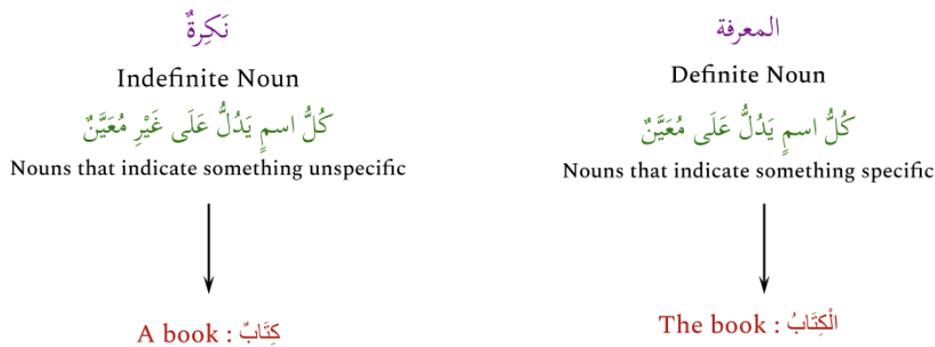


### 3 : THE DEFINITE ARTICLE (Alif Laam-ال)

- In Arabic, there are no distinct words equivalent to the English articles "a" and "an". For instance:
  - كتاب (kitab) translates to "a book"
  - مكتب (maktab) translates to "an office"
- In Arabic grammar, nouns are classified into two categories: Ma'rifa (المعرفة) and Nakirah (النكرة).

Nouns in Arabic can either be:



#### I. Ma'rifa (المعرفة) - Definite Noun

- A noun that is specific, previously mentioned, or already known to the listener or reader.
- Usually preceded by the definite article "ال" (Alif Laam).
- Can be a proper noun, a noun with a possessive pronoun, or a noun that has been previously mentioned.
- Example: الكتاب - The Book (specific book)

#### II. Nakirah (النكرة) - Indefinite Noun

- A noun that is general, unknown, or not previously mentioned.
- Not preceded by the definite article "ال" (Alif Laam).

- Can be a common noun, an unspecified noun, or a noun with an indefinite pronoun.
- Example: كتاب - A Book (any book)

★ Key difference between (المعرفة) and (النكرة)

**Definiteness:** Ma'rifa is specific, while Nakirah is general.

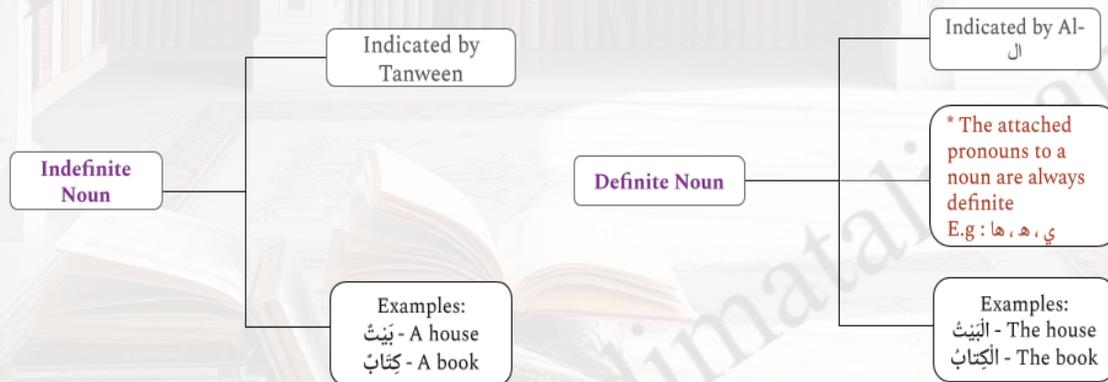
**Article usage:** Ma'rifa is preceded by "ال", while Nakirah is not.

