

Basic Arabic Expressions & Words: Syrian Dialect

Introduction

Modern Arabic falls into two distinct parts: the formal, written language which is shared throughout the Arab world, and the colloquial dialects, which are restricted to a particular country or region. The former is known as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA or *fuṣḥa*), the latter is known as the *Colloquials* (*‘āmiyya*). MSA is used in modern literature, the press, radio and television, and in formal occasions, conferences, speeches and so on. The Colloquials are used in everyday life: at work, at home, with friends, in songs, plays, movies and soap operas. This resource provides basic Arabic expressions in Levant (*Shamī*) dialect which is the colloquial spoken in Syria and Lebanon.

This resource includes the phrases in English and Arabic along with the relevant transliteration (phonetic spelling) and the [audio](#). For those who prefer the visual way of learning, the resource provides universal phonetic symbols (transliteration) of the words and expressions in this resource to make the reading easy and accurate. When they are learning the words and expressions, it is highly recommended that they depend on the Alphabet Index in the end of this document as it gives them rough ideas about the phonetic symbols and sounds of Arabic letters, and they can use it as reference whenever they want to double check the articulation of a word.

For those who would prefer to depend on their auditory skill, the [audio files](#) are made into separate files and one whole file to make it easier to use on the phone or computer. These files can be downloaded from Reset's training website. The users can easily



listen to the words and expressions and their English equivalents when they are driving, working out or before bedtime, which offers them the opportunity to listen and learn at their convenience. For the best results, the audio files were recorded by a native speaker of the Syrian dialect.

As gender is an important aspect of Arabic grammar, the only grammatical aspect indicated in this resource is gender. Therefore, a few footnotes were added to clarify why some suffixes and sounds are required.

The best way to optimally benefit from this resource we recommend the following:

- Read the table of the Alphabet paying attention to the phonetic symbols and listening to the sounds.
- Listen to the audio tracks while focusing on the Arabic written form and its relevant phonetic spelling.
- Cover the English equivalents and try memorising the meaning of each set.
- Rehearsals and repetition are very helpful.

Arabic has some sounds that can be challenging to some non-native speakers. But this will not block communication. Syrians do not feel upset nor offended when they hear a non-native speaker make mistakes in Arabic. On the contrary, this encourages them to communicate further and try to listen more to what the speaker is trying to say. So have fun practicing and saying these words and phrases rather than being concerned about sounding like a native speaker.



Introduction

English	Arabic	Phonetic spelling	Audio track no.
Hello	مرحبا	<i>marħaba</i>	track_1
Good morning	صباح الخير	<i>šabaħil khair</i>	track_2
Good afternoon/ Good evening	مساء الخير	<i>masal khair</i>	track_3
Good night	تصبح على خير	<i>tešbaħ/~i¹ ‘ala khair</i>	track_4
Welcome to the UK.	أهلا وسهلا فيك/فيكي	<i>ahla w sahla fiik/~i bibritania</i>	track_5
How are you?	كيفك؟	<i>kifak? (m.)² kifek? (f.)³</i>	track_6
I'm fine	أنا منيح/ة	<i>ana mniih/~a⁴</i>	track_7
Thank you	شكرا	<i>shukran</i>	track_8
Please	إذا بتريد/ بتريدي	<i>iza bitriid/~i</i>	track_9
Goodbye	مع السلامة	<i>ma‘ esalamé</i>	track_10

1 ~i is added to verbs when talking to a female person.

2 (m.) is for masculine.

3 (f.) is for feminine.

4 ~a is a sign of a female speaker.

What's your name?	شو إسمك؟	<i>shu ismak (m.) ...?</i> <i>shu ismek(f.) ...?</i>	track_11
My name is...	اسمي...	<i>ismi</i>	track_12
Do you want...?	بدك...؟	<i>biddak (m.) ...?</i> <i>biddik(f.) ...?</i>	track_13
Do you want anything?	بدك شي؟	<i>biddak (m.) shi?</i> <i>biddik (f.) shi?</i>	track_14
Do you need anything?	لازمك شي؟	<i>lāzma shi? (m.)</i> <i>lāzmik shi? (f.)</i>	track_15
Do you need help?	لازمك مساعدة؟	<i>lāzma (m.) musa'adé?</i> <i>lāzmik (f.) musa'adé?</i>	track_16
Let's go	ياالله نروح	<i>yallah nrūh</i>	track_17
Maybe	ممکن يتمكن إن شاء الله	<i>mumkin</i> <i>yemkin</i> <i>inshallah</i>	track_18
Yes	أيه	<i>eh</i>	track_19
No	لا	<i>la'</i>	track_20
Not possible	مو ممکن	<i>mū mumkin</i>	track_21
It is ok	معلیش	<i>ma' laish</i>	track_22
It is allowed	مسموح	<i>masmūh</i>	track_23
It is not allowed	ممنوع	<i>mamnu'</i>	track_24

