

- to be extended, spread out \( tawassa^{2}-a/ya-tawassa^{2}-u \)
- to be abundant, plentiful \( tawaffa-ra/ya-tawaffa-ra-u \)
- to expect, anticipate \( tawaqqqa^{2}-a/ya-tawaqqqa^{2}-u \)
- to stop; stand still \( tawaqqaf-a/ya-tawaqqaf-u \)

6 Hollow roots in Form V

Hollow roots behave as sound roots in Form V, the \( waa \) or \( yaa^{2} \) that is the second radical functions as a normal consonant, with \( shadda \).

- to change (intr.) \( taghayyar-a/ya-taghayyar-u \)
- to volunteer \( taTawwa^{2}-a/ya-taTawwa^{2}-u \)

7 Defective roots in Form V: \( tafa '^{2} 'aa \) تَفَعَّلُ / \( ya-tafa '^{2} 'aa \) يَتَفَعَّلُ

Defective roots, where the final radical is either \( waa \) or \( yaa^{2} \), behave as -\( aa/\)aa verbs in Form V.5

- to receive, accept \( talaqqaa/ya-talaqqaa \)
- to wish \( tamannaa/ya-tamannaa \)
- to trespass, to transcend \( ta'addaa/ya-ta'addaa \)
- to challenge \( taHaddaa/ya-taHaddaa \)

---
5 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 also /\( a \)/ 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: tawallaayu-tawallaayu تَوَالَّي / يتوَالٍ
be entrusted with (root: w-l-y)

9 Examples of Form V verbs in context

تَبَنَّى العِراق استراتيجيَّة عسكريَّة جديدة
Iraq has adopted a new military strategy.

والرجل نصرَف ببرودة
(And) the man behaved coldly.

تَحْوَل من سيِّء إلى أسوأ
It changes from bad to worse.

سَيِّئَّة منصِّب غداً
It will get better.

10 Form V verbal nouns: *tafa*c*ul

10.1 Sound roots
Form V verbal nouns of regular or sound verbs have the pattern taC1aC2C2uC3.

breathing tanaffus تنفس
avoidance tajannub تَجْنَب
progress taqaddum تَقَدَّم
interference tadaxxul تَدَخُل

10.2 Geminate roots
hesitation taraddud تَرَدُّد
feeling, touching taHassus تَحَسَّس

10.3 Hamzated roots
The placement of hamza on a particular seat is determined by contiguous vowels.

lateness ta’axxur تَأَخْر
being affected ta’aththur تَأَثِر
prediction tanabbu تَنَابِعُ
chairmanship tara*us تَروَعُ
10.4 Assimilated roots

being extended, spreading out  tawassu

abundance, availability  tawaffur

penetration, absorption  tawaghghul

tension  tawattur

10.5 Hollow roots

change  taghayyur

volunteering  taTawwu

development  taTawwur

pollution  talawwuth

10.6 Defective roots: tafa'in

The verbal nouns of defective verbs in Form V inflect as defective nouns (delection six in this book).

accepting  talaqqin

transcending, overtaking  ta'addin

wishing  tamannin

challenge  taHaddin

10.7 Examples of Form V verbal nouns in context

yu-'aani min-a l-tamazzu-i.

It suffers from fragmentation.

Haalat-u l-ta'ahhub-i

state of alert

since his assumption of the presidency

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): mutafa'il

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  mutakallim

extremist  mutaTurrif

frozen  mutajammid

married  mutazawwij

mutant
11.1.2 Geminate root

specialist \( \text{mutaxaSSis} \)  
renewed \( \text{mutajaddid} \)

11.2.3 Hamzated root

sorry, regretful \( \text{muta'assif} \)  
late \( \text{muta'uxxir} \)

11.2.4 Assimilated root

abundant \( \text{mutawaffir} \)  
middle \( \text{mutawassiT} \)

11.2.5 Hollow root

volunteer \( \text{mutaTawwi} \)

11.2.6 Defective root: \( \text{mutafa}^{\varepsilon \gamma} \)

These participles inflect as defective nouns (declension six).

challenger; \( \text{mutaHaddin} \)  
wishing \( \text{mutamannin} \)

11.2 Form V passive participle (PP): \( \text{mutafa}^{\varepsilon \gamma} \)

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 \( \text{mutakallaf} \)

requirement/s \( \text{mutaTallah\aa} \)  
expected \( \text{mutawaqqa}^{\varepsilon} \)

11.3 Form V participles in context

11.3.1 Active participle

the Arctic Ocean (the ‘frozen northern’ ocean)

the Mediterranean Sea (‘the middle white sea’)

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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<th>Form</th>
<th>Sound root: تكلَّم، يتكلمُ</th>
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Form V Geminate root: تُرِدُّدُ، يترِدُدُ مُترِدِّدُ متَرِدِّدُ، تترِدِّدُ AP: تترِدِّدُ، يترِدِّدُ PP: تترِدِّدُ، يترِدِّدُ VN: تترِدِّدُ 'to hesitate'

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A Reference Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

Form V hamza-initial root: تأخر، يتأخر

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VN: تأخر
‘to be late, delayed’
Form V hamza-final root: تنبُّأٰ, يتنبأٰ

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Form V Assimilated root: توقعِّ - توقعٌ - توقعٌ

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Form V Defective root: نحَذَاء، ينحَذَاء

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Athama anfus

Form V Defective root: نحَذَاء، ينحَذَاء

AP: ُتحَذَاء   PP: ُتحَذَاء   VN: ُتحَذَاء   ‘to challenge’
Form VI triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: tafa'al-a تفاعل ال /ya-tafa'al-u يتفاعل .
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 taC1aC2C3aC3 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'aanaqa تعاناق /ya-ta'aanaq-u يتعاشق). Other meanings of this form of the verb include gradual, continuous movement or increase in a quality (e.g., 'to diminish, grow smaller' taDa'al-a تضافال /ya-taDa'al-u يتضاءال), and also pretending or feigning something (e.g., 'to feign ignorance' tajahal-al يتجلال /ya-tajahal-u يتغاضى).

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., tabaad-al/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.
3 Geminate (doubled) root Form VI

Geminate roots in Form VI have the following stem patterns: taC₁aaC₂C₂aC₂ in the past tense and ya-taC₁aaC₂C₂aC₂ 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
  ta’aamar-a/ya-ta’aamar-u  
  تآمَر / يتأمَر

- to harmonize (with each other)
  ta’aallaf-a/ya-ta’aalaf-u (ma’a)
  تَألف / يتألف (مع)

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
  tafaa’al-a/ya-tafaa’al-u  
  تفاؤل / يتفاؤل

- to be pessimistic
  tasha’am-a/ya-tasha’am-u
  تساؤم / يتساؤم

- to be mended; be in harmony
  talaa’am-a/ya-talaa’am-u
  تلاءم / يتلاءم

- to diminish
  taDaa’al-a/ya-taDaa’al-u
  تضاءل / يتضاءل

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 /aa/ 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.
be equal to; to counterbalance  
\( takaafa^2-a/ya-takaafa^2-u \)

5 Assimilated roots in Form VI
Assimilated roots, where the first radical is either waaw or yaa', are inflected as sound roots in Form VI: the waaw or yaa' remains.

to coincide; agree with each other  
\( tawaafaq-a/ya-tawaafaq-u \)

to be in equilibrium  
\( tawaazan-a/ya-tawaazan-u \)

6 Hollow roots in Form VI
Hollow roots behave as sound roots in Form VI, the waaw or yaa' that is the second radical functions as a normal consonant.

to deliberate; consult one another  
\( tashaawar-a/ya-tashaawar-u \)

to cooperate with one another  
\( ta'aawan-a/ya-ta'aawan-u \)

to coexist  
\( ta'aayash-a/ya-ta'aayash-u \)

to deal with; treat  
\( tanaawal-a/ya-tanaawal-u \)

7 Defective roots in Form VI
Defective roots, where the final radical is either waaw or yaa', 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.

to take, undertake, pursue (a task)  
\( ta'aaTaa/ya-ta'aaTaa \)

to meet each other, come together  
\( talaaqaa/ya-talaaqaa \)

to be equivalent to; be in balance  
\( tasaawaa/ya-tasaawaa \)

8 Examples of Form VI verbs in context

\( ya-taDaa'al-u \) tadriijiiyy-an. 
It diminishes gradually.

\( qad \ ya-tabaadar-u \) 'ilaa dhiihni-ka. 
It might cross your mind.
This correlated with complaints of some of the voters.

9.1 Strong/regular root

- embracing: ta‘aanuq (تَعَانُق)  
- partition: taqaasum (تَقَااسُم)
- retirement: taqaar’ud (تَقاَرُعُد)  
- mutual: tafaahum (تَفاَهُم)
- 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’aaalif (تَأَالِف)  
- conspiracy: ta’aaamur (تَأَامُر)

- camaraderie

9.3.2 Hamza-medial

In these verbal nouns, the hamza sits on a waaw seat because it is followed by Damma.

- optimism: tafaar’ul (تَفَازْوُل)  
- pessimism: tashaa’um (تَشَآءُم)

9.3.3 Hamza-final

In these verbal nouns, hamza sits on waaw because it is preceded by Damma:

- equivalence, sameness: takaafu (تَكَافُو)

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.

cooperation ta‘aawan نَعَانُ increase, tazaayud تَزَايِد
joint tashaawur تَشَوَّر alternation tanaawub تَناوْب
consultation

9.6 Defective root
In verbal nouns of defective Form VI verbs, the noun is defective:

meeting, talaaq-in تَلاَقٍ equivalence, tasaaw-in تَساوٍ
encounter

talaac-in تَلاَقٍ
tasaaw-in تَساوٍ

9.7 Examples of Form VI verbal nouns in context

الترباط بين قوة النظام وشرعته
al-taraabuT-u bayn-a quwwat-i l-niZaam-i wa-shar‘iyyat-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-silmiyy-i bayn-a l-shu‘uub-i
establishing mutual tolerance and coexistence among peoples

قد يقود إلى تقاسم ثنائي.
qad ya-quud-u ‘ilaa tqaasum-in thunaa‘iyy-in.
It might lead to a bilateral partition.

مجلس تعزيز التفاهم العربي البريطاني
majlis-u ta‘ziz-i l-tafaalam-i l-arabiyy-i l-barifTaaniyy-i
the council for strengthening Arab-British (mutual) understanding

بعد أن اتهمهم بالتأمر مع الحكومة
ba‘d-a ‘an-i itaham-u-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.
Sadara l- kitaab-u bi-l-ta‘aawun-i ma‘a majlis-i l-sufaraa‘i l-arab-i.
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): mutafaa‘il

10.1.1 sound/regular root

- synonym: mutaradif مَتَرَادِف
- retired: mutaqaa‘id مُتَقَاعِد

scattered: mutanaathir مُتَنَاثِر
mutual, reciprocal: mutadaamin مَتَداَمٌ

10.1.2 Geminate root

This is rare in Form VI.

10.1.3 Hamzated root

10.1.3.1 Hamza-INITIAL

- harmonious: mut’aalif مَتَأَلِف
- corroded: mut’aakil مَتَأَكِل

10.1.3.2 Hamza-MEDIAL

- optimistic: mutafa‘il مَتَفَاعِل
- pessimistic: mutashaa‘im مَتَشآَيْم

10.1.3.3 Hamza-FINAL

- commensurate, alike: mutakaafi٣ مَتَكَافِئ٣

10.1.4 Assimilated root

- balanced: mutawaazin مَتَوَازِن٢
- continuous: mutawaaSil مَتَوَآَصِل٢

10.1.5 Hollow root

- increasing: mutazuayid مَتَزاَيِد٢
- alternating: mutanaawib مَتَناَوِب١
- rotating

10.1.6 Defective root

- successive, following: mutataalin مَتَتَالِن

10.1.7 Examples of Form VI APs in context

الاهتمام المتزايد بالإسلام  مَتَتَالِن

al-ikhimaam-u l-mutazaayid-u bi-l-’islaam-i
the increasing interest in Islam

مياءة متكافئة  مُتَتَالِن
mubaaraat-un mutakaafi’at-un
an equal match
in successive years

scattered containers

10.2 Form VI passive participle (PP): \textit{mutafaa'\,\,al}
This participle form is not frequent in MSA, but a few examples are provided here.

10.2.1 Sound/regular root

mutual, reciprocal \hspace{0.5cm} mutabaadal \hspace{0.5cm} متبادل

10.2.2 Hollow root

prevailing, mutadaawal \hspace{0.5cm} متبادل availability; reach; mutanaawal \hspace{0.5cm} متناول available

10.2.3 Examples of Form VI PPs in context

bi-l-ma'\,\,naa \hspace{0.5cm} l-mutadaawal-l \hspace{0.5cm} بالمعنى المتبادل
in the current meaning \hspace{0.5cm} al-il\,\,itiraam-u \hspace{0.5cm} l-mutabaadal-u

mutual respect
Form VI Sound root: تَقَاعَدٌ / تَقَاعَدٌ  

**AP:** تَقَاعَدٌ  
**PP:** تَقَاعَدٌ  
**VN:** تَقَاعَدٌ 'to retire'  

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### Form VI hamze-initial root: تآمَر / يتآمَر

**AP:** تآمَر

**PP:** يتآمَر

**VN:** 'to conspire'

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**Note:** The table continues, displaying the full conjugation for Form VI in bothActive and Passive voices.
### Form VI hamza-medial root: مَتفَاءل / مَتَفَأل

**AP:** تَفَأَلُوْلِ ‘to be optimistic’

**PP:** تَفَأَلُوْلِ

**VN:** تَفَأَلُوْلِ

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Form VI hamza-final root: تُکافِنَ، يُکافِنَ

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Al: تُکافِنَ، يُکافِنَ PP: VN: تُکافِنَ  ‘to be equal’
### Form VI Defective root: تَدَاعُ أُتِّدَاعِي

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### AP: تَدَاعُ أُتِّدَاعِي

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### PP: VN: ‘to decline, subside’

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*Note: The table above lists the conjugations for the given root in Modern Standard Arabic.*
Form VII triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: infa'al-a /ya-nfa'il-u

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 -nC1aC2iC3. 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, raay, 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 lbaaba fa-nfataH-a ‘I opened (Form I) the door and it opened (Form VII).’

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 انفجِر / ينفجّر

to be at ease, be happy4 inbasat-a/ya-nbasat-u انبسط / ينبسط

to sink, declineinxafaD-a/ya-nxafid-u انخصِ / ينخصّ
to withdraw; be withdrawn insaHab-a/ya-nsaHib-u انسحب / ينسحب

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 انقسم / ينقسم

to be cut off inqaTaTi-a/ya-nqaTii-u انقطع / ينقطع

to be reflected in'akas-a/ya-n'akis-u انعكس / ينعكس

to be held, convened in'aqad-a/ya-n'aqid-u انعقد / ينعقد

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form VII
Geminate roots in Form VII have the following stem patterns: inC1aC2C2 in the past tense and ya-nC1aC2C2 in the present.

to affiliate; join (with) inDamm-a/ya-nDamm-u (ِيلَأ) انضم / ينضم

to disintegrate inHall-a/ya-nHall-u انحل / ينشق

to split, crack inshaqq-a/ya-nshaqq-u انشق / ينشق

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 inTafaT'-a/ya-nTafii'-u انطفأ / ينطفئ

4 Also, 'to be spread out;' s.v. basaT in Wehr 1979.
5 Assimilated roots in Form VII
These do not occur (see 1.1).

6 Hollow roots in Form VII infaal-a

Hollow roots in Form VII are inflected with 'alif as the long vowel and fatlta as the short vowel in the present and in the past: inCaaCrr-a /ya-nfaal-u.

to take sides, align inHaaz-a/ya-nHaaz-u

to decline, collapse inhaar-a/ya-nyaar-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 inqaDaayu-nyaDaDii

to be folded; be absorbed5 inTawaa/ya-ntawii

8 Examples of Form VII verbs in context

انفجَرَ الوضع في الشوارع
infajar-a l-waD-`u fii l-shawaari`i.
The situation exploded in the streets.

انخترطوا في جدل عنيف.
inxaTuu fii jadal in `anif-in.
They plunged into violent debate.

9 Form VII verbal noun: infi`aal

9.1 Strong/regular root

reflection in`ikaas انعكاس

explosion infijaar انفجار

coup d'etat inqilaab انقلاب

isolation in`izaal انغزال

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 انضمّام

disintegration inHilaal انحلال

5 Used with the preposition `ala, inTawaa means 'to contain.'
9.3 Hamzated root  
extinguishing  
inTifaaً  

9.4 Assimilated root  
These do not occur.  

9.5 Hollow root: infiyaal  
The verbal noun for Form VII hollow verbs has a yaaً as the medial consonant, no matter what the root of origin.  

alignment  
inHiyaaz  
collapse; decline  
inHiyaar  

9.6 Defective root: infi‘aaً  
The verbal noun of defective Form VII verbs is of the pattern infi‘aaً, انفعاء, with hamza after the long ٍ-aaٍ. 

expiration, elapsing  
inqiDaaَ  
introversion  
inTiwaاَ  

9.7 Examples of Form VII verbal nouns in context  

الانحلال السياسي  
al-inHilaal-u  
l-isyuasiyy-u  
political disintegration  

قبل انقضاء عام على ذلك  
qabl-u nqiDaaَ-i  
‘aam-in  
‘ala a dhaalika  
before the elapsing of a year after that  

because of the preoccupation of the officials  

هو انعكاس للواقع الاجتماعي.  
huwa n‘ikaas-un  
l-l-waaqَ-i  
hijtimaa‘iyy-i.  
It is a reflection of social reality.  

10 Form VII participles  

10.1 Form VII active participle (AP): munfa‘il  

10.1.1 Sound/regular root  
isolated  
mun‘azil  
mتنعَزٌ  
sloping  
munHadir  
mتنحَرٌ  

introverted; shrunk  
munkamish  
mتنكَش  
sliding  
munzaliq  
mتنزلَقٌ  

10.1.2 Geminate root: munfa‘cc  
The active and passive participles for geminate roots in Form VII have the same pattern: munfa‘cc. If the verb itself has a passive, reflexive, or intransitive meaning, 

Because of the shift of the semi-consonant (waaw or yaaً) to hamza, this verbal noun winds up looking like the verbal noun for 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 مَنْضَمٍ separatist munshaq مَنْشَقٍ

10.1.3 Hamzated root

extinguished munTafi مَنْطَفٍ

10.1.4 Assimilated root

These do not occur.

