

البَابُ السَّابِعُ
Chapter 7

Numbers One to Ten

7.1 Zero

The Arabic word for zero is صِفْرٌ and is written as a dot ٠. It is not used on its own to count anything.

7.2 One

Most arabic numbers have a مُذَكَّرٌ (masculine) and مُؤَنَّثٌ (feminine) form. When stating the number one isolated, the مُذَكَّرٌ (masculine) is used.

مُؤَنَّثٌ Feminine	مُذَكَّرٌ Masculine	الْعَدْدُ Number
وَاحِدَةٌ	وَاحِدٌ	١

7.2.1 We have used وَاحِدٌ (f) and وَاحِدَةٌ (f) as a صِفَةٌ (adjective).

كِتَابٌ وَاحِدٌ One book

لِمُحَمَّدٍ كِتَابٌ وَاحِدٌ Muhammad has one book
(lit. One book belongs to Muhammad)

لِمَرْيَمَ بِنْتٌ وَاحِدَةٌ Mary has one daughter

In the above examples, both كِتَابٌ and بِنْتٌ are singular nouns so they do not require وَاحِدٌ and وَاحِدَةٌ after them to express their singularity. وَاحِدٌ and وَاحِدَةٌ serve as emphasis.

(a) وَاحِدٌ may also be used as a خَبِيرٌ (predicate) .

هُوَ وَاحِدٌ He / it is one

هِيَ وَاحِدَةٌ She / it is one

7.2.2 أَحَدٌ (one) is an alternative to وَاحِدٌ. It is an اسْمٌ (noun) and cannot be used as a صِفَةٌ (adjective).

هُوَ أَحَدٌ He is one

The feminine of أَحَدٌ is إِحْدَى but إِحْدَى cannot be used on its own in this way.

هِيَ إِحْدَى ✗

(a) أَحَدٌ used on its own often to mean 'someone', 'anyone' or when negated, 'no one'.

هَلْ فَهِمَ أَحَدٌ الْكِتَابَ Did anyone understand the book?

هَلْ بَعَثَ أَحَدًا إِلَى الْبَلَدِ Did he send anyone to the town?

مَا ذَهَبَ أَحَدٌ No one went

7.2.3 There are three ways of expressing 'one of ...'. For example, to say one of the houses we may say:

1. وَاحِدٌ مِنَ الْبُيُوتِ
2. أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْبُيُوتِ
3. أَحَدُ الْبُيُوتِ

The latter two are better expressions in Arabic.

1. وَاحِدٌ مِنْ ...

وَاحِدَةٌ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ

One of the women

وَاحِدٌ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ

One of the men

We cannot use وَاحِدٌ or وَاحِدَةٌ in an إِضَافَةٌ (possession)

وَاحِدَةُ النِّسَاءِ ✗

وَاحِدُ الرِّجَالِ ✗

2. أَحَدٌ مِنْ ...

إِحْدَى مِنَ النِّسَاءِ ✗

One of the women

أَحَدٌ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ

One of the men

Note that the above structure cannot be used for the feminine

3. أَحَدٌ + مُضَافٌ إِلَيْهِ

إِحْدَى النِّسَاءِ

One of the women

أَحَدُ الرِّجَالِ

One of the men

7.3 Two

مؤنث Feminine	مذكر Masculine	Case	العدد Number
اثنان	اثنان	مرفوع	٢
اثنان	اثنان	منصوب and مجرور	

As the table above illustrates, the number two in Arabic is اثنان (m) / اثنان (f) when مرفوع and اثنان (m) / اثنان (f) when منصوب and مجرور. In short the -ان ending changes to -ان.

اثنان may be used on its own as a خبر (predicate).

هُمَا اثنان / اثنان

They are two

‘اثنان من ...’ renders ‘two of ...’.

حَضَرَ اثنان مِنَ الوُزَرَاءِ فَقَطْ

Only two (of the) ministers attended

قَرَأَتِ اثنان مِنَ النِّسَاءِ كِتَابًا

Two of the women read a book

أَخَذَ اثنان مِنَ الكُتُبِ

He took two of the books

دَخَلَ اثنان مِنَ الأَرْضِي

He entered two of the lands

7.4 Three to Ten

مؤنث* Feminine	مذكر* Masculine	العدد Number
ثَلَاثَةٌ*	ثَلَاثٌ*	٣
أَرْبَعَةٌ*	أَرْبَعٌ*	٤
خَمْسَةٌ*	خَمْسٌ*	٥
سِتَّةٌ*	سِتٌّ*	٦
سَبْعَةٌ*	سَبْعٌ*	٧
ثَمَانِيَةٌ*	ثَمَانٍ*	٨
تِسْعَةٌ*	تِسْعٌ*	٩
عَشْرَةٌ*	عَشْرٌ*	١٠

ثمانٍ is a منقوص* word and behaves the same way as وادٍ . The feminine ثمانية* behaves normally.

