



QUR'ANIC LANGUAGE MADE EASY

Basic Grammar Required
to Understand the Qur'an
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Preface

Why learn Arabic at all? It should be reason enough that the timeless speech of Allah, the Glorious Qur'an, was revealed to humanity in Arabic. However, if we truly believed that, we would not be so ignorant of even the simplest grammatical concepts, which would otherwise help us to make sense of the Word of the Creator, Most High.

Of course there are those of us who will argue that learning Arabic is, at best, a redundant exercise, especially in an age when Qur'anic translations are so readily available. We would reply to this by saying that the true Qur'anic experience cannot be divorced from its Arabic origins. This is something which the rightly guided Ulema' of the Ummah have attested to down through the ages. How is this so?

The simplest example that comes to mind is the Islamic prayer itself. We stand five times a day in intimate conversation with our Lord, yet we do not even know what the nature of the discourse is. How would one benefit from the blessings of the King, if the King knows that His words fall unintelligibly on uncomprehending ears?

The fact is that one of the greatest miracles of the Qur'an is its eloquence, and its ability to turn the hearts of those who hear it recited. It uses the choicest words in what is being said. Ultimately what is being said is being said in Arabic, and what is being said in Arabic is the actual speech of Allah, Most High, in its exact words. And what a difference there is in hearing something from the King himself and hearing it from one of his interpreters! Anyone who has any knowledge of the Arabic language will readily admit that we cannot fully appreciate the depth of as simple a statement as the Muslim testimony of faith: La Ilaha Illa Allah.

Like anything in life, learning Arabic takes time and effort. For those who are willing to make the effort and take a plunge into the endless depths of the beauty of the Qur'an, we pray that this small and imperfect attempt at outlining the basics of Qur'anic grammar and vocabulary will be a worthwhile starting point.

In making the following work accessible to those with little familiarity with the Arabic language, we've attempted to use the simplest terminology in explaining grammatical concepts and functions. Each lesson is also accompanied by a vocabulary list of words found in the Qur'an.

These vocabulary lists have also been put in alphabetical order for ease of reference. All examples found in each lesson are also taken from the Qur'an. In simplifying the material herein, we've deliberately kept out vocabulary words and phrases that do not appear in the Qur'an.

The book is divided into three units. The first unit deals with concepts such as nouns, pronouns, prepositions, and their characteristics. In the second unit, we delve into the verbs and their trilateral roots, as well as basic sentence structure. In the third unit we further explore the vast world of Arabic verbs by examining derived verb forms, and more sentence structures.

Our hope is that this attempt will be sufficient in giving the student of Arabic a very intimate familiarity with the discourse of the Qur'an. If one is interested in continuing studies in Arabic in order to be able to comprehend Ahadith and the many classical Islamic works in Arabic, then we hope that this book will provide a springboard for further study, Insha'Allah. In the meantime, we hope that this work will provide a sufficient guide for the teachers of the language as well as an easy reference for the students.

Whatever good you will find herein is from Allah, and whatever fault you may find herein is mine alone.

Wa ma taw-fiqi illa billah

Iffath Hasan

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IQRA's Note

Mrs. Iffath Hasan's textbook, *Qur'anic Language Made Easy* is a welcome addition to *IQRA's* growing list of books teaching the Arabic language. During the last few years Iffath Hasan has emerged as a popular teacher of Arabic in Greater Chicago area, whose classes overflow with enthusiastic students. Her students are non-Arabic speaking ladies of all ages who make special effort to attend to her classes to enhance their knowledge of Arabic in order to better understand the Qur'an in its original language.

Qur'anic Language Made Easy is a response to the demands of her students to transform her notes and methodologies in a properly produced textbook. Our initial reluctance to publish another book on Arabic Language was overcome as we began to receive positive opinions from some of our reviewers who appreciated the texts simple and direct approach. We hope the novice will find this book a helpful guide to the language as they aspire to open the door to the Message of the Qur'an. The Qur'an is a miracle in both perfection of language and purity of message. Allah ﷻ Himself promised:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ سَاهِفُونَ

Indeed We have revealed this Dhikr (The Qur'an) and We shall safeguard it.
(Al-Hijr 15:9)

The Qur'an was revealed to an unlettered ('Ummi) Prophet, through an unlettered community, for the entire humankind to guide it to the straight path of Submission to the Divine Will (*Islam*). It was revealed over a period of 23 years. Initially it was written on stones, parchment, cloth and bark; but it was also preserved in the hearts of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. It was compiled into book form during the reigns of the first two "Rightly Guided" Caliphs Abu Bakr ؓ and 'Umar ؓ then finally standardized by the third Caliph Uthman ibn 'Affan ؓ. Allah ﷻ has promised to safeguard the Qur'an in every respect and the Book itself is a living testimony to this Divine promise:

- Its language has been preserved without one iota of change from the time of its revelation.
- It has been memorized by millions of Muslims who can recite it from memory.
- It is recited by *Muqris/Qaris* (articulate reciters), as the Prophet ﷺ and his Sahabah ؓ recited it.
- Its meaning and message has been preserved through the direct line of theologians ('*Ulama*') who spend their lifetimes in learning its message and disseminating it to others.
- Thousands of seminaries (*Madaris*) across the world continue to preserve the message and teach it to others.

