

MAKING OUT ♂ IN ♀ ARABIC

From everyday conversation to the
language of love—a guide to
Arabic as it's really spoken!

by Fethi Mansouri

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TUTTLE PUBLISHING
Tokyo • Rutland, Vermont • Singapore

Contents

Introduction	iv
1 What's Up?	9
2 Basic Phrases	18
3 Got a Minute?	21
4 Hey There!	28
5 Look At That!	32
6 Coming and Going	34
7 Eat, Drink, Be Merry!	37
8 I Like It!	43
9 Curses and Insults	49
10 Party Talk	56
11 Getting Serious	65
12 Lovers' Language	71
13 The Other Side	79

Introduction

Making Out in Arabic is your passport to the living, breathing, colorful language spoken on the streets of the Arab world and the Middle East. It is the first book to give you access to the casual, unbuttoned Arabic that will allow you to express yourself in restaurants, cafes, and nightclubs, in crowded market places, and at train stations. Here you will find the warm-hearted language that you can use with friends, and also the rough-and-tumble language you can fall back on when you are ready for a fight.

Making Out in Arabic will be a useful companion throughout the Arab world – even when traveling in the furthest outbacks. So you want to meet people, make friends, eat out, go dancing, or just take part in friendly chitchat? A quick glance at *Making Out in Arabic* and you'll have the language at your fingertips.

PRONUNCIATION

Consonants

The imitated pronunciation should be read as if it were English. The emphatic consonants *d* and *t*, *s* and *z* represent more a question of volume than a separate sound.

th is pronounced like **th** in **three**;

dh is pronounced like **th** in **there**.

kh is pronounced like **ch** in Scottish **loch**;

gh is the voiced equivalent.

A few sounds do not exist in English, such as the uvular stop (q), which is pronounced like a "k" in the back of one's throat; a glottal stop (ʔ), an abrupt, momentary cutting off of air followed by an explosive release and the pharyngeal fricatives both voiced (ʕ) and voiceless (ħ). A voiced pharyngeal fricative is produced by forcing air through a narrow channel in the

back of the throat with vibrations at one's vocal chords while a voiceless one is produced in the same manner without vibrations at the vocal chords. To check if a sound is voiced, place your fingers on your throat and feel the vibrations.

Vowels

There are three basic short vowels in Arabic and three long ones. These are:

- a** as in **cat**
- aa** as in **far**
- i** as in **pin**
- ii** as in **clean**
- u** as in **put**
- uu** as in **noon**

Stress

Arabic words do not have a stress accent in the way that English ones do. However, individual consonants can exhibit stress by means of doubling. For example, in the word **kassara** "to break," the double **s** indicates consonantal stress as in the English name "Cassandra."

PRONOUNS

The following are the main Arabic personal pronouns:

I	anaa
You (singular, masculine)	anta
You (singular, feminine)	anti
He	huwa
She	hiya
We	nahnu
You (plural, masculine)	antum
You (plural, feminine)	antunna
They	hum

QUESTIONS

The easiest way of asking a question in Arabic is to use a question word at the beginning of the phrase or sentence, e.g.:

What's this?	<i>maa haadha?</i>
Which man?	<i>ayyu rajul?</i>
Which lady?	<i>ayyatu imra'a?</i>
Who are you?	<i>man anta?</i>
Why did the girl leave?	<i>limaadhaa kharajat al-bintu?</i>
When did the plane land?	<i>mataa habatat at-taa'ira?</i>
Where did he buy a shirt?	<i>ayna ishtaraa qamiis?</i>

An affirmative sentence (statement) may be turned into an interrogative one (question) by means of the word **hal**, e.g.:

The boy ate	<i>akala al-waladu</i>
Did the boy eat?	<i>hal akala al-waladu?</i>

NEGATION

Negation is expressed differently for nominal as opposed to verbal sentences.

When negating nominal and adjectival phrases, **laysa** or one of its variants is inserted after the noun or pronoun to which it refers, e.g.:

I am not angry ***lastu ghaadiban*** (literally "not I angry")

Laysa combines with the personal pronouns as follows:

I	<i>lastu</i>
You (singular, masculine)	<i>lasta</i>
You (singular, feminine)	<i>lasti</i>
He	<i>laysa</i>
She	<i>laysat</i>
We	<i>lasnaa</i>
You (plural, masculine)	<i>lastum</i>

You (plural, feminine) **lastunna**

They **laysuu**

In addition, there are four verbal negation words used according to the tense of the verb, e.g.:

laa	present	laa ashrab	I'm not drinking
lan	future	lan ashrab	I won't drink
lam	past	lam ashrab	I didn't drink
maa	past/continuing	maa sharibtu	I haven't drunk

What's Up? 1

Hello. مرحباً	marḥaban
How are you? كيف الحال؟	kayfa l-haal?
I'm fine. بخير	bikhayr
OK, I guess. الأمور عادية Not very common in Arabic.	al-umuur 'aadiyya
So-so. لا بأس	laa ba'sa
Things are busy. أنا مشغول جداً	anaa mashghuul jiddan
Things are hard. الأوضاع صعبة Literally, this means the situation (conditions) is not as good as it should be.	al-awḍaa' ṣa'ba
How have you been? كيف أنت؟	kayfa anta?
I've been fine, thank you. أنا بخير، شكراً	anaa bikhayr, shukran
What's new? هل من جديد؟	hal min jadiid?
What have you been doing? ماذا كنت تفعل؟	maadhā kunta taf'al?
Nothing much. ليس كثيراً	laysa kathiiiran

Nothing special. لا شيء يذكر	laa <u>shay'</u> yudhkar
I haven't seen you around for a while. لم أرك في المنطقة منذ فترة	lam arak fi l-mintaqa mundhu fitra
Yes, it's been a long time. نعم، لقد مضى وقت طويل	na'am, laqad mada waqtun tawiil
Have you been around? هل كنت في المنطقة؟	Hal kunta fi l-mintaqa?
What are you doing here? ماذا تفعل هنا؟	maad <u>ha</u> taf'al hunaa
How's Peter / Mary doing? كيف حال بيتر/ماري؟	kayfa haal Peter / Mary?
He's / she's fine. إنه/إنها بخير	innahu / innaha bikhayr
Anything new with Peter/ Mary? هل من جديد مع بيتر/ماري؟	hal min jadiid ma'a Peter / Mary?
What's wrong? ماذا حدث؟	maad <u>ha</u> hadath?
What's on your mind? ماذا يدور بفكرك؟	maad <u>ha</u> yaduur bifikrik?
Nothing. لا شيء	laa <u>shay'</u>
I was just thinking. كنت أفكر	kuntu ufakkir
I was just daydreaming. لقد سرحت بالتفكير	laqad sarihtu bit-tafkiir
It's none of your business. هذا الأمر لا يهمك	haad <u>ha</u> al-amr laa yahummuk

Mind your own business. ihtamm bima huwa min
اهتم بما هو من شأنك sha'nik

Leave me alone. utrukni liwahdii
اتركني لوحدي

Go away. idhhab min hunaa
إذهب من هنا

Fuck off. hill 'annii
حل عني

This is a colloquial expression which means "get out of my sight". The actual expression "fuck off" is not used in Standard Arabic.

Really? haqqan?
حقاً؟

Is that so? ahaakadhaa?
أهكذا؟



Are you sure? hal anta muta'akkid?

هل أنت متأكد؟

Yeah? aah, na'am?

أه، نعم؟

