

**INTRODUCTION TO LEARNING  
ARABIC**

**VOCABULARY  
MEMORIZATION:  
THE TICKETS  
METHOD**

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## Introduction

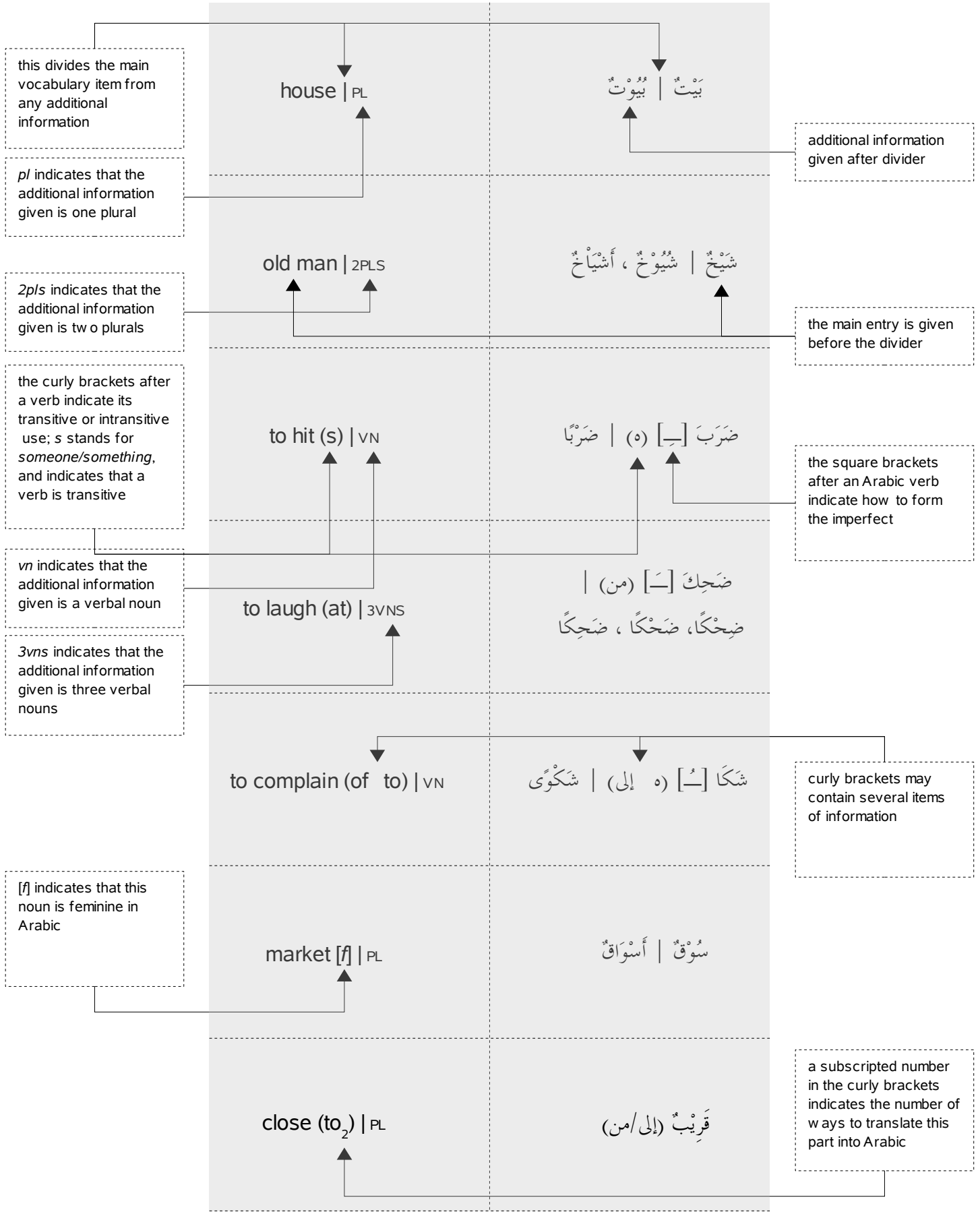
Before beginning the series of courses *Basic Arabic Grammar: Parts A-D* (TAS004A-D), it is recommended that students read and fully understand this document, which outlines a rigorous vocabulary memorization technique. A Vocabulary Tickets document is provided with the each grammar course textbook to facilitate the implementation of the technique here outlined.