Family			
English	Arabic	Phonetic spelling	Audio track no
family	عيلة	'ailé	family_01
mother	إم	im	family_02
father	أب	ab	family_03
brother	أخ	'akh	family_04
sister	أخت	'ukht	family_05
husband	زوج	zawj	family_06
wife	زوجة	zawjé	family_07
son	ابن	ibn	family_08
daughter	بنت	bint	family_09
child	طفل/ة	ṭifl/~é ⁵	family_10

⁵ ~é is a suffix for feminine singular nouns.

Question words			
English	Arabic	Phonetic spelling	Audio track no
What?	شو	<i>shū</i>	question_words_01
When?	إيمتى	<i>aimta?</i>	question_words_02
where?	وين	<i>wain?</i>	question_words_03
where from?	منين	<i>minain?</i>	question_words_04
who?	مين	<i>meen?</i>	question_words_05
Why?	ليش	<i>laish?</i>	question_words_06
How much/many?	كم	<i>kam</i>	question_words_07

Useful vocabulary

English	Arabic	Phonetic spelling	Audio track no.
Ticket (train, theatre...)	تذكرة	<i>tazkara</i>	useful_vocabulary_01
Card (Oyster, Bank, ...)	كرت	<i>kart</i>	useful_vocabulary_02
Car	سيارة	<i>sayyāra</i>	useful_vocabulary_03
Plane	طيارة	<i>ṭeyyāra</i>	useful_vocabulary_04
Taxi	تكسي	<i>taksi</i>	useful_vocabulary_05
School	مدرسة	<i>madrasé</i>	useful_vocabulary_06
Bank	بنك	<i>bank</i>	useful_vocabulary_07
Hospital	مستشفى	<i>mistashfa</i>	useful_vocabulary_08
Pharmacy	صيدلية	<i>šedaliyyé</i>	useful_vocabulary_09
Job Centre	مركز العمل	<i>markaz el ‘amal</i>	useful_vocabulary_10
GP	دكتور	<i>doktour</i>	useful_vocabulary_11
Surgery/clinic	عيادة	<i>‘yādé</i>	useful_vocabulary_12
Money	مصري	<i>mašāri</i>	useful_vocabulary_13

Coffee	قهوة	<i>qahwé</i>	useful_vocabulary_14
Police	شرطة	<i>shurṭa</i>	useful_vocabulary_15
Tea	شاي	<i>shāy</i>	useful_vocabulary_16
Today	اليوم	<i>ilyawm</i>	useful_vocabulary_17
Tomorrow	بكرة	<i>bukra</i>	useful_vocabulary_18
Yesterday	مبارح	<i>embareḥ</i>	useful_vocabulary_19
There is/are	في	<i>fii</i>	useful_vocabulary_20
There is/are not	ما في	<i>ma fii</i>	useful_vocabulary_21
Volunteer	متطوع	<i>mittawwe'/~a</i>	useful_vocabulary_22
Community Sponsorship Group	اللجنة الأهلية الراعية	<i>el lijné elahaleyé ilra'yé</i>	useful_vocabulary_23
UK Government	الحكومة البريطانية	<i>el hukumé elbritaniyyé</i>	useful_vocabulary_24
Local authority	إدارة محلية	<i>idāra maḥaliyyé</i>	useful_vocabulary_25
Emergency	طوارئ	<i>ṭawari'</i>	useful_vocabulary_26
Complaint	شكوى	<i>shakwa</i>	useful_vocabulary_27
Interpreter	مترجم	<i>mutarjim</i>	useful_vocabulary_28

