Team Nisreen’s Fusha to Shami
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spelling etc</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consonants</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial consonant clusters</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vowels</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short vowel é</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping vowel @</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vowel dropping</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vowel shifting</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns, ‘here’, ‘there’ etc</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent personal pronouns</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object pronouns</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun suffix and la-</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The -la- object pronouns</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The carrier yaa-</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessive pronouns</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double object construction</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrative pronouns</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here and there</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question words</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who, what, which</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much, how many, how long etc</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where, how</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heek</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keza</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone, anyone; somewhere, anywhere etc</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nouns</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definiteness</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dual</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The plural ................................................................. 30
Collectives and their singulars ........................................ 31
Negation ......................................................................... 33
Adjectives ......................................................................... 34
Masculine, feminine and plural ........................................ 34
Agreement ........................................................................ 34
Modifying adjectives ..................................................... 35
Superlative and comparative ......................................... 36
Negating adjectives ......................................................... 36
Adverbs ............................................................................ 38
Verbs ............................................................................... 40
Verbs and pseudoverbs .................................................. 40
Agreement ........................................................................ 41
Negation ........................................................................... 42
Past tense .......................................................................... 45
  Conjugation .................................................................. 45
  Usage ............................................................................. 45
Present tense ................................................................. 47
  Conjugation .................................................................. 47
  Usage ............................................................................. 48
بكون bikuun ................................................................. 49
Subjunctive ................................................................. 50
  Conjugation .................................................................. 50
  Usage ............................................................................. 51
Imperative ................................................................. 56
  Conjugation .................................................................. 56
Participles ................................................................. 58
  Derivation .................................................................... 58
  Feminine and plural forms ........................................... 60
Object pronouns .......................................................... 63
Usage .............................................................................. 64
Participles and nouns-from-participles .......................... 67
Compound tense structures ......................................... 68
Future ............................................................................ 68
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The reciprocal pronoun</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocal verbs</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causatives</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>بـ b- or bé-</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مع ma3</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>عند 3énd</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>عن 3an</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>من mén</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لـ la-</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كـ ka-</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>على 3ala</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple prepositions</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causatives in context</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fractions</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Basic) maths</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing possibility, obligation, etc</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibility</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex prepositions</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>قدم 2éddaam</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>قد 2add</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>قبل 2ab@l ‘before’</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conjunctions

بـ ra **barra** .................................................................................................................. 133
بـ بكـ ت **b2alb** ‘inside’............................................................................................................. 134
بعد **ba3@d** ‘after’.................................................................................................................. 134
بين **been** ‘among, between’.................................................................................................. 134
بـ نـ **bnéSS** ‘in the middle of’ ............................................................................................... 134
دـ اـ ـير **daayer** ................................................................................................................... 135
جنـ **jamb, jamb** ‘next to’........................................................................................................ 136
جـ وـ **juwwa** ‘inside’................................................................................................................ 136
مواـ ـجـ ـه، مواـ ـجـ ـيـ ـه **mwaajeh, mwaajiih** ‘opposite’ ...................................................... 137
قـ ـا **2afa** ................................................................................................................................ 137
تحـ ت **ta7@t** ................................................................................................................................ 137
 طويل **Tool** ................................................................................................................................ 137
وسط **bwasT** ‘in the middle of’ .............................................................................................. 138
ورـ ا **wara** ................................................................................................................................ 138
حـ وـ الي **7awaali, 7awaalee** ‘around’ ..................................................................................... 138

Conjunctions

أـ بـ يـ **asba7** ................................................................................................................................ 140
أو **aw** ...................................................................................................................................... 140
بـ يـ **ba2a** ................................................................................................................................ 140
بعدين **ba3deen** ........................................................................................................................ 140
بـ س **bass** .................................................................................................................................. 141
فـ **far** ....................................................................................................................................... 141
كـ نـ و **ka2énno** ........................................................................................................................ 141
لـ ـ لـ ـ ـتي **la-, la7atta** ............................................................................................................. 142
لا **laa... laa** .................................................................................................................................. 143
لـ ـ ـ نـ و **la2énn(o)** ................................................................................................................... 143
مـ وـ دـ ام **maadaam** ............................................................................................................... 143
ما عـ د **maa3aad, مـ ـاقـ ـي** maaba2a ....................................................................................... 143
مـ شـ اـ نـ مـ شـ اـ ن نـ شـ اـ ن **méshaan ménsaahn 3ashaan** .................................................................. 144
كرمـ ال **kurmaal/kérmaal** ........................................................................................................ 144
شـ مـ شـ ـي، شـ ـي **shi... shi** ........................................................................................................ 144
وـ وـ **w-** .................................................................................................................................... 145
ولا **wala** ..................................................................................................................................... 145
ولا **wélla, willa** ....................................................................................................................... 146
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forms with -ma</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nouns + ma</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions + ma</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question words with -ma</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superlatives + ma</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combinations with énno</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb tables</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form I</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form II</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form III</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form V</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form VI</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form VII</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form VIII</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form IX</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form X</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quadriliteral verbs</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spelling etc

There are very few resources that discuss colloquial in anything other than an academic transliteration complete with intimidating dots, circumflexes and other unpleasant diacritics, and the ones that don’t do that often try and adopt some kind of terrible system of representing colloquial sounds using Arabic letters and diacritics (or spell everything like fuSHa).

Both of these systems have problems – the former reflect a time when colloquial was almost never written, which thanks to social media is firmly in the past, and the latter is absolutely terrible at accurately representing the way that colloquial Arabic is actually pronounced in real life.

To try and get the best of both worlds, in this document all Arabic words and example sentences are given in both their original Arabic spelling and in a transliteration based on the 3arabiizi occasionally used by native speakers to write Arabic when support for letters is not conveniently available. This has the downside of involving quite a lot of capital letters and numbers where an English speaker definitely doesn’t expect them to be.

Because spelling is not standardised, colloquial words can be written in a variety of different ways ranging from slightly modified fuSHa (قائلاً or even قائل for 2aayel) to the very phonetic (ئايل) to the unpredictable and weird (كون for -kon). Most speakers lean towards modified fuSHa spelling which reflects the usual pronunciation of those letters, alongside some odd conventions and phonetic spellings, which appear particularly in function words, suffixes etc. I’ve kept the sentences here mostly as they were where I found them, but I’ve got rid of some of the more bizarre spellings.

One particularly weird thing I have got rid of which you might encounter in real life is that in Syrian text-speak, ج 'the' is often not written at all. When it is written it is sometimes separated from the word it’s attached to: بَل بِيْت belbeet ‘at home’, هَال بِيْت halbeet ‘this house’. Even more weirdly, these ‘separated’ forms are sometimes written alongside هَال الْبِيْت. I can’t explain this, but I can warn you to watch out for it since it’s very counterintuitive.
**Consonants**

Most of the Arabic consonants are pronounced basically the same in Shami as in newsreader-style MSA, but just to showcase the transliteration we’ll list them all here;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Transliteration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ب</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ت</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>خ</td>
<td>kh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>د</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ر</td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ز</td>
<td>z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>س</td>
<td>s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ش</td>
<td>sh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ع</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غ</td>
<td>gh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ف</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ك</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>م</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ن</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ه</td>
<td>h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>و</td>
<td>w (when a consonant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ي</td>
<td>y (when a consonant)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You should be aware of the following sounds:

recommended – usually transliterated and pronounced as s in more common words.

In **higher-register** words like ثقافة ‘culture’ or ثورة ‘revolution’ some speakers may have th (as in English thin) as in fuSHa. This seems to be more common in southern Levantine than in northern Levantine – many Syrians cannot pronounce ث consistently as th and even when reading fuSHa will pronounce it as s.
Note that a lot of common words which have ت in fuSHa have a ت instead in colloquial: تلاات ‘three’, تين ات ‘two’, بعات ba3at ‘he sent’ – but this is not a rule you can generalise to just any word (حديث ‘conversation’).

- Usually transliterated and pronounced as ژ in more common words.

In higher-register words like ذهاب ‘to go’ some speakers may have دح (as in English that) as in fuSHa. This seems to be more common in southern Levantine than in northern Levantine – many Syrians cannot pronounce ژ consistently as دح and even when reading fuSHa will pronounce it as ژ.

As with ت, a lot of common words which have ژ in fuSHa have a د instead in colloquial: داقة daa2 ‘he tasted’, دواب daab ‘it melted’, بولةاد buulaad ‘steel’. This is not a rule you can generalise to all words however (ذوق ‘taste’, حبذ 7abbaz ‘he was in favour of’).

- Generally pronounced as in fuSHa, but in Syrian is sometimes not pronounced word-finally in a few common words like صحي ‘hot’.

- Generally pronounced as in English pleasure in northern Levantine and as in English jam in southern Levantine (although in southern Levantine both pronunciations occur).

J has a tendency to get confused with sounds produced in the same area of the mouth, and in a few common words like تجوز ‘get married’ and سدادة ‘carpet’ it has switched places with other sounds, producing jumbled-up versions of the fuSHa equivalents.

- In Levantine this is the emphatic equivalent of ت, pronounced velarised (with the back of your tongue raised). This is probably the pronunciation you were taught in fuSHa, but if your teacher was Iraqi you may have learnt to pronounce it as an emphatic version of ژ دح instead.

Note that there are a few words which have ض in fuSHa which have an emphatic ژ (ظ) in colloquial, at least for some speakers: ضابط ZaabeT ‘officer’, بالظبط biZZab@T ‘exactly’.

Especially in Lebanese but to some extent elsewhere, some words with ض may actually be pronounced د.

- Pronounced as in fuSHa with the back of the tongue raised. As with د these sounds are a bit confused with ض and some words appear with both in different areas or by different people (سقف سقث saffT/saffat ‘line up’, فقث فقث fa2aS/fa2as ‘hatch’). The most common word like this is ژد دقا دشدا2 ‘believe’, which is usually spelt as in fuSHa but pronounced with a normal s.

Z – depending on who taught you, you may have learnt the Levantine pronunciation in fuSHa – that is, an emphatic version of ژ. If, however, you learnt this sound as an emphatic version of ژ – a more prestigious fuSHa pronunciation – you should change it to ژ in Levantine.

There are a number of words with ض in fuSHa which instead have ژ in Levantine: ضلل Dall ‘he stayed’, ضله ژل ‘noon’, ضفر Défr ‘fingernail’. But this is not a rule that can be generalised to all words: ذيزل Zariif ‘nice’.

