

# East Arabic C

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Illustrations by

**McGraw**

New York Chicago San Francisco  
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**Also in this series**

*Easy Arabic Script, Jane Knightwick and Mahmoud Gaafar*

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# Introduction

## What is Arabic 'grammar'?

Arabic 'grammar' will mean different things to different people.

To learners of Arabic as a foreign language it might mean the fundamentals of the language: whether there are genders, whether the noun or the adjective comes first, how the verb changes in the past and future, etc.

To more advanced Arabists and scholars it might mean the higher level subtleties of Modern Standard or Classical Arabic.

To native speakers, it usually conjures up a subject studied at school, often hazily remembered lessons analysing sentences with a view to being able to spell and pronounce formal Arabic correctly.

What this book means by 'grammar' is a progressive knowledge of the structure of Arabic from the basic building blocks to some, but by no means all, of the more subtle nuances of Modern Standard Arabic.

## Levels of formality

Learners of Arabic generally appreciate the difference between the various spoken Arabic dialects and the universal Modern Standard Arabic. What is not so well understood is that Modern Standard itself can be spoken and written at different levels of sophistication.

Although most Arabs can communicate in a form of standard Arabic and are aware that formal Arabic is pronounced with additional case endings, only scholars, media presenters and public speakers use these endings routinely.

This book includes Case Notes sections with additional explanations and activities covering the grammatical case

endings used in formal grammatical cases as in German or Russian, pronounced in less formal contexts without reference to the formal endings. To acquire a more general understanding, study the Case Notes sections. This is an aspect of Arabic grammar for the beginning.

## How to use this book

This is a reference and a learning book for intermediate students, to be used by themselves. The book is designed to improve understanding and to provide an overview of the structure of Arabic.

The book has a built-in self-learning system. The activities draw only on the material of the units. Work your way through the book progressively step by step. As you progress through Arabic you can use the book to practice on a particular point of grammar.

The main part of the book is divided into units, concentrating on one particular feature:

- clear structural explanations
  - more than 100 structured grammar points
  - optional Case Notes (see above)
  - end-of-unit In Summary sections (see above)
- Answers to all the activities are given in the section of the book.

## Arabic script

It is beneficial to acquire familiarity with the Arabic script and the short vowel marks before studying this book. However, the complete alphabet is provided here for reference.

<i>final</i>	<i>medial</i>	<i>initial</i>	<i>isolated</i>	<i>letter</i>
ا	ا	ا	ا	ألف alif
ب	ب	ب	ب	باء ba'
ت	ت	ت	ت	تاء tā'
ث	ث	ث	ث	ثاء thā'
ج	ج	ج	ج	جيم jim
ح	ح	ح	ح	حاء ḥā'
خ	خ	خ	خ	خاء khā'
د	د	د	د	دال dal
ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	ذال dhāl
ر	ر	ر	ر	راء rā'
ز	ز	ز	ز	زاي zāy
س	س	س	س	سين sin
ش	ش	ش	ش	شين shīn
ص	ص	ص	ص	صاد ṣād
ض	ض	ض	ض	ضال ḍād
ط	ط	ط	ط	طاء ṭā'
ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظاء ḏā'

*final*      *medial*

ع      ع

ف      ف

ق      ق

ك      ك

ل      ل

م      م

ن      ن

ه      ه

و      و

ي      ي

فتحة fatha

ضممة damma

كسرة kasra

سكون sukūn

شدة shadda

مدّة madda

a d  
'u'  
a d  
'u'  
a d  
llu  
a s  
fall  
a s  
le-t  
a v  
pro

(Note: These symbols are written in Arabic. This book uses the Latin alphabet for reference.)



# Funda Arabic



# The Arabic root system

Arabic is a language based on a system of 'roots'. In English, we often refer to the 'root' of a word to mean its origin, for example the root of the English word 'engineer' is the Latin *ingenium*, meaning 'skill'.

