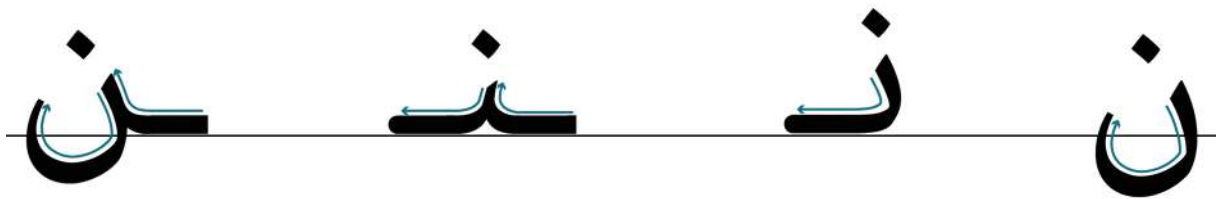


الفصل الأول

ن nūn



Another useful consonant that overlaps in shape with the above is the consonant *nūn* ن (its name sounds like the English word “noon”).

At the beginning of a word and in the middle of a word, it has the same shape as ب, ت, ث, and ي except that it has one dot on top: نـ and نـ. At the end of a word it has the shape نـ (a slanting bowl with a dot in the middle). The *nūn* ن is transcribed as *n*.



Exercise 10

A. Write the letter ن three times in the four different positions:

Final	Medial	Initial	Isolated
نـ	نـ	نـ	ن
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

B. Write each of the following words twice:

نون	بُن
_____	_____
_____	_____
يبني	نبات
_____	_____
_____	_____



Drill 2

*nūn* ن with short and long vowels:  
Listen and repeat after the pause.

نَ	نِ	نُ
نا	ني	نو



Exercise 11

A. Connect the letters to form a word and then read the words aloud to your partner.

_____	_____	_____	١. أ ن ت
_____	_____	_____	٢. ب ن ت
_____	_____	_____	٣. ب ن ا ت
_____	_____	_____	٤. ن ب ا ت
_____	_____	_____	٥. ا ث ا ث
_____	_____	_____	٦. أ ن ت
_____	_____	_____	٧. ن ب ي
_____	_____	_____	٨. أ ن ا

أبجد ١

C. Read and transcribe the following (from now on, when a consonant ends a word, assume it has a *sukūn* (zero vowel sign) on it (unless indicated otherwise):

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____



Exercise 9

A. Transcribe the following into Arabic (remember to start at the right-hand side of the lines provided):

1. <i>bābt</i>	_____	6. <i>ṭḥabāt</i>	_____
2. <i>bīt</i>	_____	7. <i>tubūt</i>	_____
3. <i>būt</i>	_____	8. <i>tūbī</i>	_____
4. <i>ṭḥāt</i>	_____	9. <i>bābī</i>	_____
5. <i>bāth</i>	_____	10. <i>ṭḥābū</i>	_____

B. Listen carefully and check (✓) when you hear one of the long vowels *ī* or *ū* or *yī*.

<input type="checkbox"/> ٩.	<input type="checkbox"/> ٧.	<input type="checkbox"/> ٥.	<input type="checkbox"/> ٣.	<input type="checkbox"/> ١.
<input type="checkbox"/> ١٠.	<input type="checkbox"/> ٨.	<input type="checkbox"/> ٦.	<input type="checkbox"/> ٤.	<input type="checkbox"/> ٢.

C. Read the following words, which all contain either *و* or *ي*, and classify them in the table on the right, depending on whether the *و* should be pronounced *w* or *ū*, on the one hand, and whether the *ي* should be pronounced *y* or *ī*, on the other. Remember that these letters are respectively pronounced *w* or *y* whenever they begin a word, *immediately adjacent to a vowel* of any kind, or come between two vowels:

٩. ثيب	١. ثواب				
١٠. بوب	٢. بُيوت				
١١. بِيَات	٣. ثِيَاب	ي is pronounced <i>y</i>	ي is pronounced <i>ī</i>	و is pronounced <i>w</i>	و is pronounced <i>ū</i>
١٢. تابوت	٤. يِيت	_____	_____	_____	_____
١٣. بيب	٥. يَابِت	_____	_____	_____	_____
١٤. بُوي	٦. واثب	_____	_____	_____	_____
١٥. بُتوت	٧. نَوْب	_____	_____	_____	_____
١٦. بَوَات	٨. ثُبوت	_____	_____	_____	_____