10.1.5 Hollow root: munfaal مُنَفَّعٌ

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 مُنْحَازٍ

10.1.6 Defective root

introverted munTawin مَنْطَوٍ

10.2 Form VII passive participle (PP): munfa‘al مُنَفَّعٌ

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 مُنْحَدِر starting point munTalaq مُنْتَلَق

lowland munxafaD مَنْخَفْضٍ

10.2.2 Geminate root: munfa مُنَفَّعٌ

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* 
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* منْفَعٍ
enclosed, folded in *munTawan* منْطِوُيّ

10.3 Examples of Form VII participles in context

الدول غير المنحازة
al-duwal-u ghary-u l-munHaazat-i
non-aligned states

باب منزلق
baab-un munzaliq-un
a sliding door

تطوَّق منحدراته الأشجار.
tu-Tawwiq-u munHadaraat-i-hi l-’ashjaar-u.
Trees encircle its slopes.
Form VII Sound root: **اِنبِسْطِ، انبُسِّط، انبُسِتْ**  
AP: منبسط، بينبسط  
PP: منبسط، بينبسط  
VN: ‘to be glad, happy’

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Form VII  Geminate root: انضم / ينضم  'to join with, affiliate with'

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Form VII Hollow root: انْحَاز / ينْحَازَ AP: مَنْحَازَ PP: مَنْحَازِي ‘to take sides’

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Form VII Defective root: انُقضى / انقضى / انقضى  
**AP:** انقضى  **PP:** انقضى  **VN:** انقضى  **AV:** 'to elapse, expire'

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| إنّهم   | انقضى تنقضى تنقضى  |
|         | تنقضى تنقضى تنقضى  |
| إنّكم   | تنقضون تنقضون تنقضون  |
| إنّكم   | تنقضين تنقضين تنقضين  |
| إنّكم   | تنقضون تنقضون تنقضون  |
| إنّكم   | تنقضين تنقضين تنقضين  |
Form VIII triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: *IFTA* / *ya-IFTA*I

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 -C_C_aC and the present tense stem -C_C_a_C. A prefixed elidable hamza with kasra is added to the past tense stem of Form VIII in order to make it pronounceable; this 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 (*nitaawi* مطاعم), 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 *hamza*, *waaw*, *raa*, *laam* or *nuun*, because these roots do not occur in Form VII and often use Form VIII instead to express the resultative (e.g., Form I *rafa* -a/ya-*rafa*-u 'to raise' and Form VIII *irtafa*-a/ya-*irtafi*-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 *jama*-a/ya-*jama*-u 'to collect, gather (s.th.)' and Form VIII *ijtama*-a/ya-*ijtami*-u 'to meet with each other; collect together.'

1.3 Transitivity

Form VIII verbs may be transitive or intransitive. Some are doubly transitive, such as *i'tabara* / *ya-* *tabir*-u 'to consider (s.o.) (s.th.).'

---

1 On this point see Fleisch 1979, II: 311.
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., intaxaib-a ٌلُخُبَ ل*ntaxib-u `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 taa` to the initial root consonant occur, and with assimilated verb roots the taa` itself assimilates the initial waaw or yaa` completely.

1.5.1 Progressive assimilation
In progressive assimilation, the taa` 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 taa` acquires the velarization feature. This results in a spelling change from taa` to Taa`.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Script</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to crash (into); collide with</td>
<td>iSTadam-a/ya-STadim-u (bi-)</td>
<td>اِصْطَدَمْ / يَصْطَدِمْ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(root: S-d-m)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be disturbed, agitated</td>
<td>iDTarab-a/ya-DTarib-u</td>
<td>اِضْطَرَبْ / يَضْطَرِبْ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(root: D-r-b)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be aware; examine, look into</td>
<td>iTTala<code>a/ya-TTali</code>a (`alaal)</td>
<td>اِطْلَعْ / يَطْلَعْ (على)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(root: T-l-`a)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5.1.2 Voiced Alveolars: Where the initial root consonant is voiced and alveolar (d or z)

(1) daal-initial root: The taa` assimilates totally to the daal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Script</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to be inserted; to assimilate</td>
<td>idda'qham-a/ya-dda'qhim-u</td>
<td>اِدْعَمْ / يَدْعِمْ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(root: d-gh-m)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to allege, claim</td>
<td>idda'a<code>a/ya-dda</code>a`ii</td>
<td>اِدْعَى / يَدْعِي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(root: d-t-w)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) zaay-initial root: In the zaay-initial root, the infixed taa` partially assimilates to the /z/ sound by becoming a voiced dental stop (daal) instead of a voiceless dental stop (/t/). That is, instead of ifta`al-a it becomes ifda`al-a.
to flourish \[izdahar-a/ya-zdahir-u\] (root: z-h-r)

[الذَّهْرُ / الزَّهْرُ]

to be crowded \[izdallam-a/ya-zdallim-u\] (root: z-H-m)

[الزَّدُحُ / الزَّدَحُ]

to be doubled, be paired \[izdawaj-a/ya-zdawij-u\] (root: z-w-j)

[الزَّدُوجُ / الزَّدَوجُ]

to increase \[izdaad-a/ya-zaad-u\] (root: z-w-d)

[الزِّدَادُ / الزَّدَادُ]

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 \[iththa'av-a/ya-ththa'ir-u\] אַתָּר / ְתָּר

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 \[iddaxar-a/ya-ddaxi-r-u\] אֵדֵחֶר / יְדֵחֶר

(3) Zaa'-initial root:

to be wronged, suffer injustice \[iZZalam-a/ya-ZZalim-u\] ְזָלֲמִ / ְזָלָם

1.5.2 Form VIII regressive assimilation

In regressive assimilation, the initial root consonant waaaw or yaa' is affected by the infixed taa' and is assimilated into it. That is, for example, instead of the shape ‘iwtalHad-a (from the root w-H-d) the actual Form VIII verb is ittaHad-a.


to be united \[ittaha'd-a/ya-ttaHid-u\] אֵתַחַד / יָתַחַד

(to root w-H-d)

to expand \[ittasa'a-a/ya-ttas'î-u\] אֵתֵסֵ / יָתֵס

(root: w-s-a"

to face, take the direction of \[ittajah-a/ya-ttajih-u\] אֵתָגֵה / יָתָגֵה

(root: w-j-h)

to accuse \[ittaham-a/ya-ttahim-u\] אֵתֵהַמִ / יָתֵהַמ

(root: w-h-m)
2 Regular or sound roots

- to celebrate, have a party: iHtafal-a/ya-Htafil-u
- to respect: iHtaram-a/ya-Htarim-u
- to earn: iktasab-a/ya-ktasib-u
- to be different; to differ: ixtalaf-a/ya-xtalif-u

2.1 Initial-nun roots

A number of intransitive Form VIII verbs are from roots whose initial consonant is /n/, since these do not assume Form VII.

- to move, be transferred: intaqal-a/ya-ntaqil-u
- to spread out: intashar-a/ya-ntashir-u
- to elect: intaxab-a/ya-ntaxib-u

3 Geminate (doubled) root Form VIII

- to be interested, concerned (with): ihtamm-a/ya-htamm-u (bi-)
- to be spread, extended: imtadd-a/ya-mtadd-u
- to occupy: iHtall-a/ya-Htall-u

4 Hamzated roots in Form VIII

4.1 Hamza-initial

- to deliberate; to plot: i'tamar-a/ya-'tamir-u
- to go well together; form a coalition: i'talaf-a/ya-'talif-u

4.2 Hamza-medial

- to be healed, to heal: ilta'am-a/ya-lt'a'im-u

4.3 Hamza-final

- to begin: ibtada'-a/ya-btadi'-u
- to be filled: imtala'-a/ya-mtali'-u
5 Assimilated roots in Form VIII
In Form VIII, the infixed *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-iftaal-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 iC_CaaC的话 / ya-C_CaaC話.

- to need: *iHtaaj-a/yu-Htaaj-u* يَحْتَاجُ / يُحْتَاج
- to assassinate: *ightaal-a/yu-ghtaal-u* يَغْتَالُ / يُغْتَال
- to choose: *ixtaar-a/yu-xtaar-u* يَخْتَارُ / يُخْتَار

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-a/yu-zdawij-u* يَزْدُوجُ / يُزْدُوج
- to contain: *iHtawaa/yu-Htawii* يَحْتَويُ / يُحْتَوي

7 Defective roots in Form VIII
Defective roots in Form VIII inflect as -aaj-li defectives:

- to meet, encounter (s.o.): *iltaqaa/yu-ltaqii* يَلْتَقَى / يَلْتَقِي
- to be content, satisfied: *iktafa/yu-ktafii* يَكْتَفَى / يَكْتَفِي
- to wear, be dressed (in): *irtadaa/yu-rtadii* يَرْتَدِى / يَرْتَدِي

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/yu-Htawii* يَحْتَويُ / يُحْتَوي

8 Examples of Form VIII verbs in context

-wa-ktashaf-a *ay-D-an *axTaa*-an and he also discovered mistakes
- *ta-jtdhib-u* 1-Fullaab-a 1-jayyid-tina. It attracts good students.

- takwa *ya-Htawii* haadhaa 1-matHaf-u what this museum contains
- ya-truk-u li-kull-i insaan-in *an* ya-xtaar-a. He leaves [it] to every person to choose.
## 9 Verbal nouns of Form VIII

### 9.1 Sound/regular root: افتُعاَل

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>respect</td>
<td>احترام</td>
<td>meeting</td>
<td>اجتماع</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>election</td>
<td>انتخاب</td>
<td>difference</td>
<td>اختلاف</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 9.1.1 With assimilation of taa’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>collision, crash</td>
<td>اصطدام</td>
<td>flourishing,</td>
<td>ازدهار</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disturbance, unrest</td>
<td>اضطراب</td>
<td>crowd, jam,</td>
<td>ازحHAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>crush</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9.2 Geminate root

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>interest, concern</td>
<td>اهتمام</td>
<td>occupation</td>
<td>احتلال</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spreading</td>
<td>امتداد</td>
<td>gratitude</td>
<td>امنتان</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9.3 Hamzated root

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>coalition</td>
<td>ائتلاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ابتدأ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9.4 Assimilated root

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>union</td>
<td>اتحاد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>اتهام</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9.5 Hollow root

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>reserve; precaution</td>
<td>احتياط</td>
<td>increase</td>
<td>ازدياد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pleasure, delight</td>
<td>ارتياح</td>
<td>doubling, pairing</td>
<td>ازدواج²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9.6 Defective root

In the defective root Form VIII verbal noun, the final defective root consonant is represented by a hamza.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>membership; belonging</td>
<td>ائتماء</td>
<td>disappearance</td>
<td>اختفاء²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 ارتياب الجانبين
‘adam-u rtiyaH-i l-jaanib-a‘ayni
the discomfort of both sides

لا احترام للحقوق الشخصية للإنسان.
laa Htiraam-a l-Huquuq-i l-shaxSiyyat-i lH-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 مُفْتَعَل
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 mutta‘Hid ‘united.’

10.1.1 Sound/regular root: mufta’il مُفْتَعَل

respecting muftarim مُفْتَرِمّ
convincing muqtani‘ مُقْتَنِع
listener mustami‘ مُسْتَمِع
objecting mutariD مُتَأَرِض
different, differing muxtalif مُخْتَلِف
spreading muntashir مُنْتَشِر

10.1.2 Geminate root: mufta’r مُفْتَعَر
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’r’, the form is mufta’re.3 As a result of the deletion of the stem vowel in this AP form, the AP and PP are identical.

occupying muHtall مَهْتَلّ (with)
concerned muhtamm (bi) مَهْتَمّ ب

10.1.3 Hamzated root
Hamza-final: mufta’r مُفْتَعَر

beginning mubtadi‘ مَبْتَدِئٍ
filled muntali‘ مَمْتَلَى

3 This stems from phonological restrictions on identical consonants separated by a short vowel.
10.1.4 Assimilated root: mutta’il

united muttaHid facing muttafijh مَتَّٰهَٰث
contacting muttaSil مَتْسِلَلْ مَتَّهُم

10.1.5 Hollow root: muftaal مُفَتَّال

relaxing; murtaaH مَرْتَاح double muzdawij٤ مُزْدَوِّجٍ
satisfied
accustomed mu’taad مُعتَادٌ علَى needing muHtaaj مَحْتَاج
(to); usual (‘alaal)

10.1.6 Defective root: mufta’in مُفَتَّعٍ

belonging muntam-in مَتَّمَ لَحْمَتْٰ مَحَثَوٰل
containing muHtaw-in

10.1.7 Form VIII APs in context

الولايات المتحدة للأمم المتحدة مازِرَ مُزْدَوِّجٍ
al-wilaayaat-u l-muttaHid-at-u al-‘umam-u l-muttaHid-at-u maaziq-un muzdawij-un
the United States the United Nations a double bind

في مكانه المعتاد باتوا مفتنعينً
fii makaan-i-hi l-mu’taad-i baat-uu muqtani-iina.
in its usual place They have become convinced.

10.2 Form VIII passive participle (PP): muftaal مُفَتَّعٍ

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 مُفَتَّعٍ

respected muHtaram مَحْتَرَمْ مشترک مشترک
shared, mushtarak مَشْتَرَك
society mujtamaً مَجْتَمَعٍ مَسْتَنَد مسْتَنَد
elect ed mustanad مَسْتَنَد مطلع مطلع

document

elected

٤ See note 2.
10.2.2 Geminate root: *muttaʿal* مُتَّعَلَ
The AP and PP of geminate Form VIII verbs are identical. Context is often needed to differentiate the meaning.

occupied  
muḥtall  مُحتَلً

10.2.2 Hamzated root

Hamza- initial: *muʿtaʿal* مُؤْتَعَلَ

conference  
muʿtamar  مُؤْتَمَر

10.2.3 Assimilated root: *muttaʿal* مُنْتَعَلَ

accused; suspected  
muttaham  مُتَهَم

10.2.4 Hollow root: *muṭṭaʿal*

The AP and PP of hollow Form VIII verbs are identical. Context is needed to differentiate the meaning.

excellent, distinguished  
mumtaaz  مُمْتَاز  chosen  muxtaar  مُخْتَار

10.2.5 Defective root: *muṭṭaʿan* مُقْتَعَنَ

required  
muqtaD-an  مُقْتَنِدَ level  mustaw-an  مُسْتَوِّى

10.2.6 Examples of Form VIII PPs in context

المصادر مطلعة
maSaadir-u muTTalaʿt-un
informed sources

لديه المستندات الرسمية
laday-hi l-mustanadaat-u l-rasmiyyat-u.
He has the official documents.

بمقتضى الحقوق
bi-muqtaDaa l-Huquq-i
in accordance with the laws

الرئيس المنتخب
al-raʿiils-u l-muntaxab-u
the president-elect

جدول أعمال مشترك
jadwal-u ʿaʿmaal-in mushtarak-un
a shared agenda

في الأراضي المحتلة
fit l-araaDii l-muḥtallat-i
in the occupied territories
Form VIII Sound root: احترم، يحترم، محترم
AP: محترم
PP: محترم
VN: محترام 'to respect'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Passive</th>
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Form VIII Geminate root: احتلَّ، بِحتلَّ AP: محَتلَّ، محَتلَّ PP: نَحتَّلَن، نَحتَّلَن VN: احتَلالَ ‘to occupy’

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Form VIII hamza-final root: to begin

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Form VIII triliteral verb

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Form VIII Hollow root: اختّار, يَخْتَارَ AP: مُخْتَار PP: مَخْتَار VN: اِخْتِيَارَ ‘to choose’
Form VIII Defective root: ملتقى، يلتقى

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VN: ‘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 $iC_1C_2aC_3C_4$ and the present tense stem $-C_1C_2aC_3C_4$. 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 `af'al adjectival pattern, as the colors, e.g., 'aswad 'black,' '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 hamza al-wasla 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

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<th>Root</th>
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<td>ilall-a/jxki</td>
<td>to be or become green</td>
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<td>xDar-ra/ya-xDar-u</td>
<td>ُبَخْضَرُ / بَخْضرُ</td>
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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 \( i^{\text{Hmarr-a/ya-Hmarr-u}} \)

to be or become yellow; to become pale \( i^{\text{Sfarr-a/ya-Sfarr-u}} \)

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 (\( waa\) or \( yaa' \)):

- to become black \( i^{\text{swadd-a/ya-swadd-u}} \)
- to be or become white \( i^{\text{byaDD-a/ya-byaDD-u}} \)
- to squint; be cross-eyed \( i^{\text{wall-a/ya-wall-u}} \)
- to become crooked \( i^{\text{wajj-a/ya-wajj-u}} \)

7 Defective roots in Form IX: rare

8 Form IX verbs in context

\( \text{إدَعَجُتُ الشَّجَرَةُ} \)
\( i^{\text{wajj-at-l-shajarat-u}}. \)
The tree became crooked.