**Context:** Ma'rifa is used when the noun is already known, while Nakirah is used when introducing a new noun.

- In Arabic, the definite article is denoted by the prefix "ال" (al-), also known as "معرف باللام" (mu'arrif bi-l-lam). This prefix is employed to indicate definiteness, transforming an indefinite noun into a definite one. The letter "ل" (lam) is the key element in conveying definiteness.
- Examples include:

كتاب - A book	الكتاب - The book
قلم - A Pen	القلم - The pen
مكتب - An office	المكتب - The office

Difference between a Definite & Indefinite Noun



Note: The ال and the تنوين can never coexist.

If the word is definite, its without tanween, and if the word is Indefinite, it has tanween.

## ★ Rules Governing ال (the Arabic Definite Article):

### ❖ No tanween with ال

- A noun having Arabic definite article ال can never have a double vowel (tanween).
- Incompatibility with Tanween: A noun prefixed with ال cannot have tanween (double vowel). In other words, tanween and ال cannot co-occur in the same word.
- Tanween Reduction: When a noun is prefixed with ال, the three types of tanween (ـَـ, ـِـ, ـُـ) are reduced to single vowels, resulting in -َـ, -ِـ, -ُـ.
- Indefiniteness Marker: Tanween (double vowel) serves as a marker of indefiniteness. The presence of tanween indicates that the noun is indefinite.

### ❖ Sun and Moon letters:

The Arabic alphabet is categorized into two distinct groups: Sun Letters and Moon Letters.

- Sun Letters: The Sun Letters (حُرُوفُ الشَّمْسِيَّةِ) are a group of 14 Arabic alphabets (ت, ث, د, ذ, ر, ز, س, ش, ص, ض, ط, ظ, ل, ن) that, when preceded by the definite article ال (al-), cause the "ل" (lam) to be silent and the initial letter to be doubled (ـلـ), resulting in a stronger sound, characterized by assimilation, where the sound of the letter is intensified or emphasized, and doubling of the initial letter.
  - **Examples of Sun Letters:**  
التَّالِبُ، الدَّرْسُ، الرَّجُلُ
- Moon Letters: The Moon Letters (حُرُوفُ الْقَمَرِيَّةِ) are a group of 14 Arabic letters (أ, ب, ج, ح, خ, ع, غ, ف, ق, ك, م, و, هـ, ي) that, when preceded by the definite article ال (al-), cause the "ل" (lam) to be pronounced clearly, without any change to the initial letter, characterized by the clear pronunciation of the "ل" sound, no doubling of the initial letter, and no assimilation, resulting in a consistent sound.

- Examples of Moon Letters:

أَبُّ, أَلْعَلُّ, أَلْمَالُ



## The Sun (الشَّمْسِيَّة) and The Moon (القَمَرِيَّة) Letters



**SUN LETTERS**

أ ب ت ث ج ح خ د ذ ر ز س ش  
ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ك ل م ن و ه ي

↓

The Rest of the Letters

Sun Letters + ال

❑Dropped

أَسْمَاءُ

أَهْدِينَا الصَّرِيحَ

The ال is dropped because it has a sun letter following it.

**MOON LETTERS**

أ ب ت ث ج ح خ د ذ ر ز س ش  
ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ك ل م ن و ه ي

↓

They form the word

أَبْعُ حَجَكِ وَخَفِ عَقِيمَهُ

Moon Letters + ال

❑Pronounced

أَعْطَيْتَكَ الْكَوْثَرَ

الْقَرْيَةَ

The ال is pronounced because it has a moon letter following it.

★ **Elision (القلب):**

Elision is a phonetic phenomenon in Arabic where the vowel "ا" (alif) is dropped or "elided" when it comes directly after a vowel, usually in the definite article ال (al-). This occurs when the word starts with a vowel or when the definite article ال is followed by a vowel.

- The House (البيت) (al bait) - In the house (في البيت) (fil bait)

The 'a' of 'al bait drops' hence, we get 'fil bait' rather than 'fi- al bait'