- Probably the most well-known ‘transformation’ from fuSHa to colloquial is the change of q to a glottal stop 2. Generally speaking, most more colloquial words undergo this change: بقé2i ‘it remained’, داق daa2 ‘he tasted’, قال ژال ‘he said’.
However, many words – especially higher-register ones – retain their q sound: ثقافة saqāfe ‘culture’, مقالة maqāle ‘article’. There are some more common words that typically retain ق too: وقء wēqe7 ‘rude’. (In Lebanese all q can become a glottal stop, however).

The glottal stop pronunciation is probably the most sensible for non-native speakers to adopt in any country. Although regional dialects exist which have q, g, or even k instead of a glottal stop, they are relatively marked. The one exception to this might be Jordan, where men studying Arabic might be expected to use g in at least some situations (here is an article discussing the complexity of the situation in Jordan).

ل – Generally pronounced as in fuSHa. In a few words, particularly الله and its derivations, l is pronounced emphatic/velarised (with the back of the tongue raised).

ء – Pronounced as in fuSHa as a glottal stop. However, most fuSHa hamzas have no equivalent in colloquial, being dropped and replaced by vowel lengthening or just going missing entirely.

Where the hamza appears in fuSHa conjugation patterns as a stand-in for vowels, they tend to be replaced by semivowels consistently, as in the active participle pattern faa2il (for hollow verbs), which in colloquial is replaced by faayil: دايق daaye2 ‘having tasted’, سابيق saaye2 ‘driving’.

**Initial consonant clusters**

Shami allows lots of consonant clusters that fuSHa does not, especially word initially (where fuSHa has none):

كلااب klaab ‘dogs’

صعون SHuun ‘dishes’

صغار Sghaar ‘little kids’

ضروب Droob ‘hit (it)’

It is often the case in common words (and patterns) that where fusha has an α- prefix or an unstressed short i/u in the first syllable, this will be dropped if it results in a cluster of only two consonants (so الأولاد becomes wlaad, حدود becomes 7duud etc). But this is again not a generalisable rule to all words and you should be careful not to over-Shamify higher register words!
Vowels

The actual exact pronunciation of the vowels in Levantine is, as in English, one of the many indicators of regional dialect. The most important thing for an initial learner is trying to approximate the sounds and keep the various different vowels distinct. You can worry about getting them closer to native pronunciation later when you have people to imitate.

Length

One of the most important things to worry about is length – you have to make your long vowels longer than your short vowels. The five long vowels are aa ii uu ee oo (ee and oo correspond to ay and aw in fuShA and probably sound to you, if you are a native English speaker, like the vowels in ‘late’ and ‘wrote’ and should not be confused with our vowels in ‘beet’ and ‘boot’).

كاتب kaatab ‘he wrote to’ and كتب katab ‘he wrote’ are distinct from one another.

من miin ‘who’ and من min ‘from’ are distinct from one another.

دوق duu2 ‘taste (it)!’ and دوق du2(2) ‘hit (it)!’ are distinct from one another.\(^1\)

In fuShA, there are almost no long final vowels that are not followed by a consonant. If you’re pronouncing fuShA right, then شهداء shuhadaa2 should have a long vowel in its last syllable, but ذكرى dhikra, despite being written with one, has a short final vowel (unless you learnt Tajwiid or something, in which case good for you). The only exception is in words like مباراة mubaaraa(h) where there is a final taa marbuuTa that is not pronounced. This is mostly the same in Levantine, with one exception: when we attach the pronoun ـه ‘he’ to a final vowel, that vowel is lengthened and the -h is dropped.

درس drési ‘study!’ is distinct from درسيه drésii ‘study it’

مصاري maSaari ‘money’ is distinct from مصاريه maSaarii ‘his money’.

Finally, in Palestinian and Jordanian, long vowels which are not stressed are usually shortened: مفاتيح mafatii7 ‘keys’ (not mafaatii7 as in Syrian and as the spelling suggests).

Short vowel é

In Palestinian and Jordanian, short u/i are distinct at all times. In Syrian and Lebanese, however, short u/o/e do not commonly occur in stressed syllables, merging into a sound we write with é (بدرس bédros ‘I study’, كتبó ktébu ‘write!’, شغل shégh@l ‘work’). This sound also occurs in some unstressed syllables (قدام 2éddaam ‘in front of’).

This sound is pronounced in a variety of ways depending quite predictably on the sounds around it. The two most common realisations in Damascene are as what is called in linguistics a schwa

\(^1\) Although in lots of Syrian and Lebanese dialects the latter is actually dé22 not du22 and has a different vowel quality entirely.
(approximately the central-ish vowel sound in English ‘but’) and as a kind of short i (similar to in English ‘pit’). This means that 

كنت kënt ‘I was’ sounds like kint, whilst حط وت 'put (it) down’ sounds sort of like English ‘hut’.

Note that this sound is being replaced in some words by its higher-register (fuSha) equivalent. حب for example (‘love’) is pronounced both 7ébb and 7ubb by different speakers.

**Helping vowel @**

Whilst initially Shami allows lots of consonant clusters, finally and across word boundaries it is less keen on them and usually breaks them up with a helping vowel @. This vowel cannot be stressed and the word takes stress as though it wasn’t there (تعلمت t3allam@t ‘I learnt’, مشمشه mésh@mshe ‘apricot’). Exactly which final consonant clusters are broken up depends on the speaker and the dialect, but here are some examples:

- فيلم fil@m ‘film’
- كنت kën@t ‘I was’
- بحر ba7@r ‘sea’

In Syrian and Lebanese this vowel is pronounced exactly like é. In Palestinian and Jordanian, where there is no é vowel, it is pronounced differently depending on the real (non-epenthetic) vowel before it. In verbs it is always e, but in nouns it is typically e after a i e and o after o u:

- فلم filem ‘film’
- كنت kunet ‘I was’
- عذر 3uzor ‘excuse’

The helping vowel is typically inserted into final consonant clusters when they appear before a pause or if the next word begins with a consonant which creates an unpleasant consonant cluster:

- الفيلم يل شفتو élfil@m yalli shéfto ‘the film I saw’
- رحت لعندو ré7@t la3éndo ‘I went to his house’
- اخدت دوى؟ اي اخدت akhad@t dawa? ee akhad@t ‘have you had some medicine? Yeah, I have

It can also be inserted in between words. This typically happens if the next word begins with a consonant cluster itself:

- انبسطت كتي mbasaTT @ktiir ‘I had a really good time’
- كنت اشتريت ként @shtareet ‘I had bought’
Vowel dropping

Unstressed o e i u in a final syllable are usually dropped when a suffix beginning with a vowel is added:

-كاتب, كاتب, كتاب ‘writer, writers’
-شرب, شرب, شرب ‘he drank’, ‘she drank’, ‘they drank’
-قالت, قالت ‘she said’, ‘she said to you’

Unstressed a is not normally dropped, except when the third person singular feminine suffix -et, -at is added:

-كتبت, كتبت, كتبت ‘she wrote’, ‘they wrote’

Vowel dropping can also occur across word boundaries when words are pronounced as part of a tight unit:

-شافت الفيلم ‘she saw the film’
-مدرسة محمد ‘Muhammad’s school’

Vowel shifting

Adding some suffixes results in a stress shift (according to the regular rules of stress). If this results in an unstressed e o i u becoming stressed, in Syr/Leb it changes into an é:

-بيكتب, بيكب ‘he writes’, ‘he writes for you’
-بتمسك, بتسمسك ‘you grab, you grab it’

When the -l- suffixes are added to a hollow verb, its long vowel is shortened. If the long vowel is ii or uu, then in Syr/Leb it is shortened to é:

-bقول، بقول ‘he says’, ‘he says to you’

When suffixes are added to nouns and adjectives ending in -i, it never drops (as in fusha ماشي ماسحون for example). Where the suffix is a nisba adjective suffix, it becomes -jyy:-

-حلبي, حلبي ‘Aleppan’, ‘Aleppans’

In most other cases it becomes -y:-

-ماسي ماسي ‘walking’
-مستوي مستوية ‘cooked’

There are a few exceptions, however, like form I defective passive participles:

-مطفي, مطفي ‘switched off’
Stress

The stress system of Levantine is pretty similar to the one usually taught as the standard for fuSha, with a few exceptions.

The placement of the stress depends on the ‘weight’ of the syllable. A syllable consisting of just a consonant and a short vowel (like daras, katab etc) is ‘light’. A syllable consisting of a consonant-short vowel-consonant sequence (like daras, katab) is ‘heavy’. Any other syllable is considered “super-heavy”. These syllables are either a consonant followed by a long vowel (maashi, woraa), a consonant followed by a vowel and then a consonant cluster (kalb, khawwaf@tni) or, more unusually, a combination of the two (Zaasse).

The rule is basically that if the final syllable of the word is super-heavy, then that takes the stress:

وراه waraa ‘behind him’
شايفتيه؟ shaayéfti? ‘do you see him?’
مزراب mézaab ‘gutter’

If not, then if the second-to-last syllable of the word is heavy or super-heavy, then that takes the stress:

مدارس madaares ‘school’
درستو darasto ‘you studied it’
اختارتنا khtaaartna ‘you chose us’

If not, then the third-to-last syllable automatically takes stress regardless of its weight.

درسو daraso ‘he studied it’
طلبة Talabe ‘students’

Note that the helping vowel is ignored when deciding where stress goes:

خوفتب khawwaf@tni ‘you scared me’
اخدتنا akhad@tni ‘you took me’

Since é and @ are pronounced the same, pairs like the following are only distinguished by stress:

دراستي darrasétni ‘she taught me’
درستي darras@tni ‘you taught me’

There are a few exceptions, mainly form VII verbs and related forms, where stress is not predictable in Syrian. In other dialects these forms are regularised:

بسيغيل byéshéghel ‘he works’ (Pal. bishtghel)
منتدا muntada ‘conference’
Pronouns, ‘here’, ‘there’ etc

Independent personal pronouns

The independent (منفصل) pronouns in Shami are as follows:

انا ana
انت inte/inte
اقت inti
هو huwwe
هي hiyye
نحنا, احنا ni7na, i7na
انتو intu
هنن, هنه, هن, هم, همه hinnen, hinne, hin, hum, humme

As you can see, most of the forms are pretty close to fuSHa. There are no dual pronouns and no plural feminine – the form hin(ne) is simply plural despite its similarity to the fuSHa feminine plural. The forms i7na, hum and humme are only used in Jor/Pal. Jordanian does not have the forms hinnen, hinne, hin, but Palestinian does.

Object pronouns

The object pronouns are pretty similar to fuSHa, especially if you’ve been taught the less literary variants used in many readings of MSA. They are also almost identical to the possessive pronouns:

- ana: -ni
- inte: -ak/k
- inti: -ek/ki
- huwwe: -o/h
- hiyye: -(h)a
- ni7na: -na
- intu: -kon, -kum
- hinne/hum: -(h)on, -hom

The forms -hom and -kum are only used in Jor/Pal, whilst -hon and -kon are not used in Jordanian. In Syr/Leb, -ha and -hon often lose their h.