9 Verbal nouns of Form IX

9.1 Sound/regular root: \( i^{\text{f'ilaaal}} \)

- greenness \( i^{\text{tDiraar}} \)
- blushing \( i^{\text{Hmiraar}} \)
- yellowness; pallor \( i^{\text{Sfiraar}} \)
9.2 Hollow root: *if*ilaal

squinting          *ihwilaal*       أَحْوَلَلَ
crookedness        *i‘wijaj*        أَعْوَجَجَ

10 Form IX participles

10.1 Form IX participles (AP and PP): *muf*‘al مَفْعُولٌ

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:

- blushing          *muhmarr*         مَحْمَرَ

Hollow root:

- blackening        *muswadd*         مُسْوَدَ
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Form IX Sound root: أحمر، يحمر، أحمر

*AP*: أحمر
*PP*: أحمر
*VN*: `to become red`

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Form IX triliteral verb: أَسْوَدُ، يَسُودُ، يَسُودُنَّ  ‘to turn black’

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Form X triliteral verb

1 Basic characteristics

1.1 Pattern: istaf'"al-\textipa{a}/ya-staf'"il-\textipa{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 \textipa{ista}$C_1C_2aC_3$ and the present tense stem \textipa{-sta}$C_1C_2iC_3$. 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:

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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Form X Verb</th>
<th>لَعْبَةُ أَجْزَالِكَ</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to request guidance</td>
<td>istars\textipa{a}/ya-starshid-\textipa{u}</td>
<td>استِرشَدُ / يَسْتَرْشَدُ</td>
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<tr>
<td>(from s.o.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>to request or seek explanation</td>
<td>istafs\textipa{a}/ya-stafsir-\textipa{u}</td>
<td>يستفْسَرُ / يَسْتَفْسِرُ</td>
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<td>(from s.o.)</td>
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Examples of estimatives include:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to consider (s.th.) good</td>
<td>istah\textipa{s}an-\textipa{a}/ya-stallsin-\textipa{u}</td>
<td>يَسْتَحْسَنُ / يَسْتَحْسِنُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to consider (s.th.) strange</td>
<td>istaghr\textipa{b}a/ya-staghrib-\textipa{u}</td>
<td>يَسْتَغْرِبُ / يَسْتَغْرِبُ</td>
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Form X may be the reflexive of Form IV: Wright writes (1967, 1:44) : “Form X converts the factitive signification of Form IV into the reflexive or middle.” For example, Form IV ‘\textipa{a}dd-\textipa{a}/yu-idd-\textipa{u}’ ‘to prepare (s.th.)’ and Form X ‘ista\textipa{c}add-\textipa{a}/ya-sta\textipa{c}idd-\textipa{u}’ ‘to prepare one’s self, get ready.’

1.3 Transitivity
Form X verbs may be transitive or intransitive.¹

¹ Koulish (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-ya-staqbil-u ‘to receive (s.o.)’).

2 Sound/regular root

to consume  


to discover; invent  


to disdain; detest  


to invest  


3 Geminate (doubled) roots in Form X

to continue, to last  


to be independent  


4 Hamzated roots in Form X

to rent, to hire  


to resume  


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  

to colonize, settle  

to awaken, wake up  


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 /iː/ in the present tense stem.

to benefit (from or by)  


to be able (to do s.th.)  


7 Defective roots in Form X
Defective roots in Form X inflect as -aal-ii defectives.

to except, exclude: istathmaa/ya-stathnii

to seek an opinion: istafa/ya-staftii

to appropriate: istawl/ya-stawlII

8 Examples of Form X verbs in context

Hattaa ‘ind-a-maa staDaafat-i l-qimmat-a

even when it hosted the summit [conference]

في زيارة إلزابوربا تستغرق أوقعا

fil ziyaarat-in li-faransaa ta-staghriq-u ‘usbu’un-an

on a visit to France that lasts a week

Hatta’s still in the first stage of the second stage.

ta-stamirr-u fatrat-u l-hululuf-i min tishriin-a l-thaanii Hattaa ‘aadhaara.

The snow season lasts from November until March.

9 Form X verbal nouns: istif’aal

9.1 Sound/regular root

inquiry: istixbaar

use: istixdaam

investment: istithmaar

disdain: istiukar

9.2 Geminate root

The verbal noun of the geminate Form X verb is regular, using the istif’aal pattern and splitting the identical second and third root consonants:

continuation: istimraar

merit, worthiness, claim: istiHqaaq

preparation: isti’daad

claim: istiqlaal

9.3 Hamzated root

The verbal noun of hamzated roots of Form X is usually regular in formation. The hamza takes a seat appropriate to its phonetic context.

renting: isti’jaar

resumption: isti’naaf
9.4 Assimilated root: استُيعال
In the verbal noun of assimilated-root Form X, the root-initial waaw assimilates to the preceding kasra and becomes long jiiː:

importation  istiiraad  استیراد  colonizing  istiifaan  استیتان
awakening  istiiqaaZ  استيقاظ

9.5 Hollow root: استُغاَلة
The verbal noun of Form X hollow verbs has the form istifaala استifaَلة spelled with taa' marbuTaa.

benefit  istiinaa  استِفادة  ability  istifaa'a  استِفاعة
response  istijaaba  استِجابة  resignation  istiqaala  استِقالة

9.6 Defective root: استُفناء
The verbal noun of defective roots in Form X has the pattern istif'a استِفَاء. The weakness of the final root element converts into hamza:

exception  istitlinaa  استثناء  renunciation  istighnaa  استِغناء
plebiscite,  istifa'a  استِفَاء  appropriation  istilaa  استِيلاء
referendum

9.7 Form X verbal nouns in context

لأَنَّها اسْتِحْقَاق دِيمُوْرَاطِيّ  إلى استثمَار بلايين الدولارات
li-anna-haa stiHqaay-un  stilmaar-i balaayin-i
diinmaqraatiyy-un  l-duulaaraat-i
because it is a democratic claim  to the investment of billions of dollars

في العيد الخمسي لاستقلال لبنان
fii l-tiil-i l-xamsiina l-istiqlaa.l-i 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 مستَفعل

10.1.1 Sound/regular root

consumer  mustahlik  مستَهلك  orientalist  mustashriq  مستشرِق

2 Instead of 'istiiraad or 'istiifaan. The sequence /-wa/ is usually avoided in Arabic.
10.1.2 Geminate root: مُستَفَعْع
continuous mustamirr مستمر independent musta'all مستقل
ready musta'idd مستعد entitled: musta'all مستحق

10.1.3 Hamzated root
renter musta'jir مستأجر
tenant, musta'jir مستأجر

10.1.4 Assimilated root
importer mustawrid مستورد colonizer mustawTin مستوطن

tenant, musta'jir مستأجر
tenant, musta'jir مستأجر

colonizer mustawTin مستوطن

colonomer mustawTin مستوطن

10.1.5 Hollow root: مُستَفَعْع
circular mustadiir مستدير impossible musta'll مستحل

10.1.6 Defective root: مُستَفَعْع
doing mustaghnin مستغني without

10.1.7 Form X APs in context
saalat-an mustadiirat-un a Had-u l-nuwwaab-i l-musta'all-iina
a circular courtyard one of the independent deputies

10.2 Form X passive participle (PP): مُستَفَعْع
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: مُستَفَعْع
laboratory mustaxbar مستخبر colony musta'mara مستعمرة
future mustaqbal مستقبل strange mustaghraab مستغرب
swamp mustanqa مستنقع used musta'mal مستعمل

10.2.2 Geminate root
This root type is rare in the passive participle.
10.2.3 Hamzated root

resumed musta‘naf  مُسْتَنَافٍ rented musta‘jar  مُسْتَأْجِرٍ

10.2.4 Assimilated root: mustafa‘al مُسْتَفْعَل

settlement mustawTi‘ana  مُسْتوَتِّنَة imported mustawrad  مُسْتوْرَد

10.2.5 Hollow root: mustafaal مُسْتَفَاال

borrowed; false: musta‘aar  مُسْتَعْار counsellor mustashaar  مُسْتَشاَر

artificial

10.2.6 Defective root: mustaf‘an

hospital mustashfan  مُسْتَشْفَيٌ excepted mustathnan  مُسْتَثْنَى

10.2.7 Form X PPs in context

أسماء مستعارة
‘asmaa‘-un musta‘aarat-un
pseudonyms ('borrowed names')

وضع حجر الأساس للمستشفى
wuD‘-u Hajri l-‘asaasi li-l-mustashfaa
setting the foundation stone for the hospital

في المستقبل القريب
fit l-mustaqbal-l-‘aqiib-i
in the near future

منة مليون دولار ليست مستغربة.
mi‘at-u milyum-i duulaar-in lays-at
mustaghrabat-an.
A hundred million dollars is not unusual.
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*Form X Sound root: استخدامُ يستخدمُ ‘to use’*
### Form X Geminate root: 

**AP:** استمر، يستمر  
**PP:** VN: ‘to last’

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### Notes
- **Active:** تستمر, تستمر
- **Passive:** تستمر, تستمر
- **Alternate Active:** تستمر
- **Alternate Passive:** تستمر
- **Subject:** تستمر، تستمر
- **Object:** تستمر، تستمر
- **Perfect Active:** تستمر
- **Perfect Passive:** تستمر
- **Imperfect Active:** تستمر
- **Imperfect Passive:** تستمر
- **Jussive:** تستمر
- **Imperative:** تستمر

### Examples
- **Active:** تستمر، تستمر
- **Passive:** تستمر، تستمر
- **Perfect Active:** تستمر
- **Perfect Passive:** تستمر
- **Imperfect Active:** تستمر
- **Imperfect Passive:** تستمر
- **Jussive:** تستمر
- **Imperative:** تستمر
592

A

Reference

Grammar of Modern Standard Arabic

•go
Form X hamza-initial

root:

j^LLuj

go

g

AP: j^.

\

o

>

PP:

^

got
Llu^o

O

VN: jl

.

‘to rent’


Form X Assimilated root: استوردَانُ - **نتُستوردُ - **وَيُستوردُ - **وَيُستوردُ

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<td>to import</td>
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Form X Hollow root:  

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AP:  استطاع , يستطع  
PP:  استطع  
VN:  استطاعة  
‘to be able’
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Form X Defective root: استَنْتِي. AP: مستَنْتِي. PP: مستَنْتِي. VN: استَنْتِي. ‘to except’
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: \( \text{if}^{‘}\text{aall-}^{‘}\text{aall-}^{‘}/\text{ya-f}^{‘}\text{aall-u} \)

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 \( \text{hamza} \text{t al-waSl} \) and is distinguished by the lengthening of the stem vowel from \( \text{fatHa} \) to \( \text{'alif} \), and the doubling of the final consonant, giving the pattern \( \text{iC}_1\text{C}_2\text{aaC}_3\text{C}_3\text{alif}/\text{ya-}\text{C}_1\text{C}_2\text{aaC}_3\text{C}_3\text{u} \). It is intransitive.

- to become temporarily red \( \text{iHmaarr-}\text{alif}/\text{ya-Hmaarr-u} \)
- to become temporarily yellow \( \text{iSfaarr-}\text{alif}/\text{ya-Sfaarr-u} \)
- to be dark brown \( \text{ismaarr-}\text{alif}/\text{ya-}\text{ismaarr-u} \)

1.1 Verbal noun: \( \text{if}^{‘}\text{iilaal} \)

- turning temporarily red \( \text{iHmiiraar} \)

2 Form XII: \( \text{if}^{‘}\text{aw‘al-}^{‘}/\text{ya-f}^{‘}\text{aw‘il-u} \)

Form XII has the pattern \( \text{iC}_1\text{C}_2\text{awC}_3\text{awC}_3\text{alif}/\text{ya-}\text{C}_1\text{C}_2\text{awC}_3\text{C}_3\text{u} \), with doubling of the medial radical and insertion of a \( \text{waaw} \) 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, 183. 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.

\[i^\text{Hdawdab-a}^\text{ya-Hdawdib-a}\]

2.1 Verbal noun: *if^\text{ii}^\text{aal}*
becoming humpbacked \[i^\text{Hddiidaab}\]

2.2 Active participle: *mu^\text{aw}^\text{il}*
mounded; humped \[mu^\text{Hdawdib}\]

3 Form XIII: *if^\text{awwal-a}^\text{a/Hdawdab-a}^\text{ya-f^awwil-u}^\text{u}*

Form XIII inserts a doubled *waaw* between the second and third root consonants, yielding the pattern \[i^\text{C}_1^\text{C}_2\text{awwaC}_3^\text{a/ya-C}_1^\text{C}_2\text{awwiC}_3^\text{u}\] . It, too, usually denotes color or quality but may also denote an action.

\[i^\text{xrawwaT-a}^\text{ya-xrawwiT-u}\] to last long
\[i^\text{lawwaT-a}^\text{ya-f^awwiT-u}\] to mount a camel without a saddle

3.1 Verbal noun: *if^\text{wwal}*
lasting long \[i^\text{xriwwaaT}\]

4 Form XIV: *if^\text{anlaal-a}^\text{I/Hdawdab-a}^\text{ya-f^anlii-u}^\text{u}*

Form XIV has the pattern \[i^\text{C}_1^\text{anC}_3^\text{aC}_3^\text{a/ya-C}_1^\text{anC}_3^\text{anC}_3^\text{u}\] , with doubling of the third radical and insertion of a *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.

\[i^\text{Hankak-a}\] to be dark

4.1 Verbal noun: *if^\text{naal}*
being dark \[i^\text{Hinkaak}\]

5 Form XV: *if^\text{anlaa}^\text{I/Hdawdab-a}^\text{ya-f^anlii}*

Form XV resembles Form XIV in that there is an inserted *nuun* between the second and third radicals of the root. However, there is an added suffix */aa/ which turns

Note that this form with its inserted *nuun* correlates closely with Form III of quadriliteral verbs (also very rare); e.g., *ibmnshaq-a* / *ya-branshiq-u* 'to bloom.' The difference is that in the quadriliteral, 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'landaafya-landii  اَعْلَنْدَي / يَعْلَنُدَي
- to conquer, vanquish: israndaafya-srandii  اَسْرَنْدَي / يَسْرَنُدَي

5.1 Verbal noun: if'inlaa* اَفْعَالِهُ
- conquering: isrindaaf  اَسْرِنْداَء
Quadriliteral verbs

1 Basic characteristics of quadriliteral verb roots (‘af‘a al rubaa‘iyya) Quadrilateral 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 mishmash). 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-smi-llahi ‘in the name of God.’

1.3 Borrowed roots Quadrilateral verb patterns are sometimes used to borrow verbal concepts from another language (e.g., talfan-a / yu-talfin-u ‘to telephone’).

1.4 Forms Quadrilateral 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 quadrilateral verbs are by far the most common in MSA.

2 Form I: fa‘iil-a / yu-fa‘iil-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 quadrilateral verb Form I, the two middle consonants are different, whereas in a Form II triliteral, they are the same.

2.2 Transitivity
Form I quadrilaterals may be transitive or intransitive.

2.3 Regular quadrilaterals
In regular or sound quadrilateral roots, all the consonants are different. Most quadrilaterals of this type contain a “liquid” consonant: /r/, /l/, /m/.

- to obstruct: 'arqal-a/yu-'arqil-u
- to translate: tarjam-a/yu-tarjim-u
- to dominate: sayTara/yu-sayTir-u
- to prove: barhan-a/yu-barhin-u

2.4 Reduplicated quadrilaterals
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.

- to gargle: gharghara/yu-gharghir-u
- to flutter: rafraf-a/yu-rafrif-u
- to move, to budge: zaHzaH-a/yu-zaHziH-u
- to ruin, demolish: Da'Da'-a/yu-Da'Di'-u
- to shake: zalzal-a/yu-zalzil-u
- to chatter: tharthar-a/yu-tharthir-u

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

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1. Certain quadrilateral verbs appear to be expanded triliterals, with liquid or continuant phonemes /r/, /l/, /m/, /l/, or /w/ added to the root. They are called mulHaqaat bi-l-rubaa'iyy, for example: zaHlaf-a/yu-zaHlif-u ‘to roll along’ from zaHif ‘to advance slowly.’ See Roochnik, n.d.; Sterling 1964, 26-27; Wright 1967, 1:47-48.

2. For a semantic analysis of reduplicated quadrilateral verbs see Procházk 1993.
somewhat like creating an acronym, but in Arabic this particular usage creates verbs that denote saying a set phrase.

**basmal-a/yu-basiml-u**

to say: bi-ism-i laa haa-i

(‘in the name of God’)

**Hawqal-a/yu-Hawqil-u**

to say: laa Hawl-a wa laa quwwat-a‘illaa bi-lhaah-i

(‘There is no power and no strength save in God’)

**fadhlak-a/yu-fadhlik-u**

to say: 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

(from roots: ع - ب - د ‘to serve, to worship’ and س sh-m-s ‘sun’)

to be petrified jalmad-a/yu-jalmid-u

(from roots: ج - ي - ل مد ‘freeze’ and ي - د j-m-d ‘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
- to televise talfaz-a/yu-talfiz-u
- to philosophize falsaf-a/yu-falsif-u

### 3 Form II quadriliterals: tafa’l-a تفَاعِل تفا’ل / ya-tafa’l-u تفَاعِل تفا’ل

#### 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-u / ya-takahrab-u تکهرب
- to decline, go down: tadahwar-u / ya-tadahwar-u تدهور
- to be crystallized: tabalwar-u / ya-tabalwar-u تبلور
- to adorn one’s self, dress up: tabahraj-u / ya-tabahraj-u تبصره
- to acclimatize (o.s.): ta’aqlam-u / ya-ta’aqlam-u تأقلم
- to become dilapidated: taDa’Da’-u / ya-taDa’Da’-u تضرع

3.3 Denominals
Form II quadriliterals may be denominalizations, as in the following verb:

to concentrate, be centered, concentrated: tamarkaz-u / ya-tamarkaz-u تمرکز

(from the noun of place, markaz ‘center’ from the root ر-ک-ز)

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-u / ya-tafalsaf-u تفسف
- act like a philosopher

to act American: ta’amrank-u / ya-ta’amrank-u تأمرک

4 Form III: if’anlal-a / ya-f’anlil-u یفعال

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-u / ya-branshiq-u ابرنشق
- to be proud, raise the nose: ixranTam-u / ya-xranTim-u اخرينتم

(Wright 1967, 1:49)

(Haywood and Nahmad 1962, 263)

3 Whereas Wright (1967) as well as Haywood and Nahmad (1962) give this Form as III, other authors, including the MEGAS grammar (1965, 225) and Sterling (1904, 26) give it as Form IV of the quadriliteral, and Form IV as Form III.
5 Form IV: if'alall-a / 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 iCCaCC-a, ya-CCaCC-u. It denotes an intensity of quality or degree and is intransitive.

- to be calm, serene, reassured: tīma‘ann-a/ya-tīma‘inn-u
- to vanish away, disappear: iDmaHall-a/ya-DmaHill-u
- to shudder: iqsha‘arr-a/ya-qsha‘irr-u
- to stretch: ishra‘abb-a/ya-shra‘ibb-u
- to shrink, shudder, recoil: ishmu‘azz-a/ya-shmu‘izz-u
- to become dark, gloomy: ikfaharr-a/ya-kfahirr-u

6 Examples of quadriliteral verbs in context

Form I:

- بحلق في عينيها: baHlqa‘a fil ‘ayn-ay-haa.
  He stared into her eyes.

