

8 : ADJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTIVE SENTENCES

In Arabic, An adjective (a word describing the noun) is either called “Na’t/نَعْتٌ” or “As-sifah/الصِّفَةُ”, and the noun it qualifies/ describes is called “Man’ut/مَنْعُوتٌ” or “Al-mawsuff/المَوْصُوفُ” and the clause thus formed is called either النَّعْتُ وَالْمَنْعُوتُ or المَرْكَبُ الوَصْفِيُّ.

Example: الجامعة الكبيرة , where الجامعة is المَوْصُوفُ / مَنْعُوتٌ and الكبيرة is الصِّفَةُ / نَعْتُ

★ Common Patterns of Adjectives

In Arabic, many adjectives display common patterns. It includes:

- **Basic pattern:** A fatha on the first consonant and a long yaa (yaa madd - ي) between the second and third consonants.

Examples:

طَوِيلٌ - Long/ Tall	قَدِيمٌ - Old	جَدِيدٌ - New	بَعِيدٌ - Far	قَرِيبٌ - Near
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- It often begins with مَ or مُ

Examples:

مُنَاسِبٌ - Suitable	مَشْهُورٌ - Famous	مَكْسُورٌ - Broken	مُضْحِكٌ - Funny	مُجْتَهِدٌ - Hardworking
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★ Rules of Adjectives/Adjectival Phrase

There are **two** rules regarding the adjective in Arabic:

- The adjective/descriptive word is placed after the noun, i.e., unlike English, the adjective comes systematically after the noun it qualifies.
- The adjective and its noun will be the same as each other/ agree with each other in 4 things:

- Gender - الجِنْس
- Quantity/ Number - العَدَد
- Definiteness - التَّعْرِيف
- Grammatical case ending - الإِغْرَاب

1. Gender - الجنس

- The adjective always follows the noun which it is describing in gender. The adjective of a masculine noun is masculine and that of a feminine noun is feminine.
- Examples:

A young boy - وَلَدٌ صَغِيرٌ

A young girl - بِنْتُ صَغِيرَةٌ

2. Number/Quantity - العدد

- When an adjective is added to a noun, it must agree with it in number. That is, if the noun is singular, the adjective must be singular; if it is dual, the adjective must be dual; and if it is plural, the adjective must be plural.
- Examples:

A young boy - وَلَدٌ صَغِيرٌ

Two young boys - ولدان صغيران

Young boys - اولاد صغار

3. Definiteness - التَّعْرِيف

- When an adjective is added to describe a noun or a noun phrase, **BOTH** the adjective and the noun followed by it must agree in the definiteness.
- That is, the *indefinite noun is followed by an indefinite adjective*, and the *definite noun is followed by a definite adjective*.
- Examples:

The big city - الْمَدِينَةُ الْكَبِيرَةُ

A poor man - رَجُلٌ فَقِيرٌ

4. Case Ending - الإعراب

- Arabic adjectives must also agree with the noun in case.

- This means that the ending of the adjective must change depending on the role of the noun in the sentence.

★ More About الإعراب

In Arabic, adjectives can have up to three different forms, depending on their use in the sentence.

When the noun or the adjective is

- assigned صَمَّة, it is called مَرْفُوع 'nominative'.
- assigned فَتْحَة, it is called مَنْصُوب 'accusative'.
- assigned كَسْرَة, it is called مَجْرُور 'genitive.'

1. The first form, known as the **Nominative**, is used when the adjective is the **subject** of the sentence.

Examples:

This is a new teacher - هَذَا مُدْرَسٌ جَدِيدٌ

The old book is at home - الْكِتَابُ الْقَدِيمُ فِي الْبَيْتِ

2. The second form, known as the **Accusative**, is used when the adjective is the **direct object** of the sentence.

Examples:

I saw a big masjid - رَأَيْتُ مَسْجِدًا كَبِيرًا

I heard a new story - سَمِعْتُ قِصَّةً جَدِيدَةً

3. The third form, known as the **Genitive**, is used when the adjective is the **object of a preposition**.

Examples:

The pen is in the small bag - **الْقَلَمُ فِي الْحَقِيْبَةِ الصَّغِيْرَةِ**

The water is in a broken glass - **الْمَاءُ فِي كَأْسٍ مَكْسُوْرٍ**

★ Adjectives with Color

- In Arabic, colour adjectives follow a special pattern that differs from most other adjectives. They usually begin with an alif **أ** and include an “a” vowel between the second and third root letters. e.g. **أَحْمَر**
- Each colour has a masculine form and a feminine form, and the feminine form is also used for non-human plurals.
- Basic Colors:

Color	Masculine Form	Feminine Form
Red	أَحْمَر	حَمْرَاء
Blue	أَزْرَق	زَرْقَاء
Green	أَخْضَر	خَضْرَاء
Yellow	أَصْفَر	صَفْرَاء
White	أَسْوَد	سَوْدَاء
Black	أَبْيَض	بَيْضَاء

- Example:

This is a green book - **هَذَا كِتَابٌ أَخْضَر**

This is a yellow bag - **هَذِهِ حَقِيْبَةٌ صَفْرَاء**

★ Adjectival/Descriptive Sentences (الجملة النعتية)

- This is a full sentence (nominal or verbal) that comes after a noun to describe it.
- Instead of just one word, the whole sentence acts as an adjective.
- Example:

رأيتُ رجلاً يضحكُ - I saw a man who is laughing.

يضحكُ is a verbal sentence in the place of a *na't* (adjective).

مررتُ بامرأةٍ شعرها طويلٌ - I passed by a woman whose hair is long -

شعرها طويلٌ

شعرها طويلٌ is a nominal sentence in the place of a *na't*.