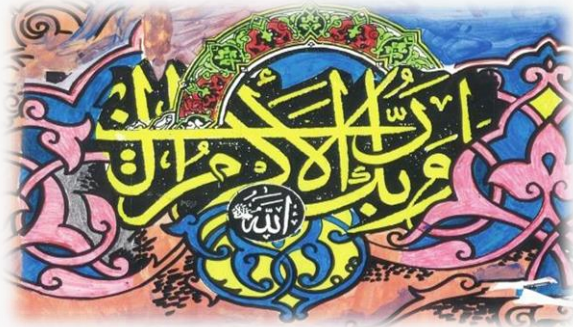


For example, if you're a woman, you may find yourself in a place where the local dress code is very conservative (headscarves and عباة [abaya] a robe-like dress). You should also avoid any public display of affection towards your partner, as this is also considered impolite or even illegal in some very conservative countries such as Saudi Arabia. Arabs are renowned for their hospitality and eagerness to honour their guests, which can sometimes put westerners in awkward situations. If you admire an item, your host may feel obligated to give it to you and you're obliged to accept his / her offer, since it's considered impolite to refuse a gift.



Islamic Art by Ibrahim Aduani

## 6. Famous quotations

**[Insha'Allah]** إن شاء الله

This very famous term, meaning God willing is the equivalent of the word 'hopefully' in English. e.g. Insha'Allah I will get a promotion. Although the saying has a religious concept and appears often in the verses of the Qur'an, it's also used by Arabic speakers in non-religious contexts.

**[Masha'Allah]** ما شاء الله

Another form of God willing. This expression is usually said after giving a compliment, in the same way that you say bless or knock on wood in English. It shows that someone is not envious of someone else's fortune, and that God is the reason for that good fortune, e.g. Your eyes are beautiful, Masha' Allah.

Well known proverbs of wisdom shared in Arabic and English:

قل لي من تعاشر ، أقل لك من أنت

[Kul lee man to'ashirakullaka man ant]

Tell me your friends I tell you who you are.

الصدیق وقت الضیق [Assadeeqwaqtaltheeq]

A friend in need is a friend indeed.

الطيور على أشكالها تقع [Attuyooraalaashkalihataka'o]

Birds of feather flock together.

## 7. Earliest form of written Arabic

The Arabic language is believed to have started among nomadic tribes in the **Arabian Peninsula**, long before the birth of Islam. However, this ancient Semitic language remained predominantly spoken and had no major written records until the 7th century AD. It was used for writing the Yemeni Old South Arabic languages and eventually developed into a pre-classical form of Arabic alphabet, the **Nabataean**.

## 8. Learn Arabic in Perth

Arabic language is being taught as a second and background language at the Australian Islamic College to all students from Kindergarten to Year 10 (compulsory), and to Year 11 and 12 students (Optional). Arabic language is also scored as a Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) subject for Year 12 students helping them to raise their marks for entering university. For more details, contact:

The Arabic Department, Australian Islamic College,  
139 President Street, Kewdale, WA. 6105, Australia  
Telephone: + 9362 2100, Fax: + 9362 5810, [www.aic.wa.edu.au](http://www.aic.wa.edu.au)



### References:

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<http://www.importanceoflanguages.com/LearnArabic/AL-MAWRID, English/Arabic Dictionary>.

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الكلية الإسلامية الأسترالية

Australian Islamic College / Perth

# Why Learn ARABIC?

*Facts and Information*

لماذا نتعلم

اللغة العربية

حقائق ومعلومات



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## Top 10 Reasons to Learn Arabic!

1. Arabic is the 5th most spoken language of the world. You will be able to communicate with over 300 million people from 22 Arabic speaking countries. It is also one of the official language of the United Nations, the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Conference, and the African Union. In addition, Arabic is the sacred language of over a billion Muslims around the world.
2. There is a great demand for speakers of Arabic. Many job opportunities in the Arabic speaking world offer attractive incentives. Many excellent job opportunities are available for those who speak it in many fields such as journalism, trade, industry, education, finance and banking, translation and interpretation, consulting and the foreign service.
3. You will gain a greater perspective on the world we live in. You will learn how we are all connected and have a better understanding of the culture, background and traditions of Arabic- speaking countries.
4. Learning Arabic will help you better understand **Islam**, **the Quran** and culture. The Arab World contains a wealth of historical riches with archaeological sites, filled with the archaeological remains from significant events of the past, religious sites and a wealth of artistic, cultural, and human heritage that makes it very important to learn the language of the area and to explore it.
5. You'll impress the people around you. Knowing any foreign language is impressive and a language like Arabic is even more exotic and interesting.
6. Knowing Arabic would be a valuable negotiating tool when liaising with clients from the Arab World. You will set yourself apart in the business world because there will be no need for a translator anymore.
7. Learning Arabic will improve your memory. Learning a foreign language will improve your brain function because it's very challenging. In fact, latest research has shown that learning a second language helps fight against Alzheimer's disease and slows down the aging effects of the brain. (<http://www.importanceoflanguages.com/LearnArabic>)
8. You will have fun. You will learn a different type of humour and how people communicate in addition to new food, music and ways of life.
9. You will open opportunities to travel. By learning even a little bit of Arabic will give you the ability to travel to **the Middle East and North Africa**.
10. You will achieve a difficult goal. No one said it would be easy, they just said it would be worth it. Learning Arabic will be extremely rewarding.