- يترجم إلى لغته: yu-tarjim-u ‘ilaa lughat-i-hi.
  He translates into his language.

Form II:

- تزحزحت الصخرة: tazaHzaH-at-l-Saxrat-u.
  The rock moved.

  It can deteriorate (‘it is possible that it deteriorate’) bit by bit.

Form IV:

- وضع يطمئن في جميع المواطنين: waD‘-un ya-Tma‘inn-u fii-hi jamīl-f‘-u l-muwādatin-liina
  a situation in which all citizens can be reassured

- حيث تشعرُ الطريق: 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 فعالة ~ fi’lila فعللأ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>translation</td>
<td>ترجمة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obstacle</td>
<td>عقلة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chattering</td>
<td>ثرثرة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>link, chain</td>
<td>سلسلة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.1.2 fu’laal فعاللأ ~ fa’laal فعللأ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>proof, evidence</td>
<td>برهان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>earthquake</td>
<td>زلزال</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2 Form II quadrilateral verbal nouns: tafa’lul تفعللأ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>deterioration</td>
<td>تدهور</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sequence</td>
<td>تسلسل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continuity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.3 Form III quadrilateral verbal nouns: if’inaal إنفعللأ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>flourishing</td>
<td>إبرشاق</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.4 Form IV quadrilateral verbal nouns: if’illaal إنفعللأ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>serenity</td>
<td>اطمئنان</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vanishing</td>
<td>اضطرال</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.5 Quadrilateral verbal nouns in context

لوقف تدهور الدينار
li-waqf-i tadahwur-i l-diinaar silsilat u jibaal-in
to stop the decline of the dinar a chain of mountains

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’lil مفعاللأ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>engineer</td>
<td>مهندس</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explosive</td>
<td>مفرقع</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.1.2 Form II QAP: \textit{mutafa'\textasciitilde{il}l}
\begin{itemize}
\item deteriorating \textit{mutadahwir}
\item crystalline \textit{mutabalwir}
\end{itemize}

8.1.3 Form III QAP: rare

8.1.4 Form IV QAP: \textit{muf\textasciitilde{al}il}
\begin{itemize}
\item serene, calm \textit{muTma\textasciitilde{i}n}\textasciitilde{n}
\item dusky, gloomy \textit{mukfahitr}
\end{itemize}

8.1.5 QAPs in context

They are in a deteriorating state of health.

8.2 Quadrilateral passive participle (QPP)

8.2.1 Form I passive participle: \textit{mufa\textasciitilde{l}al}
\begin{itemize}
\item camp \textit{mu'askar}
\item series \textit{musalsal}
\item old-timer \textit{muxaDram}
\end{itemize}

8.2.2 Form II QPP: \textit{mutafa\textasciitilde{l}al}
This form is rare.

8.2.3 Form III and Form IV QPP
These are rare.

8.2.4 Quadrilateral PPs in context

\begin{itemize}
\item new series \textit{musalsal-un jadiid-un}
\item articles translated from Arabic \textit{muquala\textasciitilde{a}at-un mutarjamat-un min-a l-arabiyyat-i}
\end{itemize}
Moods of the verb I: indicative and subjunctive

Mood or "mode" refers to the Arabic verb properties indicative, subjunctive, and jussive. 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.

1 The indicative mood: al-muDaari, al-marfu'u

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'ūd 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, 1:61ff., 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 -'rif- عرف - 'know'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>أَعِرَفُ</td>
<td>تعرِفَانُ</td>
<td>نَعِرَفُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'a-'rif-u</td>
<td>ta-'rif-aani</td>
<td>na-'rif-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>تعرِفَ</td>
<td>تعرِفَانَ</td>
<td>تعرِفُونَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>ta-'rif-u</td>
<td>ta-'rif-aani</td>
<td>ta-'rif-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تعرِفْتِينَ</td>
<td>تعرِفَانَ</td>
<td>تعرِفْتَنَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ta-'rif-tina</td>
<td>ta-'rif-aani</td>
<td>ta-'rif-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td>يعْرَفُ</td>
<td>يعْرَفَانَ</td>
<td>يعْرَفُونَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>ya-'rif-u</td>
<td>ya-'rif-aani</td>
<td>ya-'rif-uuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تعرِفَ</td>
<td>تعرِفَانَ</td>
<td>يعْرَفَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ta-'rif-u</td>
<td>ta-'rif-aani</td>
<td>ya-'rif-na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 (-u-) suffix on five of the persons (I, we, you m.sg., he and she):³
2. the /-na/ suffix after the long vowel /-uu-/ in the second and third persons masculine plural and after /-ii-/ in the second person feminine singular;
3. the /-ni/ suffix after the long vowel /-aa-/ in the dual.

1.3 Examples of indicative in context

1.3.1 Statements

ta-'rif-u kull-a shay-in. نرحب بزبائتنا. 
She knows everything. We welcome our customers.

³ 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 marfu' in Arabic.
يغادر القاهرة اليوم.
yu-ghaadir-u l-qaahirat-a l-yawm-a. He leaves Cairo today.

ل întشَّرَف. na-tasharraf-u. We are honored.

1.3.2 Questions

ماذا تفعال؟ maadhaa ta-f’al-u? What does it (f.) do?

لماذا تحبّه؟ li-maadhaa tu-Hibb-u-hu? Why do you like it (m.)?

1.3.3 Future tense

1.3.3.1 WITH FUTURE MARKER

سوف يتحسن. sawf ya-taHassan-u. It will get better.

سيعقدون اجتماعاً. sa-ya’-qud-uuna jima’-an. They will hold a meeting.

1.3.3.2 BY CONTEXT

يغادر القاهرة غداً.
yu-ghaadir-u l-’aaSimat-a qhad-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 تصدق! ‘as’aar-un laa tu-Saddaq-u! Unbelievable prices!

تُستَخدَم 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 المضارع المنصوب

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
Moods of the verb I: indicative and subjunctive

The moods of the verb I: indicative and subjunctive. This uses the forms /-una/, /-ina/, and /-aan/, the /nun/ and its short vowel are dropped, so the suffixes are left as long vowels /-uu/, /-ii/, /-aa/.

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).

Subjunctive mood paradigm
Present tense -‘rif- عرف- ‘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>m.</td>
<td>ْعَرْف</td>
<td>ْتَعْرِفْ</td>
<td>ْتَعْرِفْ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>ْعَرْف</td>
<td>ْتَعْرِفْ</td>
<td>ْتَعْرِفْ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>ْعَرْف</td>
<td>ْتَعْرِفْ</td>
<td>ْتَعْرِفْ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>ْعَرْف</td>
<td>ْتَعْرِفْ</td>
<td>ْتَعْرِفْ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>ْعَرْف</td>
<td>ْتَعْرِفْ</td>
<td>ْتَعْرِفْ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>ْعَرْف</td>
<td>ْتَعْرِفْ</td>
<td>ْتَعْرِفْ</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 َلَن, which negates the future; a series of particles that express purpose (li-بِكَي, kay كَي kَي, Hattaa حَتَّى) and the subordinating conjunction particle ‘َانَ, which links a subordinate clause to a main clause. The subjunctive mood may also occur in the passive voice.

2.1 Negative particle: lan َلَن ‘will not; shall not’
After the negative particle lan the subjunctive is used. This combination of lan + subjunctive yields a future negative.

*For the history and development of the Arabic subjunctive, see Testen 1994.*
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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

لاخذ في نزهة
li-'aaxudh-a-lu fii nuzhat-in
in order that I take him for a walk

ليغلفوا داخل الحدود
li-ya-ngaHiq-uu daaxil-a l-Huduud-i
in order that they be closed inside the borders

2.2.1.2 WITH VERBAL NOUN

للدفاع عن نفسه
li-l-difa'a-i 'an nafsi-hi
in order to defend himself

2.2.2 kay كي 'in order that, in order to'

كي يستعد للامتحان
kay na-sta'idd-a li-l-imtiHaan-i
in order for us to get ready for the exam

2.2.3 kay laa كي لا 'in order not to'

لا أقول...
kay laa 'a-qul-a...
in order that I not say...

كي لا يبقى قويًا
kay laa ya-bqaa qawiyy-an
so that it not remain strong

2.2.4 li-kay لكي 'in order to; in order that'

لكي يعود إلى بلاده
li-kay ya-'uud-a 'ilaal bilaad-i-hi
in order to return to his country

لكي يحافظ على موقعه
li-kay yu-HaadfiZ-a 'alaal mawqfi-t-i-hi
in order to maintain his position
Moods of the verb I: indicative and subjunctive

2.2.5 *li-kay-laa* نكِيْلَأَ 'in order not to'

likay-la ta-dxul-a l-maktab-a
in order that she not enter the office

2.2.6 *Hattaa* حَتَّىَ 'in order that'

The particle *Hattaa* has other meanings, as well ('until' or 'even'), but when used with a verb in the subjunctive it indicates purpose.

حتى ندرك صعوبة هذا العمل

Hattaa mu-drik-a Su’unbat-a haadhaa l’amal-i
in order that we realize the difficulty of this work

2.2.7 *Hattaa laa* حَتَّىَ لَا 'in order not to; so that . . . not'

حتى لا يسقط في تأييد الانسحاب

Hattaa laa ya-shuTT-a fii ta’yiid-i l-usiHaab-i
so that it does not go too far in supporting withdrawal

2.3 Subordinating conjunction: *‘an* أَنَّ + subjunctive

The particle *‘an* أَنَّ 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. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to like, love</td>
<td>ʿallhab-ba ʿan</td>
<td>to be possible</td>
<td>ʿamkan-ba ʿan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to decide</td>
<td>qarrar-ba ʿan</td>
<td>to be able</td>
<td>istaTaa ʿan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to want</td>
<td>ʿaraad-ba ʿan</td>
<td>to be able</td>
<td>qadar-ba ʿan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to try</td>
<td>Haawal-ba ʿan</td>
<td>to intend</td>
<td>qaSad-ba ʿan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 ʿan will be used” (1975, III:107). See his extensive section on ʿan 1975, III: 107–16. Compare these verbs to verbs followed by the particle ʿanna, 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:

\[ \text{We like to read (lit. 'we like that we read').} \]

or

\[ \text{We like to read (lit. 'we like reading').} \]

Sentences in English may use the infinitive (e.g., “to read”) as the equivalent of either structure. For example:

\[ \text{We don't want to forget ('that we forget').} \]

\[ \text{We are able to do it ('we are able that we do it').} \]

\[ \text{Then it requested that the appointment be [the day] after tomorrow.} \]

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* 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:

\[ \text{qabl-a 'an nu-fakkir-a bi-dhaalika} \]
before we think of that

\[ \text{qabl-a 'an tu-mazziq-hu l-Harb-u} \]
before war rips it apart

---

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 يخفف 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 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.9

 (1) Describing the past:

 بعد أن أتهمهم بالتأمر

 ba'd-a 'an-i ttaham-a-hum bi-ta'aamuri

 after he accused them of conspiracy

 (2) Discussing the future:

 سنأكل بعد أن ندرس.

 sa-na'ku la 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-nbaghi 'an

 ينبغي أن

 it is possible that yu-mkin-u 'an

 يمكن أن

 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-y-nua 'an me-huwiDa 'We have to negotiate (it is necessary/ incumbent upon us that we negotiate)."
It could turn into a trap.

It is necessary that we undertake a visit.

It is necessary for the US to support the agreement.

It ought to become an indivisible part of their policy.

Isn’t it necessary (‘for us’) that we defend ourselves?

He must not feel anxious.

It must not be paid in cash.

It is necessary that he not disregard it.

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.
2.3.4 Adjective + َّاَن + subjunctive

The particle َّاَن 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 has been determined that explosives experts will detonate the bombs.
Moods of the verb II: jussive and imperative

1 The jussive: al-jazm الجزم

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 sukun.

Like the subjunctive, the jussive shortens the longer verb suffixes, such as /-uuna/, /-ina/, and /-aan/, by deleting the nun and its short vowel, so those suffixes are left as long vowels /-uun/, /-iin/, /-aan/. 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></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>جَعَفْنَى</td>
<td>جَعَفْنا</td>
<td>جَعَفْنَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>جَعَفْنَى</td>
<td>جَعَفْنا</td>
<td>جَعَفْنَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>جَعَفْنَى</td>
<td>جَعَفْنا</td>
<td>جَعَفْنَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>جَعَفْنَى</td>
<td>جَعَفْنا</td>
<td>جَعَفْنَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td>جَعَفْنَى</td>
<td>جَعَفْنا</td>
<td>جَعَفْنَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td>جَعَفْنَى</td>
<td>جَعَفْنا</td>
<td>جَعَفْنَا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- عَرَفَ • rif • 'know'
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>1st person</td>
<td>a-rudd-a</td>
<td>na-rudd-a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>ta-rudd-a</td>
<td>ta-rudd-aa</td>
<td>ta-rudd-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>ta-rudd-ii</td>
<td>ta-rudd-aa</td>
<td>ta-rudd-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>ya-rudd-a</td>
<td>ya-rudd-aa</td>
<td>ya-rudd-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>ta-rudd-a</td>
<td>ta-rudd-aa</td>
<td>ya-rudd-na</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-waaw verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>أَقُلْ</td>
<td>تَقُلْ</td>
<td>نَقُلْ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>أَقُلْ</td>
<td>تَقُلْ</td>
<td>نَقُلْ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>تَقُلْ</td>
<td>تَقُولَا</td>
<td>تَقُولَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>تَقُلْ</td>
<td>تَقُولَا</td>
<td>تَقُولَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تَقُولُ</td>
<td>تَقُولَا</td>
<td>تَقُولَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td>تَقُلْ</td>
<td>تَقُولَا</td>
<td>تَقُولَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>تَقُلْ</td>
<td>تَقُولَا</td>
<td>تَقُولَا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تَقُلْ</td>
<td>تَقُولَا</td>
<td>تَقُولَا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3.2 Hollow yaa' verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>أَبِعْ</td>
<td>تَبِعِّ</td>
<td>بِعَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>أَبِعْ</td>
<td>تَبِعِّ</td>
<td>بِعَ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>تَبِعِّ</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>تَبِعِّ</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td>تَبِعِّ</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>تَبِعِّ</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تَبِعِّ</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
<td>تَبِعُ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 1.3.3 Hollow 'alif verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-nam- / -naam- 'sleep'</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First person</strong></td>
<td>'a-nam</td>
<td></td>
<td>na-nam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second person</strong></td>
<td>ta-nam</td>
<td>ta-naam-aa</td>
<td>ta-naam-uu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong></td>
<td>ta-naam-ii</td>
<td>ta-naam-aa</td>
<td>ta-naam-uu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.4 Jussive mood paradigm: Defective Form I verb

The effect of the sukun 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 yaa'-defective verb (-aa/-ii)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>- bni- / -bniy- 'build'</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First person</strong></td>
<td>'a-bni</td>
<td></td>
<td>na-bni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second person</strong></td>
<td>ta-bni</td>
<td>ta-bniy-aa</td>
<td>ta-bniu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong></td>
<td>ta-bniy-ii</td>
<td>ta-bniy-aa</td>
<td>ta-bniyu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 1.4.2 Jussive of yaa'-defective verb (-ii/-aa)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong>&lt;br&gt;m.</td>
<td>يا بني</td>
<td>يبنيا</td>
<td>بنيوا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>يا بني</td>
<td>يبنيا</td>
<td>بنيوا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>تا بني</td>
<td>تبنيا</td>
<td>تبنيا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First person</strong>&lt;br&gt;م.</td>
<td>انس</td>
<td>ننس</td>
<td>ننس</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>التانسا</td>
<td>تستا</td>
<td>تستا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>تا نسا</td>
<td>تنسا</td>
<td>تنسا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Third person</strong>&lt;br&gt;m.</td>
<td>يا نسا</td>
<td>ينسا</td>
<td>ينسا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>تا نسا</td>
<td>تستا</td>
<td>تستا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>تا نسا</td>
<td>تستا</td>
<td>تستا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.4.3 Jussive of waaw-defective verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First person</strong>&lt;br&gt;m.</td>
<td>اب</td>
<td>ند</td>
<td>ند</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>التابد</td>
<td>نتب</td>
<td>نتب</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Moods of the verb II: jussive and imperative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-bdw- / -bdw- ‘seem, appear’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Full paradigms of verbs in all moods are found in chapters on the respective verb forms (I-X).

1.5 Use of the jussive
The jussive is used in essentially five ways: with conditional sentences, with the negative particle لام لام; with the negative imperative particle لَا لَا, the indirect imperative particle لِلِي لِلِي, and as a basis for forming the imperative.

Most often, the jussive mood in MSA is used with the negative particle لام لام 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 تذهب، 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.
إن يكسرAINASAN سن آخر، فسته تكسر.

"in yu-ksir "insaana-un sinn-a 'aaxar-a, fa-sinn-u-hu tu-ksar-u." 2

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.” 3

lam na-‘ti.
We did not come.

lam ‘a-nam.
I didn’t sleep.

lam ta-njall Hattaa l-2aan-a
She has not yet succeeded.

lam ta-ktamil mundh-u
renovations that haven’t been completed in two years

lam tu-kun ta-dfa‘-u l-‘ijaar-a.
She didn’t used to pay the rent.

lam yu-bligh-un zumalah-‘a-hum.
They did not notify their colleagues.

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

3 From Ziaadeh 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 *kataba* ‘to write’ in the present tense, jussive mood, second person is:

- you (m. sg.) write: *ta-ktub*  
  تَكُتُب
- you (f. sg.) write: *ta-ktub-ii*  
  تَكَتُبَيْ
- you two write: *ta-ktub-aa*  
  تَكُتُبَا
- you (m. pl.) write: *ta-ktub-uu*  
  تَكَتُبُونَ
- you (f. pl.) write: *ta-ktub-na*  
  تَكَتُبوُنَ

To create the imperative, the *ta-* prefix is dropped, leaving:

- *ktub*  
  كَتُب
- *ktub-ii*  
  كَتَبَيْ
- *ktub-aa*  
  كَبَا
- *ktub-uu*  
  كَبُونَ
- *ktub-na*  
  كَبُنَ

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 *'alif* seat. This yields the pronounceable forms:

- Write! *u-ktub*!  
  أَكْتُبُ!
- *u-ktub-ii*!  
  أَكْتَبَيْ!
- *u-ktub-aa*!  
  أَكْبَا!
- *u-ktub-uu*!  
  أَكْبُونَ!
- *u-ktub-na*!  
  أَكْبُنَ!

