

# 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/~i<sup>1</sup> ‘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.)<sup>2</sup><br/>kifek? (f.)<sup>3</sup></i> | track_6         |
| I'm fine                     | أنا منيح/ة          | <i>ana mniih/~a<sup>4</sup></i>                            | track_7         |
| Thank you                    | شكرا                | <i>shukran</i>   | track_8         |
| Please                       | إذا بتريدي/ 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><br><i>shu ismek(f.) ...?</i>     | track_11 |
| My name is...         | اسمي...                      | <i>ismi</i>   | track_12 |
| Do you want...?       | بدك...؟                      | <i>biddak (m.) ...?</i><br><i>biddik(f.) ...?</i>           | track_13 |
| Do you want anything? | بدك شي؟                      | <i>biddak (m.) shi?</i><br><i>biddik (f.) shi?</i>          | track_14 |
| Do you need anything? | لازمك شي؟                    | <i>lāzma shi? (m.)</i><br><i>lāzmik shi? (f.)</i>           | track_15 |
| Do you need help?     | لازمك مساعدة؟                | <i>lāzma (m.) musa'adé?</i><br><i>lāzmik (f.) musa'adé?</i> | track_16 |
| Let's go              | ياالله نروح                  | <i>yallah nrūh</i>  | track_17 |
| Maybe                 | ممکن<br>يتمكن<br>إن شاء الله | <i>mumkin</i><br><i>yemkin</i><br><i>inshallah</i>          | track_18 |
| Yes                   | أيه                          | <i>eh</i>   | track_19 |
| No                    | لا                           | <i>la'</i>  | track_20 |
| Not possible          | مو ممكن                      | <i>mū mumkin</i>  | track_21 |
| It is ok              | معليش                        | <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  | ʔifl/~é <sup>5</sup> | family_10      |

<sup>5</sup> ~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>madrásé</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>waħid</i>      | numbers_01      |
| two     | تئين   | <i>tnain</i>      | numbers_02      |
| three   | ثلاثة  | <i>tlaté</i>      | numbers_03      |
| four    | أربعة  | <i>'arb'a</i>     | numbers_04      |
| five    | خمسة   | <i>khamsé</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>ħdash</i>      | numbers_11      |
| 12      | طنعش   | <i>tnash</i>      | numbers_12      |

|      |        |                  |            |
|------|--------|------------------|------------|
| 13   | تلطعش  | <i>tlatash</i>   | numbers_13 |
| 14   | اربطعش | <i>'arbatash</i> | numbers_14 |
| 15   | خمسطعش | <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  | مئة    | <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 [ <i>ħ</i> ] | <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>şaw</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 <b><u>d</u>ark</b>      | <b>ḏ</b>      | <b>ḏād</b>   | ض | ض | ض | ض |
| emphatic of [t] as in <b><u>t</u>orch</b>     | <b>ṭ</b>      | <b>tā'</b>   | ط | ط | ط | ط |
| emphatic of [th]                              | <b>ṯ</b>      | <b>ṯā'</b>   | ظ | ظ | ظ | ظ |
| Arabic sound [ ]                              |               | <b>'ain</b>  | ع | ع | ع | ع |
| Arabic sound [gh]                             | <b>gh</b>     | <b>ghain</b> | غ | غ | غ | غ |
| <b><u>f</u>ood</b>                            | <b>f</b>      | <b>fā'</b>   | ف | ف | ف | ف |
| similar to [c] in <b><u>c</u>od</b>           | <b>q</b>      | <b>qāf</b>   | ق | ق | ق | ق |
| <b><u>k</u>in</b>                             | <b>k</b>      | <b>kāf</b>   | ك | ك | ك | ك |
| <b><u>l</u>ate</b>                            | <b>l</b>      | <b>lām</b>   | ل | ل | ل | ل |
| <b><u>m</u>oon</b>                            | <b>m</b>      | <b>miim</b>  | م | م | م | م |
| <b><u>n</u>ice</b>                            | <b>n</b>      | <b>nūn</b>   | ن | ن | ن | ن |
| <b><u>h</u>eel</b>                            | <b>h</b>      | <b>hā'</b>   | ه | ه | ه | ه |
| <b><u>w</u>ow/<u>m</u>oon</b>                 | <b>w/ū</b>    | <b>wāw</b>   | و | و | و | و |
| <b><u>y</u>es/<u>b</u>ead, mach<u>i</u>ne</b> | <b>yes/ii</b> | <b>yā'</b>   | ي | ي | ي | ي |

This resource was commissioned from LISAN ARABI LTD.



**LISAN ARABI** renders multiple services related to Arabic language and culture including teaching Arabic, translation, proofreading, typesetting, book design and consultancy. For more information visit:

**WWW\_ARABINGLISH\_COM**