الفصل الأول



Exercise 7

A. The letter in column 1 is written in different positions in some of the words in the adjacent cells. Identify the letter in each word by underlining it. Note that not every word has the letter from column 1 in it. See example 1:

١. ا	إمرأة	تَاب	قلم	بَابَا
٢. ا	ابن	كلب	ناب	كتبا
٣. و	المنظر	الواقع	مهندسون	ورد
٤. ي	بيت	منطقي	منزل	ياسر

B. Write each of the following words twice:

ابت	باب	بابا	ايوا	وثب	توت
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
تابوا	تابوت	يبت	بيت	بيتي	باي
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____



Exercise 8

A minimal pair is a pair of words which differ only in one sound, such as hit and hid. Minimal pairs serve as tools to establish that two sounds contrast. A difference in sound means a difference in meaning. This exercise will help you recognize the minor differences, in the pronunciation, between long and short vowels.

A. First, listen and repeat the words in column 1 and then the words in column 2. Secondly, listen and repeat the words in column 1 and their counterparts in column 2, read in succession. Thirdly, you will hear words from either columns and will have to decide whether the word you have heard is from column 1 or 2 by putting (✓) next to the word you hear.

٢		١	
<input type="checkbox"/>	بابْ	<input type="checkbox"/>	بَبْ
<input type="checkbox"/>	ثَابْ	<input type="checkbox"/>	تَبْ
<input type="checkbox"/>	تَيْتْ	<input type="checkbox"/>	تَتْ
<input type="checkbox"/>	بَاثْ	<input type="checkbox"/>	بَبْ
<input type="checkbox"/>	توُثْ	<input type="checkbox"/>	تُبْ
<input type="checkbox"/>	بوُثْ	<input type="checkbox"/>	بُبْ
<input type="checkbox"/>	بِيثْ	<input type="checkbox"/>	بَبْ
<input type="checkbox"/>	ثوُثْ	<input type="checkbox"/>	تُبْ
<input type="checkbox"/>	ثِيْبْ	<input type="checkbox"/>	تَبْ

B. Work with a partner and repeat the activities above. Your partner will read a word either from column 1 or 2 and you should circle the word you hear. Then switch roles.

# أ ب ج د هـ



## Exercise 5

Write the letter و three times in the four different positions:

Final	Medial	Initial	Isolated
و	و	و	و
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____



The last letter representing a long vowel is *yā'* ي. At the beginning of a word, *immediately adjacent to a vowel* of any kind, or between vowels, it is pronounced like the *y* in “yes,” and in this case we transcribe it *y*. Otherwise it has the sound *i*, that is, the same sound as the letter “i” in “machine” or the double “e” in “beet,” and in that case we transcribe it *i*.

At the beginning of a word it has the same shape as ب, ت, and ث except that it has two dots under the letter like this: ي. At the end of the word it looks like this: ي. Notice that it curves slightly backwards and then dips below the line, coming back up all the way to the line again.

In the middle of a word, it has the same shape as medial ب, ت, and ث except that it has two dots below ي.

In fact, like و *wāw*, ي *yā'* has two pronunciations: at the very beginning of a word, immediately adjacent to a vowel of any kind (i.e. *immediately preceded or followed by a vowel*) or between two vowel sounds, it has the “y” sound of “yes”; otherwise it has the long “i” sound as mentioned above. At the beginning of the word, it looks like this: ي.



## Exercise 6

Write the letter ي three times in the four different positions:

Final	Medial	Initial	Isolated
ي	ي	ي	ي
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

# الفصل الأول

## Unit Two - الوحدة الثانية:

### ي 'yā' و 'wāw' / 'alif' The Long Vowels

Arabic has three long vowels, which, unlike the short vowels, are written almost all the time. The first long vowel, *ā* (like the “a” sound in “bad”), is written like this in isolation: ا.