The Arabic root, or *حَصْر* *ḥaṣr*, refers to the core meaning of a word. This core can usually be identified by three root consonants (non-vowels). For example, the sequence of three consonants *س/ف/ر* *s/f/r* (in this order, reading the Arabic script right to left) carries the meaning of 'travel'. A word which includes the sequence of letter *س/ف/ر* *s/f/r* is likely to have something to do with travelling. For example:

 journey	سَفَرٌ <i>satar</i>
 he travels	يَسَافِرُ <i>yusāfir</i>
 ambassador	سَافِرٌ <i>safir</i>
 traveller	مَسَافِرٌ <i>musāfir</i>
 embassy	سَفَارَةٌ <i>sifāra</i>

All these words are derived from the root *س/ف/ر* *s/f/r*. Notice how the root letters always appear in the same order. Any additional consonants or vowels before, after or between the root letters modify the meaning according to different general patterns. The feminine ending *ة* (*tā' marbū'a*) is never part of the root and the most common additional consonants are *م* *m*, *س* *s* and *ت* *t*.

The emphasis on especially short vowel pronunciation often and spoken dialects. pronounced *yaktub* in *yiklib* in dialect. The consonants rather than

Much of Arabic grammar manipulated to create become more familiar be more able to identify yourself.

### Activity 1

Can you identify the sets of words? What could be?

- 1 book  
office  
writer/clerk  
library
- 2 lesson  
teacher  
study  
school

3	broken	مكسور maksūr
	fragmentation	تكسير takṣīr
	it was broken	انكسر inkasara
	nut cracker:	كسارة kassara
4	player	لاعب lāʿib
	playing field	ملعب maʿlab
	toy	لعبة luʿba
	games	ألعاب alʿab

### Words with doubled root letter

Some Arabic words have the same second and third root letters. When this is the case, they are sometimes written together with a shadda doubling sign (ّ) and sometimes separately, depending on the type of word:

جديد jadīd (new) = root letters ج/د/د j/d/d

كل kull (all) = root letters ك/ل/ل k/l/l

### Words with four root letters

A few Arabic words have four root letters. Sometimes these are four different letters, for example ترجمة tarjama (translation), where the root letters are ت/ر/ج/م t/r/j/m, but often they are a repeated pair, for example زلزال zalzala (earthquake), where the root letters are ز/ل/ز/ل.

### Words of foreign origin

Generally loan words such as راديو radyu (radio) or إنترنت intarnat (internet) fall outside the Arabic root system.



## In summary

- Most Arabic consonants form the core meaning of a word.
- Vowels and shadda are used to create related words.
- The most common root letters are س and ت.
- Some words have more than three root consonants.
- Roots are the basis of the Arabic vocabulary.



# Gender: masculine and feminine

Gender: masculine and feminine

In addition, there are feminine and don't fit in these categories. Most of the features or parts of the

Arabic nouns (words that name people, objects or ideas) are either *masculine* مذكر (mudhakkar) or *feminine* مؤنث (mu'annath).

chair (masculine)	كرسي korsi
table (feminine)	مائدة ma'ida

It is not difficult to tell the difference between masculine and feminine words. Feminine words usually fall into one of two categories:

1 Words with the feminine ending *sa* (ta' marbuta), for example:

car	سيارة sayyāra
bag	حقيبة ḥaqība
aunt (maternal)	خاله khāla
nurse (female)	ممرضة munarrifa

2 Words referring to female people but not ending in *sa*, for example:

girl	بنت bint
mother	أم umm

leg	رجل rajl
sun	شمس shamṣ
desert	صحراء ṣaḥrā
Egypt	مصر miṣr

## Activity 1

Decide if these words are masculine or feminine and tick the correct box.

- 1 كتاب kitāb
- 2 أخت ukht
- 3 بيت bayt
- 4 قميص qamiṣ
- 5 دجاجة dajaja
- 6 أب ab
- 7 ولد walad
- 8 العراق al-irāq
- 9 شارع shāriḥ
- 10 صورة ṣūra
- 11 عين ʿayn
- 12 اجتماع iṭimaʿ

## Case Notes

Arabic has different levels of formality and complexity. In certain contexts, particularly Quranic or Classical Arabic, but also sometimes in more formal Standard Arabic, you will see and hear additional grammatical endings. These endings represent the *case* of the noun (*nominative, accusative or genitive*) and whether it is *definite or indefinite*. The endings change depending on the function of the noun in a sentence.