This helping vowel is used with *hamzat al-waSl*, 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-qra' wa-ktub*!  
  أَقْرَاَ وَأَكْتُبُ!
Note that although the prefix hamza drops out in pronunciation, the ʿalif seat remains in the spelling of the word.

The deletion of the subject-marker prefix (tu- or tu-) does not always leave a stem that starts with two consonants. For example, in the Form II verb *fassara* ُفَسْرَةٌ 'to explain':

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You (m. sg.) explain</th>
<th>tu-fassir</th>
<th>تُفَسِّرُ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You (f. sg.) explain</td>
<td>tu-fassir-ii</td>
<td>تُفَسِّرَى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You two explain</td>
<td>tu-fassir-aa</td>
<td>تُفَسِّرَ آ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (m. pl.) explain</td>
<td>tu-fassir-uu</td>
<td>تُفَسِّرَ أو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (f. pl.) explain</td>
<td>tu-fassir-na</td>
<td>تُفَسِّرَ نا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The imperative forms stripped of the subject marker are:

- Explain! َفَسْرَ
- fassir-ii! ُفَسْرِيٌ
- fassir-aa! ُفَسْرَ آ
- fassir-uu! ُفَسْرَ أو
- fassir-na! ُفَسْرَ نا

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>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open, Sesame!</td>
<td>افتحُ يا سمسمٌ</td>
<td>ارفعُ يديكٌ</td>
<td>اسمحُ لي</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i-ftH yaa simsim-ul</td>
<td>i-ʃa' yad-ay-ka!</td>
<td>i-small-li!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2.1.2 STEM VOWEL kasra

احفر هنا!  اغذرني
i-Hfir huna!  i-'dhir-ni.
Dig here!  Forgive me/Excuse me.

2.2.1.3 STEM VOWEL Damma

انظر جيدا!  انظر جيدا!
u-dxul!  u-nZur jayyid-an!
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 الحزر!  خذ هذه!
kul-i I-jazar-a.  xudh haadhihi!
Eat the carrots.  Take this!

Verbs with medial hamza may behave as regular verbs or may drop the initial hamza:

اسأل عن معنى أي كلمة.
i-s'āl!  sal!  is'al 'an ma'naa 'ayy-i kalimat-in.
Ask!  Ask about the meaning of any word.

Verbs with final hamza behave regularly in the imperative:

ابدبي!
i-qra'!  i-bda'-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 ~ rudd!  rudd-
rudd-ii  رد
rudd-aa  ردًا
2.2.4 Assimilated verbs

Most verbs whose initial root consonant is waaw or yaa\textsuperscript{a} (such as waDa\textsuperscript{a}-a/ ya-Da\textsuperscript{a}-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!   Da'!  ضع
   Da'ii!  ضعي
   Da'aa!  ضعا
   Da'uu!  ضععا
   Da'na!  ضعنا

Da'a-haa fi kitaab-i-ka. min faDli-ka qif.
Put it in your book. 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 waaw VERB: qaal-a نقال/ya-quul-u یقول ‘TO SAY’

```
Say!   quil!  قل
   quil-ii!  قولي
   quil-aa!  قولا
   quil-uu!  قولوا
   quil-na!  قلنا
```

2.2.5.2 HOLLOW yaa\textsuperscript{a} VERB: baa\textsuperscript{a}-a نباع/ya-bii\textsuperscript{a}-u بيع ‘TO SELL’

```
Sell!  bi'!  بع
   bii'i-i!  بيعي
```
2.2.5.3 HOLLOW ʕalif VERB: naam-اُهِنِ 'TO SLEEP'

Sleep! nam!
naam-ii!
naam-aa!
nam-nal
nam-uu!
nam-na!

2.2.6 Defective verbs

Defective verbs have either waaw or ʔaa' 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 ʔaa'-DEFECTIVE VERBS: The ʔaa'-defective verbs are of two types: ones that end in -aa (ʕalif maqSura) and ones that end with ʔaa' in the past tense. The ones ending in -aa usually inflect the present tense with -ii; the ones that end with ʔaa' in the past tense take -aa in the present tense. These verbs take kasra as their imperative prefix helping vowel.

1) /-aa-ii/ verb: ramaa رمْيُ 'to throw'

Throw! i-rmi!
i-rm-ii!
i-rmiy-aa!
i-rm-uu!
i-rmi-nu!
(2) /-ii-a/ verb: nasii-a نَسِيُّ / ya-nsaa يَنسى ‘to forget’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i-nsa!</td>
<td>انسِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i-nsay!</td>
<td>انسِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i-nsay-aa!</td>
<td>انسِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i-nsaw!</td>
<td>انسِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i-nsin!</td>
<td>انسِ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.6.2 Waaw-DEFECTIVE VERBS: The waaw-defective verbs end in -aa (‘alif Tawiila ألف طويلة) 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.

(1) /-aa-uu/ verb: shakaa شَكَّ / ya-shkaw يَا-شَكِّ ‘to complain’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>u-shkii!</td>
<td>اشكيِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u-shkuw-aa!</td>
<td>اشكوُا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u-shk-uu!</td>
<td>اشكوُا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u-shkuw-na!</td>
<td>اشكونُ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 رَأى / ya-raa يَا-رَأى ‘to see’ and the verb wa’aa وَعَي / ya-‘ii يَعُ ‘to heed, pay attention.’

2.2.7.1 IMPERATIVE OF ra’aa رَأى / ya-raa يَا-رَأى

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ra~ rahl!</td>
<td>راهُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ray!</td>
<td>رىُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ray-aa!</td>
<td>رياُ !</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raw!</td>
<td>رواُ !</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ray-na!</td>
<td>رينُ !</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\^4 Taken from Wright 1967, I:93. Note that the verb ra’aa is used primarily in written Arabic and is not normally used in the vernacular forms of the language.
2.2.7.2 IMPERATIVE OF wa‘aa / ya‘ii
Pay attention! 'i!
'ii!
'i-y-aa!
'i-uul!
'iil-na!

2.2.8 Replacive imperative verb: ta‘aal / java’a َتَعَالِلَ ‘come!’
The verb java’a / ya‘il / java’a َجِئَلَهُ ‘to come’ has a different form in the imperative, based on another root entirely:§

Come! ta‘aal-a!
   ta‘aal-ay!
   ta‘aal-aal-
   ta‘aal-aal-
   ta‘aal-aal-
   ta‘aal-aal-
Come here!

2.3 Form II imperative
Form II imperatives do not require the addition of an initial helping vowel. Examples include:

خَبْرَنِي! xabbir-nil!
فَكْرُ، فِي ما تَأْكُلَهُ، fakkir fil-maa ta‘-kul-u-hu.
Tell me!
Think about what you eat.

سَلِمْ لَي عَلِيَهْ، sallim lii ‘alay-hi.
سَكْرَوا كَتِبِكِمْ، 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:

§ Based on the Form VI defective verb ta‘alaa/ya-ta‘alaa َتَرْفَاءَلَهُ ‘to rise, ascend, be sublime.’ For discussion of this “suppletive imperative” see Testen 1997.
قاطع البضائع اليابانية!
qaaTi-i i-baDa'a'i-i a-lyabaaniyyat-a!
Boycott Japanese goods!

احفظوا على نظافة مدينتكم.
HaafiZ uu 'ala naZaafat-i
madinat-i-kum!
Preserve the cleanliness of your city!

سارع إلى إغلاقها.
saari' ila-a 'ighlaaq-i-haa.
Hasten to turn it off.

شاركوني في الترحيب به.
shaarik uu-nii fii l-tarHiib-i bi-li.
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-qadT):

اغلق يا سالم!
'aghiq yaa simsim!
Close, Sesame!

أجيب عن سؤالي!
'ajib 'an su'aal-a!
Answer my question!

أعطوني الواجبات.
'a T uu-nii l-waajibaat-i.
Give (m. pl.) me the homework.

2.6 Form V
Form V imperative verbs do not require a prefix vowel.

تفضل بالدخول.
tafaDDal bi-l-duxuul-i.
Please come in.

تصور!
taSawwar!
Imagine!

2.7 Form VI
Form VI imperative verbs do not require a prefix vowel.

تعاونوا!
ta'aawan-nii!
Cooperate (m. pl.)!

2.8 Form VII
Form VII verbs require a prefixed /i/ vowel (kasra) and hamzat al-waSl.

انصرف من هنا.
inSarif min hunaa.
Leave here.
2.9 Form VIII
Form VIII verbs require a prefixed /i/ vowel (kasra) and hamzat al-waṣl.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ابتعدوا عن هنا!</td>
<td>Get away (m. pl.) from here!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>انتظر دقيقة!</td>
<td>Wait a minute!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intaZir daqilqat-an!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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-waṣl.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>استعمل هذا المفتاح</td>
<td>Use this key.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>استرح!</td>
<td>Relax!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ista'jil!</td>
<td>Hurry up!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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-ا ‘to translate’:

Base form jussive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تَنْتَرَجُم</td>
<td>Translate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَنْتَرْجِمي</td>
<td>Translate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَنْتَرَجَمَا</td>
<td>Translate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَنْتَرَجُمَا</td>
<td>Translate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَنْتَرَجُمَ</td>
<td>Translate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The imperative forms stripped of the subject marker are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تَرْجِمُ!</td>
<td>Translate!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَرْجِمي</td>
<td>Translate!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَرْجَمَا</td>
<td>Translate!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَرْجِمَا</td>
<td>Translate!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تَرْجَمَنِ</td>
<td>Translate!</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 تَبَلْوَرَ ‘to be crystallized’) is often reflexive or passive in meaning.

タルيمُ نِي غَداً. 
タリジム-ي هaadhihi l-jumlat-a.
Phone me tomorrow. Translate (f. sg.) this sentence.

3 The permissive or hortative imperative: laam al-‘amr لَامُ الْأَمْر
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-/ لَمِ, implying the idea of permission or encouragement to do something:

لَنْتَجِرْ فِي الْسَّلَةَ
li-na-nズur fiī l-sallat-i.
Let’s look in the basket.

Sometimes the /li-/ لَمِ particle is preceded by the particle /fiu/ فِ، in which case the vowel is dropped from /li-/ making it just /l-/.

فلْتَنُهْبُ
fa-l-na-dhkidab. fa-l-na-sri
(So) let’s go. Let’s hurry.

4 The negative imperative: laa J + jussive
The negative imperative is formed by using the negative particle laa 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 tarji
f. sg. laa tarji
m. pi. laa tarjadi
f. pi. laa tarjadi

dual laa tarjadi

Examples:

لا تَرْجِعُ
laaa-tarjadi
Don’t (f. sg.) open the window. Don’t forget! Don’t smoke.

لا تَفْتَحُ الْشَّبَكَ
laaa-ta-ftahi
laaa-ta-nsa
laaa tu-daxxin.

Moods of the verb II: jussive and imperative

لا تخافوا!
Don't be afraid!

لا تنتظروا.
Don't wait.

لا تستعجل.
Don't hurry.

لا تؤجل عمل اليوم إلى الغد.
Don't postpone today's work to tomorrow.

لا تزعج نفسك.
Don't disturb yourself.
Verbs of being, becoming, remaining, seeming (kaan-a wa-`axawaat-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 (َكَانَاء َكَانَاء). 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، e.g., kaan-a za`im-an ‘He was a leader.’ The subject of kaan-a (اسم كَانَاء) and her sisters, if mentioned specifically, is in the nominative case (e.g., kaan-a l-rajul-u za`im-an، ‘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 َكَانَاء (ya-kuun-u ‘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” (جمل اسمية). For more on equational sentences, see Chapter 4, section 2.

هَيَّا مَهْزَعَةٍ. أنا متأكد.
1 [am] certain. She [is] fortunate.

1 For more extensive discussion of kaan-a wa-`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, E2), I use the terms “nominal sentence” and “equational sentence” as equivalents.
Verbs of being, becoming, remaining, seeming

1.2 Use of kaan

The verb kaan 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.

1.2.1 Past tense

kuun-tu muta’akkid-an.
I was certain.

kaan-uu muta’axxir-iina.
They were late.

1.2.2 Future tense

sa-’a-kuun-u muta’akkid-an.
I will be certain.

sa-ya-kuun-uuna muta’axxir-iina.
They will be late.

1.2.3 Further examples

Here are some examples of kaan in various tenses and moods:

1.2.3.1 PAST TENSE

kaan-a jaasus-an.
He was a spy.

haadhihi kaan-at manuazil-a-naa.
These were our homes.

1.2.3.2 FUTURE TENSE

sa-’a-kuun-u l-malik-a.
He will be the king.

kaan-a kathir-uuna min-hum musajjal-iina.
Many of them were registered.

haadhihi kaan-at manuazil-a-naa.
These were our homes.

kuun-tu muta’akkid-an.
I was certain.

kaan-uu muta’axxir-iina.
They were late.

1.2.3.3 PRESENT TENSE

huwa l-malik-u.
He [is] the king.

hum muta’axxir-auna.
They [are] late.

1.2.3.4 PAST PARTICIPLE

huwa l-malik-u.
He [is] the king.

hum muta’axxir-auna.
They [are] late.

1.2.3.5 IMPERATIVE

haadhihi kaan-at manuazil-a-naa.
These were our homes.

huwa l-malik-u.
He [is] the king.

hum muta’axxir-auna.
They [are] late.
1.2.3.2 NEGATIVE PAST WITH lam لام JUSSIVE MOOD OF kaan-a كان

يمكن القول إن هذا الاجتماع لم يكن ضرورياً.
yu-nkin-u l-qawl-u ‘inna huadhaa l-ijtimaa‘-a lam ya-kun Daruuriyy-an.
It could be said that this meeting was not necessary.

لَمْ يَكُنَّ حَلْماً عَادِياً.
lam ya-kun Hulm-an ‘aadlyy-an.
It was not a regular dream.

1.2.3.3 PAST TENSE FOR OPTATIVE/CONDITIONAL

كم كَنَا سَعَداً?
kam kun-naa su‘adaa‘-a!
How happy we would be!

1.2.3.4 FUTURE TENSE

لِبَنَانِ سِيْكُونَ غَابِيّاً عَنِ اللَّقْمَةِ.
lubnaan-u sa-ya-kuun-u ghaa‘ilib-an ‘an-i l-qimmat-i.
Lebanon will be absent from the summit [meeting].

1.2.3.5 SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD

لا يَمِكِن أَنْ يَكُونَ عَرَبِيّاً.
laa yu-nkin-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.

كُنْنَا نَامُلَ
kun-naa na’amal-u
we were hoping

عَادّنا مِنْ عَائِلَةٍ كَانَتْ تَعْمَلُ فِي المِدْنِيَّةِ.
‘aanu min ‘aa‘ilat-in kaan-at ta-‘mal-u fii l-madiinat-i.
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 ٣called may be optionally inserted just before the main verb.

\[
\text{كانوا (قد) عملوا معهم على إعادة فتح السفارة.}
\]

\[
\text{kaan-uu (qad) ٣amil-uu } \text{mu\textsuperscript{c}}-	ext{a-hum ٣'alaa ٣'i\textsuperscript{a}aadat-i futH-i l-sif\textsuperscript{a}arat-i.}
\]

They had worked with them on re-opening the embassy.

\[
\text{كان السفير (قد) وصل مساء الجمعة.}
\]

\[
\text{kaana l-safiir-u (qad) wasal-a masaa\textsuperscript{a}-a l-jum\textsuperscript{a}at-i.}
\]

The ambassador had arrived Friday evening.

\[
\text{كنت (قد) أيدت وضع مصر على القائمة.}
\]

\[
\text{kun-tu (qad) ٣ayyad-tu waD\textsuperscript{c}-a miSra\textsuperscript{a} ٣'alaa l-qua\textsuperscript{a}inat-i.}
\]

I had supported putting Egypt on the list.

2 The verb lays-a لئِس ‘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.

\[
\text{هذا ليس صديقنا.}
\]

\[
\text{lays-a muHaamiy-an.}
\]

This is not our friend.

\[
\text{ليس محامياً.}
\]

\[
\text{lays-a muHaamiy-an.}
\]

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-a/ya-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.

\[
\text{باتمن الضروري.}
\]

\[
\text{baat-uu muqta\textsuperscript{n}t-i\textsuperscript{a}na.}
\]

They have become convinced.

\[
\text{بات من الضروري.}
\]

\[
\text{baat-a min-a l-Daruuriyy-i.}
\]

It has become necessary.

\[
\text{باتن البلاد تعرف به اليوم.}
\]

\[
\text{baat-at-i l-bilaad-u tu\textsuperscript{c}raf-u bi-hi l-yawm-a.}
\]

The country has come 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 أَصْبَحَ أَمْراً ضَرُورِيّاً  
qad 'aSbaH-a 'amr-an Duruuriyy-an.  
It has become an essential matter.

وَسِبْحَ جُزءًا أَكْثَرَ أَهْمَمَةً  
wa-sa-yu-SbiH-u juz-an 'akhtar-a  
'ahammiyyat-an.  
And it will become a more important part.

3.3 Saar-a /ya-Sii-r-u '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.

صارَ ثَقَافَتُها أَطْلَسِيَّةٌ عَالِمِيَّةٌ  
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:

مِنذَ الْسَّتِينَاتِ صَارَ تَأْخُذُ دُورًا أَكْبَرٍ  
mandhu l-sittinaat-i Saar-at ta-'xudh-u dawran 'akbara.  
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’:

صَارَ الْوَلاَءَ لِلْعَتْمَانِيِّينَ شَكْلِيّاً  
Saar-a l-wila'at-u li-l-'uthmaaniyy-tina shakliyy-an.  
The Ottomans came to have allegiance in form.  
(‘Allegiance came to be to the Ottomans in form’).

4 Verbs of remaining: baqiy-a بَقِيَّٰ, Zall-a زَالَ, maa zal-a مَا زَالَ, maa daam-a مَا دَامَ  
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 *baqiya* / *ya-bqaa* ‘to stay; remain’

**sein bi yebqi**

*sa-ya-bqaa* sirriyy-an.