When you write it by hand, you start at the top and go down. If connected with the previous letter by means of a short line, it looks like this; ل. In this case, since you are connecting it to the previous letter, you write it from the bottom to the top.



The name of this vowel letter is ‘*alif*’. It is one of six letters that never connect with the following letter; that is to say, they never connect with the letter on their left. Thus to write *bāt* we would write بات. Because it is a long vowel and more or less the same as *a* except twice as long, we transcribe it *ā*.



#### Exercise 4

Write the letter ا three times in the four different positions:

Final	Medial	Initial	Isolated
ا	ا	ا	ا
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Another letter that does not connect on the left and is also a long vowel is the letter we call *wāw* like the exclamatory word “wow!” in English.

In fact, the letter و (*wāw*) has two sounds: at the very beginning of a word, immediately adjacent to a vowel of any kind (i.e. *immediately preceded or followed by a vowel*) or between two vowel sounds, it is pronounced like the “w” in “west”; in that case we transcribe it *w*. Otherwise it has the long “ū” sound as in “rule”; in that case we transcribe it *ū*.



To write this letter at the beginning of a word, you start with the loop at the top on the line, moving in a clockwise direction and dipping below the line like this: و. In the middle of a word or at the end of a word, you use a short line to connect with the previous letter (if the previous letter connects), then make the loop and write the letter as before. Thus *bū* would be: بو. If the previous letter does not connect, then the letter is written the same way it is written at the very beginning of a word, like this: باو.

أبجد ١



Drill 1

bā' ب, tā' ت, thā' ث, and the short vowels:  
Listen and repeat after the pause.

بُ    ب    بَ  
تُ    ت    تَ  
ثُ    ث    ثَ

Exercise 2

A. Read and transcribe the following:

تَبْ      بَتْ      بَبْ  
\_\_\_\_\_  
تَبْ      تُتْ      بُبْ  
\_\_\_\_\_  
تَبْ      تَتْ      بُتْ  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. Put the following combinations into Arabic  
(remember to start at the right-hand side of the  
page and write each word from right to left):

3. bab	2. <u>thub</u>	1. tub
_____	_____	_____
6. tib	5. <u>thab</u>	4. ba <u>th</u>
_____	_____	_____
9. tab	8. bit	7. bu <u>th</u>
_____	_____	_____
12. bat	11. bi <u>th</u>	10. bib
_____	_____	_____

C. Read each of the following combinations:

تُبْت      تَبْت  
بَتْت      بُتْت  
تَبْت      تَبْت



Exercise 3

A. Match the Arabic nonsense  
words with the transcription:

a. <u>that</u>	١ - بُبْ
b. but	٢ - تُتْ
c. ba <u>thuth</u>	٣ - بَتْتْ
d. ba <u>thit</u>	٤ - بُتْتْ
e. tut	٥ - بُتْ
f. bi <u>th</u>	٦ - بُتْ
g. bub	٧ - تَتْ

B. In this exercise, you will hear each nonsense  
word twice in succession. Write the short  
vowel(s), including the *sukūn*, for each word.

١ - بب	٤ - ثث	٧ - بت
٢ - تبت	٥ - تثب	٨ - بتث
٣ - بشت	٦ - بثت	٩ - تثب

الفصل الأول



Exercise 1

- A. Write each of the following letters three times in the four different positions:
- B. Read and transcribe the following:

Final	Medial	Initial	Isolated
ب	ب	ب	ب

Final	Medial	Initial	Isolated
ت	ت	ت	ت

Final	Medial	Initial	Isolated
ث	ث	ث	ث

تب	ثب	بت
ثبت	بتث	ثب
بتث	بث	ثبت

- C. The letter in column 1 is written in different positions in some of the words in the adjacent cells. Identify the letter in each word by underlining it. Note that not every word has the letter in column 1. See example 1:

١. ب	أب	بلد	ينام	كتبا
٢. ب	واجب	بيوت	دبج	دمج
٣. ت	بيوت	تابوت	ثواب	اشترى
٤. ث	أثاث	اشترى	الثرى	ثوابت

The Short Vowels

*fathā'* َ / *kasra'* ِ / *damma'* ُ / *sukūn* ْ

The three short vowels in Arabic have the sounds *a* as in “mat,” *i* as in “lip,” and *u* as in “put.” The first symbol, for “a,” is called *fathā'* and is written as a small diagonal line slanting upwards to the right above the consonant letter that precedes it in pronunciation. For example, *ba* would be written بَ.

