

A Journey with Arabic

رحلة مع العربية

Why study Arabic?

Arabic is so much more than a magnificently rich language; it's a key that unlocks a deeper understanding of the Quran and gives you access to a treasure trove of classical Islamic knowledge, which is why many Muslim families try to include Arabic as a part of their curriculum. With the right resources and mentors, learning Arabic can be turned into a collective and enjoyable journey that keeps on rewarding you throughout your life, in sha Allah.

My journey with Arabic

I started learning Arabic when I was around seven, with Ustaadh Ibrahim (who later founded ArabicForUmmah.com). Using the Madinah Arabic Reader course and through engaging activities, he helped us develop a love for learning Arabic in the very early stages. We always enjoyed playing the "Bismillah Game" (an Arabic version of "Simon Says") at the end of every class, as well as joining in on poem-singing sessions or even watching Ice Age in Arabic. Later, his friend started teaching us and we went through the Al-Arabiyyatuh Lil-Nashieen course with him. This course is one of my personal favorites: it teaches conversational Arabic using short, repetitive exercises and bite-sized

lessons that are cleverly designed in such a way that you learn a lot in very little time without even realizing it, and best of all, you get the hang of the language's structure without memorizing any grammar rules! Because our teacher was a native Arabic speaker and wasn't fluent in Urdu or English, we were forced to communicate with him solely in whatever Arabic we knew. He went beyond just teaching from the textbooks and would chat with us, listen to our stories, and relate his own. We saw him as not merely a teacher but also a friend, and his enthusiasm and passion for the Arabic language was contagious, Ma Sha Allah, so we never felt like we were being forced to learn anything. All in all, these classes developed our conversational skills a great deal and eventually made us fluent, Alhamdulillah. I personally have a lot of fond memories of those days because these teachers made them so lively, interactive, and joyful.



The depth of Arabic can be judged by the fact that it has two major branches of grammar - "نحو", the science dedicated to nouns, and "صرف", the one dedicated to verbs. Our journey with صرف started when we began attending the "Understanding Quran courses" organized by Al-Falah Manzil in Islamabad. I and my sister would be the only kids there in a big class of adults, but that didn't faze us at all because we were so captivated by learning Arabic already, and Al-Falah's signature "TPI" (Total Physical Interaction) method had us breezing through Arabic grammar and verb forms in no time. We covered the first stage of the course as a family twice, which strengthened our understanding of verb forms (صرف) even more, before doing the second stage in a couple of years' time. At this point, we were able to understand around 80% of Quranic text directly, and identifying vocabulary and verb forms while reciting the Quran was an amazing experience. We would pick out familiar-looking verbs from our daily reading of the Quran and go through the verb exercises (گردان) for the root word, to apply and retain what we learnt.

Having familiarized with the basics of صرف, we soon started نحو with another Ustaadh, who went through the classical book "الأجرومية" with us. We also memorized some parts of the poetized version of the book, and that of تحفة الأطفال and الأصول الثلاثة, which is the traditional Arab way of learning a

science. In addition, we started going through Arabic Tafaseer, such as Tafseer as-Sa'di and Tafseer Al-Waseet, which was an eye-opening experience, Alhamdulillah; reading Tafseer in Arabic helps you achieve a completely fresh and up-close relationship of the Quran. The experience with this Ustaadh was a serious one, and majorly that of finally using Arabic as a medium to learn Islamic sciences; he taught us the subjects of Tafseer, Aqeedah and Tajweed in the classic, traditional ways - of course, completely in Arabic. In addition, we embarked upon our Hifdh journeys at around this time as well. Having the understanding of Arabic and its grammar helped us immensely and made it incredibly easy to memorize as well as connect with the Quran, Alhamdulillah.

My parents made learning Arabic a collective journey for the whole family, so even though they didn't know the language, they kept learning along with us. To reinforce what we learnt, we would play games in Arabic, or specify times in which we would speak only in Arabic (e.g. on road trips or drives). If we got stuck with vocabulary, we would use online resources or note words down to ask our teachers later. We would also get storybooks - and picture books for my younger sister - from Arab countries whenever we could (such as Kalimaat Group's books), and read them again and again, from stories of Palestine to stories about animals. One of our

favorite shows to watch was Arabian Sindbad, which was structured in such a way that we easily understood plots and dialogues without subtitles. We would listen to Arabic nasheeds on repeat and bond over singing them together, as well as watching Arabic documentaries as a family. Now it's amusing to think of our excitement to go and converse with strangers in Masjid al-Haram using whatever little we knew of Arabic! It was a very special part of our Umrah trips, to be able to connect with people using our newfound skills. My parents had a hard time though facilitating our global friendships with their newly acquired shaky Arabic 😊

Teaching is the key to mastery when it comes to language, so we started teaching Arabic to kids around us in our early teens. My sister and I conducted on-site and online courses for kids, going through the same courses that we had studied ourselves, and attempting to give the same experience as our teachers had given us. This was definitely one of the most beneficial experiences for me that boosted my own understanding, confidence, and fluency a great deal.

When I was in my tweens, I free-styled a handmade 4-part workbook series with comic-style illustrations, "العربية للأطفال" Al Arabiyyatu lil-Atfal", for my little sister. I ended up selling photocopies of the series to her friends and more kids in the homeschooling community on demand. Eventually, I re-made the series with a

few adjustments to the course as well as design, and made an accompanying set of readers, stickers, and magnets as well. Although I still sell photocopies of these resources, I'm currently looking for someone who can facilitate in getting this much-loved content properly published, in sha Allah! (If you think you can be of help in this regard, please drop me an email 😊)

In the recent couple of years, I conducted two runs of conversational Arabic classes for teenagers and adults using a combination of the Al-Arabiyyatu-lil Nashieen course, TPI methods, and some of my self-made resources; Alhamdulillah, I learnt a lot from the experience myself, and was able to help my students achieve basic fluency and a solid base for learning Arabic further.