*It will remain secret.*

**stay**

*sa-ta-bqaa* Tawil-fii dhaakirat-i l-aaalami.

*It will remain long in the world’s memory.*

4.2 *zall* / *ya-Zallu* ‘to keep, keep on, to remain’

**stay**

*sa-ya-Zall-u* 'afDal-a.

*It will remain better.*

4.3 *maa* zaal / *laa* zaal-u ‘to remain; to continue to be; to still be’

This expression consists of a negative particle (*maa* plus the past tense; *laa* 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.

**continue**

*al-Sinaa-at* l-sha'hiyyat-u *maa zaal-at* Hayyat-an.

*Handicrafts continue to be lively.*

**still**

*maa zaal-at* nhiyaa-u-hu mustamir-ru.

*Its decline is still continuous.*

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.

**standing**

*aswaar-un laa ta-zaal-u* ta-qif-u

*walls that are still standing*
4.3.1.1 WITH EQUATIONAL SENTENCES

لا يزال عندي وقت.
\(\text{laa ya-zaal-u 'ind-a-naa waqt-un.}\)
We still have time
\(\text{('there is still time to-us').}\)

ما زلت في مرحّلة التحضير.
\(\text{maa zil-tu fii marHalat-i l-tahHDiiri.}\)
I am still in the preparation stage.

4.4 maa daam-a 'as long as'

The expression maa daam-a \(\text{ما دام} \) consists of the pronoun maa ‘that which’ or ‘what’ and the verb daam-a \(\text{دام} \) ‘to continue,’ ‘to remain,’ or ‘to last.’

ما دامت خارجة من الشرعية، فإن المقاطعة مستمرة.
\(\text{maa daam-at xaarijat-an min-a l-shar'iyyat-i, fa-'inna l-muqaaTal'a'at-a mustamirrat-un.}\)
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’

لا يبدو متفائلًا.
\(\text{laa ya-bduu muntafia'il-an}\)
He does not seem optimistic.
\(\text{ya-bduu 'atiq-an jidd-an.}\)
It looks very ancient/antique.

5.2 Zahar-a/ya-Zhar-u ‘to seem; to appear’

يظهر ضعيفًا.
\(\text{ya-Zhar-u Da'ilf-an.}\)
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-ا 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-ا لَيْسَ 'to not be'
This verb is exceptional in two ways:

(1) it is inflected only as a past tense verb but it negate the present tense of "be";
(2) it is a sister of kaa'n-a كَانَ and therefore requires its complement to be in the accusative case.

1.1 Chart: conjugation of lays-ا لَيْسَ 'to not be'
The verb lays-ا 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 negate the present tense. Like a hollow verb, lays-ا لَيْسَ has two stems; a short one, las-ا لَيْسَ, used when the suffix starts with a consonant, and a longer stem, lays-ا لَيْسَ, used when the suffix starts with a vowel.

1 Negation of the perfect or past tense of "be" is not done with lays-a, but with the use of the negative particle laam plus the jussive form of kaa'n-a 'to be.' Similarly, the future tense of "be" is negated through the use of the future negative particle laam plus the subjunctive of kaa'n-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 conjuguaison d'allure concave."
### Table: Singular, Dual, Plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person</td>
<td>لست لست</td>
<td>لستما</td>
<td>لستما</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>las4u</td>
<td>las-tumaa</td>
<td>las-tumma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person</td>
<td>لست لست</td>
<td>لستما</td>
<td>لستما</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>lasta</td>
<td>las-tumaa</td>
<td>las-tumma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>lasta</td>
<td>las-tumaa</td>
<td>las-tumma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person</td>
<td>ليس ليس</td>
<td>ليسوا</td>
<td>ليسوا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>lays-a</td>
<td>lays-aa</td>
<td>lays-aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>lays-at</td>
<td>lays-ataa</td>
<td>lays-na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.2 Discussion and examples of *lays-a* ليس

*ليس الأستاذ مُؤَرَّخاً*

*lays-a لُسْتَ الأستاذُ مَعْلَمًا.*

The professor is **not** a historian.

In the above example, the verb *lays-a ليس* starts the sentence, followed by the subject noun *الَّذِيْنَ الأستاذُ الأستاذ* in the nominative case. The predicate or complement of the verb *lays-a ليس* (mu’arrix-an مُؤَرَّخًا) is in the accusative case because *lays-a ليس* 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 *الَّذِيْنَ الأستاذُ الأستاذ* and the predicate *mu’arrix-an مَعْلَمًا* both in the nominative case, as is the rule with equational sentences:

*الأستاذُ مُؤَرَّخًا*

*الَّذِيْنَ الأستاذُ الأستاذُ مَعْلَمًا.*

The professor is a historian.

In another example,

*لْسَتْ لِبْنَانِيَةً*

*I am not Lebanese.*

---

³ See Chapter 36, on verbs of being, becoming, remaining, seeming (kaan-a وَعَكَّرُوا وَكُلُّهُمُ).
Negation and exception

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 ليбанانية. It is feminine because the writer is feminine and speaking of herself. If the sentence were not negative it would be:

أنا ليبنانية.
'tanaa lubnaaniyyat-un.
I [am] Lebanese (f).

with a pronoun subject ('tanaa 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-a ليس in context:

1.3.1 Predicate of lays-a ليس is a noun or adjective in the accusative case

لَا يَسْتُ ْيَسْتُ منْقَبَة أَثَار.  
lay-at munaqqibat-a ْ'aathaar-in
She is not an archaeologist.

هذَا ليس liéس جيزة.  
haadhaa lays-a rajul-an shariif-an.
This is not a noble man.

هذا ليس السبب.  
haadhaa lays-a l-sabab-a.
This is not the reason.

سُمَاَتَا ْلِيَسُ جيزة.  
sumaat-ka lays-at jayyidat-an.
Your reputation is not good.

1.3.2 Predicate of lays-a ليس is a prepositional phrase

الْيَسِ ْلا يَسِ منْ الضروري. 
lays-a min-a l-Daruuriyy-i.
It is not necessary.

أَلِيْس كَذَكَلْك؟  
'a-lays-a ku-dhaalika?
Isn't it so ('like that')?

لِسْتَ ْلَيْسَ طِلَّةٌ كَافِ عَلَيْ المَوْضُوع. 
las-tu ْ'ala l-Tilaa ْ'in kaaf-in ْ'ala l-mawDuur-i.
I am not informed enough about the subject.

1.3.3 Predicate of lays-a ليس is an adverb

The predicate of lays-a may also be an invariable adverb that does not take case inflections. In the following sentence, the adverb hunaaka هنَاك is the predicate and Siraa-un صراعة 'struggle' is the subject of lays-a ليس.
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'
لاَّ. لاَّ لُسْتُ مَصْرِيًا.
hal 'anta miSrîyy-un? No. I am not Egyptian.
Are you 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.4

لاَّ أَفْهِمُ مَاذا تَقْوَلُ
laa 'a-fham-u maadhaa ta-qool-u. I do not understand what you are saying.

لاَّ أَحْجَرُ
laa 'u-daxxin-u. I do not smoke.

لاَّ يَحَارِبُ الْخَرْجَ
laa yu-Haabil-u l-xurouj-u. He is not trying to leave.

لاَّ أَحْبُبُ الْجُرْزَ
laa 'u-Hibb-u l-jazar-a. I do not like carrots.

لاَّ يَشْكُلُ ضَمَانَةً
laa yu-shakkil-u Damamaat-an. It does not constitute a guarantee.

لاَّ يَجْزَوُ
laa ya-juuz-u. It is not possible/permissible.

2.1.3 laa ' with the subjunctive

2.1.3.1 'alla laa ' = 'an 'an + 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 Bennamoun 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" (Bennamoun 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, *qarrar-a '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, 'allaa:

قُرِرتُ الْأَمْلَ فِيْهِ.

*qarrar-tu 'allaa 'a-‘mal-a fihi.*

I decided not to work in it.

2.1.3.2 *laa* ʿAFTER *Hattaa* حَتَّى: The subjunctivizing particle *Hattaa* حَتَّى ‘in order that, so that’ may be followed by *laa* ʿa plus a verb in the subjunctive:

حَتَّى لَا يُضِلْ فِيْ تَأْيِدِ سيَاسَتِهِم

*Hattaa laa ya-shuTT-a fiī ta‘yiid-i siyaasat-i-him*

so that it does not go too far in supporting their policy

2.1.4 *laa* ʿa + 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:

حركة لا تُهدَّا قَرْبَ المَسْجِد

*Harakat-un laa-ta-hda’-u qurb-i-masjid-i*

non-stop motion/movement near the mosque

تعطى للسياحة معنى خاصًا لا يُفْكَ الأَنْكَارُ

*tu-‘Tii li-siyyaHat-i ma‘n nan xaaSS-an laa yu-mkin-u ʿinkaar-u-hu.*

It gives to tourism an undeniably special meaning.

2.1.5 The negative imperative with *laa* ʿa

The negative imperative is formed by using *laa* plus the jussive form of the verb in the second person (“you”).

لا تَنْزعْ نفسَكَ.

*laa tu-z‘ij nafs-u-ka.*

Don’t disturb yourself/don’t bother.

لا تَعْصِم المصَدَع.

*laa ta-staxdim-i l-mis‘ad-u.*

Don’t use the elevator.

2.1.6 The *laa* ʿa of categorical or absolute negation: (*laa al-naafiy a 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 idiomatic expressions.

لا سبيل لدفعه.
lā sabīl-ā li-daf‘-i-hi
There is no way to defend it.

لا قلب لها.
lā qalb-ā la-haa.
She is heartless (‘there is no heart to her’).

لا شك فيه.
lā shak-ā fī-hi.
There’s no doubt about it.

لا بأس به.
lā ba’s-ā bi-hi.
It’s not bad (‘There is no harm in it’).

2.1.6.1 RELIGIOUS EXPRESSIONS WITH \(lā\) \(\lambda\) OF ABSOLUTE NEGATION

لا هو إلا الله.
lā illsa nīllāh-u.
There is no god but God.

لا حَوْل وَلَوْ قُوَّةٌ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ.
lā Hawl-ā wa-laa quwwat-ā illsa bi-llaah-i.
There is no power and no strength but in God.

2.1.7 \(lā\) ... \(wā-lā\) ... \(\lambda\) ‘neither ... nor’

The two-part formation of \(lā\) ... \(wā-lā\) ... \(\lambda\) is used for the coordinate negative ‘neither ... nor’ or ‘don’t ... even ...’. In response to a negative statement, the \(wā-lā\) ... \(\lambda\) part may be used at the start of the response.

لا في فاس ولا في مراكش.
lā fī fās-ā wa-laa fī marraakah-ā
neither in Fez nor in Marrakesh

لا الولايات المتحدة ولا الاتحاد السوفيتي.
lā l-wiltihayyat-ū l-muttaHidat-ū wā-laa l-litihlaad-ū l-sunfiyaatiyy-ū
neither the United States nor the Soviet Union
2.1.8 *laa* γ 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-fuqaariyy*
- never-ending: *laa-nihaa'iyy*
- decentralization: *al-laa-markaziyya*
- the unconscious: *al-laa-wa'yi*

**Note:** *laa* رَجُوع

*nuqTat-u l-laa-rujnu*<i>c</i>
the point of no return

2.2 Negation of the past

2.2.1 *lam* لم + 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.

- *lam na-ti.*
  We did not come.

  No accident happened.
  ('an accident did not happen')

- *lam ya-mut* 'aHad-un.
  No one died.
  ('someone did not die')

**Note:** *lam* لم

*lam ta-kshuf-i l-shurTat-u huwiyyat-a-hun.*
The police did not reveal his identity.

*lam ya-sbiq la-hu mathiil-un.*
It is unprecedented.
  ('an equivalent has not preceded it')

*fa-lam ya-Hdath maa Hadath-afii l-shaam-i.*
What happened in Syria did not happen [here].

2.2.2 *maa* ما + 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.

**Note:** *maa* ما

*maa kaan-at sa-ta-'rif-u l-qiraa'at-a wa-l-kitaabat-a.*
She would not have known how to read and write ('reading and writing').
2.2.3 *lan* لَنْ plus subjunctive to negate the future tense

To negate a proposition in the future the particle *lan* لَنْ is used followed by the verb in the subjunctive mood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>lan</em></th>
<th><em>lan</em> يكون الآخر من نوعه.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'a-nsaa.</td>
<td><em>lan</em> ya-kuun-a ِبِتَأْيِرَ الْمَذْعَرَاءِ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I won't forget.</td>
<td>It will not be the last of its kind.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>lan</em> يَتَوَافَقَ</th>
<th><em>lan</em> تَعْرَفُ الْمَايِمَةِ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ya-tawaqqaf-a.</td>
<td><em>lan</em> tu-'arqil-a ِبِتِيْقَالَ الْتَفْقِيدِ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He will not stop.</td>
<td>It will not obstruct the agreement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.4 Use of *ghayr* غَيْرُ 'other than; non-

The noun *ghayr* غَيْرُ 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* غَيْرِ PLUS PRONOUN SUFFIX: The pronoun suffix on *ghayr* غَيْرِ reflects the number and gender of the noun or pronoun antecedent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>تَخْلُفُ عَنْ غَيْرِهَا</th>
<th>مثل غَيْرِهَا مِنْ المنظَمَاتِ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ta-xtalif-u 'an ghayr-i-haa.</td>
<td>mithl-a ghayr-i-haa min-a l-munaZZamaat-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She differs from others ('other than others').</td>
<td>like other ('other than it') organizations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>مصْرٍ وَغَيْرِهَا مِنَ الْبَلَادِ العَرَبَيَّةِ</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>miSr-u wa-ghayr-u-haa min-a l-bilaad-i l-'arabiyyat-i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt and other Arab countries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.4.2 USE OF *ghayr* غَيْرِ AS FIRST TERM OF NOUN CONSTRUCT: Used as the first term of a construct phrase or 'iDaafa إضافة. ghayr غَيْرِ carries the meaning of ‘other than.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>لا يأكلُ غَيْرِ اللَّحمِ والبَطاطِسِ</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>laa ya-'kul-u ghayr-a ِلِهَلِيمِ الْيُبْحَرِ وَالبَطَاطِسِ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He doesn’t eat [anything] other than meat and potatoes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

⁶ Cantarino 1975 (II:147–53) provides an extensive analysis of *ghayr* غَيْرِ and its usage in literary Arabic. See also Wright 1967, II:208–209.
2.2.4.3 *ghayr* غَيْرَ + 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 ‘*iDaafa* إِضَافَة' 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* غَيْرَ 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. Therefore, it is the second term of this descriptive construct that shows agreement with the modified noun.7 Here are some examples:8

non-Islamic  
unusual  
non-oil-exporting  
unsuitable  
indirect  
unofficial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>ghayr</em> ‘islaamiyy-in</td>
<td>غَيْرَ إِسْلَامِيَّةِ</td>
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<td><em>ghayr</em> ‘aadiyy-in</td>
<td>غَيْرَ عَادِيَّ</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>ghayr</em> muSaddir-in l-li-nafT-i</td>
<td>غَيْرِ مُصْدَرِ التُّنفِّي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ghayr</em> munaasib-in</td>
<td>غَيْرِ مَناسِبِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ghayr</em> mubaashir-in</td>
<td>غَيْرِ مُبَاشِرِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ghayr</em> rasmiyy-in</td>
<td>غَيْرِ رَسْمِيَّ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) **Modifying definite noun:** To modify a definite noun, *ghayr* غَيْرَ is followed by an adjective with the definite article.

الدولَ غَيْرَ المنحازةَ  
al-bilaad-u ghayr-u l-‘islamiyyat-i  
the non-Islamic countries  

الدولَ الإِسْلاَمِيَّةَ غَيْرَ العربِيَّةَ  
al-duwal-u l-‘islaamiyyat-u ghayr-u l-‘arabiyyat-i  
the non-Arab Muslim countries

(2) **Modifying indefinite noun:** To modify an indefinite noun, *ghayr* غَيْرَ is followed by an indefinite adjective.

*ghayr* u SaHiiH-in maa ya-quul-u-hu.  
It is untrue what he says.

---

7 For more examples, see *ghayr* غَيْرَ in Chapter 10, section 7.2.

bi-shakl-in ghayr-i munta Zam-in

in a disorganized manner

in illegal ways

2.2.4.3 ghayr غيْر FOLLOWING NEGATIVE VERB: Following a negative verb, ghayr غيْر has the meaning of 'only' or 'merely.'

لام يقدّم غيْر القليل من الأموال،

lam yu-qaddim ghayr-a l-qaliil-i min-a l-amwaal-

It offered only a little money ('It did not offer other than a little money').

2.2.5 ‘adam + 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 ‘ilDaafa is a two-word expression in Arabic, it may carry a non-compositional meaning.

9 See also Chapter 8, section 1.7.1.

non-interference ‘adam-u tadaxxul-in
nonexistence ‘adam-u wujuud-in
neutrality; non-alignment ‘adam-u nHiyaaz-in

instability ‘adam-u stiqraar-in

the non-support of any Kurdish movement ‘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-

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.
Negation and exception

3.1 *bal* : ‘but; rather; but rather’
This word introduces a subordinate clause that contrasts in meaning with the main clause. The verb in the main clause is normally negative, with *bal* introducing a contrary affirmation.

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* لا
When the main clause is affirmative and *illaa* introduces an exception to that statement, it is followed by a noun in the accusative.

3.2.2 Negative clause + *illaa* لا
When the main clause is negative, *illaa* لا is followed by a noun that takes whatever case its role in the sentence requires. That is, *illaa* لا has no grammatical effect on the noun. In the following sentences, for example, the noun phrase after *illaa* لا fills the logical role of subject of the verb and is therefore in the nominative case.

لا يوجد إلا أقلية صغيرة
*laa yuujad-un* *illaa* *aqalliyyat-un Saghiraat-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.
لا يفصل المغرب عن إسبانيا إلا بضعة كيلومترات.
lā ya-fṣilū l-maghribu ‘an isbaanyaa ‘illaa biD ‘at-ū kullumitrāt-in.
Only a few kilometers separate Morocco from Spain (‘there does not separate Morocco from Spain but a few kilometers’).