-ak/k, -ek/ki and -o/h are found in all regions, but have two forms depending on what they are attached to. The first form is used following a consonant: تركتك تركتك تركتو tarakt-ak tarakt-ek tarakt-o. The second form is used following a vowel: بينساك بينساك بينساه byénsaak byénsaaki byénsaa(h). -h is not pronounced as an h, but has the effect of lengthening the final vowel of the word and shifting the stress: byénsa ‘he forgets’ is pronounced with the stress on the first syllable, whilst byénsaa ‘he forgets it’ is stressed on the second syllable.
When suffixes beginning with vowels are added to a verbal form, they can trigger the expected vowel dropping:

- بتشربو ‘you drink it’
- ضاربو ‘I’ve hit it’

**Pronoun suffix and la-**

Sometimes rather than just using a straightforward verb plus noun an object pronoun attaches to the verb and the object will instead follow la-:

- ضاربو لاحمد Darabto la-2a7mad

This can even happen when the direct object is a pronoun:

- ضاربو لالو Darabto la-2élo (or just élo)

This construction is sometimes used for emphasis, especially when the object is a pronoun, but often there is no clear reason why it is used as opposed to a simple direct object construction.

**The -la- object pronouns**

Completely unlike fuSHA, colloquial has a second set of suffixes derived from ‘to’ which regularly appear attached to verbs and certain other expressions, usually in the meaning of ‘to’ or ‘for’:

- ana: -li/élli
- inte: -lak/éllak
- inti: -lek/éllek
- huwwe: -lo/élllo
- hiyye: -léha, élla
- ni7na: -élln
- intu: -élkon, -élkom
- hinne, hum: -éllon, élhon, ilhom

The first four pronouns have alternative forms in -éll- which appear after consonant clusters:

- تركل tarak-li
- تركلك tarak-lak
- تركل tarak-lek
- تركلو tarak-lo
- تركتل tarakt-éllli
- تركتلك tarakt-élllak
- تركتل tarakt-éllek
- تركتلو tarakt-éllo

This of course includes doubled consonants:

- دقتي لك da22eetii-lak
- دقتك da22-élllk

As well as consonant clusters, for lots of speakers the -él- forms appear after -eet too:

---

1. For some speakers who drop the ḥ in pronouns the hiyye form also has two forms which act like this: -la and -élla.
When these four suffixes (\(-li\) \(-lak\) \(-lek\) \(-lo\)) are attached to hollow verbs, they (unlike normal object pronouns) cause a shortening of the long vowel:

\[
ykuun-lak > ykén-lak
\]
\[
bjiib-lak > bjéb-lak biira 'I’ll get you a beer'
\]

This applies even when another suffix comes between the \(-l\) form and the long vowel of the root:

\[
bét2uuli-lo > bét2ééli-lo 'you (f.) tell him'
\]
\[
bijiibu-lo > bijébuu-lo 'they bring him'
\]

The same thing happens with passive participles on the form \(maf3uul\) (where the long vowel is part of the pattern, not the root):

\[
masmuu7-li > masmé7-li 'permitted to me'
\]

The usage of these pronouns is very wide but it is basically analogous to the additional objects we see in English expressions like ‘I got you a present’ or ‘I told you a story’ or, when the person it references is the same as the subject, as in expressions like ‘get you a guy who can do both’:

طيب قول اسمها وانا بجبلك الها صوره

\(Tayyeb\ 2uuli\ isma\ w2ana\ bjéblak\ Zéla\ Suura\)

OK, tell me her name and I’ll get a picture up of her for you [= I’ll bring you of her a picture]

بظنلك بدون إبر أحسن خلينا طبيع

\(bzénnéllek\ biduun\ ébar\ a7san\ khalliina\ Tabii3i\)

I think [for you] without vaccinations is best, let’s keep it natural

The effect expressed by the \(-l\) suffixes does not necessarily have to be positive. Often it expresses some kind of negative effect which cannot be nicely translated directly:

مثل اللي ميتيتو لأخ

\(métl\ éli\ mayyétlo\ 2akh\)

Like someone whose brother has died [= the one for whom a brother has died]

وائل كفوري كسرلي رجل

\(waa2el@kfuuri\ kasarli\ réjli\)

Wael Kfoury broke [for me] my leg

سرقالي جراني

\(sara2uuli\ jézdaani\)

they stole [for me] my purse

There are also a large number of verbs (like 2aal ‘say’, da22 ‘ring’ etc) which typically take objects with \(la\)- when they are nouns but take these pronominal forms when they are pronouns.
لما يقولوك بالمطار مسمحك بنشطة وحدة بس

lamma y2éluulek bilmaTaar masmé7lek [< masmuu7-lek] b-shanTa wa7de bass
When they tell you in the airport you’re only allowed one bag [= one bag is permitted to you]

بس تفضي دقيـل

bass téFDa dé22élli
As soon as you’re free ring me [= tap for me]

انا جايه قلنلك شغله
ana jaaye 2élak shéghle
I’ve come to tell you something

There are also a few other functions of the normal preposition la- in which it occasionally ends up attaching to a verb, including as a ‘verb’ of possession (in which case it appears with kaan ‘to be’) and a few other miscellaneous cases:

عراسي أنا هو ناطرك لا ينككل فكر
3araasi 2ana hoon naaTrak laa ykénlak fék@
Of course, I’ll be here [= I’m here] waiting for you, don’t worry [= let there not be to you/let you not have thoughts about it]

اخختا كـرا صورة بالشمس
Zakhadélla keza Suura bishsham@s
I took a few photos of her in the sun

There are a limited number of non-verbs which take these suffixes, mainly comparative adjectives:

خليك بحالك اريحلك
khalliik b7aalak 2arya7lak
It’s better for you to keep yourself to yourself [= more comfortable for you]

برايي احسنلك ما تروح
b-ra2yi a7sanlak maa truu7
To me it’s better for you not to go [= better for you]

The carrier vaa-

As in modern fuSHa, in Shami it is impossible for a verb to carry two object suffixes at a time. When two object pronouns occur with the same verb, one of them must be carried by a ‘holder’, vaa-(clearly derived from إيّاه in fuSHa):

3aTiini yaa ‘give me it’
3aTeeto yaaha ‘I gave him it’

---

1 This is a passive of a verb sama7 la- b- whose object takes a preposition, b-. As such the normal object follows b- and the participle is in masculine singular. For more explanation see the section on the passive.

8 In this one a la- (see the section on prepositions or the example above) which is actually not directly related to the verb but to a noun – in this case ‘of’ in ‘a picture of her’ – is transformed into a suffix on the verb.
This is also used to carry object pronouns for a range of ‘semi-verbal’ constructions, most commonly 

بّدي، which already takes attached pronouns to mark its subject:

بّدي ياها béddi yaaha ‘I want it’

The -l- series of pronouns can also not, in Shami, coexist with suffixed object pronouns. Adding an -l- 

pronoun to a verb with a direct object pronoun forces the direct object off onto yaa-:

يا ريت تشف يياهي yaa reet tshéf-l yaa could you please have a look at it for me?

The yaa forms are also used in conjunction with w- when coordinating pronouns:

مّروح أتنا وياك ménruu7 ana wiyyaak you and me will go

أنا وياها ana wiyyaaha me and her

Possessive pronouns

As well as being placed in iDaafe with other nouns, nouns can take possessive pronoun suffixes 

which attach directly to the end of the word. The suffixes are as follows:

| ana:       | -/yi      |
| inte:      | -ak/k     |
| inti:      | -ek/ki    |
| huwwe:     | -o/h      |
| hiyye:     | -(h)a     |
| ni7na:     | -na       |
| intu:      | -kon, -kum |
| hinne/hum: | -(h)on, -hum |

-hum and -kum are Jor/Pal, -(h)on and -kon are found everywhere except Jordan but are more 

common in Syr/Leb. The forms -i, -ak, -ek, -o are attached to nouns ending in consonants; -yi, -k, -ki 

and -h to nouns ending in vowels:

كلبي كلبك كلبك كلبو kalbi kalbak kalbek kalbo ‘my, your, your, his dog’

مصاريي، مصاريك، مصاريكي، مصاريه maSaariyyi, maSaariik, maSaariiki, maSaarii ‘my, your, your, his 
money’

The forms -(h)a -(h)on usually drop the initial h. This usually does not affect the stress (the word is 

still stressed as though the h were still there) but for many Syrians it does:

ريحتها rii7ét-ha, rii7ét-a, rii7t-a ‘her smell’

When a suffix beginning with a consonant is attached to the ّ, it is stressed and becomes –ét-:
When suffixes beginning with vowels are added to any noun, they trigger the usual vowel dropping:

كاببو kaatbo ‘its writer’

مشيتو mashito~mashyto ‘his walk, way of walking’

**Double object construction**

As with the objects of verbs, speakers often use a ‘double possessive’ where a pronoun appears on the possessed noun and the possessor is then preceded by la-. This seems to happen particularly frequently with personal relationships but also appears elsewhere. It is important not to mistake these constructions for two separate elements of the sentence (‘her brother, to Nisreen’ rather than Nisreen’s brother):

اخوا لنسرين akhuwwa la-nisriin – Nisreen’s brother

رفيفو لمجيد rfi2o la-majiid – Majeed’s friend

**Demonstrative pronouns**

The demonstrative pronouns have a lot of regional variation. Here we will list only a few very common variants:

هاد هادا هيدا haad haada heeda – this (masc)

هي هادي هيدي heyy haadi heedi – this (fem)

هدول هول hadool hool – these (pl)

هاك nadaak – that (masc)

هديك hadiik – that (fem)

هدولاك هدوليك hadolaak hadooliik – those (pl)

The hee- forms and hool are Lebanese. Hadooliik is Leb/Syr, hadolaak Jor/Pal. All of these forms can be used on their own (meaning ‘this one’, ‘that one’ etc). They can also appear before definite nouns:

هي الفكرة hayy elfekra – this idea

In this position they can be contracted into ه ha-, which can stand in for all of them and can only appear with nouns:

هالبيت ha-lbeet ‘this house’

هالزلمة haz-zalame ‘this guy’
Note that whilst hal is obviously a contraction of ha- and the definite article l- and assimilates just like l-, in Syrian it can prefix to things that él- cannot, particularly definite iDaafe constructions:

هالبيت المخدة hal-beet lémkhadde ‘this pillowcase’ (< beet mhkhađd)

Using the full forms allows for emphasis and contrasting of different things, neither of which are possible with ha-. In the opposite direction, ha-sometimes carries additional nuance that the full forms do not. You don’t need to worry about this for now, though.

