

Syrian Arabic grammatical summary

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This grammar is under construction. The following topics are planned to be added:

- syllable structure
- exclamations(?)
- imperative
- dual
- gender
- adverbs
- the possessive exponent
- participles
- verbal noun

1 Introduction

This is a short pedagogical summary of the variety of Arabic spoken in the Damascus area in Syria. It is intended to be used for quick reference and overview for beginner to intermediate language learners. It is partially based on *A Reference Grammar of Syrian Arabic* (Cowell 2005 [1964], Georgetown University Press) and *Arabisch-syrische grammatik* (Grotzfeld 1965, Harrasowitz), to which the reader is referred for detailed and comprehensive grammatical descriptions.

This grammar uses a simplified transcription (see Phonology) adapted from *Alif Baa* (Brustad et al., Georgetown University Press, 2010). Words and examples are presented in transcription, translation, and, space permitting, also in Arabic script.¹ The Arabic script represents written vernacular as used in text messaging, advertisement, etc. There is considerable variation in vernacular Arabic orthography, especially in the extent to which Standard Arabic spelling is followed, and forms that differ from those presented here are therefore common.

For corrections or suggestions on improvements, please contact the author at andreas.hallberg@sprak.gu.se.

2 Phonology

Many of the IPA symbols in square brackets are hyper-linked to sound samples on Wikimedia. Click on them to hear an example of the pronunciation.

2.1 Consonants

Compared to Standard Arabic, several consonants are missing in Syrian Arabic, namely the dentals *th* ث, *dh* ذ, and *DH* ط; as well as *q* ق. Furthermore, *j* ج is in Syrian Arabic pronounced [ʒ], as opposed to the Standard Arabic affricate [tʃ].

¹For an overview of the Arabic script, see *The Arabic Writing System* (available for download at <http://andreamhallberg.github.io/documents/>).

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar/Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Fricative						
– voiced			<i>j</i>	<i>gh</i>	‘	
– voiceless	<i>f</i>			<i>kh</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>h</i>
Plosive						
– voiced	<i>b</i>	<i>d, D</i>				
– voiceless		<i>t, T</i>	<i>k</i>			’
Lateral		<i>l</i>				
Trill		<i>r</i>				
Nasal	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>				
Sibilant						
– voiced		<i>z</i>				
– voiceless		<i>s, S</i>				
Semi-vowel	<i>w</i>		<i>y</i>			

The following consonants are used only in a few words:

- emphatic *m* (*maamaa* ‘mum’)
- emphatic *b* (*baaba* ‘dad’)
- emphatic *l* (*alla* ‘God’)
- *g* (*ergiile* ‘water pipe’)

The emphasis distinction in *m*, *b*, and *l* is not reflected in the transcription employed here.

2.1.1 Pointers on pronunciation

<i>r</i>	ر	[r]	Rolled <i>r</i> , as in Spanish. Pronounced emphatically [r ^s] when adjacent to <i>a</i> or another emphatic consonant (<i>mara</i> ‘wife,’ <i>rSaas</i> ‘led’).
<i>j</i>	ج	[ʒ]	As in French <i>journal</i> .
<i>H</i>	ح	[ħ]	Hissing <i>h</i> formed by tensioning the throat.
<i>kh</i>	خ	[x]/[χ]	As the German <i>ach</i> or (Castilian) Spanish <i>jota</i> .
<i>gh</i>	غ	[ɣ]/[ʁ]	As the French or German throaty <i>r</i> .
‘	ع	[ʕ]	Produced by using swolloing muscles to restrict the air flow. It is one of the most difficult sounds for language learners to produce. Learners often wrongly percieved as a vowel <i>a</i> .
’	ء	[ʔ]	A stop and quick release of the air pressure by the vocal-cords, as the <i>t</i> in colloquial British <i>better</i> .
<i>S</i>	ص	[s ^s]	Emphatic <i>s</i> .
<i>D</i>	ض	[d ^s]	Emphatic <i>d</i> .
<i>T</i>	ط	[t ^s]	Emphatic <i>t</i> .

