Stage 0 · Lesson 1

How Arabic Works

By the end of this lesson you will know the direction of the writing, recognise three letters, read the three short vowels — and read a complete āyah from the Qur'an.

The first letter



alif

sound: a carrier — the long “aa”

A single upright stroke. No dots. It never joins to the letter that comes after it.

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـا	ـا	ا	ا

✍ trace here

The second letter



lām

sound: l

A tall stroke like the alif, but it curves at the bottom, like a hook.

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـل	ـلـ	لـ	ل

✍ trace here

The third letter



mīm

sound: m

A small closed loop with a tail hanging down.

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـم	ـمـ	مـ	م

✍ trace here

The same three letters — right to left



Sūrat al-Baqarah — the opening āyah.

You have just read the first āyah of the longest sūrah in the Qur'an.

The whole vowel system — three marks

بُ

ḍammah

loop above → the sound “u”

بِ

kasŕah

slash below → the sound “i”

بَ

fatḥah

slash above → the sound “a”

What is written is what is said — no silent letters.

Now read — right to left

مَا

“what”

مَال

“wealth”

لَمْ

“did not”

اللَّه

“Allah” — the Name you are here for

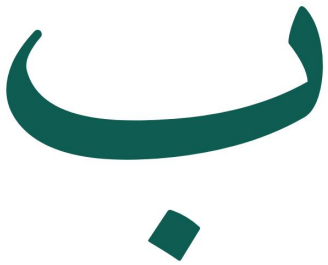
Task: write م ل l twenty times each, by hand, on paper.

Stage 0 · Lesson 2

The Tooth Family

Read five letters that share one skeleton and are told apart only by their dots.

Letter 1 of 5



bā’

b — one dot below

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـب	ـبـ	بـ	ب

✍ trace here

Letter 2 of 5



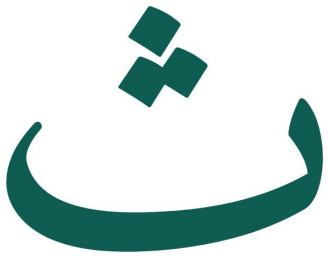
tā’

t — two dots above

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـت	ـتـ	تـ	ت

✍ trace here

Letter 3 of 5



thā’

th as in “think” — three dots above

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـث	ـثـ	ثـ	ث

✍ trace here

Letter 4 of 5

ن

nūn

n — one dot above, on a deeper bowl

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـن	ـنـ	نـ	ن

✍ trace here

Letter 5 of 5



yā’

y, or a long “ee” — two dots below

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـي	ـيـ	يـ	ي

✍ trace here

Your task before the next lesson

Write ب ت ث ن ي five times each, by hand, on paper.

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Stage 0 · Lesson 3

The Letters That Refuse to Join

Learn the single most important shape rule in Arabic — the letters that never join to what comes after — plus eight new letters.

Letter 1 of 8

dāl



d — never joins to the letter after it

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـد	ـد	د	د

✍ trace here

Letter 2 of 8



dhāl

th as in “this” — never joins forward

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـذ	ـذ	ذ	ذ

✍ trace here

Letter 3 of 8

rā’

r, lightly rolled — never joins forward



final	medial	initial	isolated
ـر	ـر	ر	ر

✍ trace here

Letter 4 of 8



zāy

z — never joins forward

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـز	ـز	ز	ز

✍ trace here

Letter 5 of 8

wāw

w, or a long “oo” — never joins forward



final	medial	initial	isolated
ـو	ـو	و	و

✍ trace here

Letter 6 of 8

jīm

ج

j — one dot inside the bowl

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـج	ـجـ	جـ	ج

trace here

Letter 7 of 8

ḥā’

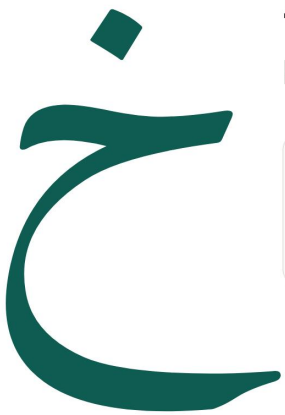
a deep h from the throat — no dot



final	medial	initial	isolated
ح	ـحـ	حـ	ح

✍ trace here

Letter 8 of 8



khā’

kh — one dot above

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـخ	ـخـ	خـ	خ

✍ trace here

Your task before the next lesson

Copy each non-joining letter (د ذ ر ز و) and notice the gap after it.