**Here and there**

The most common forms are:

هون hoon – here

هناك هنيك hunaak huniik~hniik – there

Huniik is Leb/Syr, hunaak Jor/Pal. Note that whereas English ‘here’ and ‘there’ can also express motion to somewhere (‘go there’, ‘come here’) in Arabic these require the preposition la-(تعال لهون ta3aal la-hoon, روح لهنيك ruu7la-hniik).

**Question words**

**Who, what, which**

شور ايش shu, eesh ‘what’

مين miin ‘who’

Shu is used in all dialects. Eesh is largely Southern Levantine.

اي اية, انواني eyy eyyet; anu ani ‘which’

Anu and ani are originally (and in some dialects) masculine and feminine, but in Damascene are used freely for both genders. Whilst eyy can be used to mean ‘any’, anu/ani can only be used to mean ‘which’.

Anu and ani can stand alone in the meaning ‘which one’, which eyy/eyyet cannot. However, all of these forms are usually, but not always, followed by waa7ed or waa7de in the meaning ‘which (one)’ (anu waa7ed, ani waa7de etc):

اني واحد بدك؟ ani waa7ed béddak?

which one do you want?

Prepositions referring to question words move to the beginning of the sentence rather than staying in place like in English:

لمن الجزدان؟ lamiin éjjézjdaan

whose [= to whom] is the purse?
How much, how many, how long etc

**Kam** is used with a following singular noun to mean ‘how many’:

- كام ليرة؟  
  *kam leera?*  
  how many lira?

- كام شخص؟  
  *kam shakhıs?*  
  how many people?

**2addeesh** usually (but not always) means ‘how much’:

- بقديش الجزدان؟  
  *b2addeesh éjjézdaan?*  
  how much is the purse?

Note that قديش is also the normal, idiomatic way of requesting any answer which contains a number, even in cases where in English we usually use ‘what’:

- قديش مواليدك؟  
  *2addeesh mawaalidiidak?*  
  what year were you born in [= what number is your birth year]?

- رقم تليفونك؟  
  *2addeesh ra2@m telefoonak?*  
  what’s your phone number?

Where, how

**ween ‘where’, mneen ‘from where’**

- كيف شلون  
  *kiif, shloon ‘how’*

**Kiif** is used everywhere. *Shloon* (originally a contraction of *shu loon ‘what is the colour of’) is only used in Syria. Despite its origins, *shloon* is an all-purpose word for ‘how’.
شلون بدي افتح الباب؟
*shloon bédî éfta7 élbaab?*
how am I supposed to open the door?

*Ween, kijf and shloon* all very commonly take pronoun suffixes: *weenak* ‘where are you’, *kiifak* ‘how are you’, *shloonak* ‘how are you’.

**Why**

ليش، ليه *leesh, leeh* ‘why’

*Leesh* is the more common form (probably from *la-eesh* originally).

**When**

ايمت ايمب *eemat eemta* ‘when’

اي ساعة *eyy saa3a* ‘at what time’

These can be combined with prepositions:

لايمت يرح نضل هيك؟
*lâeemat ra7 @nDêll heek?*
how long [= until when] are we going to go on [= stay] like this?

**Heek**

The form *heek* (not exactly a pronoun but in that general area) has a variety of meanings. On its own it typically means ‘in that way’, ‘in this way’, etc. It is essentially the equivalent of fuSHa *hekkâ* in this sense:

ليش؟ هيك
*leesh? Heek*

نحنا هيك
*né7na heek*
That’s just how we are.

بالمناسبة مين هيك بينغالظ؟
*bilmunaasabe miin heek byêtghaalaZ?*
And by the way – who [else] is rude like this?

تاغ لحدا بتحسو هيك
*taag la7ada bêt7éssso heek*
Tag someone you think is like this
رفاع ايدك هيك
rfaa3 iidak heek
Lift up your hand like this.

It also appears in comparisons meaning ‘that’ (generically, referring for example to a situation):

ولا احل من هيك
wala 2a7la mén heek
There’s nothing nicer than that!

It also commonly appears in tag questions:

رحبت امبارح مو هيك؟
ré7t @mbaare7 muu heek?
You went yesterday, didn’t you?

It also appears in the set phrases لهيك laheek and مشان هيك mishaan heek ‘thus, so, for that reason’ and مع هيك ma3 heek ‘nonetheless’. It can also appear in front of nouns meaning ‘such (a)’, etc.

Keza

The form كذا keza is often used synonymously to/as a slightly more elegant synonym of heek. In particular, وكذا w-keza is a common equivalent to ‘and so on’, ‘etc’:

قلولي عندك مقابلة وكذا
2éluuli 3éndek muqaabale w-keza
So they told me ‘you have an interview’ and so on...

Like heek, keza can also appear before nouns. Unintuitively, however, in this case it means ‘several’ and doesn’t mean the same as heek:

فيها شوية أخطاء أو خلينا متحكي كذا شغيلة ما عجبتي
fiiha shwayyet akhta2 aw khalliina ni7ki keza sheghle maa 3ajbatni!
It has a few mistakes or let’s say several things I didn’t like!

---

1 In Jordanian you will hear zayy heek, but this does not exist in other dialects.
2 You hear this sometimes in MSA – هكذا مشانك for example – but this is probably actually a borrowed structure from colloquial rather than the other way around as the fuSha structure is a recent innovation.
3 In Egyptian a cognate form keda is used as the all-purpose equivalent of heek, but this keza is probably recently borrowed from fuSha.
Someone, anyone; somewhere, anywhere etc

Generally the ‘some’ and ‘any’ element here is expressed with شيء shi used as a kind of indefinite article which also appears with other nouns (i.e. there are no dedicated words for this purpose):

إذا شيء مرة حبيت تلعب معي
\textit{iza shi marra 7abbeet tél3ab mâ3i}
if you want to play with me sometime [\textit{= on some occasion}]

بشي مكان \textit{bshi makaan} – someplace, somewhere

The only major exception is حدّا 7ada ‘someone’, ‘anyone’, which is always singular masculine:

 حدّا بيحك انكليزي؟
\textit{7ada byé7ki ingliizi?}
does anyone speak English?

ما شفت حدّا
\textit{maa shéf@t 7ada}
you didn’t see anyone

When it is the subject it is negated by ما:

ما حدّا شافتي
\textit{maa 7ada shaafni}
nobody saw me

In certain limited circumstances يمكن 3éndi can also appear in a similar meaning:

عندى يمكن يساعدني
\textit{3éndi miin ysaa3édni}
I have (someone, people etc) who can help me

في مين غيرك يحك عنو
\textit{fii miin gheerak yé7ki 3anno}
there are others [someone other than you] who will speak for him
Nouns

Gender

Nouns can be either masculine or feminine. In the singular, most feminine nouns are distinguished by the presence of ـة (a taa marbuuta), as in fuSha. Unlike fuSha, this is pronounced as –a or –e depending on the preceding sound: generally, it is -a after ط ص ض ظ خ ـ and -e after other consonants:

- ديدوبة dabduube ‘teddy-bear’
- محكية mé7kiyye ‘spoken’
- ملمونة mal3uune ‘naughty’
- بوسة boose ‘kiss’
- طريقة Tarii2a ‘way’
- ببضة beeDa ‘egg’
- شوشرة shooshara ‘fuss’
- ببطة baTTa ‘duck’

There are a few exceptions to this rule, almost all of them with r. These have to be learnt.

- ابره ibre ‘needle’ (also ibra)
- شفرة shafre ‘razor’

Most adjectives ending in -iir also follow this pattern:

- كبيرة kbiire ‘big’
- صغيرة zghiire ‘small’

But: اميرة amiira ‘princess’

There is one other common feminine endings, invariable -a, which is found in words like ذكرى zikra ‘memory’ and the feminine of colour (بضاء beeDa ‘white’) and nouns of ‘defect’ (هيلة habla ‘idiot’). A few words with this ending, like شتى shita ‘winter’ and دنيا dunya ‘world, are usually pronounced with final -e in Damascene (شête, dénye).

Unlike in MSA, many nouns that have final -a as a realisation of a final root vowel (like معنى ma3na ‘meaning’, مستشفى mustashfa ‘hospital) are treated as feminine at least some of the time.

In some dialects, including most or all Palestinian dialects, words ending in -aay ye elsewhere lose their final -e when not in construct state, producing forms like the following:
مراي mraay ‘mirror’ (Damascene mraaye)
كنباي kanabaay ‘sofa’ (D. kanabaaye)
عرباي 3arabaay ‘carriage’ (D. 3arabaaye)

As in MSA, there are a number of words with noة which are nonetheless feminine, but these words are not necessarily the same ones as in MSA (and vary by dialect – شااي is feminine for some people but not others’ for example). This includes most place names, letters of the alphabet, body parts that come in pairs, and the following common exceptions:

أرض arD ‘earth’
بلد balad ‘town, country’
بلاد blaad ‘country’
دفن da2@n ‘beard’
حرب 7arb ‘war’
مي may y ‘water’
سما sama ‘sky’
سكين sékkiin (also sékkiine) ‘knife’
دكان dékkaan (also dékkaane) ‘shop, stall’
شمس sham@s ‘sun’
طيز Tiiz ‘arse’

Definiteness

The definite article is (@)- (Syr/Leb) or (i)- (Jor/Pal) before single consonants. The initial vowel often drops, especially after other vowels:

البسة él-bisse ‘the cat’
بالبيت bi-l-beet ‘in the house’

As in fuSHa the l of the article assimilates to sun letters. The only difference is that ج is (optionally) a sun letter in Shami:

الجو éj-joww ‘the weather’

Before consonant clusters, the article is lé/li:

1 This is probably limited to dialects with the -aaye > -aay thing mentioned above – so shaay then patterns with other words ending in –aay.
الكتاب lé-ktaab ‘the book’

الكبير lé-kbiir ‘the big one’

As in fuSha, the definite is used for both specific things that the speaker and the listener are expected to understand the reference of (i.e. the way it is used in English) and for generics, languages, some countries etc. The definite plural or singular are often used to make generalisations, sometimes causing ambiguities:

السوري شغيل éssuuri shéghghiil
the Syrian is hardworking/Syrians are hardworking

يحب الكتب b7ébb élkétob
I love books/I love the books

This general rule results in a few cases where an indefinite is used in English but a definite is required in Arabic:

واحد بيضحك متل الحمار وتان بيضحك متل الدبابة
waa7ed byéD7ak métl lé7maar w taani byéD7ak métl éddabbaabe
One guy who laughs like a donkey and another who laughs like a tank!