2.1.2 Emphatic consonants

Emphatic consonants (technically “pharyngealized”) are pronounced as their non-emphatic equivalents but with the back of the tongue raised, giving a darker, thicker sound. This affects the quality of surrounding vowels, most clearly heard in *aa* [æː] (as English *bad*) becoming a backed [ɑː] (as in English

far).

2.1.3 Consonant length

All consonants have a short and a long variant. The long variant is transcribed as a doubled letter. Consonant length is a central part of Arabic phonology, often changing the meaning of a word (*daras* ‘he studied’ vs. *darras* ‘he taught,’ *Hakat* ‘she talked’ vs. *Hakkat* ‘she scratched’).

For plosives (*ʔ, b, d, D, t, T, k*) the long variant is produced by briefly holding the air pressure before releasing it and producing the sound.

Consonant length is not indicated in the Arabic script. Only very rarely is it marked with the diacritic ّ (*shadda*).

2.2 Vowels

Short		Long		
<i>i</i>	[i]	<i>ii</i>	[i:]	ي
<i>e</i>	[e]/[ə]	<i>ee</i>	[e:]	ي
<i>u</i>	[u]	<i>uu</i>	[u:]	و
<i>o</i>	[o]	<i>oo</i>	[o:]	و
<i>a</i>	[a]/[ɑ]	<i>aa</i>	[æ:]/[ɑ:]	ا

Note:

- The Arabic letters only represent long vowels. Short vowels are not indicated.
- *i* and *u* occur primarily in word final position as part of inflections (*beet-i* ‘my house,’ *bye‘mel-u* ‘they do’).
- The vowel here transcribes as *e* is pronounced
 - [ə] *schwa* (as in English *the*) before or at word stress
 - [e] (as in English *when*) after word stress
- Short and long *a* is pronounced backed [ɑ] when adjacent to an emphatic consonant.
- There are no diphthongs in Syrian Arabic. The Standard Arabic diphthongs *ay* and *aw* correspond in Syrian Arabic to the long vowels *ee* and *oo* respectively.

2.3 Word stress

Word stress in Syrian Arabic is largely predictable and corresponds with the rules of word stress in Standard Arabic. Word stress occurs on

- the last
 - long vowel followed by consonant (*darasúuna*)
 - short vowel followed by two consonants or a long consonant (*darásna, byedárres*)
- or else on the first vowel (*dárasu*), excluding any prefix.

2.4 Standard to Syrian Arabic phonological conversion rules

<i>aw</i>	→	<i>oo</i>	<i>yawm</i>	→	<i>yoom</i>	day	يوم
<i>ay</i>	→	<i>ee</i>	<i>bayn</i>	→	<i>been</i>	between	بين
<i>q</i>	→	ʾ	<i>daqiiqa</i>	→	<i>daʾiiʾa</i>	minute	دقيقة
<i>DH</i>	→	<i>D</i>	<i>DHuhr</i>	→	<i>Duhr</i>	noon	ظهر
ʾ	→	∅	<i>masaaʾ</i>	→	<i>masa</i>	eavening	مساء
<i>th</i>	→	<i>t</i>	<i>thalaatha</i>	→	<i>tlaate</i>	three	ثلاثة
		(s)	<i>mathalan</i>	→	<i>masalan</i>	for example	مثلا
<i>dh</i>	→	<i>d</i>	<i>dhahab</i>	→	<i>dahab</i>	gold	ذهب
		(z)	<i>idha</i>	→	<i>iza</i>	if	إذا

Loans from Standard Arabic, including foreign Arabic place names, often retain the Standard Arabic pronunciation. In such words, *th* and *dh* are pronounced *s* and *z* respectively. Some examples are:

Syrian Arabic	Standard Arabic		
<i>saqaafe</i>	<i>thaqaafa</i>	culture	ثقافة
<i>ustaaz</i>	<i>ustaadh</i>	teacher	أستاذ
<i>demuqraaTiyye</i>	<i>dimuqraaTiyya</i>	democracy	ديمقراطية
<i>el-qurʾaan</i>	<i>al-qurʾaan</i>	the Quran	القرآن
<i>el-qaahira</i>	<i>al-qaahira</i>	Cairo	القاهرة

3 Pronouns

3.1 Personal pronouns

	Independent	Attached		متصل	منفصل
I	<i>ana</i>	<i>-i</i>	(<i>-ya</i>)	حي	أنا
you (m.s.)	<i>enta</i>	<i>-ak</i>	(<i>-k</i>)	ك	أنت
you (f.s.)	<i>enti</i>	<i>-ik</i>	(<i>-ki</i>)	(مكي) ك	أنتي
he	<i>huwwe</i>	<i>-o</i>	(<i>-h</i>)	(ه) و	هو
she	<i>hiyye</i>	<i>-a</i>	(<i>-ha</i>)	ها	هي
we	<i>neHna</i>	<i>-na</i>		نا	نحننا
you (pl.)	<i>intu</i>	<i>-kon</i>		كن	أنتو
they	<i>honnen</i>	<i>-on</i>	(<i>-hon</i>)	(هن) ن	هنن

Forms in parenthesis are used with words with final vowel: *aʿTaa-ki* ‘he gave you (f.)’

Attached pronouns are used for:

possession	<i>ktaab-o</i>	his book	كتابو
prepositional complements	<i>ma^c-o</i>	with-him	معو
direct objects	<i>katabt-o</i>	I wrote it	كتبتو
indirect objects	<i>katabt-l-o</i>	I wrote for him	كتبتلو

The connective *-l-* ‘for’ for indirect objects may take the form *-el-* to prevent consonant clusters: *katabt-el-kon* ‘I wrote for you (pl.)’. A direct object may then be added with the word *yaa-*: *katabt-l-ak yaa-ha* ‘I wrote it (fem.) for you.’

3.2 Demonstrative pronouns

	Close	Distant	بعيد	قريب
m.s.	<i>haada</i>	<i>hadaak(e)</i>	هداك	هادا
f.s	<i>haay</i>	<i>hadiik(e)</i>	هديك	هاي
pl.	<i>hadool(e)</i>	<i>haadooliik</i>	هدوليك	هدول

Note:

- Several forms have a stylistic variant with final *e*.
- *haada* has a shortened form, *haad*, used only at the end of phrases: *shuu haad?* ‘What is this?’
- The distant plural pronoun has several variants not listed above, including *hadook*, *hadenk*, and *hadenken*.

3.3 Indefinite pronouns

<i>Hada</i>	someone	حدا
<i>shi</i>	something	شي

4 Nouns

Nouns are inflected for number and definiteness, and most animate nouns (referring to humans or animals) are also inflected for gender.

4.1 Plural

There are four ways to form plural: *irregular*, *regular masculine*, *regular feminine*, and *general human*:

		Singular	Plural		جمع	مفرد
Irrregula		<i>beet</i>	<i>buyuut</i>	house	بيوت	بيت
Regular masculine	<i>-iin</i>	<i>muslem</i>	<i>muslemiin</i>	muslim	مسلمين	مسلم
Regular feminine	<i>-aat</i>	<i>sheghle</i>	<i>sheghlaat</i>	thing	شغلات	شغلة
General human	<i>-(iyy)e</i>	<i>‘eraaqi</i>	<i>‘eraaqiyye</i>	Iraqi	عراقية	عراقي

