

Index to Foundation Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)

Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is an instrument of communication between all Arabs. All Arab children learn the rules of MSA at school and can therefore use it to be understood anywhere in the Arab World.

The Michel Thomas Method MSA courses will help you grasp this instrument of communication, so you too can be understood if you travel to an Arab country. It may be true that the spoken dialects vary considerably from one Arab country to the next, but the Michel Thomas Method MSA will act as a passport to the culture and spirit of the Arab World.

Note about transliteration

The Arabic words are transliterated so that you can read them even if you don't know the Arabic script. To show some sounds that don't exist in English we've had to use some extra symbols:

- ◌[◌] This represents the sound called 'ain'. It's like a deep 'aah' sound, that comes from the stomach rather than the throat.
- D, S, T, Z We use these capital letters to represent the 'back' versions of these sounds. Arabic distinguishes between pairs of sounds such as the English 's' of 'sorry' and the 's' of 'silly'. The 's' of 'sorry' is said at the back of the mouth, while the 's' of 'silly' is said at the front. In English these don't represent separate letters but in Arabic they do, and in this track listing we show them by using the capital letters.
- H We use this capital letter to represent the "breathy" version of the "h" sound. Arabic distinguishes between the "h" sound as in the English "hotel" and a breathier version, a little like the sound made when you're breathing on glasses to clean them. In Arabic these are separate letters.
- Capitals Except for the special use of D, H, S, T and Z to show 'back and breathy' sounds, capital letters are not used at the beginning of Arabic sentences or for proper nouns.
- Double letters In general these both need to be pronounced with the effect that the sound is lengthened: *sayyāara* 'car'; *ummee* 'my mother'.

Common Arabic signs

toilets

دورات المياه

entry

دخول

exit

خروج

no entry

ممنوع الدخول

police

الشرطة

ambulance

سيارة الإسعاف

hospital

مستشفى

tickets

تذاكر

information

استعلامات