لا عنا اتصالات متل العالم والخلق ولا بلد ولا مازوت ولا طرقات
lil2asaf laa 3énna ittiSaalaat métl él3aalam wélkhal@2 wala balad wala maazoot wala Tur2aat
Unfortunately we don’t have phones [communication] like normal people, nor a country, nor diesel, nor roads...

بتحك متل جماعة ضيعة ضابعة
bté7ki mét@l jamaa3et Dee3a Daay3a
You talk like someone/like the guys from A Lost Village [a TV series set in Latakia]

There are a few verbs/expressions however which always take indefinite objects where we would expect the definite, unlike fuSha:

بحكي عربي bë7ki 3arabi
I speak Arabic (not العربي)

هاد اسمو شغل haad ésmo shéghl
this is what work is [= this thing’s name is work, this is called work]

خلصت قراءة khallaSt @2raaye
I’ve finished reading
The dual

The dual is invariably formed with -een (there is no case variation):

- كلبين kalbeen ‘two dogs’
- كاتبين kaatbeen ‘two writers’

On feminine nouns with the suffix becomes -t:

- مرتين marteen ‘two women’
- حبتين 7aabteen ‘two pills’

Unlike in fuShHa, the suffix does not drop its n in iDaafe, and is rarely used with pronoun suffixes. Certain body parts that come in twos have what appears to be a dual suffix: éjreen ‘legs’, réjleen, ‘legs’, 3eeneen ‘eyes’. But this suffix acts differently. It *does* drop its -n in iDaafe and is often followed by pronoun suffixes, and is the normal way to express ‘someone’s Xes’:

- رجلبي réjleyyi ‘my legs’
- ايديي iideyyi ‘my arms’

It’s got us all tied up [= has tied our arms and legs]¹

These nouns also have a proper dual with -t- inserted which does not drop the n:

- عينتين 3eenteen ‘two eyes’
- رجلتين réj@lteen ‘two legs’

Also unlike in fuShHa, the dual is not compulsory whenever two of a noun is meant and the plural can be freely used in these circumstances. It is possible, in fact, to use tnee just like any other number with the plural noun in place of the dual: تنين رجال tneen @rjaal ‘two men’. Often the dual is used to introduce the idea of two Xes before switching to the plural thereafter.

The plural

In fuShHa nouns are usually pluralised in one of three ways: with the sound masculine -uun/iin, with the sound feminine -aat, or with some kind of broken plural pattern. This is largely the same in Shami. The sound masculine plural is invariably -iin (there’s no case), the sound feminine is -aat, and there is a bewildering array of broken plural patterns which can be largely predicted from the shape of the singular noun. Some of these are the same as fuShHa:

- مكتب مكاتب maktab makaateb ‘office’

¹ Cowell thinks these forms are normal plurals, but since we use the singular when talking about the single body parts of a number of people (e.g. قلب الناس ‘the hearts of the people’), it’s not unreasonable to say these are duals referring to the two arms and two legs of a number of different people too.
Some correspond to fuSHa patterns closely with minor adjustments in line with common correspondences:

- درس دروس *dars druus* ‘lesson’
- كلب كلاب *kalb klaab* ‘dog’
- شهيد شهدا *shahiid shéhada* ‘martyr’

Some seem to be unique to colloquial:

- فرد فرودة *fard fruude* ‘gun’

Also unique to colloquial is the formation of a number of plurals with the suffix *ة* or *ية* (-ُa/e or -iyye) which is normally restricted in fuSHa to feminines. This applies to a number of nouns, most particularly many *nisba* nouns:

- لبنانية *lébnaaniyye* Lebanese people
- مسيحية *masii7iyye* Christians (there’s also the weird plural *إسلام* *islaam* for *مسلم* *méslem/muslem*)
- شوفرية *shooferiyye* drivers
- حلبية *7alabiyye* Aleppans
- لعبة *la33iibe* ‘players’

It’s best just to learn nouns’ plurals as you encounter them (though Cowell’s Syrian grammar has an exhaustive list of patterns if you want to look it up).

**Collectives and their singulars**

Some nouns do not have a simple singular/plural distinction – they are collectives, which refer to an undifferentiated mass of stuff:

- ورق *wara2* ‘paper’
- بطاطا *baTaaTa* ‘potatoes’
- بندورة *banadoora* ‘tomatoes’

These nouns take singular agreement:

- السلاح مانو للولاد *lésla7 maano la-lévlaad*
  Guns [= weapons] aren’t for children
So far so fuSHa. Like fuSHa, in order to refer to a single item (e.g. a piece), we need a ‘singulative’. For most native nouns this is formed by addition of ﻏ،, producing a feminine singular noun. In many cases generic noun حبة 7abb (which itself is the singulative of 7abb) is typically used instead:

ورقة wara2a ‘piece of paper’
حبة بطاطا 7abbet baTaaTa ‘a (single) potato’

Lots of speakers are actually perfectly happy to form singulatives from loanwords like بطاطا:

بطاطية baTaaTaaye ‘a (single) potato’
بندوراية banadooraaye ‘a (single) tomato’

Of course, these singulatives can themselves be made into plurals and counted, usually with -aat but sometimes with a broken plural:

تلت بطاطيات tlett baTaaTaayaat ‘three potatoes’
تلت ورقات tlett wara2aat ‘three pieces of paper’

Collectives (and some other abstract nouns) also often have their own plurals formed with ﻏات. The use of these is difficult to summarise nicely because it’s very idiomatic, but here are some contexts in which they are used:

شو هالبر shu hal-bardaat
it’s so cold! = what is this cold we’re experiencing?

شو بيدك بهالثلج shu béddak b-hat-taljaat
what are you doing with that snow? = that snow in your hands

كيف اللحيم اليوم؟ kiif élla7maat élyoom?
how’s the meat today? = the meat in your shop

قهوة مرتين كثير طبيعين 2ahwaat marty ktiir Taybiin
my wife’s coffee is really tasty = the coffee she makes (the singular would imply the coffee that belongs to her, the coffee she is drinking as opposed to yours)

They can also have broken plurals, which often refer to large amounts or different kinds:

ميايا mayaaya ‘waters’
زيوت zyuut ‘oils’
Negation

Nouns and adjectives are typically negated with mish (Jor/Pal/Leb) or muu (Syr):

- مو متيح muu mnii7 – not good
- مو رجال muu réjjaal – not a man

There are exceptions to these rules but at this point they are not very important.

There is also a construction using the semi-verb maan- (or maal-) which is used in Syr/Leb: maani maanak maanek maano maan(h)a maanna maankon maan(h)on.

- مالي رايح maali raaye7 – I’m not going
- مانو مطبوع maano maZbuT – it’s not right
Adjectives

Masculine, feminine and plural

Adjectives typically only have three or four forms in colloquial – a masculine singular, a feminine singular, and a plural which does not distinguish gender. In most adjectives the feminine is formed through addition of -a/e, sometimes dropping an unstressed short vowel:

كبير كبيرة kbiir kbiire – big
شاطر شاطرة shaatTer shaatTra – clever
مشهور مشهورة mashhuur mashhuura – famous

The only other regular feminine pattern that exists is for adjectives of ‘colour and defect’ (basically adjectives with masculines formed on af3al), which have a feminine in fa3la and usually a plural in fee3l, as you would predict from their fuShHa forms:

أهبل هبل ahblah hbl – idiot
سود سودا swad sooda suud – black
اسمر سمرا asmar samra semr – brown-skinned

The plural is formed either through the addition of the suffix -iin or on a broken plural pattern (some of which are rare or nonexistent in fuShHa):

شاطر شاطرين shaatTer shaatTriin – clever
كبير كبير kbiir kbaar – big
قليل قليلة 2aliil 2alaayle – few

Many speakers have an optional feminine plural in -aat which can only occur with feminine plurals. Using this form is not compulsory for anyone, however, except perhaps some rural speakers:

طيب طيبات Tayyeb Tayybiin Tayybaat – tasty

Agreement

Dual nouns usually take plural nouns:

رجالين امواد réjjaaleen 2awaadim – two nice guys
شغالتين مهمين shégh@lteen muhummiin – two important things

Plural inanimate nouns, unlike in (modern) fuShHa, can occur with both feminine singular and plural adjectives. Where there is a nuance, it is that the singular generalises or collectivises more:
When the plural noun is used in a generic sense (i.e. when it is translated as ‘Xes are good’ and not ‘the Xes are good’), however, only the feminine is acceptable.

Matching feminine singular adjectives (or verbs) with plural animate nouns is also possible, although much less common (and again generalises).

As in fuSHa, adjectives agree with nouns in definiteness when they modify them:

- الكتب المنيح: 
  élkétob lémnii7a
  the good books

Modifying adjectives

Unlike in fuSHa, adverbs modifying adjectives, like *ktiir ‘very’* (and its fancier equivalent, *jiddan*) can go before the adjective as well as after it:

- كبير صعب:
  *ktiir Sa3@b
  very difficult

- عن جدا مفيد
  *3an jadd jiddan mufiid
  [it] really [was] very useful

- بس شوي حامي صراحة
  *bass shwayy 7aami Siraa7a
  but it’s a bit hot, to be honest
**Superlative and comparative**

As in fuSHa not all adjectives can have a superlative derived from them. Only the simpler superlative and comparative constructions (with no agreement) appear in colloquial. Superlatives cannot usually stand on their own and require a noun to come after them:

أشطر واحد
*ashTar waa7ed*
the cleverest (one)

If an adjective cannot form its own superlative, a construction with *aktar* immediately preceding the noun is used with the normal adjective:

أكثر واحد مجنون
*aktar waa7ed majnuun*
the craziest one

With a relative clause this sort of construction is the idiomatic way to say ‘the X I Yed most’ or ‘the one who Xes most’, as in these examples:

اكرشي حبيتو بالاردن
*aktar shi /abbbeeto béérdon*
the thing I liked most about/in Jordan [ = the most thing I liked in Jordan]

انا أكثر واحد يحيك
*ana aktar waa7ed b7ébbak*
I’m the one who loves you most [ = I’m the most one who loves you]

Comparatives follow as in fuSHa. Although they are invariable for gender and number, they do agree in definiteness where appropriate:

واحد اشطر مي
*waa7ed ashTar ménni* – someone cleverer than me

القنينة الاكر
*él2anniine él2akbar* – the bigger bottle

If an adjective cannot form its own comparative, a structure with the plain adjective plus *aktar* following it is used:

مجنون أكثر
*majnuun aktar* – crazier

**Negating adjectives**

Unlike fuSHa, nominal sentences (i.e. sentences like ‘the X is Y’) are usually negated with a particle rather than a verb. This particle is *muu* in Syrian and *mish* in the other Levantine dialects:

مش جديد, مو جديد
*mish @jdiid, muu jdiid*
(he’s) not new
This particle, as well as the غير you may be familiar with from fuSHA, can precede adjectives with articles, in which case they take the article:

المو معقول انو يرشح حالو
é-l-muu ma32uuul énno yrashshe7 7aalo
the unreasonable/unbelievable thing is for him to nominate himself

الشخص المو منيح
ésh-shakhS él-muu mnii7
the not good person

In Leb/Syr, adjectives can also be negated with the sort-of-verbal negative ‘to be’ structure, which conjugates for person as maani, maanak, maanek, maano, maan(h)la, maanna, maankon, maan(h)on. In Syria some people say maal- instead, and in Lebanon the forms are with mann- (not maan-).