5 Prepositions

<i>‘a-</i>	to	ع
<i>‘ala/‘alee-</i>	on	على/عليه
<i>‘and</i>	with, at	عند
<i>been</i>	between	بين
<i>been/beenaat-</i>	among	بين/بينات
<i>bi-/fi-</i>	in, at	ب/فيه
<i>men</i>	from	من
<i>Hadd</i>	next to	حد
<i>foo’</i>	above	فوق
<i>taHt</i>	below	تحت
<i>ma’</i>	with	مع
<i>wara</i>	behind	ورا
<i>‘uddaam</i>	in front of	قدام
<i>la-/el-</i>	for (ownership)	ل/ال

For the prepositions with two alternate forms, the first is used with nouns and the second with pronouns:

<i>bi-l-beet</i>	in the house	بالببيت
<i>fii-h</i>	in it	فيه

6 Verbs

6.1 Inflection

	Non-past	Past	المضارع	الماضي
I	<i>e-ktob</i>	<i>katab-t</i>	اكتب	كتب
you (ms.)	<i>t(e)-ktob</i>	<i>katab-t</i>	تكتب	كتب
you (fs.)	<i>t(e)-ktob-i</i>	<i>katab-ti</i>	تكتبي	كتبت
he	<i>ye-ktob</i>	<i>katab</i>	يكتب	كتب
she	<i>t(e)-ktob</i>	<i>katab-et</i>	تكتب	كتبت
we	<i>n(e)-ktob</i>	<i>katab-na</i>	نكتب	كتبنا
you (pl.)	<i>t(e)-ktob-u</i>	<i>katab-tu</i>	تكتبو	كتبتم
they	<i>ye-ktob-u</i>	<i>katab-u</i>	يكتبو	كتبو

The pronoun is often omitted. The *e* in parenthesis is omitted on stems beginning with a single consonant *t-shuuf-i* ‘you (fs.) see.’

The non-past verb form is preceded by one of the following:

<i>b-</i>	habitual, generalities	ب
<i>‘am</i>	ongoing (progressive)	عم
<i>Ha-/raH</i>	future	ح/رح
<i>laazim</i>	‘have to’	لازم
auxiliary verb		

Note:

- For 1s, the initial letter *alif* | is normally omitted when preceded by *b*: *bektob* بكتب.
- For 1pl. the *b-* prefix is partially assimilated and pronounced as *m*: *mniktib*. This is often reflected in orthography: منكتب.
- Some speakers combine *b-* and *‘am*: *‘am b-yektob*.

6.1.1 Hollow verbs

Hollow verbs have a long vowel in the middle of the stem. They are of three types, each with different middle vowel in non-past tense: 1) *uu*, 2) *ii*, and 3) *aa*. The inflection of the three types does not differ in past tense, where the middle long vowel is invariably *aa*, reduced to *e* in past tense in forms with consonantal suffixes (1s, 2ms, 2mf, 1pl, and 2pl).

1. Middle *uu* (*raaH* ‘went’):

	Non-Past	Past	المضارع	الماضي
I	<i>e-ruuH</i>	<i>reH-t</i>	اروح	رحت
you (ms.)	<i>t-ruuH</i>	<i>reH-t</i>	تروح	رحت
you (fs.)	<i>t-ruuH-i</i>	<i>reH-ti</i>	تروحي	رحتي
he	<i>ye-ruuH</i>	<i>raaH</i>	يروح	راح
she	<i>t-ruuH</i>	<i>raaH-et</i>	تروح	راحت
we	<i>n-ruuH</i>	<i>reH-na</i>	نروح	رحنا
you (pl.)	<i>t-ruuH-u</i>	<i>reH-tu</i>	تروحو	رحتو
they	<i>ye-ruuH-u</i>	<i>raaH-u</i>	يروحو	راحو

Some other frequent verbs of this type are *kaan* ‘was,’ *’aal* ‘said,’ *raaH* ‘went,’ *shaaf* ‘saw’/‘met,’ *’aam* ‘stood up,’ and *maat* ‘died.’