لا يفصل نشأة الإسلام عن نشأة المسيحية إلا قرون قليلة
lā ya-fṣilū laa ya-fSil-u l-maghrib-u ‘an isbaan-yā ‘illaa biD ‘at-ū kullumitrāt-in ‘illaa qurnūn-un
Only a few centuries separate the birth of Islam from the birth of Christianity (‘there does not separate the birth of Islam from the birth of Christianity but a few centuries’).

3.2.3 ‘illaa ‘āl ‘إلا’ + prepositional phrase
A prepositional phrase may follow ‘illaa, especially after a negative main clause.

لا عودة للمهاجرين إلا من خلال الوزير
lā ‘awdat-ū l-nahjariina ‘illaa min xilaal-ū l-waziir-ū.
There is no return for exiles except through the minister.

هذا الفرصة لا تتقدم إلا في القاهرة
haudhihi l-furSat-u lā ya-jid-u-haa ‘illaa fiī l-qaahirat-ū.
This opportunity is found only in Cairo.

(‘We do not find this opportunity except in Cairo.’)

لا يخرج من مخابئه إلا خلال الليل
lā ya-xruj-u min maxaabi-‘ī-hi ‘illaa xilaal-ū l-layl-ū.
He doesn’t leave his hiding places except at night.

3.2.4 ‘illaa ‘anna ‘إلا أن’ : ‘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 أن تطورا أكثر إثارة بدأ يتلفت النظر
However, a more exciting development has started to redirect attention.

إلا أن لم ينجز حتى موعد قريب
lā ‘a anna-hū lām yu-njaz Hattaa maw‘īdh-in qariib-in.
However, it wasn’t completed until recently.
Negation and exception

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

Also, this word is an indeclinable noun which normally goes into an ‘iDaafa structure with the following noun, very much as does ghayr غير. The following noun or noun phrase is therefore in the genitive case. Usually, siwaا سوى 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

3.5 ma‘-a dhaalika مع ذلك: 'nevertheless; in spite of that' ma‘-a ‘anna مع أن: 'although, despite'
The semi-preposition ma‘-a مع مع means 'with' but it may also convey a sense of contrast or exception, as in these two expressions.

wa-ma‘-a dhaalika مع ذلك فإن الكتاب على مستوى عالٍ.
Nevertheless, the book is on a high level.

wa-ma‘-a ‘anna-nii lam ‘a-rifi l-tafaasill-a although I do not know the details

3.6 raghm-a رَجُمَ، bi-l-raghm-i بالرَّجُمُ: 'despite; in spite of'
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.

raghm-a ‘inkaar-i-haa dhaalika despite her denying that

raghm-a l-DughuuT-i kull-i-haa despite all the pressures

wa-‘alaa raghm-i haadhihi l-cawdat-i l-qawwiyyat-i despite this strong comeback
3.7 'alaa raghm-i 'anna ّعلى رغم أن ّ: 'despite [the fact] that'

The phrase 'alaa raghm-i ّعلى رغم أن may be directly followed by the subordinating conjunction 'anna and a subordinate clause. In this case, the entire clause acts as the second term of an 'iDaafa after raghm. It is often followed by another exceptive clause introduced by 'illaa 'anna 'nevertheless.'

وعلى رغم أن ّمسؤولين في الوزارة قالوا... إلا أنّه يعتقد أنّ...

wa-'alaa raghm-i 'anna mas'mul-iina fil l-wizaarat-i qaal-uu ... 'illaa 'anna-hu

Despite the fact that ministry officials said... it is nevertheless considered that...

وعلى رغم أنّ الشركة لم تعلن كلفة المشروع، إلا أنّ مصادر صناعة الغاز الطبيعي

wa-'alaa raghm-i 'anna l-sharikat-a lam tu-'tin kalfat-a l-mashru-ّi, 'illaa 'anna

Despite the fact that the company did not announce the cost of the plan, nevertheless, natural gas industry sources...

فعلى رغم أنّ الخلافة العبّاسية كانت المرجع

fa-'alaa raghm-i 'anna l-xalaafat-a l-‘abbaasiy-ّa kaan-at l-marji-ّa

Despite the fact that the Abbasid Caliphate was the authority

3.8 wa-'in: 'even though; even if; despite the fact that'

This phrase is a combination of the conjunction wa- and the conditional marker, 'in.

وأنّ كان هناك محافظون يرفضون الإذعان لهذا التغيير

wa-'in kaan-a hunaaka mul'laafiz-ّuna ya-rfuD-ّuna l-'idh'aan-ّa l-haadhaa l-taghyyiri

Even though there were conservatives who refused to comply with this change

3.9 law-laa ّلم: '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 ّلم (contrary to fact conditional) + laa ّلم (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

لم السبعون ملماً التي انهمرت على البلاد

law-laa l-sab'una milim-an-ّi llatii ahamarat ّalaa l-bilaad-ّi

Had it not been for the 70 millimeters [of rain] that poured on the country

12 No instances of law-laa ّلم 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 Hitbaa-k-u-haa bi-l-shu‘uub-i l-yuunaaniyyat-i
had it not been for their close contact with the Greek peoples

kaad-a l-masraH-u yu-nsaa law-laa l-‘uubira.
The theater would have almost been forgotten had it not been for the opera.
Passive and passive-type expressions

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-nushkilat-a درست المشكلة); 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-nushkilat-u درست المشكلة). 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., ‘uqid-a عَقِدَ ‘it was held’ from ‘aqad-a اِقْدَ ‘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 inf’aqad-a انَّعَقَدَ ‘it was held’). The type of action denoted by the derivational passive is referred to in Arabic as muTaaawa’ة مطاعنة ‘obedience, conformity’ because it reflects a resultative state of the object (fataH-tu l-baab-a fi-nfataH-a فَتَحَ الباب فانفتح ‘I opened the door and it opened’).

---

1 As Wright notes (1967, l: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 فَعْل), 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 muTaaawiه مطاعو or, literally, ‘obedient’ to an action that has occurred (e.g., infataH-a انفتح ‘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').

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.

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: 

فَتَحَتَ الْبَابَ
fataH-tu l-kaab-a.
I opened the door.

فَتَحَ 
futiH-a l-kaab-u.
The door was opened.

أَفْتَحَ الْبَابَ
infataH-a l-kaab-u.
The door opened.

Passive:

The term that Arab grammarians use for "transitive verbs" is 'afaal muta'addiya
؛افعال متعدية ؛ derived from the Form V verb ta'aadda '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'ual ghayr muta'addiya ؛أفعال غير متعدية ؛ or 'af'ual laazima ؛ أفعال لازمة ؛ verbs whose action
does not extend beyond the subject.

1 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 (patient, the patient), than
to the doer of it (agens, the agent)" 1967, 1:50.

4 The term that Arab grammarians use for "transitive verbs" is 'afaal muta'addiya ؛أفعال متعدية ؛ derived from the Form V verb ta'aadda 'to go beyond, exceed.' That is, the action of the verb
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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.,

\[ \text{فتح الباب بهذا المفتاح.} \]
\[ \text{futiH-a l-baab-u bi-haadhaa l-niftaaH-i.} \]
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 \( \text{naa’ib al-fau’il} \) نائب الفاعِل '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 \(/u\ -i-/\). That is, within the stem, all vowels previous to the stem vowel are /\(\text{u}\)/ and the stem vowel itself is /\(\text{i}\)/. 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 \( \text{maa lam yu-samma faa’iib-u-hu} \) ‘that whose agent is not named.’ 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.
Paradigm: wulid-a ‘was/were born’

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<td>O</td>
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<td>ولدتُ</td>
<td>ولدتُ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jj</td>
<td>wulid-tu</td>
<td>wulid-tu</td>
<td>wulid-tu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second person:</td>
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2.1.1 Examples of the Form I past tense passive in context

2.1.1.1 STRONG/REGULAR ROOT

نقل إلى المستشفى.

\textit{nnqil-a 'ilaa l-mustashfaa.}

He was \textit{transported} to the hospital.

\textit{مَنعوا من دخول المدينة.}

They were \textit{prevented from entering the city.}

كتب بحروف عبرية.

\textit{kutib-a bi-Huruuf-in 'ibrayyat-in.}

It was \textit{written in Hebrew characters.}

فرض رسم دخول.

\textit{furid-a rasm-a dukhuul-in.}

An entry fee \textit{was imposed.}

2.1.1.2 ASSIMILATED ROOT

سوريا وضعت على القائمة.

\textit{suuriyya wuliD-’at alaa l-qaa’imat-i.}

Syria was \textit{placed on the list.}

وجد في الإسطبل.

\textit{wujid-afii l-istabil-i.}

It was \textit{found in the stable.}

2.1.1.3 GEMINATE ROOT

‘عدت الأصوات.

\textit{’uddat-i l-a’Swadi.-u.}

The votes \textit{were counted.}
2.1.1.4 HAMZATED ROOT

سَلَل الوزير عن الجريمة.

su‘il-a l-waziir-u ‘an-i l-jariimat-i.
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.

HAMZATED ROOT

وَ بَيْعَتْ لأَحَدِ العَدَايِنَ...

wa-bi‘at li-i-Hadi l-mataaHif-i

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 /ya‘/. This applies to the derived forms as well.

وَ جَدَوا بَرَجْينَ بَنِيَا مَنَ الحَجَارَةِ.

wajjad-nu burj-ayni buniy-aa min-a l-Hijaarat-i.

They found two towers [which] were built of stone.

وَ لَذَاكْ سَمَّىَ الْقَرْرَاءِ هَٰذَا بِاَسْمَائِهِمَا.

wa-li-dhaalika summiiy-at-l-qaaraa hunaaka bi-asmaa‘-i-him.

Therefore, the villages there were named after them.

وَ قَدْ دَعَىَ السَّحَفِيْنَ إِلَى الْحَضُورِ

wa-qad du‘iy-a l-SuHufiyy-una ‘ilaa l-HaDuur-i.

The journalists were invited to attend.

2.1.2 The past passive in derived forms of the verb

2.1.2.1 FORM II: fu‘il-a

عَيْبٌ طَبيِّعًا لِلْمَلِكِ.

‘uyyin-a Tabiib-an li-l-malik-i.

He was appointed physician to the king.

أَجْلَتِ الْإِجْمَاعاتِ

‘ujjil-at-l-l-jitaamaat-u.

The meetings were delayed.

2.1.2.2 FORM III: fuw‘il-a

فَعَلَ الْوَثْقَيْنِ

buurik-a l-ittifaaq-u.
The agreement was blessed.

فَوجِئْتُ بِالْوَثْقَيْنِ

fiuji‘-at bi-l-ittifaaq-i.

She was surprised at the agreement.
2.1.2.3 FORM IV: 'uf'il-a أَفْعَلْ, HOLLOW FORM IV 'ufil-a أَفْعَلُ, DEFECTIVE FORM IV 'uf'iy-a أَفْعِي.

أُرسلت الرسالة من أمريكا.
The letter was sent from America.

عُلِقَ المطار.
The airport was closed.

أُدخلت إلى المستشفى.
She was admitted to the hospital.

أَدْخِلَ ظُلُمَةً.
One of them was afflicted with serious wounds.

2.1.2.4 FORM V: tutu'ril-a (rare)

tَفْعَلْ.

tuwuffiy-a.
He passed away.

2.1.2.5 FORM VI: tutuw'il-a (rare)

2.1.2.6 FORM VII: none. 

2.1.2.7 FORM VIII: uttu'ril-a أَفْتَعَلْ, FORM VIII HOLLOW uttil-a أَفْتِئْلُ, FORM VIII DEFECTIVE uttu'iy-a أَفْتُعِي

سَبعة أشخاص اعتقلوا.
Seven persons were arrested.

أُعِتِقَ بالجريمة.
He was accused of the crime.

وَكَانَ قد أُعْتِي.
He had been assassinated.

مُتَقَرَّبُ الحضور.
Attendance was required.

* Note that although the Form VII passive verb does not occur, some Form VII passive participles do exist, e.g., manHadar منحدر 'slope.'
2.1.2.8 FORM IX: none.

2.1.2.9 FORM X: *ustuf'il-a* استفعِل, FORM X HOLLOW *ustuf'il-a* استفعِل, FORM X DEFECTIVE *ustuf'iy-a* استفعي

- *ustuxdim-a.* استخدِمت
- *ustafid-a min-hu.* استفاد منه

It was used. It was beneficial

(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'il-a* فعل

turjim-at haadhihi l-shurunH-u 'ilaa huatiinyyat-i

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* يذكر 'he/it is mentioned'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>أذكرُ</td>
<td>tu-dhkar-u</td>
<td>tu-dhkar-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تذكرينُ</td>
<td>tu-dhkar-fina</td>
<td>tu-dhkar-aani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>تذكرونُ</td>
<td>tu-dhkar-aani</td>
<td>tu-dhkar-aani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تذكرونُ</td>
<td>tu-dhkar-aani</td>
<td>tu-dhkar-aani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third person:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>يذكرونُ</td>
<td>yu-dhkar-aani</td>
<td>yu-dhkar-aani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>تذكرونُ</td>
<td>tu-dhkar-aani</td>
<td>yu-dhkar-na</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2.1 Examples of the Form I present tense passive in context

2.2.1.1 STRONG/REGULAR ROOT: \(yu^-\text{f'\text{al}}^-\text{u}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>سلالة التي يوضع فيها الخبر</th>
<th>يوجد حل للمشكلة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(tu^-\text{qad}^-\text{u fii l-qaahirat-i SabaH-a ghad-in.})</td>
<td>(yujiad^-\text{u Hall-un li-l-mushkilat-i.})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be held tomorrow morning in Cairo.

2.2.1.2 ASSIMILATED ROOTS: \(yu\text{u}'\text{al}^-\text{u}\)

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).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>السلال التي يوضع فيها الخبر</th>
<th>يوجد حل للمشكلة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(al-silaal-u llatii yuuDa^-\text{u fii-haa l-xubz-u yujad^-\text{u Hall-un li-l-mushkilat-i.})</td>
<td>(baskets in which bread is put )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.1.3 GEMINATE ROOTS: \(yu^-\text{fa}^-\text{a}^-\text{u}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>السليلة الموهوبة</th>
<th>يوجد حل للمشكلة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(tu^-\text{add}^-\text{u 'adiibat-an mawhuubat-an.})</td>
<td>(She is considered a gifted writer.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.1.4 HAMZATED ROOTS: \(hamza-\text{INITIAL: } yu^-\text{al}^-\text{u}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>السليلة الموهوبة</th>
<th>يوجد حل للمشكلة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(tu^-\text{kal}^-\text{u l-muqabbilaat-u.})</td>
<td>(The hors d'oeuvres are being eaten.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.1.5 HOLLOW ROOTS: \(yu^-\text{faal}^-\text{u}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>السليلة الموهوبة</th>
<th>يوجد حل للمشكلة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(tu^-\text{baa}^-\text{u fii-haa l-hadaayaa.})</td>
<td>(Gifts are sold in it.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What has been said and what will be said about it
2.2.1.6 DEFECTIVE ROOTS: *yu-f'aa* يُفْعَلٌ

*wa-kaad-u l-maw'Duu-l* 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* يُفْعَلَ; DEFECTIVE: *yu-f'aal* يُفْعَلٌ

أسعارًا لا تصدق. *(as'taarun laa tu-Saddaq-u)*
unbelievable (‘not believed’) prices

لم يكتئ بالنجاح. *(lan yu-kallal bi-l-najaal-l-i)*.

He is called/named Ahmad.

### 2.2.2.2 FORM III: *yu-fa'aa* يُفْعَلٌ: rare.

### 2.2.2.3 FORM IV: *yu-f'al-u* يُفْعَلُ; HOLLOW: *yu-f'al* يُفْعَلُ; DEFECTIVE: *yu-f'aal* يُفْعَلٌ

سبعين غدا. *(sa-yu-'lan-u ghad-an)*.

ترجى محادثات مهمة. *(tujraa muhaaaddathat-un muhimmat-un)*.

It will be announced tomorrow.

*yu-Daaf-u* 'ilay-haa 'ishruuna bi-l-mi'at-l Daribat-an Hakuumiyyat-an.

Added to it is twenty percent government tax.

### 2.2.2.4 FORM V: *yu-tafa'al-* يُتَفَعَلُ: rare.

### 2.2.2.5 FORM VI: *yu-fa'al* يُفْعَلُ: rare.

### 2.2.2.6 FORM VII: *yu-nfa'al-* يُنفَعَلُ: rare.

⁹ See section 3.
2.2.2.7 FORM VIII: yu-\textit{ta’al-u} یُفَعَّل تَأَلٍّ; HOLLOW: yu-\textit{taaal-u} تَأَالٍّ; DEFECTIVE: yu-\textit{taa’aa} تَأَالٍّ یَفْعَلَی

یُعْتَبَرُ مِنْ أَشْهَرِ الرُّسَأَمِينَ فِي العَصْرِ الحَدِيث. yu-\textit{tabar-u} عِنْ رَشَاءٍ l-rassaa\textit{im-lina} fii l\textit{-aSr-i} l-Hadith-i.
He is considered one of the most famous artists of the modern era.

فِسْكانَ الْخَليْفَةِ يُنْتَخِبُ فِي الْمَسْجِد fa-\textit{kaan-a} x-al\textit{ilfat-u} yu-\textit{naxab-u} fii l-mas\textit{fid-i}.
The Caliph used to be elected at the mosque.

یَنْتِظَرُ أَنْ تَتَعْلَنَّ الْحُوْكَمَة . . . yu-\textit{ntaZar-u} ْعَنْ tu-\textit{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-\textit{staf\textit{a}l-u} یُسَتَفْعَل تَفَلٍّ; HOLLOW: yu-\textit{stafaal-u} تَفَالٍّ; DEFECTIVE: yu-\textit{staf\textit{a}a} تَفَالٍّ یَسْتَفْعَلی

تُسْتَخْدَمُ لِصَنَعِ الأُوْرَاق tu-\textit{staxdam-u} li-Sanaa’-\textit{i} l-\textit{awraaq-i}.
It is used to make papers.