The second symbol, called *kasra'*, has exactly the same shape, but is written below the preceding consonant, so *bi* would be written بِ.

The third vowel, *damma'*, looks like a small comma and is written above the preceding consonant, giving بُ for *bu*. The three short vowels are transcribed as *a*, *i*, and *u*.

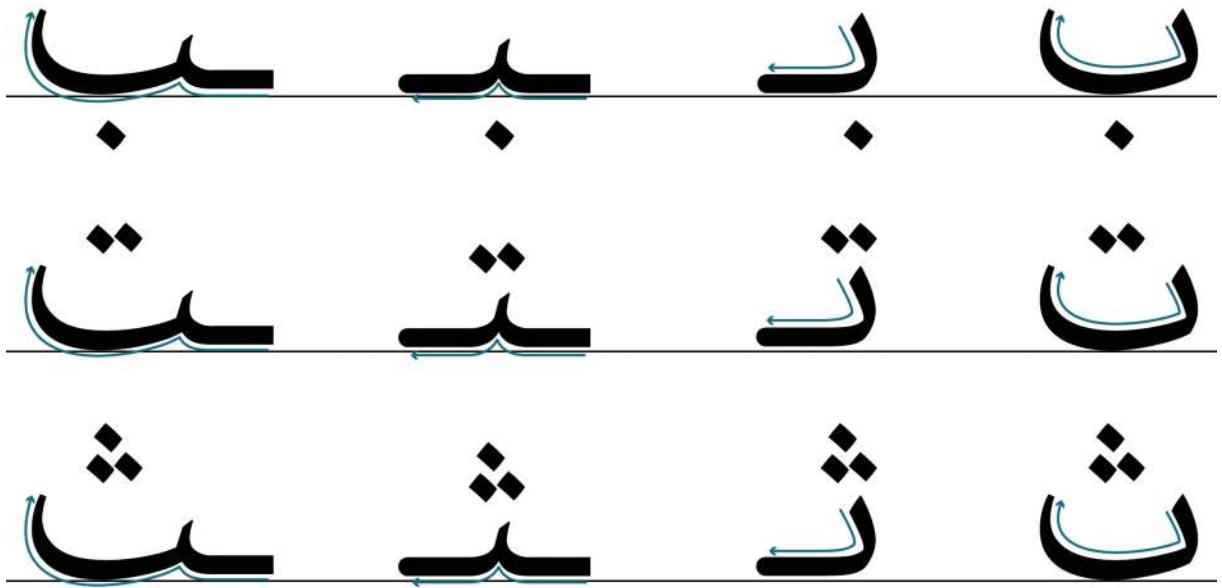
Sometimes consonants are followed by no vowel at all. In the English word “tip toe,” there is no vowel after the “p”; in the word “chitchat,” there is no vowel after either of the “t”s. In Arabic, if no vowel (i.e., zero vowel) follows a consonant, we write a small zero sign above the consonant, called *sukūn*. For example, *b* not followed by any vowel would be written بْ.

In normal Arabic writing (outside of holy scripture and children’s books) the above-mentioned vowel symbols are not written, but they are helpful to us as beginners for indicating the pronunciation of new words and memorizing them.

# أبجد ١

## Unit One - الوحدة الأولى:

### The Shape of Independent Consonants: *bā'* ب / *tā'* ت / *thā'* ث



Many Arabic letters have the same shape as others but are differentiated from one another by means of dots. Let us start with one of the most basic shapes: ب. Without any dots it is not, in fact, a letter. But if we put one dot on the bottom, like this: ب, we have the letter *b*. If we put two dots on the top of the same shape, like this: ت, we have the letter *t*.

The Arabic *t*, in fact, is pronounced slightly differently from the English “t” because the tip of your tongue is against your teeth (in the same position as the “d” in “width” or “breadth”), thus further forward than the English “t.” If we put three dots on top, like this: ث, we have the letter *th*, representing the whispered “th” sound in words like “three,” “think,” and “thistle,” not the hummed “th” sound in words like “there,” “mother,” and “this.”\* The names of these three letters are *bā'* ب, *tā'* ت, and *thā'* ث.