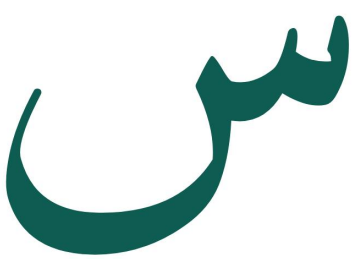
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Stage 0 · Lesson 4

Teeth and Loops

Meet the heavy letters — your first real threshold in tajwīd, where a light and a heavy sound change the meaning.

Letter 1 of 4



sīn

s — three teeth, no dots

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـس	ـسـ	سـ	س

✍ trace here

Letter 2 of 4



shīn

sh — three dots above

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـش	ـشـ	شـ	ش

✍ trace here

Letter 3 of 4



ṣād

a heavy s

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـص	ـصـ	صـ	ص

✍ trace here

Letter 4 of 4



ḍād

a heavy d — the letter Arabic is named for

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـض	ـضـ	ضـ	ض

✍ trace here

Your task before the next lesson

Say each pair aloud: س / ص, then د / ض — feel the weight change.

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Stage 0 · Lesson 5

Sounds From the Throat

Pronounce the four letters that are hardest for an English speaker — two of which are in the very first sūrah you will read.

Letter 1 of 4



ṭā’

a heavy t

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـط	ـطـ	طـ	ط

✍ trace here

Letter 2 of 4



ẓā’

a heavy dh

final	medial	initial	isolated
ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ

✍ trace here

Letter 3 of 4



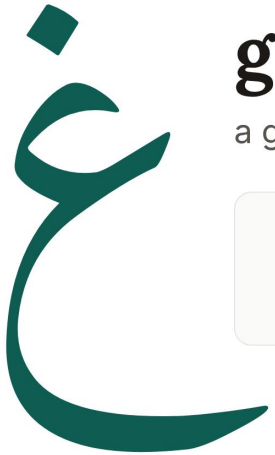
ʿayn

from the middle of the throat — no English equivalent

final	medial	initial	isolated
ع	ـعـ	عـ	ع

✍ trace here

Letter 4 of 4



ghayn

a gargle — like the French r

final	medial	initial	isolated
غ	ـغـ	غـ	غ

✍ trace here

Your task before the next lesson

Practise ع and غ slowly and patiently — a few minutes, out loud.

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Stage 0 · Lesson 6

The Last Four

Finish the whole alphabet — all twenty-eight letters, in six lessons.

Letter 1 of 4



fā’

f — one dot above

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـف	ـفـ	فـ	ف

✍ trace here

Letter 2 of 4



qāf

q — from the deep throat, two dots above

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـق	ـقـ	قـ	ق

✍ trace here

Letter 3 of 4



kāf

k

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـك	ـكـ	كـ	ك

✍ trace here

Letter 4 of 4

hā’



a light h, like “hat”

final	medial	initial	isolated
ـه	ـهـ	هـ	ه

✍ trace here

Your task before the next lesson

Write out all 28 letters once, from memory if you can.

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Stage 0 · Lesson 7

The Marks That Make It Read

Learn the four marks that control timing, and the tā' marbūṭah — after this you can read any fully-marked word.

