Arabic A2, lesson 17: asking questions

A2 Lesson 17 of 18

You ask the essential questions: who, what, where, when, why, how, how many.

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
مَنْ	*man*	who
مَاذَا	*mādhā*	what
أَيْنَ	*ayna*	where
مَتَى	*matā*	when
لِمَاذَا	*li-mādhā*	why
كَيْفَ	*kayfa*	how

ARABIC	PRONUNCIATION	MEANING
كَمْ	*kam*	how many
أَيُّ	*ayyu*	which
هَلْ	*hal*	do/is (yes/no question)
مِنْ أَيْنَ	*min ayna*	from where
أَتَعَلَّمُ	*ataʿallamu*	I learn
الْعَرَبِيَّةُ	*al-ʿarabiyya*	Arabic, the Arabic language
بِلَادٌ	*bilād*	countries, lands
لِأَنَّ	*li-anna*	because

KARIM

لِمَاذَا تَتَعَلَّمِينَ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ؟

li-mādhā tataʿallamīna l-ʿarabiyya?

Why are you learning Arabic?

SALMA

لِأَنِّي أُحِبُّ السَّفَرَ إِلَى الْبِلَادِ الْعَرَبِيَّةِ.

li-annī uḥibbu s-safara ilā l-bilādi l-ʿarabiyya.

Because I like travelling to Arab countries.

KARIM

وَكَيْفَ تَتَعَلَّمِينَ؟

wa kayfa tataʿallamīn?

And how do you learn?

SALMA

أَقْرَأُ وَأَسْمَعُ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ.

aqraʾu wa asmaʿu kulla yawm.

I read and listen every day.

KARIM

وَكَمْ سَاعَةً تَدْرُسِينَ؟

wa kam sāʿatan tadrusīn?

And how many hours do you study?

SALMA

أَدْرُسُ سَاعَةً وَاحِدَةً.

adrusu sāʿatan wāḥida.

I study for one hour.

Question words

Question words go at the start of the sentence: مَنْ (who), مَاذَا (what), أَيْنَ (where), مَتَى (when), لِمَاذَا (why), كَيْفَ (how), كَمْ (how many), هَلْ (yes/no question).

كَمْ is followed by a singular noun with "an": كَمْ سَاعَةً؟ (how many hours?). أَيُّ is followed by a noun with a kasra: أَيُّ فَصْلٍ؟ (which season?).

To answer لِمَاذَا (why) start with لِأَنَّ (because): لِأَنِّي أُحِبُّ السَّفَرَ. With pronouns, لِأَنَّ + نِي gives لِأَنِّي (because I…).

Examples

ARABIC	PRONUNCIATION	MEANING
مَنْ هَذَا؟	*man hādhā?*	who is this?
أَيْنَ تَسْكُنُ؟	*ayna taskunu?*	where do you live?
كَمْ سَاعَةً تَدْرُسُ؟	*kam sāʿatan tadrusu?*	how many hours do you study?
لِمَاذَا؟ لِأَنِّي أُحِبُّ الْعَرَبِيَّةَ	*li-mādhā? li-annī uḥibbu l-ʿarabiyya*	why? because I like Arabic



Ibrahim explains

Answer “why” with li-anna: “because”. It is the start of every explanation.

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