Isolated nouns are usually shown with the neutral **تنوين** (tanwīn) ending showing they are *indefinite* ('a/an'). **تنوين** (tanwīn) literally means 'putting a nun on' and for this reason is sometimes called *nunation*. It is written as a small symbol above the final letter (ـ) and pronounced *un*:

a boy	وَلَدٌ waladun
a girl	بِنْتٌ bintun

If a noun ends in ة (lā' marbūʿa), the *i* is pronounced before the **تنوين** (tanwīn):

a car	سَيَّارَةٌ sayyāratun
a nurse	مُمَرِّضَةٌ mumarriḍatun

**تنوين** (tanwīn) is not normally added to foreign loan words such as **كمبيوتر** kumbyūtir (computer).

### Optional Activity

Put the **تنوين** (tanwīn) on these nouns and say them out loud.

1 صورة	1 قميص
2 سيارة	2 حاجة
3 عين	3 بيت



## fn summary

- Arabic has b
- Most femini not, they ret
- Other nouns
- In more form additional g heard on Ara



# ال al- (the)

Arabic has no separate word for 'a' or 'an', as in 'a chair' or 'an apple'. So كتاب (kitāb) means 'a book', مكتب (maktab) 'an office', etc.

To make a noun *definite* ('the book', 'the office', etc.), you need to add ال (al-) meaning 'the'. ال (al-) is written *joined* to the word it refers to and is the same for both masculine and feminine:

- ولد walad (a boy) → الولد al-walad (the boy)
- بنت bint (a girl) → البنت al-bint (the girl)
- قميص qamis (a shirt) → القميص al-qamis (the shirt)
- حقيبة haqiba (a bag) → الحقيبة al-haqiba (the bag)

## Sun letters الحروف الشمسية and moon letters الحروف القمرية

Nouns starting with certain letters of the Arabic alphabet cause the pronunciation of ال (al-) to change. The 'l' is assimilated and instead the initial letter of the noun is pronounced twice – and written with a shadda (ّ) if the vowel marks are included:

- سيارة sayyara (a car) → السَّيَّارة as-sayyara (the car)
- نهر nahr (a river) → النَّهر an-nahr (the river)

ال al (the)

The letters which cause this change are called 'sun letters', الحروف الشمسية. ش (sh:n) is itself an exception: its pronunciation is unaffected and doesn't change. Hal...

The remainder of the lesson (al-huruf al-qamriyya)...

ظ ل ن  
ي

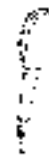
### Activity 1

Write these nouns with the definite article (al-), as in the examples.

(al-k...)

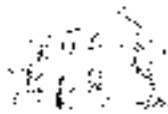
(as-sa...)

قلم



3

بيت



4

صورة



5

ممرضة



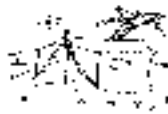
6

تين



7

خيمة



8

الـممرضة  
(the nurse)

### Case Notes

When a noun is made definite (i.e. the neutral (*ism*) becomes a *damir* (pronoun in *ā*):

a boy ولدًا *waladā*

a car سيارةً *siyāra*

### Optional Activity

Put the definite noun in the box for Activity 1 and so on.

المفتاح *al-mufṭāḥ*



### In summary

- الـ (al-) is the definite article (the) written joined to the noun (house); بيت
- There is no space between the article and the noun.
- Half the letter 'ayn' of 'al-' is written.
- The 'a' of 'al-' is written only when the noun ends in a vowel.

### Elision

If الـ (al-) comes directly after a vowel, the 'a' of الـ (al-) will drop out, or elide, leaving just the 'l'. Again, this affects only the pronunciation and not the spelling:

البيت *al-bayt*  
(the house)

في البيت *fi l-bayt*  
(in the house)

# Pronouns (singular) and non-verbal sentences

Pronouns are words such as 'I', 'it' or 'you' which replace names or nouns in a sentence.

Arabic has more pronouns than English since it has different versions for masculine and feminine, singular and plural, and even special *dual* pronouns for two people or things.

## Singular pronouns

Here are the singular pronouns.