7.4.1 When standing alone, the feminine numeral is used

قرأ الولد الأعداد: واحدٌ , اثنانِ , ثلاثةٌ , أربعةٌ The boy read the numbers: one, two, three, four

Numbers are written from left to right.

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7.4.2 Counting between three and ten

- * When counting between three and ten the عدد* (number) exhibits reverse gender agreement or 'gender disagreement' with the مفرد* (singular) of the معدود* (counted noun). The thought process is as follows: Suppose we want to say 'three houses'. The معدود* (counted noun) we shall use is بيوت* . Should we use the masculine numeral ثلاث* or the feminine ثلاثة* ? To answer this, we need to look at the counted noun (بيوت*) and find its singular (بيت*). This is masculine so we need to use the numeral that disagrees with it, the feminine ثلاثة* .

(a) There are two ways of saying 'three houses':

1. صِفَةٌ (adjective) + اسْمٌ (noun)

بُيُوتٌ ثَلَاثَةٌ

Here are some further examples:

أَوْلَادٌ ثَلَاثَةٌ

بَنَاتٌ ثَلَاثٌ

مُلُوكٌ سِتَّةٌ

مَلِكَاتٌ سِتٌّ

كَتَبَ كُتُبًا ثَمَانِيَةً جَدِيدَةً

قَرَأَ كَلِمَاتٍ ثَمَانِيًا طَوِيلَةً

لِمَرْيَمَ بَنَاتٍ ثَمَانٍ حَمِيلَاتٍ

2. *indefinite* إِضَافَةٌ construction:

ثَلَاثَةٌ بُيُوتٍ

ثَلَاثَةٌ أَوْلَادٍ

ثَلَاثٌ بَنَاتٍ

سِتَّةٌ مُلُوكٍ

سِتٌّ مَلِكَاتٍ

كَتَبَ ثَمَانِيَةً كُتُبٍ جَدِيدَةٍ

قَرَأَ ثَمَانِيًا كَلِمَاتٍ طَوِيلَةً

لِمَرْيَمَ ثَمَانِيًا بَنَاتٍ حَمِيلَاتٍ

Three boys

Three girls

Six kings

Six queens

He wrote eight new books

He read eight long words

Mary has eight beautiful daughters

(b) If we make these expressions definite, we have the following

الْبُيُوتُ الثَّلَاثَةُ

The three houses

ثَلَاثَةُ الْبُيُوتِ

Three of the houses

We can also express this as

ثَلَاثَةٌ مِنَ الْبُيُوتِ

Note that when we make both of these expressions definite, we are no longer counting.

Here are some further examples:

كَتَبَ الْكُتُبَ الثَّمَانِيَةَ الْجَدِيدَةَ

He wrote the eight new books

قَرَأَ الْكَلِمَاتِ الثَّمَانِيَةَ الطَّوِيلَةَ

He read the eight long words

كَتَبَ ثَمَانِيَةَ الْكُتُبِ الْجَدِيدَةِ /

كَتَبَ ثَمَانِيَةً مِنَ الْكُتُبِ الْجَدِيدَةِ

He wrote eight of the new books

قَرَأَ ثَمَانِيًا الْكَلِمَاتِ الطَّوِيلَةَ /

قَرَأَ ثَمَانِيًا مِنَ الْكَلِمَاتِ الطَّوِيلَةَ

He read eight of the long words

7.5 One hundred and One thousand

مِائَةٌ (١٠٠, one hundred) and أَلْفٌ (١٠٠٠, one thousand) also work in an إِضَافَةٌ construction.

- * However, the مَعْدُودٌ (counted noun) remains singular and there is no gender agreement.

مِائَةٌ كِتَابٍ	One hundred books
مِائَةٌ الْكُتُبِ	A hundred of the books
مِائَةٌ كَلِمَةٍ	One hundred words
أَلْفٌ كِتَابٍ	A thousand books
أَلْفٌ كَلِمَةٍ	A thousand words
مِائَةٌ مِائَةٍ	A hundred hundreds
مِائَةٌ أَلْفٍ	A hundred thousand
أَلْفٌ مِائَةٍ	A thousand hundreds
أَلْفٌ أَلْفٍ	A thousand thousands

7.5.1 To count in hundreds and thousands between three and ten, we simply treat مِائَةٌ and أَلْفٌ as the مَعْدُودٌ (counted noun). The rules of gender disagreement for counting between three and ten apply. مِائَةٌ is feminine so we will always use the masculine numeral for it and أَلْفٌ is masculine so we will always use the feminine numeral for it.

ثَلَاثٌ مِئَاتٍ	Three hundred
ثَلَاثَةٌ آلَافٍ	Three thousand
مِئَاتٌ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ	Hundreds of men
آلَافٌ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ	Thousands of women