Arabic A1, lesson 3: classroom objects and the article “ال”

A1 Lesson 3 of 18

You name ten classroom objects and learn to say “the” in Arabic.

Vocabulary | Dialogue | Grammar | Exercises

Pronunciation is written in Latin letters (ā, ī, ū = long vowels; ḥ, ṣ, ḍ, ṭ, ẓ = emphatic consonants; ʿ = the letter ع). The Arabic is always fully vowelled.

ARABIC	PRONUNCIATION	MEANING
كِتَابٌ	*kitāb*	a book
قَلَمٌ	*qalam*	a pen
دَفْتَرٌ	*daftar*	a notebook
حَقِيبَةٌ	*ḥaqība*	a school bag
طَاوِلَةٌ	*ṭāwila*	a table
كُرْسِيٌّ	*kursī*	a chair

ARABIC	PRONUNCIATION	MEANING
بَابٌ	*bāb*	a door
نَافِذَةٌ	*nāfidha*	a window
سَبُّورَةٌ	*sabbūra*	a board
مِسْطَرَةٌ	*mistara*	a ruler
وَرَقَةٌ	*waraqa*	a sheet of paper
مِمْحَاةٌ	*mimḥāh*	an eraser
هُنَا	*hunā*	here
هُنَاكَ	*hunāka*	there

KARIM

أَيْنَ الْقَلَمُ؟

ayna l-qalam?

Where is the pen?

SALMA

الْقَلَمُ هُنَا.

al-qalam hunā.

The pen is here.

KARIM

وَأَيْنَ الْكِتَابُ؟

wa ayna l-kitāb?

And where is the book?

SALMA

الْكِتَابُ هُنَاكَ.

al-kitāb hunāka.

The book is over there.

KARIM

وَأَيْنَ الْمِسْطَرَةُ؟

wa ayna l-mistara?

And where is the ruler?

SALMA

الْمِسْطَرَةُ هُنَا. شُكْرًا!

al-mistara hunā. shukran!

The ruler is here. Thank you!

The definite article “ال” (the)

“The” is **ال**, attached to the start of the word. The word then loses its final double sound (tanwin): كِتَابٌ (a book) becomes **الْكِتَابُ** (the book).

Before the 14 **sun letters** (ت ث د ذ ر ز س ش ص ض ط ظ ل ن), the ل of ال is not pronounced: the next letter is doubled. **السَّبُّورَةُ** is read “as-sabbūra”, not “al-sabbūra”.

Before the other letters (moon letters) you do say “al”: **الْقَلَمُ** (al-qalam).

Examples

ARABIC	PRONUNCIATION	MEANING
الْكِتَابُ	*al-kitāb*	the book (moon letter)
الْقَلَمُ	*al-qalam*	the pen (moon letter)
السَّبُّورَةُ	*as-sabbūra*	the board (sun letter)
الطَّاوِلَةُ	*aṭ-ṭāwila*	the table (sun letter)
النَّافِذَةُ	*an-nāfidha*	the window (sun letter)



Ibrahim explains

To know whether you say “al” or “as”, look at the first letter: sun or moon?

Previous lesson **All lessons** **Next lesson**