ماني جديد
maani jdiid
I’m not new
Adverbs

Most adjectives can be used straightforwardly as adverbs to modify verbs:

عود ادمي
3ood 2aadami
Sit nicely! [= nice]

بتحكي عربي
bté7ki 3arabi mnii7
You speak Arabic well

This includes superlatives:

انت بتحك احسن مني
inte bta3ref a7san ménni
You know better than me

The equivalents of 7aal expressions with accusatives in fuShA are simply unmarked:

الشيكات بتجي هيك طويلة
éshsheekaat btéji heek Tawiile
Cheques are about this length [= come long]

ما في احلى من انو تجي ع البيت تعبان واجوعان وبتلاقي اهلك طابخين ملوخية
maa fii a7la mén énno térja3 3albeet ta3baan w-joo3aan w-bétlaa2i ahlak Taabkhiin @mluukhiyye
There’s nothing nicer than coming home tired and hungry and finding your family have cooked mlukhiyye

المسورة جاية فلتانة
élmaasuura jaaye faltane
The pipe’s come loose!

There are some fuShA adverbial expressions formed with the accusative suffix –an which are also commonly used in colloquial:

عاداً 3aadatan ‘usually’
اصلاً a5lan ‘to start with, anyway’
اساساً asaasan ‘basically’
مبديتاً mabda2iyyan ‘to start with, as a starting point’
خاصةً khaaSSatan ‘in particular, especially’
عامةً 3aammatan ‘in general, generally’

\[1\] This is an idiomatic use of اجي ‘to come’ which is combined with an adjective or a participle.
With *nisba* adjectives (formed with -i) this is quite productive, at least in higher-register contexts, just as in fuSHa:

- سياسيا *siyaasiyyan* ‘politically’
- عاطفيا *3aaTifiyyan* ‘emotionally’

There are also a few odd set expressions:

- ليل نهار *leel @nhaar* ‘every day and every night’

There are also many expressions formed with the prepositions بـ and علی. For these see the relevant sections.
Verbs

Verbs in Shami are almost as complex as they are in fuSHa. Like other dialects the fuSHa manSuub and majzuum and their unique triggers are gone, but in their place Shami has developed a distinction between a normal, declarative present tense (with a b- prefix) and a new subjunctive (lacking the prefix). The fuSHa future (sawf, sa-) is replaced by a variety of particles and prefixes (ra7, la7, la-, 7a-). Shami also has a continuous form, completely lacking in fuSHa. Like other dialects, it also makes much broader use of participles than MSA does.

In the first part of this section, I’ll talk about some generalities which apply to all verbs – negation and agreement. In the second part I’ll explain how to form and use the four main ‘tense’ forms of Shami – the past, subjunctive, b-present and imperative. In the third section, we’ll discuss compound tenses formed either with a combination of different verbs (the pluperfect, future perfect, subjunctive past etc) or with the addition of particles (the continuous and future). And in the fourth section, we’ll talk about participles and their semantics.

Verbs and pseudoverbs

Before getting into anything else, I should note that while most of this section will discuss normal verbs of the kind you’re familiar with from fuSHa, most of what will be said also applies to another group of words which we’ll call ‘pseudoverbs’. Pseudoverbs are words which act like verbs in spite of the fact that they are not – etymologically or structurally – verbs. This is a small category, but one which contains quite a lot of very important and common words:

- ﯽ bêdd/-badd- ‘to want’
- ﯼ/fiin-/fii- ‘to be able to’
- ﯾ/fii ‘to exist’, ‘to contain’
- ﯼ 3énd-, 3ind-, 3and- ‘to have’
- ﯼ 2él-, 2il- ‘to have’
- ﯼ ma3- ‘to have on oneself’, ‘to have enough money to’
- ﯼ 3alee- ‘to have to, to be compelled to’
- ﯼ laazem-, laazm- ‘to need, be necessary’

Most of these structures are originally prepositions, and their semantics are discussed in the prepositions section.

Unlike normal verbs, of course, pseudoverbs have no distinct tense forms (all non-present forms are produced by adding the relevant form of كاان kaan in the third person⁴). Their ‘conjugation’ for person and number is achieved by adding personal pronouns – the same personal pronouns, more or less, that normal verbs use to mark objects:

---

¹ This use of ‘tense’ might make linguists see red since in the normal jargon, these are strictly not tenses per se but combinations of tense, aspect and mood (TAM). But everybody knows what I mean by ‘tense’ here.
² ﯽ بّددٌ bi-waddi ‘[it is] in my desire [that]’, might be the most verb-like in this respect: for a lot of speakers, both kaan ﯽ بّددٌ and ﯼ ﯽ بّددٌ are acceptable. Some speakers also allow weird forms like ﯼ 3am bêddi with the continuous.
As such, when pseudoverbs do take objects, they have to use the carrier yaa-:

?ما عليك ياها؟
ما عليك ياها؟
ماعك؟
ما عليك ياها؟

béddi yaaha! – I want it!

However, in other regards they act largely like other verbs. They appear in the same position as verbs. And despite their etymology, for example, béd- ‘want’ or fiin- ‘be able to’ cannot appear directly in iDāfe or equivalent with a subject – they always carry a pronoun, which stands in for the conjugation endings of a normal verb:

béddo a7mad yéji kamaan
Ahmad wants to come too

الزلمة ما فينو يمشي
ézzalame maa fiino yémshi
The guy can’t walk

Pseudoverbs are also negated like verbs (i.e., usually with maa).

**Agreement**

Agreement in Shami is generally fairly straightforward, but works differently from the fuSHa system. Singular masculine nouns take singular masculine agreement, singular feminine nouns singular feminine agreement:

raa7et élbén@t
The girl went

raa7 élwalad
The boy went
The earth shook

Collective nouns – even though they are sometimes translated with a plural in English – also typically take singular agreement. Most, but not all, are masculine:

- The locusts swarmed down

- The potatoes have been boiled

Shami has no distinct feminine plural forms\(^1\) and no dual verbal forms. Feminine plurals and all duals take plural agreement which looks like the fuSHa masculine:

- All of the girls went

We’re all familiar with the fuSHa rule that inanimate plurals take feminine singular. In Shami, plurals of all kinds can co-occur with feminine singular – including animate ones:

- The children of Syria are freezing to death [= dying of cold]

- Men beget men!

With animates this typically implies a generic or collective meaning (where the subject is perceived as a group). It is probably more common with inanimates.

**Negation**

Unlike in fuSHa, the simplest default verbal negation in Shami is *maa*, which is used for all of the four simple tenses (past, present, subjunctive and imperative). For past, present and subjunctive, *maa* is placed in front of the verb straightforwardly, without triggering a change in form (as happens in fuSHa with لُن + *manSuub* and لَم + *majzuum*):

- I wrote
- I write
- that he writes
- I didn’t write
- I don’t write
- that he doesn’t write

\(^1\) Some regional dialects do have distinct feminine plural forms, but these are non-standard and likely to get laughs if used by a foreigners.
The negative imperative does use a different form – the subjunctive. This should come as no surprise, though, since the same applies in fuSHa (where the negative imperative is formed with laa + majzuum):

- Ktoob ‘write!’
- Maa téktob ‘don’t write!’

Note that pseudoverbs are also negated with:

- Béddi ‘I want’
- Maa béddi ‘I don’t want’

In southern Levantine, the alternatives ma-...-sh and the simple suffix -sh also exist, probably originally from maa... shi (e.g. ‘I don’t write a thing’).¹ The -sh suffix, like other suffixes, triggers final vowel lengthening or the insertion of a helping vowel where relevant:

- Ba7ki ‘I speak’
- Maba7kiish ‘I don’t speak’
- Shufo ‘I saw him’
- Shuftuush ‘I didn’t see him’
- Biddak ‘you want’
- Biddkaash ‘you don’t want’
- I7ki ‘speak!’
- Mat7kiish ‘don’t speak!’

The only case in which maa is unacceptable is with the independent subjunctive expressing wishes or third person imperative (see the section on the subjunctive). Here laa must be used as in fuSHa:

- Laa ykuun béddo ménni shi
- [I hope] he doesn’t want anything from me

Laa is also used by many Syrian speakers to negate the imperative, but maa is also acceptable. Use of laa here is a bit of a Syrian (or even Damascene) shibboleth:

- Ktoob! ‘write!’
- Laa téktob! ‘don’t write!’
- Shtérl ‘buy!’
- Laa téshtérl! ‘don’t buy!’

It can also replace maa when used in the coordinating expressions لا ... لا لا... لاa laa... laa and لا... ولا... لاa... wala ‘neither... nor’, discussed further in the section on conjunctions:

- Laa katab@t shi wala béddi 2éktob shi
- I’ve not written anything nor am I going to write anything

Forms with particles – عم, رح etc – can be negated with the noun/adjective negative particles muu, mésh, maani etc or with maa. This depends to some extent on regional dialect and speaker, but all of the following forms are acceptable:

- Ra7 ruu7 ‘I’m going to go’
- Maa ri7 ruu7 ‘I’m not going to go’
- Mesh ra7 ruu7
- Maa rëh ruu7

---

¹ These forms also exist in some regional dialects in Syria and Lebanon: masem3t@sh. In some places the form is not ma-...-sh but a-...-sh: afish ‘there isn’t’.
Participles, unlike other verbal forms, are exclusively negated with noun/adjective negators – which makes sense, given that in many ways they are much more like adjectives than like verbs:

- مثاني رايحة maani raay7a ‘I’m not going’
- مو رايحة muu raay7a ‘I’m not going’
- رايح raay7a ‘I’m going’

*Muu*, *mish* etc can also sometimes replace normal verbal negators with simple verb tenses. Here they add a specific nuance which can be difficult to pin down exactly. The following example sentences should give you some idea of the semantics of this:

- كول صندويشك مو مثل العادة ترجعلي ياها kool Sandwiishtak *muu métl él3aade* trajjé3li *yaaha*
eat your sandwich – *don’t go bringing it back* to me like usual!