2. Middle *ii* (*Saar* ‘became’):

	Non-Past	Past	المضارع	الماضي
I	<i>e-Siir</i>	<i>Sert</i>	اصير	صرت
you (ms.)	<i>t-Siir</i>	<i>Sert</i>	تصير	صرت
you (fs.)	<i>t-Siir-i</i>	<i>Sert-i</i>	تصيري	صرتي
he	<i>ye-Siir</i>	<i>Saar</i>	يصير	صار
she	<i>t-Siir</i>	<i>Saar-et</i>	تصير	صارت
we	<i>n-Siir</i>	<i>Ser-na</i>	نصير	صرنا
you (pl.)	<i>t-Siir-u</i>	<i>Ser-tu</i>	تصيرو	صرتو
they	<i>ye-Siir-u</i>	<i>Saar-u</i>	يصيرو	صارو

Some other frequent verbs of this type are *’aash* ‘lived,’ *jaab* ‘fetched,’ *baa* ‘sold,’ and *daar* ‘turned.’

3. Middle *aa* (*naam* ‘slept’):

	Non-Past	Past	المضارع	الماضي
I	<i>e-naam</i>	<i>nem-t</i>	انام	نمت
you (ms.)	<i>t-naam</i>	<i>nem-t</i>	تنام	نمت
you (fs.)	<i>t-naam-i</i>	<i>nemt-i</i>	تنامي	نمتي
he	<i>ye-naam</i>	<i>naam</i>	ينام	نام
she	<i>t-naam</i>	<i>naam-et</i>	تنام	نامت
we	<i>n-naam</i>	<i>nem-na</i>	ننام	نامنا
you (pl.)	<i>t-naam-u</i>	<i>nem-tu</i>	تنامو	نمتو
they	<i>ye-naam-u</i>	<i>naam-u</i>	ينامو	نامو

Some other frequent verbs of this type are *khaaf* ‘was frightened’ and *ghaar* ‘was jealous.’

6.1.2 Doubled verbs

Doubled verbs have a stem ending in a lengthened (doubled) consonant. In past tense forms with consonantal suffixes, *ee* is added.

Hass ‘felt’:

	Non-Past	Past	المضارع	الماضي
I	<i>e-Hess</i>	<i>Hassee-t</i>	احس	حسيت
you (ms.)	<i>t-Hess</i>	<i>Hassee-t</i>	تحسي	حسيت
you (fs.)	<i>t-Hess-i</i>	<i>Hassee-ti</i>	تحس	حسيتي
he	<i>y-Hess</i>	<i>Hass</i>	يחס	حس
she	<i>t-Hess</i>	<i>Hass-et</i>	تحس	حست
we	<i>n-Hess</i>	<i>Hassee-na</i>	نחס	حسينا
you (pl.)	<i>t-Hess-u</i>	<i>Hassee-tu</i>	تحسو	حسيتو
they	<i>ye-Hess-u</i>	<i>Hass-u</i>	يחסو	حسو

Some other frequent verbs of this type are *radd* ‘answered’ and *Dall* ‘remained.’

6.2 Auxiliary verbs

The main verb may be preceded by an auxiliary verb. Both the auxiliary and the main verb are inflected for person:

<i>beddo yektob</i>	‘he wants to write’	بدو يكتب
<i>byeHebb yektob</i>	‘he likes to write’	بيحب يكتب
<i>kaan yektob</i>	‘he was writing’	كان يكتب
<i>Saar yektob</i>	‘he began to write’	صار يكتب

6.3 *kaan* ‘was’

The verb *kaan* ‘was’ is used

1. to make a verb-less clause past or future tense:

<i>aHmad kaan Taaleb</i>	Ahmad was a student
<i>aHmad Ha-yekuun Taaleb</i>	Ahmad will be a student

2. to express a past ongoing (progressive) event:

<i>aHmad kaan (‘am) yedros</i>	Ahmed was studying
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It is a hollow verb with middle *uu* in non-past tense:

	Non-past	Past	المضارع	الماضي
I	<i>e-kuun</i>	<i>ken-t</i>	اكون	كنت
you (ms.)	<i>t-kuun</i>	<i>ken-t</i>	تكون	كنت
you (fs.)	<i>t-kuun-i</i>	<i>ken-t-i</i>	تكوني	كنتي
he	<i>ye-kuun</i>	<i>kaan</i>	يكون	كان
she	<i>t-kuun</i>	<i>kaan-et</i>	تكون	كانت
we	<i>n-kuun</i>	<i>ken-na</i>	نكون	كنا
you (pl.)	<i>t-kuun-u</i>	<i>ken-tu</i>	تكونو	كنتو
they	<i>ye-kuun-u</i>	<i>kaan-u</i>	يكونو	كانو

6.4 Pseudo-verbs

<i>bedd-</i>	want	بد
<i>‘and-</i>	has	عند
<i>fii</i>	there is	في

The pseudo-verbs are negated as verbs with *maa* (see Negation) but do not follow verbal person and tense inflection. *bedd-* and *‘and-* are inflected for person with attached pronouns, like nouns, while *fii* is not inflected:

<i>bedd-a ktaab</i>	she wants a book [her wish is a book]	بدها كتاب
<i>‘and-a ktaab</i>	she has a book [with her is a book]	عندها كتاب
<i>fii ktaab</i>	there is a book	في كتاب

Pseudo-verbs are inflected for tense with an auxiliary *kaan*:

<i>kaan ‘and-a ktaab</i>	She had a book.	كان عندها كتاب
<i>Ha-yekuun ‘and-a ktaab</i>	She will have a book.	حيكون عندها كتاب

7 Question words

<i>shuu</i>	what	شو
<i>miin</i>	who	ميين
<i>eemta</i>	when	ايمتى
<i>kiif/shloon</i>	how	كيف/شلون
<i>ween</i>	where	وين
<i>minnen</i>	from where	منين
<i>laween</i>	whereto	لوين
<i>leesh</i>	why	ليش
<i>addeesh</i>	how much	قديش
<i>kam</i>	how many	كم
<i>ayyi/anu</i>	which	اي/انو

Question words are normally clause-initial, and may be preceded by a preposition:

ma' miin 'am teHki? 'Who are you talking to?' مع مين عم تحكي؟

Ween and *kiif* take attached pronouns:

<i>ween-ak?</i>	Where are you?	ويناك؟
<i>kiif-ak?</i>	How are you?	كيفاك؟

Yes/no-question are formed with rising intonation.

8 Negation

<i>maa</i>	ما	verbs
<i>muu</i>	مو	non-verbal clauses
<i>laa</i>	لا	imperative

For declarative clauses, in effect, *muu* is only used to negate a verbless clauses in present tense, otherwise the *maa* is used:

	Verbal clause	Verbless (“is”) clause
Past	Ahmed is studying. <i>aHmad maa daras</i> أحمد ما درس	Ahmed is a student. <i>aHmad maa kaan Taaleb</i> أحمد ما كان طالب
Present	<i>aHmad maa byedrus</i> أحمد ما بيدرس	<i>aHmad muu Taaleb</i> أحمد مو طالب
Future	<i>aHmad maa Ha-/raH yedrus</i> أحمد ما ح/رح يدرس	<i>aHmad maa Ha-/raH yekuun Taaleb</i> أحمد ما ح/رح يكيين طالب

8.1 *maa-n-*

maa- followed by a connecting *-n-* and an attached pronoun (*maan-i*, *maan-ak*, *maan-ik*, etc.) may be used to reply in the negative to a statement, question, or implication. For example,

maa-n-i ju'aan I am not hungry ماني جوعان

can be used to answer someone saying that you are hungry, asking whether you are hungry, or urging you to eat.