Although preservation of the Qur'an and its message is guaranteed by Allah ﷻ Himself, it has been accomplished through His chosen servants who have maintained its study through their sincere and tireless efforts. The author of *Qur'anic Language Made Easy* Iffath Hasan is a *Hafiza* (one who has memorized the entire Qur'an) as well as Arabic teacher who is now opening the door of Qur'anic understanding to eager believers, *al-Hamdulillah*.

We pray that Mrs. Iffath Hasan and *IQRA' International Educational Foundation* as an institution will be counted among those chosen of Allah's servants who carried out His Will in this life and will meet at the Heavenly Pond (*al-Hawd*) with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. For indeed the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ assured us:

"The best among you are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it to others."

(Sahih al-Bukhari)

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In the name of Allah Most gracious, Most merciful

This book has been prepared with the intention of helping one understand the Holy Qur'an in an easy and efficient manner. Insha'Allah, if complete instructions are followed, this task will be achieved without much difficulty, Insha'Allah.

1. In order to achieve success, first ask for the help and blessings of Allah ﷻ.
2. Do your best since Allah ﷻ helps those who help themselves.
3. Since the course is cumulative (every lesson builds upon the previous) understanding and knowing every lesson thoroughly before progressing is crucial for success.
4. Since these lessons are prepared especially for the understanding of the Qur'an, fluent reading of the Qur'an is one of the prerequisites of the understanding of the language.
5. Regular reading of a portion of the Qur'an in Arabic, along with the translation, is highly recommended.
6. The memorizing of as many short surahs and ayahs as possible is also highly recommended.

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Lesson 1

VERBS

الفعل *Al-Fi'l*

A verb is a word indicating any action by one or more persons in the past, present or future tense.

In Arabic, the verbs are mainly divided into **Past tense** ماضي (*Maadi*) and **Present / Future**

tense مضارع (*Mudaari*).

Arabic verbs are mostly tri-lettered, that is they are based on the roots of three consonants, e.g.:

كَفَرَ شَكَرَ فَعَلَ. These verbs are called الفعل السالم (*Al-Fi'l al Salim*).

PAST TENSE الفعل الماضي

To indicate patterns of the verbs, grammarians use the letters of the verb فعل (*fa'ala*). The

ف (*fa*) represents the first consonant, the ع (*'ain*) represents the second consonant, and the ل (*lam*) represents the third consonant.

In a simple tri-lettered verb, the is placed on the first and last letters, but — or is placed on the middle letter.

Constant <u> </u>	←	فَعَلَ	→	Constant <u> </u>
		Variable		
		<u> </u> — <u> </u>		

e.g.:

Middle Letter	Verb		
ـ	نَصَرَ	فَتَحَ	كَتَبَ
ـ	سَمِعَ	عَلِمَ	فَرِحَ
ـ	عَظُمَ	كَرِهَ	شَرَفَ

The format for three letter past tense verbs is as follows:

Plural جمع	Dual مثنى	Singular مفرد	
فَعَلُوا They (all) did	فَعَلَا They (two) did	فَعَلَ He, it did	الغالب الذكور Third person Masculine
فَعَلْنَ They (all) did	فَعَلَتَا They (two) did	فَعَلَتْ She, it did	الغالب المؤنث Third person Feminine
فَعَلْتُمْ You (all) did	فَعَلْتُمَا You (two) did	فَعَلْتَ You did	الخاص بالذكور Second person Masculine
فَعَلْتُنَّ You (all) did	فَعَلْتُمَا You (two) did	فَعَلْتِ You did	الخاص بالمؤنث Second person Feminine
فَعَلْنَا We (all) did	فَعَلْنَا We (two) did	فَعَلْتُ I did	المتكلم الذكور/المؤنث First person (masculine & feminine)

There are some important points about the above chart:

1. Starting with third person, masculine, dual, suffixes are added to the three letter verbs (there are no prefixes).
2. Starting with the third person, feminine, plural **فَعَلْنَ**, a **اَ** is placed over the third letter of all verbs.
3. Starting with third person, feminine, singular, **تُ** **تِ** **تِ** are placed over the last letter (ت) of singular, third, second and first person verbs, respectively.
4. Second person, masculine and feminine verbs end with **تَ**, **تُ**, **تِ**, **تِ** same as in the detached pronouns **أَنْتَ**, **أَنْتِ**, **أَنْتِ**, **أَنْتِ**.
5. First person, plural ends with **نَا**. In the attached pronouns table, first person, plural is also **نَا**.
6. Make a note of the slight difference between feminine, third person, plural **فَعَلْنَ** (short vowel, *fatha*) and first person, plural **فَعَلْنَا** (long vowel, *alif*).
7. It is important to know that there is no verb without a pronoun hidden within it.
8. If the subject is a noun mentioned after the verb, the verb will always be in the singular form, but it will match the gender of the noun; e.g.:

فَعَلَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ	فَعَلَ الْمُسْلِمَانِ	فَعَلَ الْمُسْلِمِ
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Note: The subject is masculine, in the form of singular, dual and plural, but the verb is masculine singular for every one of them.

