

Mastering Arabic 1: Arabic Numbers

Formal counting system

The Arabic counting system is based on the concept of *singular* ('one'), *dual* ('two') and *plural* ('more than two'), combined with *masculine* and *feminine* (the two genders). With the cases added into the mix, the combination results in a complex formal counting system with variations in how individual numbers and their following nouns are spelt and pronounced. For this reason, use of unchangeable numerals in written Arabic is common and an example you can follow. You have seen that numbers 3–10 are followed by a plural noun ('three camels'), but that numbers 11 and above are followed by a singular noun ('twelve camel'). You have also learnt a simplified informal pronunciation of the individual numbers that can be used universally. Here are the formal spellings of the Arabic numbers when counting masculine and feminine nouns. They may be useful for recognition.

+ feminine noun (لُعْبَة, toy)	+ masculine noun (جَمَل, camel)	Numerals	
لُعْبَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ	جَمَلٌ وَاحِدٌ	1	١
لُعْبَتَانِ (إِثْنَتَانِ)	جَمَلَانِ (إِثْنَانِ)	2	٢
ثَلَاثُ لُعْبٍ	ثَلَاثَةُ جِمَالٍ	3	٣
أَرْبَعُ لُعْبٍ	أَرْبَعَةُ جِمَالٍ	4	٤
خَمْسُ لُعْبٍ	خَمْسَةُ جِمَالٍ	5	٥
سِتُّ لُعْبٍ	سِتَّةُ جِمَالٍ	6	٦
سَبْعُ لُعْبٍ	سَبْعَةُ جِمَالٍ	7	٧
ثَمَانِي لُعْبٍ	ثَمَانِيَّةُ جِمَالٍ	8	٨
تِسْعُ لُعْبٍ	تِسْعَةُ جِمَالٍ	9	٩
عَشْرُ لُعْبٍ	عَشْرَةُ جِمَالٍ	10	١٠
إِحْدَى عَشْرَةَ لُعْبَةً	أَحَدُ عَشْرٍ جَمَلًا	11	١١
إِثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ لُعْبَةً	إِثْنَا عَشَرَ جَمَلًا	12	١٢
ثَلَاثُ عَشْرَةَ لُعْبَةً	ثَلَاثَةُ عَشْرِ جَمَلًا	13	١٣
أَرْبَعُ عَشْرَةَ لُعْبَةً	أَرْبَعَةُ عَشْرِ جَمَلًا	14	١٤
خَمْسُ عَشْرَةَ لُعْبَةً	خَمْسَةُ عَشْرِ جَمَلًا	15	١٥
سِتُّ عَشْرَةَ لُعْبَةً	سِتَّةُ عَشْرِ جَمَلًا	16	١٦
سَبْعُ عَشْرَةَ لُعْبَةً	سَبْعَةُ عَشْرِ جَمَلًا	17	١٧
ثَمَانِي عَشْرَةَ لُعْبَةً	ثَمَانِيَّةُ عَشْرِ جَمَلًا	18	١٨
تِسْعُ عَشْرَةَ لُعْبَةً	تِسْعَةُ عَشْرِ جَمَلًا	19	١٩
عِشْرُونَ لُعْبَةً	عِشْرُونَ جَمَلًا	20	٢٠
إِحْدَى وَعِشْرُونَ لُعْبَةً	وَاحِدٌ وَعِشْرُونَ جَمَلًا	21	٢١
إِثْنَتَانِ وَعِشْرُونَ لُعْبَةً	إِثْنَانِ وَعِشْرُونَ جَمَلًا	22	٢٢
ثَلَاثُ وَعِشْرُونَ لُعْبَةً	ثَلَاثَةُ وَعِشْرُونَ جَمَلًا	23	٢٣
ثَلَاثُونَ لُعْبَةً	ثَلَاثُونَ جَمَلًا	30	٣٠
أَرْبَعُونَ لُعْبَةً	أَرْبَعُونَ جَمَلًا	40	٤٠
خَمْسُونَ لُعْبَةً	خَمْسُونَ جَمَلًا	50	٥٠
سِتُّونَ لُعْبَةً	سِتُّونَ جَمَلًا	60	٦٠
سَبْعُونَ لُعْبَةً	سَبْعُونَ جَمَلًا	70	٧٠
ثَمَانُونَ لُعْبَةً	ثَمَانُونَ جَمَلًا	80	٨٠
تِسْعُونَ لُعْبَةً	تِسْعُونَ جَمَلًا	90	٩٠
مِئَةٌ (مِائَةٌ) لُعْبَةً	مِئَةٌ (مِائَةٌ) جَمَلٍ	100	١٠٠