The above consonants, when written at the beginning of a word, are reduced to only their first half, so that *bā'* becomes بـ, *tā'* تـ, and *thā'* ثـ. At the end of the word, these consonants take the same shape as their independent forms but with a line connecting them to the previous letters, like this: ـب, ـت, and ـث. When they are in the middle of a word, they look like this: ـبـ, ـتـ, and ـثـ (essentially the same shape and same number of dots but connected on both sides). These three consonants will be transcribed as *b*, *t*, and *th*.

\* We are indebted for these memory aids for *b*, *t*, and *th* to F. E. Sommer, *The Arabic Writing in Five Lessons* (New York, Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1942), p. 5.

# الفصل الأول

Now here are some of the features of Arabic that will require you to make adjustments:

1. Arabic uses a cursive script, written from right to left, not left to right.
2. The Arabic alphabet consists of twenty-eight letters, six of which do not connect to the following letter.
3. The remaining twenty-two letters do connect with the following letter on the line. When these letters connect, their individual characters change based on their positions in a word. For example, the tails or lower halves of the independent shapes disappear but the essential features (a tooth, a circle, or a triangle) are retained.
4. Apart from the letter *alif* (transcribed as *ā*), all are consonants. The letter *wāw* و and *yā'* ي, on the other hand, can function as consonants *w* and *y* or as long vowels *ū* and *ī*.
5. Arabic is a gendered language. That is, names and nouns are categorized as masculine and feminine. The feminine names and nouns usually have a feminine suffix *ō* called *tā' marbūṭa* (transcribed as *a<sup>t</sup>*), which is written only ever at the end of the word and has an *a* sound.
6. There are only three basic short vowels in Arabic, which are not represented by letters but rather by signs. These signs can be written either above or below the consonants. The three basic short vowels do not usually appear in most Arabic printed material. Despite the absence of the short vowels, native speakers are able to read words perfectly on the basis of their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar and on the basis of context. As we introduce new words into your vocabulary, we will always indicate their full pronunciation.

## Arabic Short Vowels

Name	Character	Transcription
<i>damma<sup>t</sup></i>	ُ	<i>u</i>
<i>fatha<sup>t</sup></i>	َ	<i>a</i>
<i>kasra<sup>t</sup></i>	ِ	<i>i</i>

As you progress in your own knowledge of Arabic grammar and vocabulary, you will find it easier and easier to read words on sight.

Of course, as you learn new words, it is a good idea to visualize the word as a whole. Using flash cards – either the commercial kind or your own home-made ones – can help with this.

In the exercises that follow, we make extensive use of our own alphabet to transcribe the sounds of the Arabic letters. We are doing this only as long as necessary to make the pronunciation of the letters clear until you can dispense with transcription altogether. However, in our experience, students inevitably go ahead and transcribe words on their own in the beginning, as they have no other way of recording them and remembering them, so it seemed more helpful for us to provide you with an accurate transcription ourselves and use it as an effective way to teach you the alphabet.



# CHAPTER ONE - الفصل الأول

ب ت ث أ و ي ن  
د ذ ر ز ح ح خ ج

By the end of the chapter, students will be able to:

- Identify features of the Arabic alphabet, identify shapes of Arabic letters and recall their names.
- Apply standardized transcription used in the first six chapters.
- Demonstrate knowledge of characteristics of the Arabic writing system.
- Recognize features of the Arabic short vowels and *shadda*.
- Recognize the shapes of the letters ت, ث, ب and ن, د, ذ, ر, and ز, and ح, خ, and ج in different positions.
- Recognize the shapes of the long vowels ا, و, and ي in different positions.
- Make the connection between letters and sounds.
- Connect letters to form meaningful words, and read and write words and short sentences.
- Differentiate between pairs of words which differ in only one sound.
- Use common expressions and formulaic sentences.
- Form questions with ما and كيف.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the use of adjectives.
- Recognize and conjugate present tense verbs with the personal pronoun “he.”
- Use essential vocabulary to greet people and introduce themselves.

