



Understanding Arabic

Kalpna Theophilus continues her series to help practitioners cope with language barriers

Arabic is spoken throughout the Middle East Arab world. Written Arabic has existed for about 12 centuries without any major change. Modern society owes much to Arabic scholars who provided a continuity of learning and knowledge after the fall of the Roman Empire.

Today, Arabic is spoken in three main areas – North Africa (Egypt), The Levant (Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine) and the Gulf (Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Kuwait, Oman, the United Arab Emirates). It is also widely studied and known throughout the Islamic world. There are three main forms – Koranic, local dialects and modern standard Arabic. The

following phrases have been based on modern standard Arabic, which should be understood by the majority of Arabic speakers.

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Hello	marhba
I don't speak Arabic, but I can say a few words	la aojed al-takalim bil lu-gha al-arabyia wala-kinuni a-arif bath al-kalimat
Do you have?	hal tasta-chdim natharat to-be-iaha
Spectacles	nathar-rat
Contact lenses	adasat al-larsika
Do you have a problem with	hal ta-aini min mashakal ma-a
Your eyes	ee-you-nak
Your vision	basarak
Pain	alam
Headache	alam bil-ras
Diplopia/double vision	rou-ya miz-dow-aja
Where	ay-na
How long	mintho mata
All the time	to ai-ainey
Days	ayam
Weeks	asa-bee-a
Months	ash-hor
Years	sanawat
When	mata
Morning	saba-han
Afternoon	bad al-thor-hir
Evening	mass-a-ann
All day	tool al-na-har
Yes	na-am
No	la-a
Have you seen a doctor?	hal raj-ai-et ta-beeb
Medication	ad-wey-a
Show me	hal ara
That's fine/good	hatha jay-ed
Big	kabir
Small	sa-gheer
One	wahed
Two	athenian
Three	thalatha
Four	arbaa
Look at	onthir ee-la
This	hatha
That	tilka
The light	al-thowa
The picture	al sourah
Open your eyes	eftah ae-nak
Close your eyes	egh-math ae-nak

Tell me the letters	ekra al hi-roof
The numbers	al-arkam
Look	onthir
To the left	ela al-yesar
To the right	ela al-yamin
Up	fouak
Down	tahat
Is it clear?	hal wath-ah
Is it clearer?	hal ao-wath-ah
Is it better with?	hal ahsan ma-a
Is it better without?	hal ahsan bid-oon
More clear	akthar wath-ah
Less clear	a-kal wath-ah
How many lights you see?	kam athwiya tara
In the periphery	fee al jo-anib
Red	ahmar
Green	akth-ar
White	aby-ath
I want to make this more circular for you. Which lens is clearer between the first or the second?	sa-a-jal laka akthar da-irry-aa. Ay al-adasaten aw-th-eh, al-o-la ao al-than-e-ia ao la ta-gh-er bil da-irr-ah
(answer) first/second	al-o-la/al-than-e-ia
Healthy eyes	al-ee-youn salema
You need glasses for	tah-taj nathar-rat
You need to visit a doctor	tahtaj mo-raj-at al-tabeeb
Today	al-yawm
As soon as you get home	hal-al wo-soo-lak aldar
Soon	al-ann
Chin here	al thikin huna
I will now puff some air towards your eye	al-ann sa-an-fah ba-th alhawa be-atee-jah aynak
I will now measure your eye pressure	al-ann sa akees al-tha-hat ay-nak
Lens	adasat
Diabetic	al sukkar
Blood pressure	tha-gh-at al-dam
Infection	ed-wa
Discharge	yea-friz
Sting	yea-chiz
Cataract	ma-ia al-abyath
Inflammation	el-tee-hab
Glaucoma	ma-ia al-aswad
Thank you	sho-krun
Goodbye	ma-a Al-Salama