# 1 Understanding the Vocabulary Lists

A small vocabulary list is included at the end of every chapter of the *Basic Arabic Grammar* textbooks, and a complete set of vocabulary tickets (see Section 2), organised by the chapter, is included in the Vocabulary Tickets document, which can be downloaded with each textbook.

After the English translation of each vocabulary item, additional information associated with that word is indicated, such as the number of plurals<sup>1</sup> if it is a noun, or the number of verbal nouns<sup>2</sup> if it is a verb, whether or not it is a transitive verb etc. This additional information is gradually introduced through the textbooks, but is illustrated below for reference.

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- 1 A single Arabic word may have a number of plurals. This is true of a few English words too (e.g. the plurals of *antenna* are *antennas* and *antennae*, the plurals of *fungus* are *fungi* and *funguses*), but is much more common in Arabic.
  - 2 As with multiple plurals (see note 1), a single Arabic verb often has more than one verbal noun.



The vocabulary lists at the end of each chapter give enough information to allow the students to use the nouns, adjectives and verbs correctly in any context.

It should be noted that not all the available associated information is given at this stage for every single word; it is sufficient, for example, to know only one plural for 'old man', and only one verbal for 'to laugh (at)'. At a later stage, as the student progresses in his or her Arabic, he or she should update the vocabulary lists (and also the tickets - see the next section) to include more information.

## 2 The Vocabulary Tickets

The Vocabulary Tickets document includes cut-out vocabulary tickets for each chapter. These tickets give the English translation of each vocabulary item, and indicate the additional information which the student should know about the item, in the same notation used in the vocabulary lists. In this manner, each ticket prompts the student to recall all the information he or she should have memorised about the word. This is illustrated below:

Vocabulary Ticket	Prompted Information
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">house   pl</div>	This ticket prompts the student to give the Arabic word for 'house' (بَيْتٌ), along with its plural (بُيُوتٌ).
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">old man   2pls</div>	This ticket prompts the student to give the Arabic word for 'old man' (شَيْخٌ), along with two of its plurals (شُيُوخٌ ، أَشْيَاخٌ).
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">to laugh (at)   3v.ns.</div>	This ticket prompts the student to give the Arabic for the verb 'to laugh' (ضَحِكَ [ـَ]), along with three verbal nouns (ضَحِكًا , ضَحِكًا and ضَحِكًا).
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">to complain (of... to...)   v.n.</div>	This ticket prompts the student to give the Arabic for 'to complain' (شَكَأ [ـَ]), along with the equivalent for 'of' (takes direct object: ة), the equivalent for 'to' (إِلَى), and the verbal noun (شَكْوَى).

### 3 Memorization Technique

1. The student should first memorise the vocabulary for each chapter from the lists provided at the end of each chapter, focussing in particular on English to Arabic. This is simply done by covering up the Arabic side of the page and trying to recall the Arabic word for each English word in the list. The student will, ideally, not need to refer to the vocabulary list after this stage.
2. Next, the tickets for that chapter should be used to repeatedly revise the vocabulary until the student is able to go through the tickets at pace, without hesitation, getting all the prompted information. Remember to shuffle the tickets before revising!
3. The student should make a daily habit of going through the tickets for all the chapters covered up to that point. If the vocabulary has been learnt well, this shouldn't take more than a few minutes. Care should be taken to keep the 'bundle' of tickets for each chapter separate (e.g. by using paper-clips to bind them together).
4. Words which the student struggled with during his or her revision should be put to one side. At the end of the revision session, these words should be looked up and re-memorised from the vocabulary list, and then returned to the appropriate bundle.

## 4 The Ticket Philosophy

The advantages of this ticket system are numerous:

- It makes vocabulary recall when speaking or reading much quicker, as learning from a list often results in memorising the particular page on which the list is given, without being able to use or recognise those same words in other contexts;
- It obliges the student to learn all the information necessary to use the word correctly;
- It is much more fun to revise words in this fashion, whereas revising from vocabulary lists tends to be dull. It therefore makes it much easier to form a habit of vocabulary revision.