9 Numerals 1–100

	Independent	Counting	مضاف	غير مضاف
1	<i>waaHed</i> (m.)/ <i>waHde</i> (f.)			واحد/وحدة
2	<i>etneen</i> (m.)/ <i>tenteen</i> (f.)			اثنين/تنتين
3	<i>tlaate</i>	<i>tlatt</i>	ثلاث	ثلاثة
4	<i>arba'a</i>	<i>arba'</i>	أربع	أربعة
5	<i>khamse</i>	<i>khams</i>	خمسة	خمسة
6	<i>sette</i>	<i>sett</i>	ست	ستة
7	<i>sab'a</i>	<i>sab'</i>	سبع	سبعة
8	<i>tmaane</i>	<i>tman</i>	ثمان	ثمانة
9	<i>tes'a</i>	<i>tes'</i>	تسع	تسعة
10	<i>'ashara</i>	<i>'ashar</i>	عشر	عشرة
11	<i>edda'sh</i>	<i>edda'shar</i>	ادعشر	ادعش
12	<i>eTna'sh</i>	<i>eTna'shar</i>	اطنعشر	اطنعش
13	<i>tlaTa'sh</i>	<i>tlaTa'shar</i>	تلاطعشر	تلاطعش
14	<i>arba'Ta'sh</i>	<i>arba'Ta'shar</i>	اربعةعشر	اربعةعش
15	<i>khamasTa'sh</i>	<i>khamsTa'shar</i>	خمسةعشر	خمسةعش
16	<i>seTTa'sh</i>	<i>seTTa'shar</i>	سبعةعشر	سبعةعش
17	<i>sab'aTa'sh</i>	<i>sab'aTa'shar</i>	سبعةعشر	سبعةعش
18	<i>tmanTa'sh</i>	<i>tmanTa'shar</i>	ثمانعشر	ثمانعش
19	<i>tes'aTa'sh</i>	<i>tes'aTa'shar</i>	تسعةعشر	تسعةعش
20	<i>'eshriin</i>			عشرين
30	<i>tlaatiin</i>			ثلاثين
40	<i>arba'iin</i>			اربعين
50	<i>khamsiin</i>			خمسين
60	<i>settiin</i>			ستين
70	<i>sab'iin</i>			سبعين
80	<i>tmaaniin</i>			ثمانين
90	<i>tes'iin</i>			تسعين
100	<i>miyye</i>	<i>miit</i>		مئة

The independent form of the numeral is used when it stands by itself and is not followed by a noun. The counting form is when the numeral is followed by counted a noun: *tlaate* 'three,' but *tlatt ewlaad* 'three boys.'

Note:

- 1–2 are used only for emphasis or contrast, or when ordering in restaurants and the like (*etneen shaay* 'two tea'). Otherwise, the lone noun in singular or dual is used (*ктааб* '[a/one] book'; *كتابين* 'two books'). 1 and 2 are the only numerals that inflect for gender.
- 3–10 have a special form with a final *-t* when used with one of three following nouns:

<i>eyyaam</i>	days	(<i>khamst eyyam</i> five days)
<i>eshhur</i>	months	(<i>khamst eshur</i> ‘five months’)
<i>aalaaf</i>	thousands	(‘ <i>ashart aalaaf</i> ‘ten thousand’)

- For 3–10, the counted noun is in the plural: *tlatt kutub* ‘three books,’ and for numerals above 10, it is in the singular: *idda‘ashar ktaab* ‘eleven book[s].’
- 11–19 are constructed from the counting form of the unit number and the ending *-Ta‘sh*, with irregularities in 11, 12, and 15.
- Decades (20, 30, etc.) are constructed from the counting form of the unit number and the ending *-iin*, with only 20 having an irregular form. In complex numbers, the unit in independent form appears before the decades with the two parts connected with *u-* ‘and’: *sab‘a u-tlaatiin*, ‘thirty-six.’
- For numbers above one hundred there is no counting form for 100: *miyye u-tlaate kelime* ‘103 words.’