بْ

sukūn

no vowel — the letter is closed

بّ

shaddah

a doubled letter — held for the count of two



tanwīn

-an / -in / -un at the very end of a word



the long vowels (madd)

held for two counts: aa · ee · oo

ة

tāʾ marbūṭah

a “t” when you continue, an “h” when you stop

Your task before the next lesson

Point at any marked word in the mushaf and read it slowly, mark by mark.

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Stage 0 · Lesson 8

You Can Read al-Fātiḥah

Two weeks ago it was a wall of shapes. Now you read the whole sūrah from the mushaf — no transliteration anywhere.

Āyah 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝١

Āyah 2

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Āyah 3

الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝٣

Āyah 4

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

Āyah 5

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

Āyah 6

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Āyah 7

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنعَمتَ عَلَيهِم غَيرِ
المَغضُوبِ عَلَيهِم وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

Your task before the next lesson

Read al-Fātiḥah once a day from the mushaf. You have earned it.

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✦ The Complete Arabic Alphabet Reference

Keep this slide in front of you while reciting to recognize shapes and connection rules.

1 · FOUNDATION

alif ا ـا	ا
lām ل ـلـ	ل
mīm م ـمـ	م

Forms: الم

2 · TOOTH FAMILY

bā' ب ـبـ	ب
tā' ت ـتـ	ت
thā' ث ـثـ	ث
nūn ن ـنـ	ن
yā' ي ـيـ	ي

3A · NON-JOINERS

dāl د ـد	د
dhāl ذ ـذ	ذ
rā' ر ـر	ر
zāy ز ـز	ز
wāw و ـو	و

3B & 4 · HOOKS & S

jīm ج ـجـ	ج
ḥā' ح ـحـ	ح
khā' خ ـخـ	خ
sīn س ـسـ	س
shīn ش ـشـ	ش

4 & 5 · HEAVY PAIRS

ṣād ص ـصـ	ص
ḍād ض ـضـ	ض
ṭā' ط ـطـ	ط
ẓā' ظ ـظـ	ظ
'ayn ع ـعـ	ع

5 & 6 · FINAL LETTERS

ghayn غ ـغـ	غ
fā' ف ـفـ	ف
qāf ق ـقـ	ق
kāf ك ـكـ	ك
hā' ه ـهـ	ه

6 Non-Joiners: أ · د · ذ · ر · ز · و — Never connect forward!

Short vs Long: بَ بِ بُ · بَا بِي بُو — Hold Madd 2 counts

Marks: بْ (Sukūn) · بّ (Shaddah) · ة (Tā')

✦ Practice Drill 1: Accurate Pronunciation from the Holy Quran

Read directly letter-by-letter without transliteration, keeping the vowels crisp.

Method: Read each word fluently as one unit. If needed, sound out the letters individually: (وَجَدَ ➜ دَ - جَ - وَ). **Fat-hah (a) & Kasrah (i) Drills**

نَزَلَ الحديد: ١٦	حَسَدَ الفلق: ٥	وَعَدَ الحديد: ١٠	وَجَدَ القصص: ٢٣
حَكَمَ غافر: ٤٨	كَذَبَ القيامة: ٣٢	ذَهَبَ البقرة: ٢٠	كَسَبَ المسد: ٢
وَسِعَ البقرة: ٢٥٥	شَهِدَ البقرة: ١٨٥	فَرِحَ التوبة: ٨١	رَحِمَ يوسف: ٥٣

✦ Practice Drill 2: Joining Words & Flowing Reading

Connect words smoothly without pausing between letters. You are now reading real Quranic phrases!

Goal: Read each two-word pair in one breath, feeling the meaning directly.

Quranic Pairs & Context

سَجَدَ فَشَكَرَ	"He prostrated, then gave thanks"
وَعَدَ فَصَدَقَ	"He promised, and was truthful"
عَبَدَ وَحَمِدَ	"He worshipped, and praised"
خُلِقَ فَعَبَدَ	"He was created, so he worshipped"
رَضِيَ وَشَكَرَ	"He was content, and gave thanks"
صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ	"He was patient, and forgave"