فَعَلَتِ الْمُسْلِمَاتُ	فَعَلَتِ الْمُسْلِمَانِ	فَعَلَتِ الْمُسْلِمَةُ
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Note: The subject is feminine, in the form of singular, dual and plural, but the verb is feminine singular for every one of them and the sukun is replaced by a temporary Kiswa.

Exercise

Recite the Qur'an and try to find more examples.

Memorize the following vocabulary and make the past tense tables with all the words with translations.

He went out	خَرَجَ	He wrote	كَتَبَ
He cursed	لَعَنَ	He killed	قَتَلَ
He heard	سَمِعَ	He reached	بَلَغَ
He knew	عَلِمَ	He earned	كَسَبَ
He left	تَرَكَ	He boarded (the ship)	رَكِبَ

He entered	دَخَلَ	He wronged	ظَلَمَ
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For a complete vocabulary of verbs see Appendix B.

1. The following are examples of Past Tense verbs:

كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ

How your Lord **did** (105:1)

وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ دُجَالُوتَ

And David **killed** Goliath (2:251)

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ بَيْنَهُمَا

But when they (two) **reached** the junction (18:61)

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَكِبَا فِي السَّفِينَةِ

Until when they (two) **were** in the boat (18:71)

خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ

They (all) **came** out of their land (2:243)

قَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

Those who **rejected** (the faith) said (19:73)

كُلَّمَا دَخَلَتْ أُمَّةٌ لَعَنَتْ أُخْتَهَا

Every time a new people **enters** (the hell) it curses its (sister) people (7:38)

فَلَمَّا سَمِعَتْ بِمَكْرِهِنَّ

When she **heard** of their malicious talk (12:31)

فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ

When they (women) **have completed** their term (2:234)

فَلَكُمْ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكْنَ

For you is a fourth from what they (wives) **leave** (4:12)

أَأَنْتَ فَعَلْتَ هَذَا بِآلِهَتِنَا

Did you **do** this to our gods? (21:62)

خَلَقَنِي مِنْ نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ

You **created** me from fire and you **created** him from clay (7:12)

هَلْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ بِيُوسُفَ

Did you **know** how you **dealt** with Yusuf? (12:89)

وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا

And when you **killed** a man (2:72)

رَبِّ إِيَّايَ ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي

O my Lord! Indeed I **have wronged** my soul (28:16)

مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتَ

What prevents you from bowing to the one whom I **have created**? (38:75)

قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا

They (both) said, "Our Lord we **have wronged** our souls." (7:23)

كَيْفَ فَعَلْنَا بِهِمْ

How we **did** with them (14:45)

مَا عَلِمْنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنْ سُوْعٍ

We **knew** of no evil on his part. (12:51)

2. In the following examples, an extra **و** (which has no effect on the meaning) is

attached to the pronoun **تَمَّ**, since it is followed by another pronoun.

أَدْعُوهُمْ أَمْ أَنْتُمْ صَاحِبُونَ

Whether you call them or you hold your peace. (7:193)

وَإِذَا أَعْرَضْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ

When you turn away from them. (18:16)

إِذَاءَايْتُمُوهُنَّ أَجْرَهُنَّ

When you make the payment of the dower to them. (60:10)

3. The words **قَدْ** (*qad*) and **لَقَدْ** (*laqad*), meaning 'indeed' or 'certainly', often precede a past tense verb to emphasize the meaning of the verb.

Examples:

قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بِصَافِرَاتٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ

Indeed there came to you clear proofs from your Lord. (6:104)

قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا تَنْقُصُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ

Indeed we knew what the earth diminished them to. (50:4)

لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ

Certainly we took a covenant. (5:70)

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

Certainly we made man in the best form. (95:4)

لَقَدْ آثَرَكَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا

Certainly Allah has preferred you above us. (12:91)

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ

Certainly we sent Noah to his people. (29:14)

4. The word مَا (ma) meaning 'not' or 'have not' precedes the past tense to give the negative meaning.

Examples:

مَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لِتَشْقَىٰ

We have **not** revealed upon you the Qur'an that you may be in hardship. (20:2)

مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِّن قَلْبَيْنِ فِي جَوْفِهِ

Allah has **not** made for anyone two hearts within him. (33:4)

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ

They have **not** estimated Allah with His due estimation. (6:91)