## 1. Formal and informal Arabic Language

The "formal" Arabic language, known as **Classical Arabic** or **الفصحى**, **Fus-ha**, is the language in which the Qur'an is written and is considered to be the base of the syntactic and grammatical norms of the Arabic language. This Classical form of Arabic remains widely used by religious scholars and is taught in schools around the world. However, it is considered today more of a written language than a spoken one.

**Modern Standard Arabic**, is similar but easier than Classical Arabic. It's understood across the Arab world and used by television presenters and politicians, for example, as well as to teach Arabic as a foreign language. You'll also find it in newspapers and works of modern Arabic literature. In terms of "spoken" Arabic, there are many different **dialects**. An Arabic speaker from Iraq, for example, can find it almost impossible to understand a local Moroccan. However, both will be able to communicate in Modern Standard Arabic.



Arabic Calligraphy by Dr Moayad Abdul-Rahman

## 2. What do you already know about Arabic

Arabic has contributed numerous words to the English language like قطن [koton], cotton, سكر [succar] sugar, عنبر [anbar] amber, غزال [ghazal], gazelle, قيثارة [qithara], guitar, الكحول [alco'hooll], alcohol, صحراء [sahra'a], sahara, قيراط [qeerat], carat, and ليمون [laymoon], lemon, الجبر [aljabr], algebra, سفرة [safrah], safari, صندل [sandal] sandal, and زعفران [so'furan] saffron.

Arabic and English use the same **punctuation marks** and almost the same rules, but watch out as some of the symbols are inverted, such as the comma (،), or reversed, for instance, the question mark (؟).

## 3. How hard is Arabic to learn?

Arabic is a phonetic language. In other words, it is pronounced as it is written. The pronunciation of some Arabic letters, however, may take some time to master, as they are produced right at the very back of the throat. Some examples include:

ض [dh] as in ضوء [dhaww'], light,  
خ [kh] as in خروف [kharoof], sheep,  
ع [a'a] as in عنوان [a'anwan], address,  
ح [ha'e] as in حائط [ha'et], wall,  
ق [qa] as in قانون [qanoun], law, and  
غ [gh] as in غيمة [ghayma], cloud.

In Arabic word order, the verb comes first, so to say "the boy drank the water" you actually say "drank the boy the water": شرب الولد الماء [sharebaalwaldoalma'a]. Adjectives come after the noun, rather than before as in English: السيارة الحمراء [assayaraalhamra'a], literally the car the red. The Arabic language is written right to left.

## 4. If I learn Arabic, will it help me with any other languages?

Arabic is a **Semitic language** and therefore shares similarities with other Semitic languages, such as **Aramaic** and **Hebrew**.

In terms of writing, several languages use the Arabic alphabet, such as **Persian/Farsi**, **Urdu**, **Pashto** and **Kurdish**. Arabic learners would be able to read words or sentences written in any of those languages, but not necessarily understand what they're reading

## 5. Learn what to say and to do?

When meeting someone for the first time, use the greeting السلام عليكم [assalamua'alaikum], peace be upon you.

When asking for something, you start or end your request with the expression من فضلك [min Fadlak], which is a polite form of saying please.

When introducing someone, you say السيد [assayed], Mr., or السيدة [assayida], Ms., before their name.

Kissing is a 'no-no', unless the person draws you towards them and kisses you first. Play it safe, when greeting someone, by offering to shake the other person's hand.

Finally, your new acquaintance may put their hand on their chest instead of shaking your hand, as some religious people don't like any physical contact, especially with the opposite sex.

Learning Arabic will also have the advantage of introducing you to the customs, etiquettes and social mores of the Arab World.