After learning Fusha (classical) Arabic for all these years, I've started dabbling in other Aamiyyah dialects as well. I managed to give myself a basic understanding of the Lebanese dialect through social media, especially during the worldwide surge in Palestinian activism in 2021, by going through Arab creators' posts and content. I'm grateful for this journey that made me passionate about this beautiful language and I'm looking forward to many more years of learning it and passing it on to others, in sha Allah!

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رحلة مع العربية

اللغة العربية لغة واسعة و عظيمة، وهي تؤدي دور مفتاح الكنوز في العلوم الإسلامية. ولهذا تحاول كثير من الأسر المسلمة الأعجمية أن يعلموا أولادهم هذه اللغة؛ وخاصة الذين يدرسون الأولاد في البيت. ويمكن أن يكون تعلم العربية رحلة ممتعة للعائلة كلها إذا عُلِّمت بالجدد و الحب.

أما أنا، فبدأت تعلم اللغة العربية من صغري، عندما كان عمري ٧ سنوات تقريبا. كنا ندرس في محاضرات مع أستاذنا الذي ملأنا بحب اللغة العربية، ليس فقط بالكتب، بل بالألعاب و القصص و الأناشيد و النكات أيضا. لم نحس قط أننا مجبرون على تعلم هذه اللغة؛ بل بدأنا بشوق أكبر بتعلم العربية، لاننا رأينا أستاذنا كصديق مخلص، وليس فقط كأستاذ.

عائلتنا جميعهم تعلموا الصرف بطريقة "TPI"، و استمتعنا كثيرا بهذه السلسلة رغم أننا و أختي) كنا الطفلتين الوحيدتين في فصل مليء بالبالغين. بدأنا نفهم القرآن الكريم عند التلاوة و الحمد لله. تعلمنا النحو من أستاذ آخر؛ درسنا معه "الاجرومية" و حفظنا بعض من "التحفة الأطفال" و "نظم الآجرومية"، و بدأنا حفظ القرآن أيضا. كلما تعلمنا من العربية و نحوها و الصرفها ساعدنا كثيرا في الحفظ و فهم القرآن و سهل لنا هذه الرحلة، و هذه الرحلة تعلم اللغة العربية فتح لنا أبواب العلم مثل التجويد و التفسير و العقيدة و الحمد لله.

و في بيتنا، هيئى والداي بيئة تؤيد تعلم اللغة العربية و التحدث بها؛ وهما خصصا لنا وقت من الزمن لتحدث بالعربية مثلا في السيارة أو أثناء السفر، وأيضا خصصا لنا وقت لقراءة الكتب العربية، و السماع الأناشيد العربية و المشاهدة الكرتون بالعربية. عندما كنا نذهب للعمرة في صغرننا، كنا نستمتع بالكلام مع النساء و الأطفال في المسجد الحرام الذين يتحدثون بالعربية.

الحمد لله، عربيتي الآن تحسنت، وأستطيع أن أدرس الأطفال و الكبار على الإنترنت. أحاول أن أدرس بنفس الشوق و الشغف الذي درسنا بها مع أستاذنا. قمت بإجراء دورتين من المحاضرات للمبتدئين، و بعد أن أكملت هذه المحاضرات، كان الطلاب مطمئنين بمستوى الطلاقة و الفهم الذي حصلوا عليها من المحاضرات. أرجو أن أدرس و أدرس العربية و أستمر في هذه الرحلة في السنوات القادمة إن شاء الله!

Resource list

Courses:

- [Understanding Quran courses](#) by AlFalah Manzil (across major cities in Pakistan + online)
facebook.com/alfalahmanzil
These courses use TPI (total physical interaction) method to teach Arabic grammar and verb forms, which will have you understanding 60-70% of Quranic Arabic directly in no time!
- [Arabic 360 course](#) by Arabic for Ummah (online)
arabicforummah.com/courses/arabic-360
An excellent well-rounded course for beginners that covers conversational skills, reading, writing, and understanding Arabic in a unique and thorough way.
- [QUL Arabic courses](#)
facebook.com/QulArabic
Run by a homeschooling family, these courses use the Arabiyyatu Bayn Yadaik books, are structured into multiple levels, and facilitate learning together as a family.

Curriculum:

- Al Arabiyyah bayn yadaik العربية بين يديك
- Al Arabiyyatu lin-nashieen العربية للناشئين
- Madinah Arabic reader

Dictionary resources:

- Almaany.com and livingarabic.com
Helpful for looking up root letters and finding relevant words

Especially for children:

- [Kalimat group](#) children's picture books (kalimatgroup.ae/en/children.html)
- [Arabian Sindbad](#) cartoon series (arabiansindbad.com) [has music]
- [Alef Ba Ta](#): games, exercises, and interactive lessons (www.alefbata.com)
- [Asafeer](#): games, interactive lessons and videos (3asafeer.com)
- [Learn with Zakariya](#) YouTube Channel (bit.ly/3r6J3rF)
- Arabic Nasheeds with English subtitles (e.g. from the Merciful Servant YouTube channel)