- انت مش حكيت بدك تختق لبعد الامتحانات؟ *inta mish 7akeet biddak tikhtefi la-ba3d il2imti7anaat ya zalame?*
Man, I thought you said you were going to disappear til after the exams? [But here you are on Facebook!]

- انا مو قلتلك زعلانة لا تدق علب؟ *2ana muu 2éltéll ak za3laane laa tdé22 3aleyyi?*
Didn’t I tell you I’m upset, don’t call me? [= I certainly did, so why didn’t you call me and see if I was all right!]

- مو رحتو انت وياه؟ *muu ré7tu inte wiyyaa?*
Didn’t the two of you go? [I’m sure/thought you did?]

This can also happen when the whole sentence is being negated almost like a noun:

- الحملة كانت انو ما تغني فلسطين مش نمنعها تغني هون *él7amle kaanet 2énno maa tghanni bfilisTiin mésh némna3a tghanni hoon*
The campaign was for her not to sing in Palestine, not for us to stop her singing here
Past tense

Conjugation

The suffixes used for conjugating all past tense verbs are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>3rd Person</th>
<th>1st Person</th>
<th>2nd Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ana</td>
<td>daras-t</td>
<td>درست</td>
<td>انا</td>
<td>انت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inte</td>
<td>daras-t</td>
<td>درست</td>
<td>انتي</td>
<td>انتي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inti</td>
<td>daras-ti</td>
<td>درستي</td>
<td>انتي</td>
<td>انتي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huwwe</td>
<td>daras</td>
<td>ندرس</td>
<td>هو</td>
<td>هو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hyye</td>
<td>dars-et</td>
<td>درست</td>
<td>هي</td>
<td>نحن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ni7na</td>
<td>daras-na</td>
<td>درستنا</td>
<td>انتو</td>
<td>انتو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intu</td>
<td>daras-tu</td>
<td>درستو</td>
<td>انتو</td>
<td>انتو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hinen</td>
<td>daras-u</td>
<td>درسون</td>
<td>هنن</td>
<td>هن</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you can see, they generally line up with fuShA but without the final vowels, except -et. In Palestinian and Jordanian -at and not –et is used, as in fuShA. There are no dual forms and no plural feminine forms, and the forms for ana and inte are identical and can only be distinguished by context. The consonant cluster at the end of darast is often broken up with a helping vowel: daras@t.

Usage

As in fuShA, the past is used for single instances (i.e. not continuous or habitual action) in the past tense, meaning it generally lines up with the English simple past (‘I went’ etc). It is also often used in places where in English we would use the present perfect (‘I have been’):

هلا قريت بزمني شي بسنين تقرير، وشفت شي ميتين فيلم

halla2 2areet bzamaani shi sab3iin taqriir, w shéf@t shi miiteen fil@m

now in my time I’ve read some seventy reports, and seen some two hundred films…

مرة رحت السفارة

marra ré7@t 3a-ssafaara

one time I went to the embassy

An important usage that is very common is with verbs of becoming. With these verbs the past is used in a way that often lines up with the use of an adjective in English:

n3és@t – I’m sleepy (I’ve become sleepy)

shbé3@t – I’m full (I’ve had my fill/become full)

مليت malleet – I’m bored (I’ve become bored, got bored)
عرفت 3réf@t – I know (I’ve found out, I’ve worked out what you’re talking about)

حبيت 7abhbeet – I like, I’ve fallen in love with

In a few cases the past can express non-past meaning when triggered by specific particles:

بس فضيتي خبرتي
bass @fDiit khábbéni
As soon as you’re free [= get free], let me know

وبركي ما قدرت تجي؟
w-berki maa 2dér@t téji?
What if you can’t come?

The past tense verb also has an important secondary use in conditionals of various kinds which we will discuss in the introduction to conditional sentences.

1 Contrast this one with ما كنت اعرف ‘I didn’t know’.
**Present tense**

**Conjugation**

The forms are quite similar to the fuSHa subjunctive. As elsewhere, there are no dual and no plural feminine forms. There are two main sets of prefixes used for the present tense depending on whether the ‘stem’ (the part that remains constant between all the forms, like -dros- or -darres-) begins with a consonant cluster or a single consonant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Present Tense</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ana</td>
<td>b-é-dros (b-a-dros)</td>
<td>بدرس</td>
<td>انا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inte</td>
<td>b-té-dros (b-ti-dros)</td>
<td>بتدرس</td>
<td>انت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inti</td>
<td>b-té-dros-i (b-ti-dros-i)</td>
<td>بتدرسي</td>
<td>انتي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huwwe</td>
<td>b-yé-dros (b-i-dros)</td>
<td>بدرس</td>
<td>هو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hiyye</td>
<td>b-té-dros (b-ti-dros)</td>
<td>بتدرس</td>
<td>هي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ni7na</td>
<td>m-né-dros (b-ni-dros)</td>
<td>متدرس</td>
<td>نحن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intu</td>
<td>b-té-dros-u (b-ti-dros-u)</td>
<td>بتدرس</td>
<td>انتو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hinnen</td>
<td>b-yé-dros-u (b-i-dros-u)</td>
<td>بدرس</td>
<td>هنن</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are some important things to note. Where fuSHa has a in all of its prefixes, Syrian and Lebanese have é throughout and Jordanian and Palestinian have i throughout except in the first person where they have a–, like fuSHa. Secondly, because Jo/Pal have a- in the first person, this allows them to contract the third person masculine form byidros to bidros. This can lead to confusion for the learner, because in Leb/Syr bédros is first person, whilst in Pal/Jor it is third person masculine.

Also important to note, although not related to fuSHa, is the first person plural, where b-changes to m- under the influence of n-. This does not happen for all speakers, however, and bn- is common especially in Jo/Pal.
We should note one important exception to the Syrian/Lebanese selection of prefixes above. In the very common verbs 3éref ‘know’ and 3émel ‘do’, the prefix vowel is always a in these dialects:

![Table](image)

This is not the case in Jor/Pal, where we get instead regular forms like bti3ra.

**Usage**

The present tense with b- is used to talk about generalisations, habitual action and dispositions. This mainly lines up with its use in fuShHa or the simple present in English:

- **b7ébbak**
  - بحبك
  - I love you

- **bédro doktoor**
  - بدرس دكتور
  - I study medicine

- **bruu7 la-3éndo kéll yoom**
  - بروح لئندو كل يوم
  - I go and see him every day [= go to him]

Sometimes, however, it is best translated as ‘would’. This is its ‘dispositional’ usage and often involves a conditional, either implicitly or explicitly:

- **ma7alli ma7allak maa bédfa3**
  - محللي محلك ما بدفع
  - if I was in your shoes I wouldn’t pay

- **maa bruu7 3ala heek 7afle**
  - ما بروح على هيك حفلة
  - I wouldn’t go to a party like that

It can also occasionally express continuous meaning, (e.g. Jor/Pal bamza7 ma3ak ‘I’m joking’). But this is more commonly expressed with the particle 3am which appears before either the b- form or the b-less form of the present tense:
maa 3am béfham 3aleek
I'm not understanding you

3am yiji la-3éndak @ktiir hal-2iyyaam
he's coming to your house a lot these days

It is also commonly used for the future:

اي بروح بکرا
ee bruu7 bukra
yeah, I'll go tomorrow

And for polite requests/suggestions in Syr/Leb:

بتشرب قهوة؟
btéshrab 2ahwe?
would you like some coffee? [= will you drink]

بكون bikuun

The present tense form of the verb كان has a number of special uses. Firstly, it is commonly used (where we might expect no verb) when describing family relationships:

احمد بكون ابن خالي
a7mad bikuun ib@n khaali
Ahmad is my cousin

هلبنت شو بتكن؟
halbén@t shuu bétkén-lak?
what is this girl to you [= how is she related to you, she's your what?]

It’s also used for future or for expressing conclusions:

بکرا الصبح بكون ع باب بيتک
békra éSSéb@7 bikuun 3a-baab beetak
I'll be at your front door tomorrow morning

كل مخلوق بيتعتو فيديو خمس دقائق وبيضحك بعد دقيقة بكون مخلوق كاذب
kéll makhluu2 béb3atlo viidyo kham@s da2aaye2 w byéD7ak ba3@d da2ii2a bikuun makhluu2 kazaab
every person who I send a 5 minute video to who laughs [sends me a laughing emoji] after a minute is a liar [= must be, will be a lying guy]
Subjunctive

The form in Shami that looks more like the fuShHa present tense (and the present tense in lots of other dialects), without b-, is very similar in behaviour to subjunctives in European languages.

Conjugation

The subjunctive conjugates almost identically to the b-present, albeit minus the b-. There are two sets of prefixes – one for verbs whose present stem begins with a consonant cluster, and one for verbs whose present stem begins with a single consonant:

درس daras
‘study’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Conjugation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ana</td>
<td>é-dros (a-dros)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inte</td>
<td>té-dros (ti-dros)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inti</td>
<td>té-dros-i (ti-dros-i)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huwwe</td>
<td>yé-dros (i-dros)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hiyye</td>
<td>té-dros (ti-dros)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ni7na</td>
<td>né-dros (ni-dros)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intu</td>
<td>té-dros-u (ti-dros-u)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hinnen</td>
<td>yé-dros-u (yi-dros-u)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

درس darras
‘teach, put through school’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Conjugation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ana</td>
<td>darres (a-darres)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inte</td>
<td>t-darres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inti</td>
<td>t-darrs-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huwwe</td>
<td>y-darres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hiyye</td>
<td>t-darres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ni7na</td>
<td>n-darres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intu</td>
<td>t-darrs-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hinnen</td>
<td>y-darrs-u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One thing which is important to note is that in Syr/Leb, on verbs like darras, there is no first person prefix. This means that the first person singular form – darres – looks identical to the masculine singular imperative (also darres). This does not apply in Jor/Pal.
**Usage**

The use of the subjunctive is largely triggered by environment – that is, there is usually some other word in the sentence you can identify as the trigger. Most of these triggers are similar to those associated with subjunctive forms in European languages. Often, but not always, it lines up with the English to-infinitive or bare infinitive (or if you prefer, the fuShā use of the maṣdar and the subjunctive with 2an). It is used following expressions of desire:

- **بدي روح**
  - **béddi ruu7**
  - I want to go

- **بدي ياك تروح معى**
  - **béddi yaak @truu7 ma3i**
  - I want you to go with me

- **حابب امشي**
  - **7aabeb émshi**
  - I’d like to leave

- **يا ريت تعرف لي وقت الموعد**
  - **yaa reet ta3réf-li wa2t él-moo3ed**
  - I’d really like you to find out the time of the appointment for me

Fear, expectation and anticipation:

- **خايف تروح عليي الفرصة**
  - **khaayef @truu7 3aleyyi élférSa**
  - I’m scared I’ll miss/to miss the opportunity [= that the opportunity will go, to my detriment]

- **كان متوقع يصير كلشي الا هالحظة**
  - **kaan métwaqqe3 ySiir kéll shi élla hal-la7Za**
  - He had anticipated anything but this [expected everything to happen except this moment]

- **اما دخلت ع جهنم مين أول حدا ينتظر تشوغوف؟**
  - **iza dakhal@t 3a jahannam miin 2awwal 7ada btétwaqa3 @tshuufó?**
  - If you ended up in [= entered] hell, who’s the first person you’d expect to see [there]?