أنا	أنا	ana
أنت (masculine)	أنت	anta
أنت (feminine)	أنتِ	anti
هو (masculine)	هو	huwa
هي (feminine)	هي	hiya

### Activity 1

Cover the pronouns above and then join the Arabic to the English, as in the example.

هو (masculine)	أنتِ
أنا	أنا
هي (feminine)	هو
أنت (masculine)	هي
أنت (feminine)	أنت

## Non-verbal sentences

You can construct non-verbal sentences which do not require the equivalent of a verb. Here are some examples of non-verbal sentences:

أنا ياسين	I [am] Yasine
يوسف	Yousef [is a]
أختي	My aunt Na
الكلب	The dog [is]
أنت أنت	You [are] An

### Activity 2

Fill in the gaps, as in the example.



أم سارة.

**Activity 3**

Write out these sentences again using **هو** or **هي**, as in the example.

- هو مدرس.                      1 أحمد مُدرّس.
- 2 ياسمين ممرضة.
- 3 الكلب في الشارع.
- 4 السيارة في الشارع.
- 5 الولد في الحديقة.
- 6 البيت في السيارة.

**In summary**

- هو huwa m...  
هي hiya m...
- There are m...  
أنت anta (m...)
- There is no...  
(verb 'to be')
- Sentences c...  
هو مدرس.

**Case Notes**

Look at these non-verbal sentences with the case endings included:

He's a teacher.                      هو مدرس. huwa mudarrisun

You're a nurse.                      أنت ممرضة. anti mumarridatun

The girl is in the house.                      البيت في البيت. al-bintu fi bayti

All of the case endings in italics are neutral, or *nominative* – *-un* for indefinite and *-u* for definite – except البيت where the ending changes to *-i* after في *fi* (in). You will learn more about this in Unit 8. For the moment, it is enough to know that the case ending will be nominative unless there is a reason for it not to be.



# Plurals and plural pronouns

Many aspects of elementary Arabic grammar are straightforward, but plurals require explanation and practice.

The first point to make is that Arabic plurals refer only to three or more people or items. For two people or items, there is a separate dual form, although this is not always used in less formal Arabic. The dual form is covered separately in Unit 13.

## Plural pronouns

In addition to the singular pronouns, there are also five plural pronouns:

we	نَحْنُ nahnu
you (masculine plural)	أَنْتُمْ antum
you (feminine plural)	أَنْتُنَّ antunna
they (masculine)	هُم hum
they (feminine)	هُنَّ hunna

Although there are separate masculine and feminine plural forms of 'you' and 'they', the masculine is the most common. If a group of people is mixed male and female, the masculine form is used. The group must be entirely female for the feminine plural to be used. (Spoken dialects sometimes ignore even this difference and use the masculine form throughout.)

## Plural nouns: int

Arabic nouns can be pluralised in two ways:

- By adding a suffix (the way English adds 's' to 'box' to produce 'boxes').
- By changing the internal structure (similar to the way English changes 'man' into 'men'). This is called *at-taksir* (التكسير).

However, whereas in English the broken plural is only used for a minority of plurals, in Arabic the simpler sound plural is used for the majority of plurals.

## Sound plurals

There are two sound plural forms:

- sound masculine plural
- sound feminine plural

## Sound masculine

The sound masculine plural is formed by adding *-in* (يُن) to the singular form. For example, *mudarris* (مُدَرِّس) (male teacher) becomes *mudarrisin* (مُدَرِّسِينَ).

The alternative *-in* (يُن) form, which will be explained later, is used for mixed groups.

The sound masculine plural is used with words describing males, for example:

مُحَاسِبٌ مُحَاسِبِينَ (muḥāsibun muḥāsibīn) (accountant)

عِرَاقِيٌّ عِرَاقِيَّيْنِ (ʿirāqīy ʿirāqīyayn) (Iraqi)

Note that not all words describing male people can be made plural using the SMP. Some use a broken plural (see Unit 11).