2.2.3 Quadriliteral present tense passive

Form I: \textit{yu-fa’al-u} یَفْعَلَ
The passive of quadriliterals occurs most often in Form I.

\begin{align*}
\text{الكتّابِ التي لم تُتَرِجَمُ} & \quad \text{الكتّابِ التي لم تُتَرِجَمُ} \\
\text{al-kut\textit{ub-u} lil\textit{ai} lam tu-fahras} & \quad \text{al-kut\textit{ub-u} lil\textit{ai} tu-tarjam-u}
\end{align*}

the books which have not been translated

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: *baHath-a 'an* 'to search for, to look for'

**Active:**

'بحث عن'_the children.

*baHath-naa* 'an-i l-*awlaad-i*.

We looked for the children.

'بحث عن' _the article_

*baHath-naa* 'an-i l-*maqaalat-i*.

We looked for the article.

**Passive:**

'بحث عن' _the children_

*buHith-a* 'an-i l-*awlaad-i*.

The children were looked for.

'بحث عن' _the article_

*buHith-a* 'an-i l-*maqaalat-i*.

The article was looked for.

Further examples:

*حاكم على الرجال بالحبس لمدة منحى يوم.

Hukim-*a* *'ala* l-*rijaal-i bi-l-*Habs-i li-*muddat-i* mi-*at-i* yawm-in._
The men were sentenced to imprisonment for 100 days.

*من مصادر موثوق بها*

*min* maSaad-*a* *nawthuq-in* bi-*haa*

from trusted sources.

*الوَاح طينية عثر عليها في الهلال الحصين*

*alwaali-*an Tiiiniyyat-*an* *'uthir-a* *'alay-haa* fii l-hilaal-i l-*xaSlib-i* 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:

*لا أنه يُعتبر انتقالاً نوعياً بين النصر والهزيمة.*

*i-*an-*a* *yu-'tabar-u* utiqaal-*an* naw*iyy-an* bayn-*a* l-*maSr-i* wa-*hazimat-i*.

Because it is considered a characteristic transition between victory and defeat.

*يُعتبر أحد أروع الآثار الفنية.*

*yu-*'tabar-u* *'aHad-a* *'arwa*-*i* l-*aathaar-i* l-*fanniyyat-i*.

It is considered one of the most splendid artifacts.

*عَيْن طبيباً للملك*

*yuyin-*a* Tlib-*an l-*malik-*i*.

He was appointed physician to the king.

*أوععوا السجن*

*'uudi-*u* l-*sij-*a*.

They were thrown (into) prison.
2.5 Mention of agent: ‘alaa yad-i + noun ‘by the hand of’ or min qibal-i + noun ‘on the part of.’

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 + noun ‘by the hand of’ or min qibal-i + noun ‘on the part of.’

لاكن هذه المساجد محتلة من قبل المسلمين.

But these mosques are occupied by Muslims.

أغتيل على يد علمانيين.

He was assassinated by laymen.

حتى فتحها على يد المسلمين

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

With authors of books, the phrase bi-qalam-i + noun ‘by the pen of’ is often used instead of ‘by’:

بقلم العالم والشاعر المعروف

bi-qalam-i l-‘aalim-i wa-l-shaa‘ir-i l-ma‘ruf-i

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.”

Film ykun li-l-mu‘aaraDat-i wujuud-un yu-dhkar-u.

The opposition did not have a presence [worth] mentioning.

المشروبات

al-ma‘kuulaat-u

edibles, foods

al-mashruubaat-u

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: $tafa^{c}al-\text{a} / ya-tafa^{c}al-\text{u}$

Form V verbs may function as the reflexive of the Form II verb. This is sometimes referred to by grammarians as “mediopassive.”\(^{10}\) Form V may also be resultative of Form II, showing the result of the Form II action, e.g., kassar-tu-haa fa-takassarat $I$ broke it (Form II) and it broke (Form V).\(^{11}\)

\begin{align*}
\text{to disintegrate, break apart} & \quad tafakkak-\text{a}/ya-tafakkak-\text{u} \\
\text{be fragmented} & \quad tamazzaq-\text{a}/ya-tamazzaq-\text{u}
\end{align*}

3.2 The Form VII verb: $infa^{c}al-\text{a}/ya-nfa^{c}il-\text{u} / j^i$

The Form VII verb 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.\(^{12}\) 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.\(^{13}\)

\begin{align*}
\text{inqciTa’-\text{a} l-tayyaar-\text{u} l-kahrabaa’-\text{u}.} & \quad \text{The electric current was cut off.} \\
\text{ta-nqasim-\text{u} l-bilaad-\text{u} ‘ilaa xams-\text{a} c\text{-ashrat-\text{a} min}\text{-taqaat-an.} & \quad \text{The meeting was held yesterday.}
\end{align*}

The country is divided into fifteen regions.

3.3 Form VIII

Form VIII may also have mediopassive meaning.\(^{14}\) Some examples include:

\begin{align*}
\text{be spread out} & \quad intashar-\text{a}/ya-ntashir-\text{u} \\
\text{to be related, linked} & \quad intasab-\text{a}/ya-ntasib-\text{u}
\end{align*}

\(^{10}\) “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, ya‘, ra‘, laam, or nuut. Form VIII or Form V take over the mediopassive function for those roots.
to rise, be raised irtafaʃ-a/ya-rtafiʃ-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
juruaH-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 كر (for the condition clause) and جواب (for the consequence clause).

Arabic often uses a past tense verb in the conditional clause or protasis (كر). 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 فا 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: كر and ف
To express possible conditions, Arabic uses two conditional particles: كر or ف to start the protasis or كر conditional clause. In the texts covered for this study, كر occurred much more frequently than ف.3 The use of كر is considered to imply probable conditions.4

1 See Taha 1995, 180-82 on this topic.
2 For a book-length description of conditional structures in Arabic, see Peled 1992, which contains an extensive bibliography on the topic as well. See also Cantarino 1975, Ill: 311-69, Blachère and Goudeffroy-Demonbynes 1975, 450-68, and Fischer 2002, 227-36 for discussion of conditional structures in classical and literary Arabic.
3 Note that كر does not always translate as 'if.' Sometimes it is used in the adverbial sense of 'when.' See Cantarino 1975, Ill:297-302.
4 "ف is a straight hypothesis - 'if, if it is the case that . . . , if it should be that . . . ' while كر 'if' implies some degree of probability and sometimes implies 'when, whenever.'" Abboud and McCarus 1983, Part 2:176.
1.1 'idhaa إذا ‘if’ + past tense

When 'idhaa 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: 'idhaa lam إذا لم

A negative conditional may be expressed with lam + jussive verb.

If he hasn’t abolished the law... he ignores it.

1.1.2 Negative conditional wa-‘illaa... fa- ‘if not; or else'

Another type of negative conditional is expressed through the used of wa-‘illaa (a contraction of wa-‘in-la), 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.
Conditional and optative expressions

The team would have won if the committee had permitted them to participate.

1.2 Conditional with 'in + perfect or 'in + jussive

The conditional particle 'in' 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 'in' is called in Arabic grammar one of the “particles that require the jussive on two verbs”: 

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 'in with conditional clauses is less frequent in Modern Standard Arabic than in literary and classical Arabic.

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:

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):

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.

إن يكسر إنسان سنٍّ أخر، فسنُه تكسر.

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 ‘although; even though’

وإن كانت بدايته تأخرت إلا أنها جاءت.

wa-‘in kaan-at bidaayat-u-hu ta’axzar-at ‘illaa ‘anna-haa jaa‘-at.

Although his start was late, nevertheless it came.

2 Conditional expressed with -maa لما ‘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.10

2.1 mahmaa مهما ‘whatever’

لا أعتقد أنها ستتوقف، مهما قالت الولايات المتحدة.


I don’t think it will stop, whatever the United States says.

2.2 ‘ayn-a-maa أيُّن ما ‘wherever’

أينما كنت، يمكنك أن تسمع.

‘ayn-a-maa kun-ta, yu-mkin-u-ka ‘an ta-stami‘-u.

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* كُلًا مَا ‘whenever’
This connective also specifies a condition and therefore requires the use of the past tense verb in the clause that it introduces.

يمكن تكراره كُلًا مَا تجذر الخطر
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* إذا مَا ‘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* من ‘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 شوكاً يحصد شوكاً
*man* ya-zra’il shawk-an ya-HSid shawk-an.\(^{11}\)
He who sows thorns [will] reap thorns.

من يقتل يقتل
*man* ya-qtul yu-qtal.\(^{12}\)
He who kills, shall be killed.

3. Contrary-to-fact conditionals: *la- َـََٔٔٔ lawُ
Some conditional sentences express impossible or unreasonable conditions. The conditional particle used to introduce contrary-to-fact conditions is *lawُ* لَا, 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- َـََٔٔٔ*; there are some exceptions, however. The *la- َـََٔٔٔ* is omitted when the result clause precedes the condition clause as in:

عنزة ولو طارت
*’anzat-un* wa-law Taarat.
It is [still] a goat even if it flies.\(^{13}\)

---

\(^{11}\) Cited in ‘Abd al-Latif et. al., 1997, 308.
\(^{12}\) From Ziadeh and Winder 1957, 160.
\(^{13}\) This Arabic saying is cited in McLaughlin 1988, 82.
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' حَتَّى لَو

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 wa-law 'atharat-i l-Hukuumat-u 'alaa wasaa'il-\(\text{a}\) 'uxraa

even if the government discovers other means

Hattaa law lam na-'tarif 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.

مَعَالِم اللهُ فِيکَ

May God bless you.

لَحْفَنِه اللَّهُ

May God preserve him.

مَعَالِم اللهُ

May God have mercy on him.

طَالُ عَمَرِكَ

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:

مَعَالِم اللهُ يَسَّلِمُ

May God keep you safe.

سَلَامُ عَلَیکَمُ

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 هليكبترا '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 ma- or mu-, 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>dars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lessons</td>
<td>duraus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
school  madrasa  مدرسة
teacher  mudarris  مدرس
studying  dinaasa  دراسة
he studied  daras-a  درس (the citation form)

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 *istiqaal*كنَّال، 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 1–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 *mushaakil*مشاكِل، 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 *za’ir*زائر ‘visitor’ derived from the root *z-w-r*) or a root consonant may simply disappear (for example, the noun *thiq*ةْثَق ‘trust, confidence’ from the root *w-l-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-lugha 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:

\[ \text{katab-a katab-an wa-kitaab-an wa-kitbat-an wa-kitaabat-an-i kitaab-a.} \]

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-lugha wa-l-'a'laam has an excellent introductory section summarizing Arabic derivational and inflectional morphology (pp. ha‘a‘ to faa‘).

Arabic dictionary structure has evolved over time, and some older dictionaries are organized in different ways.\(^2\) Note also that some modern Arabic dictionaries are referred to as "'abjadiyy" or 'alphabetical,' meaning that their

\(^2\) 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 ʿayn and hamza discounted as orthographic elements.

ʿaamīl  
syntactic governor or ‘operator’

ʿabjad; ʿabjadiyya  
alphabet

ʿafʿaāl  
verbs (plural of fiʿl)

ʿafʿaāl al-qulūb/  
verbs of perception or cognition, in particular, of emotions and intellect

ʿafʿaāl qalbiyya  
verbs of transformation (of something from one state to another)

ʿamāl  
syntactic government; regime

ʿamr  
 imperative; command

ʿasmaʿa  
nouns (pl. of ism)

ʿasmaʿaʿ al-ʾishaara  
demonstrative pronouns

ʾaxawaat  
“sisters” – words similar in class and in governing effect

badal  
apposition

Damiir/Damaaʿir  
personal pronoun

Damaaʿir 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

faaʿil  
subject of a verbal sentence; agent; doer of the action

fathHa  
short vowel /a/

fiʿl / ʿafʿaāl  
verb; action
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fi’l ‘ajwaf</td>
<td>hollow verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi’l ghayr muta’addin</td>
<td>intransitive verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi’l laazim</td>
<td>intransitive verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi’l lafiif mafruuq</td>
<td>assimilated and defective verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi’l lafiif maqruun</td>
<td>hollow and defective verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi’l mahmuuz</td>
<td>hamzated verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi’l mithaal</td>
<td>assimilated verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi’l muDa’af</td>
<td>geminate verb, doubled verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi’l muta’addin</td>
<td>transitive verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi’l naaqiS</td>
<td>defective verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fi’l SaHiH saalim</td>
<td>sound verb; regular verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fuSHaa</td>
<td>literary Arabic, classical Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haal</td>
<td>circumstantial accusative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hamzat al-qaT</td>
<td>strong hamza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hamzat al-waSl</td>
<td>elidable hamza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haraka/-aat</td>
<td>short vowel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harf / Huruf</td>
<td>letter (of the alphabet); particle, function word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huruf qamariyya</td>
<td>“moon” letters; word-initial sounds that do not assimilate the laam of the definite article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huruf shamsiyyya</td>
<td>“sun” letters; word-initial sounds that assimilate the laam of the definite article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'iDaafa</td>
<td>annexation structure, noun construct, genitive construct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'iDaafa ghayr Haqiqiyyy</td>
<td>“unreal” 'iDaafa, adjective 'iDaafa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'i'raab</td>
<td>desinential (word-final) inflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ishtiqaaq</td>
<td>derivational etymology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ism / ‘asma’a</td>
<td>noun; name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ism al-faa’il</td>
<td>active participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ism al-’ishaara</td>
<td>demonstrative pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ism al-maf’uul</td>
<td>passive participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ism maqSuur</td>
<td>indeclinable noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ism mawSuul</td>
<td>relative pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ism al-tafDiil</td>
<td>relative adjective; comparative or superlative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>istithnaa’</td>
<td>exception, exceptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic Term</td>
<td>English Translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jamc</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jamc mu‘annath saalim</td>
<td>sound feminine plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jamc mudhakkar saalim</td>
<td>sound masculine plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jamc al-taksiir</td>
<td>broken plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jarr</td>
<td>genitive case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jazm</td>
<td>jussive mood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jawaab</td>
<td>answer; the apodosis, consequence clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jumla</td>
<td>verbal sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jumla fi‘liyya</td>
<td>equational sentence; noun-initial sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jumla ismiyya</td>
<td>short vowel /i/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kasra</td>
<td>the laa of absolute or categorical negation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laa nafy-i l-jins-i</td>
<td>permissive or hortative imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laam al-‘amr</td>
<td>the maa of astonishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maa l-ta‘ajjub</td>
<td>past, past tense; perfective aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maaDii</td>
<td>hamza followed by a long /aa/; the symbol that indicates this sound (ī)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>madda/ ‘alif madda</td>
<td>direct object of transitive verb; the accusative of direct object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maf‘uul bi-hi</td>
<td>accusative adverb of time, manner, or place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maf‘uul fii-hi</td>
<td>accusative of purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maf‘uul li-‘ajl-i-hi / maf‘uul la-hu</td>
<td>cognate accusative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maf‘uul muTlaq</td>
<td>the passive voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>majhuul</td>
<td>diptote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mammnu‘ min-a l-Sarf</td>
<td>genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>majruur</td>
<td>accusative/subjunctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manSuub</td>
<td>defective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manqunS</td>
<td>nominative/indicative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marfiu‘c</td>
<td>verbal noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maSdar</td>
<td>a verbal noun whose initial consonant is a prefixed miim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maSdar miimii</td>
<td>future tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mustaqbal</td>
<td>“augmented”; extended verb form (II–X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maziid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
mu'ujarrad  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
muthannahaa  dual

naaqiS  defective
nafy  negation
naHw  grammar; syntactic theory
naHt  compounding into one word
naa'ib al-faa'il  subject of a passive verb
uaSb  accusative case (on substantives)/subjunctive mood (on verbs)
ua'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  quadrilateral (root)
**Sarf** derivational morphology and inflectional morphology that does not include case and mood marking

**shadda** symbol that indicates doubling of a consonant (´)

**shart** condition; protasis, conditional clause

**Sifa** adjective

**sukuun** absence of vowel; quiescence, symbolized by a small circle (°)

**tanyiiz** 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
affix: an inflectional or derivational feature added to a word stem

agreement: a relationship between words where one word requires a corresponding form in another (e.g., agreement in gender or in case)

allophone: a contextually determined variant of a phoneme

annexation structure: a genitive noun construct; an `iDaafa

assimilated: referring to lexical roots, those whose initial phoneme is waaw or yaa'

assimilation: a phonological process wherein one sound acquires features of another (usually adjacent) sound

bilateral: having only two root phonemes

case: a form of word-final inflection on nouns and adjectives that shows their relationship to other words in a sentence

clause: a unit of sentence structure that includes a predication

construct phrase: a structure in which two nouns are juxtaposed in a genitive relationship; an annexation structure; an `iDaafa

cryptofeminine: a feminine noun not overtly marked for feminine gender

cryptomasculine: a masculine noun not overtly marked for masculine gender

circumfix: 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'.

defective: a term applied to lexical roots referring to those with a final waaw or yaa'

desinential inflection: word-final marking for syntactically determined case or mood

diptote: a term applied to certain indefinite nouns that do not take either kasra or nunation
relative

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., ٣-ک-ل, ٧-س-ل or ٣-ر-ل)

hollow verb

a verb whose lexical root contains a semi-vowel in the medial position (e.g., ٣-و-ل or ٣-ی-ر)

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

(also "imperfective")

indicative

a mood of the verb that is ungoverned by a syntactic operator ("aamil"): it is characteristic of statements of fact and of questions

infixed

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., لام)

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 as applied to a verb, denoting a completed action in the past

perfect
(also “perfective”)
as applied to a verb, denoting a completed action in the past

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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sound (adj.)</td>
<td>regular in inflection or structure (see also “strong”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stem; word stem</td>
<td>the base form of a word without inflections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stem vowel</td>
<td>the vowel that follows the second root consonant in a verb stem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strong (see also “sound”)</td>
<td>regular in inflection or structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subjunctive</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suffix</td>
<td>an affix attached at the end of a word stem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>syntax</td>
<td>the relationship among words in a phrase, clause, or sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>triliteral</td>
<td>containing three root consonants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>triptote</td>
<td>a term applied to nouns meaning that they inflect for all three cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transitive</td>
<td>describes verbs whose action affects an object (often referred to as “direct object”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verbal noun (also “deverbal noun”)</td>
<td>a noun derived from a particular verb that describes the action of that verb (e.g., acceptance - qubuul; departure - mughaadara; swimming - sibaaHa); Arabic: masdar or ism fi'l</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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