

LESSON 3

In this lesson we learn the use of the Arabic definite article «al» which corresponds to the English “the”. When the definite article «al» is prefixed to a noun naturally the indefinite article (-n) is dropped, e.g.

بَيْتٌ

⇒

الْبَيْتُ

baitu-n

⇒

al-baitu

Arabic has 28 letters. Of these 14 are called Solar Letters, and the other 14 are called Lunar Letters. In the articulation of the Solar Letters the tip or the blade of the tongue is involved as in t, n, r, s, etc. The tip or the blade of the tongue does not play any part in the articulation of the Lunar Letters as in b, w, m, k, etc.

When «al» is prefixed to a noun beginning with a Solar Letter the «l» of «al» is assimilated to the Solar Letter, e.g. al-shams (the sun) is pronounced *ash-shamsu*. No change takes place in writing (الشَّمْسُ). The assimilation is indicated by the shaddah on the first letter of the noun.

No such assimilation takes place with the Lunar Letters, e.g. al-qamaru (the moon) is pronounced *al-qamaru* (القَمَرُ).

Here are some more examples of the assimilation of the «l» of «al» to the Solar Letters:

- al-najmu becomes *an-najmu*
- al-rajulu becomes *ar-rajulu*
- al-diku becomes *ad-diku*
- al-samaku becomes *as-samaku*

See the table of Lunar and Solar Letters (page 19 of the Arabic book).

Note that the «a» of «al» is pronounced only when it is not preceded by another word. If it is preceded by a word it is dropped in pronunciation, though it remains in writing, e.g. *al-baitu*. Here the «a» is pronounced, but if it is preceded by «wa» meaning “and” the «a» is dropped and the phrase is pronounced *wa l-baitu* not *wa al-baitu*.

To indicate this omission in pronunciation this sign « َ » is placed above the hamzah:

وَالْبَيْتُ

The initial vowel (a, i, or u) which is omitted when preceded by a word is called **hamazatu l-wasl**.

The door is open.

البَابُ مَفْتُوحٌ .

The pen is broken.

القَلَمُ مَكْسُورٌ .

Note:

We have learnt that the tanwīn is the indefinite article, and it is to be translated as «a», e.g. **يَيْتٌ** a house. This does not apply to adjectives like **مَفْتُوحٌ** “open”, and **مَكْسُورٌ** “broken”.

Vocabulary

غَنِيٌّ	rich	x	فَقِيرٌ	poor
طَوِيلٌ	tall	x	قَصِيرٌ	short
بَارِدٌ	cold	x	حَارٌّ	hot
جَالِسٌ	sitting	x	وَاقِفٌ	standing
جَدِيدٌ	new	x	قَدِيمٌ	old
قَرِيبٌ	near	x	بَعِيدٌ	far away
نَظِيفٌ	clean	x	وَسِخٌ	dirty
صَغِيرٌ	small	x	كَبِيرٌ	big
خَفِيفٌ	light	x	ثَقِيلٌ	heavy
الْوَرَقُ	paper		المَاءُ	water
التُّفَّاحُ	apple		جَمِيلٌ	beautiful
الدُّكَّانُ	shop		حُلُوٌّ	sweet
مَرِيضٌ	sick			

✍ Exercises:

Ex.1: (page 15)

These words are to be read and written with the correct ending, e.g.

مَسْجِدٌ *masjidun* is with tanwîn.

الْمَسْجِدُ *al-masjidu* has no tanwîn.

Ex.2: (page 15)

Fill in the blanks with the words given.

Ex.3: (page 16)

Fill in the blanks with suitable words. Note that the first word in the sentence should have «al» e.g.

الْبَيْتُ نَظِيفٌ . The house is clean.

Ex.4: (page 17)

Read and write with the correct ending.

Ex.5: (page 17)

Fill in the blanks with suitable words.

Ex.6: (page 18)

Match the words in (a) with those in (b)

Ex.7: (page 20)

Read and write the words keeping in mind the rules pertaining to Solar and Lunar Letters.