### Activity 1

Complete these sentences using the plural of the words in the box, as in the example. (All of the words can be made plural using the sound masculine -īn ending.)

engineer	مُهَنْدِسٍ muhandis
carpenter	نَجَّارٍ najjār
baker	خَبَّازٍ khabbāz
Egyptian	مِصْرِيٍّ miṣriyy
French	فَرَنْسِيٍّ faransiy

هم مدرسون -





### Sound feminine plural

The sound feminine plural (SFP) is formed by adding *-at* to the singular. If the singular word ends with the feminine *-a* (ة), this should be removed before the SFP is added:

جُنَيْهَة junayh (pound) → جُنَيْهَات junayhāt (pounds)

مُمَرِّضَة mumarriḍa (nurse) → مُمَرِّضَات mumarriḍāt (nurses)

سَيَّارَة sayyāra (car) → سَيَّارَات sayyārāt (cars)

Unlike the name 'sound feminine plural' suggests, this ending is *not* used exclusively to make feminine nouns plural. It is a common plural and is used with both feminine and masculine nouns, although not generally with nouns referring to male people. There are two main groups of nouns with which the SFP is used

#### SFP with all-female groups of people

The SFP is used for groups of three or more females

مُدَرِّسَة mudarrisa (female teacher) → مُدَرِّسَات mudarrisāt (female teachers)

عِراقِيَّة irāqiyya (female Iraqi) → عِراقِيَّات irāqiyyāt (female Iraqis)

#### Activity 2

Make these sentences feminine using the SFP, as in the example.

هَم مَدْرَسُون. هُنَّ مَدْرَسَات.

1 هَم مُحَاسِبُون.

2 نَحْنُ عِراقِيُون.

3 هَم فَرَنسِيُون.

4 أَنْتُمْ مِصرِيُون؟

5 لَآ، نَحْنُ كُويتِيُون.

6 هَم مِهْنِيسُون.

#### SFP with masculine nouns

The SFP is commonly used with masculine nouns referring to people

رُجَاة rujāja (the

اجْتِمَاع ijtimāʿ (the

حَيَوَان hayawān (the

لُغَة luḡha (language)

سَيَّارَة sayyara (car)

ثَلَاجَة thallāja (the

Unfortunately there are some nouns which use the SFP which you may not know the meaning of. You can find your own knowledge of the meaning of these words by looking them up in a dictionary. You will learn each word individually.

In informal contexts you may hear words with the SFP used to refer to

تِلْفُون tīlfun (telephone)

كُمبِيوتِر kumbyūtir (computer)

#### Non-human plurals

Plural pronouns such as *hum* (they) are used when referring to human beings (they're teachers). With non-human plurals, the feminine singular pronoun *hiya* (she) is used (the fridge is empty: *ayna az zujajat? hiya fī t* in the fridge).

This feature extends to *all* grammatical structures, such as verbs and adjectives (which will be covered in later units). The feminine singular is used with all non-human plurals whether the nouns are originally masculine or feminine in the singular.

### Activity 3

Make sentences using هو huwa, هي hiya, هم ham or هن hunna, as in the example.



2



هي ممرضات.



5. أين القلم؟



4



3



7. أين السيارات؟



6. أين المعلمة؟

### Case Notes

Plural nouns also have a case ending for the sound masculine singular nouns:

nurses

the nurses

However, the nominative case ending for both indefinite and definite

teachers

the teachers

The sound masculine plural case ending being universally pronounced as *-un*.

### Optional Activity

Make these words plural in the nominative case ending *-un*.

(male engineer)

(car)

(female teacher)

(meeting)



## In summary

- There are two types of plural in Arabic, external 'sound' plurals and internal 'broken' plurals. There are no precise rules governing which plural is used for a particular noun.
- The sound masculine plural (SMP) is formed by adding *ون /ون* *un/-in* to the singular and is used with nouns referring to groups of people.
- The sound feminine plural (SFP) is formed by adding *ات* *āt* to the singular (after any *ة tā marbuta* has been removed). The SFP is used with groups of females and to make certain other masculine and feminine nouns plural.
- Arabic grammar treats any non human plural as *feminine singular*. So you must use the feminine singular pronoun *هي hiya* with the plural of objects:

أين السيارات؟ هي في الشارع.

(Where are the cars? **They** are in the street.)