Numbers			
English	Arabic	Phonetic spelling	Audio track no.
one	واحد	<i>waḥid</i>	numbers_01
two	تنين	<i>tnain</i>	numbers_02
three	ثلاثة	<i>tlaté</i>	numbers_03
four	أربعة	<i>'arb'a</i>	numbers_04
five	خمسة	<i>kham sé</i>	numbers_05
six	ستة	<i>sitté</i>	numbers_06
seven	سبعة	<i>sab'a</i>	numbers_07
eight	ثمانة	<i>tmané</i>	numbers_08
nine	تسعة	<i>tes'a</i>	numbers_09
ten	عشرة	<i>'ashra</i>	numbers_10
11	حدهش	<i>ḥdash</i>	numbers_11
12	طنعش	<i>ṭnash</i>	numbers_12

13	تلتعش	<i>tlataash</i>	numbers_13
14	اربطعش	<i>'arbatash</i>	numbers_14
15	خمسطةعش	<i>khamstash</i>	numbers_15
16	ستطعش	<i>sittash</i>	numbers_16
17	سبطعش	<i>sabatash</i>	numbers_17
18	تمنطعش	<i>tmintash</i>	numbers_18
19	تسطعش	<i>tastash</i>	numbers_19
20	عشرين	<i>'ishriin</i>	numbers_20
30	تلاتين	<i>tlatiin</i>	numbers_21
40	اربعين	<i>'arba'iin</i>	numbers_22
50	خمسين	<i>khamsiin</i>	numbers_23
60	ستين	<i>sittiin</i>	numbers_24
70	سبعين	<i>sab'iin</i>	numbers_25
80	ثمانين	<i>tmaniin</i>	numbers_26
90	تسعين	<i>tis'iin</i>	numbers_27
100	مية	<i>miyé</i>	numbers_28
1000	ألف	<i>alf</i>	numbers_29

As in...	Phonetic Spelling	Name	Final	Middle	First	Alone
<i>man</i>	<i>ā</i>	<i>alif</i>	ل / ا	ل	ا	ا
<i>bed</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>bā'</i>	ب	ب	ب	ب
<i>time</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>tā'</i>	ت	ت	ت	ت
<i>thin</i>	<i>th</i>	<i>thā'</i>	ث	ث	ث	ث
<i>giraffe</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>jiim</i>	ج	ج	ج	ج
<i>fricative [h]</i>	<i>ħ</i>	<i>hā'</i>	ح	ح	ح	ح
Scottish <i>loch</i> , velar [ħ]	<i>kh</i>	<i>khā'</i>	خ	خ	خ	خ
<i>deep</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>dāl</i>	د	د	د	د
<i>that</i>	<i>dh</i>	<i>dhāl</i>	ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ
<i>room</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>rā'</i>	ر	ر	ر	ر
<i>zoo</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>zāy</i>	ز	ز	ز	ز
<i>saw</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>siin</i>	س	س	س	س
<i>shine</i>	<i>sh</i>	<i>shiin</i>	ش	ش	ش	ش
emphatic [s] as in <i>psalm</i>	<i>š</i>	<i>šād</i>	ص	ص	ص	ص

emphatic of [d] as in <u>d</u>ark	ḏ	ḏād	ض	ض	ض	ض
emphatic of [t] as in <u>t</u>orch	ṭ	tā'	ط	ط	ط	ط
emphatic of [th]	ṭh	ṭhā'	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ
Arabic sound [ʿ]		ʿain	ع	ع	ع	ع
Arabic sound [gh]	gh	ghain	غ	غ	غ	غ
<u>f</u>ood	f	fā'	ف	ف	ف	ف
similar to [c] in <u>c</u>od	q	qāf	ق	ق	ق	ق
<u>k</u>in	k	kāf	ك	ك	ك	ك
<u>l</u>ate	l	lām	ل	ل	ل	ل
<u>m</u>oon	m	miim	م	م	م	م
<u>n</u>ice	n	nūn	ن	ن	ن	ن
<u>h</u>eel	h	hā'	ه	ه	ه	ه
<u>w</u>ow/<u>m</u>oon	w/ū	wāw	و	و	و	و
<u>y</u>es/<u>b</u>ea<u>d</u>, mach<u>i</u>ne	yes/ii	yā'	ي	ي	ي	ي

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