Demonstratives are the 'that', as in 'this house'. Arabic demonstratives describing a feminine

this (*masculine*)

this (*feminine*)

that (*masculine*)

that (*feminine*)

The demonstratives of *الـ (al)*:

هذا

this boy

هذه

this girl

ذلك

that house

تلك

that city

Notice how the *a* of *الـ* in a vowel (see Unit 3)

**Activity 1**

Fill in the gaps with the correct Arabic demonstrative to match the English, as in the example:

this man	الرجُل	هذا	1
this bag	الحَقِيبة		2
that newspaper	الجَرِيدة		3
that teacher	المُدْرَس		4
that nurse	المُمْرُضة		5
this pen	القَلَم		6
this river	النَهْر		7
that shirt	القَمِيص		8

If you want to say 'This' (masculine) or 'that' (feminine) demonstrative:

- This [is] the bag.
- That [is] the man.

**Activity 2**

Write sentences to match the pictures, paying special attention as to whether you mean 'this' or 'that' (‘that’).



3



6

The demonstratives can also be used with an indefinite noun without ال (al) to form a sentence:

This [is a] boy. هذا ولد. hadha walad.

That [is a] city. تلك مدينة. tilka madīna.

You need to be careful. As you already know, Arabic has no separate word for 'a/an' or direct equivalent of 'is/are'. This means that only the presence of ال (al) indicates the difference between:

a) this book هذا الكتاب hadha l-kitāb

b) This [is a] book. هذا كتاب. hadha kitab.



### Case Notes

If the case endings are added to demonstrative sentences, the ending will vary according to whether the noun is definite (with 'a') or indefinite:

This is a boy.      هذا ولدٌ. *hāḍha waladun.*

This man is an engineer.      هذا الرجلُ مهندسٌ.  
*hāḍha r-rajulu muhandisun.*

That is a river.      ذلك نهرٌ. *dhalika nahrun.*

Remember that if a noun ends in ة (tā marbūṭa), the tā becomes "united" before a case ending and is pronounced as a 't' (see Unit 2):

That girl is a nurse.      تلك البنتُ ممرضةٌ.  
*tilka l-bintu mumarrīḡatun.*

This city is large.      هذه المدينةُ كبيرةٌ.  
*hāḍhihi l-madīnata kabīratun.*

### Optional Activity

Put the case endings on these sentences:

1 هذا قلمٌ.

2 ذلك ولدٌ.

3 هذا الرجلُ خبّانٌ.

4 هذه مدرّسةٌ.

5 تلك الحقيبةُ كبيرةٌ.

### Demonstratives v

Remember that Arabic has human plurals. Non-feminine singular (see Unit 1).

So, for non-human plurals, the feminine singular is used:

هذه الاجتماعاتُ. *hāḍhihi al-ijmā'āt.* These meetings.

هذه الزجاجاتُ. *hāḍhihi az-zujājāt.* These are bottles.

تلك السياراتُ. *dhalika as-sayāراتُ.* Those cars are cars.

تلك الفواكهُ. *dhalika al-fawākih.* Those are fruits.

تلك الفواكهُ. *dhalika al-fawākih.* Those are fruits.

When talking about plurals of demonstratives:

هذه الفواكهُ. *hāḍhihi al-fawākih.* These (human) plurals.

تلك الفواكهُ. *dhalika al-fawākih.* those (human) plurals.

هذه الممرضاتُ. *hāḍhihi al-mumarrīḡāt.* these nurses

تلك الفواكهُ. *dhalika al-fawākih.* Those are the fruits.

تلك الفواكهُ. *dhalika al-fawākih.* Those are the fruits.

تلك الفواكهُ. *dhalika al-fawākih.* Those are the fruits.

تلك الفواكهُ. *dhalika al-fawākih.* Those are the fruits.

تلك الفواكهُ. *dhalika al-fawākih.* Those are the fruits.

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تلك الفواكهُ. *dhalika al-fawākih.* Those are the fruits.







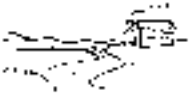

تلك الفواكهُ. *dhalika al-fawākih.* Those are the fruits.

تلك الفواكهُ. *dhalika al-fawākih.* Those are the fruits.

تلك الفواكهُ. *dhalika al-fawākih.* Those are the fruits.

### Activity 3

Look at the pictures and decide if the sentences are true or false, as in the example:

	x	1 هذا قلم.
		2 هذه جريدة.
	-	3 هذا قميص.
		4 ذلك الرجل مدرس.
		5 هذه سيارات.
		6 هؤلاء مدرسون.
		7 ذلك بيت.
		8 أولئك ممرضات.



### in summary

- Arabic demonstratives indicate whether the noun is singular, plural, masculine or feminine.
- The most common demonstratives are *masculine singular* هذا hādha, *feminine singular* هذه hādhihi, *masculine plural* هؤلاء hā'ulā, and *feminine plural* هن hā'n.
- Plural demonstratives referring to females are used for both females and males.
- The meaning of the noun has the same effect on the demonstrative.

هذا الولد

هذه سيارة

هؤلاء مدرسون

ذلك البيت

أولئك الممرضات

# Adjectives and descriptive sentences

- كسرت broken
- سعيد happy
- شهير famous
- متزوج married
- مناسب suitable

Descriptive words such as 'beautiful', 'new' or 'heavy' are known in English as *adjectives*.

A feature of Arabic adjectives is that many display common patterns. One of the most basic of these patterns is a fatha (a) after the first consonant and a long َ (ī) between the second and third consonants:

جميل	beautiful	jamil	جميل
قبيح	ugly	qabīḥ	قبيح
جديد	new	jadīd	جديد
قديم	old	qadīm	قديم
ثقيل	heavy	thaqīl	ثقيل
خفيف	light	khafīf	خفيف
كبير	big/large	kabīr	كبير
صغير	small	ṣaghīr	صغير
طويل	tall/long	ṭawīl	طويل
قصير	short	qaṣīr	قصير

Adjectives also often begin with *مـ* ma- or *مـ* mu- (the equivalent of the English past participle as in 'broken' or 'burnt' – see Unit 19):

## Position and agreement

In English, adjectives describe: 'beautiful river' words are placed after other words, if the noun is made feminine, usually

- الأنهار الجميلة (a) beautiful rivers
- الفتيات الجميلات (a) beautiful girls
- المعلمة الجديدة (a) new teacher
- السيارة الجديدة (a) new car

These descriptive words are used in the above examples as the *predicative* of a noun or as the *predicative* of a verb, as in: *al-akhabar*, 'the news' that carries the information.

- النهر [is] جميل The river [is] beautiful
- السيارة [is] جديدة The car [is] new

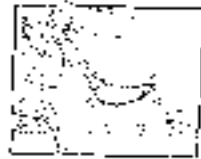
**Activity 1**

Look at the list of adjectives on pages 34-5 and then fill in the gaps to match the pictures, as in the example. (There may be more than one possible answer.)



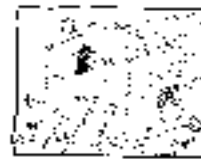
3

هذا الولد



2

هذه الحقيبة



1

هذا البيت قديم



6

هنا



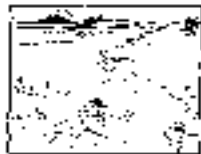
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الزجاجة



4

هذه



8



7

الخيمة

**Adjectives with definite nouns**

If an adjective is describing a definite noun with **الـ** al ('the') as in **البيت** al-bayt (the house), then the adjective must also have **الـ** al:

- |                       |                      |                |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| the new teacher       | al-mudarris al-jadid | المدرّس الجديد |
| the beautiful picture | aṣ-ṣūra al-jamīla    | الصورة الجميلة |

When a noun has a prefix (the house), the noun is definite. In this case, the ad-

- درسة الكبيرة.  
bayt al-jadid  
My new house

More details on possessive

If there is more than one of the noun, usually separate

- a large new arch

- the beautiful old

You need to be very careful. **هذه/هذا** hadha/hadha meaning, will be affo

- a beautiful river

- the beautiful river

- The river is beautiful

- This is a beautiful

- This river is beautiful



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