- **انا ماني مصدق ايمت يجي يوم وارفع علي سوريا**
  - **ana maani msadde2 eemat yéji yoom w-érja3 3ala suurya**
  - I can’t wait for the day to come when I go back to Syria [= I don’t believe when will come the day and I go back...]

**Ability and inability:**

---

1 See the section on uses of على.
I can’t sleep, I’m worn out, I don’t know what’s wrong with me

I’ve got time to walk around for a bit

I can’t work out [I’m not knowing] how to open the door

Is this what someone able to get married and start a family [= open a house] looks like? [= is this the shape of]

Compulsion, necessity:

you have to forget me

I was forced to go back home

He forced me to go and get him the books

She told me to forget about you

What’s stopping you from being one of the top students in the class?

I won’t let you talk [that way] about my beautiful month that I love so much!

---

Although this looks like it might be an imperative – ‘she told me “forget about...”’ – it is in fact a subjunctive, and to be an imperative we’d need 'Anne Entre' since otherwise the pronouns don’t make sense.
What is it that’s so urgent it made you delay your prayers? [ = this urgent issue that]

Starting and stopping:

بلش ببيض خلي من تمثيلك
ballash ydi2 khél2i mén tamsiilek
Your acting has started getting on my nerves [my temper started to narrow]

ما عاد اعرف مثل دور المجامله
maa3aad 2a3ref massel door lémjaamle
I can’t flatter people anymore [= I no longer know how to act the role of flatterer]

حاج تكشر
7aaj @ikashsher
Stop frowning

نص شباب الحارة تابت وقتها وبطلت تدخن من الخوف
néSS shabaab él7aara taabet wa2ta w baTTalet @tdakhkhen mn élkhoof
Half the kids of the neighbourhood repented that moment and stopped smoking out of fear

Expressions of opinion about (e.g.) activities:

I like walking around in the streets
b7ébb étmaasha bishshawaare3

I don’t like anyone taking advantage of me
maa b7ébb 7ada yéD7a 3aleyyi

It often appears after certain verbs – particularly verbs of motion – to express purpose. A similar construction exists in fuSHA with the jussive.

I want to go and see the doctor
béddi ruu7 shuuf éddoktuur

I’m going to bed [= going in to sleep]
ana faayet naam

I’ve come to tell you something
ana jaaye 2él-lak shéghle
More broadly, it is triggered by the various conjunctions expressing purpose:

منعني من الروحة ع بيروت مشان ما شوفك
*mana3ni mén érroo7a 3a beeruut méshaan maa shuufak*
he forbade me/stopped me from going to Beirut so I *wouldn’t/couldn’t see* you

جاي عبالي اركض بهالشوارع ل دور عليك
*jaa 3abaali érkoD bi-hash-shawaare3 la-dawwer 3aleek*
I feel like running in the streets to *look* for you

It is also used very commonly with expressions combining a preposition with *ma* and meaning for example ‘without’, ‘instead of’, ‘before’, ‘after’, ‘until’ etc (the equivalent of *fuSHa* من دون أن and other expressions). For more of these see the conjunctions section:

بلا ما يفوت ع البيت
*bala ma yfuut 3a-lbeet*
without coming inside

بعد ما ينام
*ba3@d ma ynaam*
after he *goes to sleep*\(^1\)

It is used with *كان* to form a past habitual, as in *fuSHa*:

كان يروح كل يوم
*kaan yruu7 kél yoom*
he used to *go* every day

In a possibly related usage, it commonly appears in past narratives (without *kaan*) expressing repeated action. In this sentence we could insert *Saar* but not *kaan*:

قعدت وراء الشوفر، كل شوي تمد ايدا وتعطيه حبة فستق
*2é3det wara shshoofeer, kéll @shweyy tmédd iida w ta3Tii 7abbet fésto2*
She sat behind the driver – every little while, she *stretched out* her hand and *gave* him a peanut

It is used without any triggering word commonly in prayers (‘may/let X happen’). This is the only construction in colloquial (other than the negative imperative) which is normally negated by *lāa* (as in MSA) rather than *maa*:\(^{ii}\)

**بعطلك العافية**
*yaa3Tiik él3aaafye*
[God] give you health

---

\(^{i}\) Some speakers distinguish habitual *بعد ما بنام* and future *بعد ما ينام* – the first would be used for example in ‘every day after he goes to sleep I read a book’ and the second in ‘after he goes to sleep this evening, I’ll read a book’.

\(^{ii}\) The only exception to this is *lāa... lāa* ‘neither... nor’.
لا تكون راجع لهون
\textit{lāa tkuun raajē3 lahoon}
(I hope) you’re not coming back here

A relatively common use related to this which is not easy to directly translate is approximately similar to the biblical English ‘let him’ (not in the sense of ‘allow’ but as a kind of third person imperative) suggesting a course of action:

اذا ضاع منو المفتاح يفوت من الباب الثاني
\textit{iza Daa3 ménno lmēfta3 yfuut mn élbaab éttaani}
If he’s lost the key, he can [= let him] get in through the other door

ما جدا يلمسيني
\textit{maa 7ada yēlmēsni}
Nobody touch me!

انا هيك اللي عاجبو عاجبو واللي ما عاجبو ينساني
\textit{ana heek. élli 3aajbo 3aajbo wélli muu 3aajbo yēnsaani}
is this how I am – those who it pleases it pleases and those who it doesn’t please should forget me

This form is also used for first-person action similar to English ‘shall’:

 سمعلك الغنية؟
\textit{sammā3ak ēlghēnnīyye?}
shall I play you the song?

بلش من اول وجديد؟
\textit{ballesh mén awwal w @jdiid?}
Shall I start again from the beginning [= from first and new]?

In Lebanese however the \textit{b-} form is used for suggestions where the question does not have a yes or no answer but has a question word or presents answers, as in the second example above (where Lebanese speakers would say \textit{šu ba3mēl-lak}).

In Pal/Jor, the subjunctive form is also used in suggestions to another person. In Syr/Leb, the \textit{b-}present is used here:

تشرب شاي؟
\textit{tishrāb shaay?}
Would you like to drink some tea?
**Imperative**

**Conjugation**

The formation of the imperative (فعل الأمر) is one of the major dividing lines between Jor/Pal and Syr/Leb. However, the differences are exclusively in form 1 (‘simple’) verbs. For non-form-1 verbs, the imperative is simply the present form with the prefix removed:

- تعلم t-3allam > 3allam ‘learn!’ (masc)
- علمي 3allmi ‘teach!’ (fem)
- اشتنفو t-shteghl-u > shtéghlu ‘work!’ (pl)

Sometimes, especially where it appears in fuSHa writing, the initial ا may be written in forms in Shami before consonant clusters. This does not mean it is necessarily pronounced.

For form 1 verbs, Jor/Pal work like fuSHa, prefixing i- or u- to the present form minus its prefix depending on the stem vowel for sound and defective verbs and using the present form minus its prefix on its own for hollow verbs:

- افتح ifta7 ‘open!’
- ادرس udros ‘study!’
- احكم i7ki ‘speak!’
- قول 2uul ‘say’

Syr/Leb follow Jor/Pal in their treatment of hollow and defective verbs, but with sound verbs (with three solid root consonants) they do not add a prefix but instead lengthen the stem vowel:

- فتاح ftaa7! ‘open!’ (< yéfta7)
- دروس! droos! ‘study!’ (< yédros)
- مسيك! mseek! ‘take!’ (< yémsek)

The vowel is not lengthened in the feminine and the plural, but neither is a prefix added:

- فتحي fta7i ‘open!’
- درس! drésu ‘study!’

This also applies to the imperatives of akal ‘eat’, akhad ‘take’ and 2é3ed ‘sit’, which are slightly irregular:

- خود خدي خدو khoood khédi khédu ‘take!’ (you might hear the shortened kho, khi)
- كول كلي كلو kool kéli kélu ‘eat!’
عود عدي عدو

3ood 3édi 3édu ‘sit!’ (compare with the regular Jor/Pal u23od).

عطني 3aTa ‘to give’ has an irregular imperative:

عطى عطني عطو 3aTi 3aTi 3aTu ‘give!’

ija does not have a regular imperative, replaced (as in fuShA) by the following forms:

تعال تعال تعالو ta3aal ta3aali ta3aalu
نع نعي تعو ta3 ta3i ta3u

A few other forms are used with imperative meaning that are not full verbal paradigms (or not verbs at all):

مكانك makaanak (makaanik etc) – ‘stop where you are’

ايدك iidak (iidik etc) – ‘put that down!’

And most commonly:

هات هاتي هاتو haat haati haatu ‘give me, hand over’ (e.g. ‘give us the money’)

Note the negative imperative:

كول صندويشتك مو مثل العادة ترجعلي ياها kool Sandwiishtak muu métl ël3aade trajjé3li yaaha
eat your sandwich – don’t go bringing it back to me like usual!
Participles

Participles (اسم فاعل و اسم مفعول) are much more broadly used in Shami than in fuSHa. Often described lazily as equivalent to the English continuous, this is only rarely the case and learning to use them properly (and understand their meaning) is very important to understanding normal speech.

Derivation

In Shami participle derivation is mostly similar to fuSHa. With form I verbs, however, there is some variation which is not predictable from the normal fuSHa-Shami sound correspondences. The following table shows the masculine singular active and passive participle forms of the different kinds of form I verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>كتاب</td>
<td>كاتب</td>
<td>مكتوب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كتاب</td>
<td>kaateb</td>
<td>maktuub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اخذ</td>
<td>2aakhd</td>
<td>ma2khuud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اخذ</td>
<td>2aakhd, maakhd (J/P)</td>
<td>ma2khuud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>وصل</td>
<td>waaSel</td>
<td>mawSuul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>وصل</td>
<td></td>
<td>mawSuul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>بائع</td>
<td>baaye3</td>
<td>mabyuu3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>بائع</td>
<td>baaye3</td>
<td>mabyuu3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>حس</td>
<td>7aases</td>
<td>ma7suus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>حس</td>
<td>7aasses</td>
<td>ma7suus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفي</td>
<td>Taafi</td>
<td>méTfi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفي</td>
<td>Taafi</td>
<td>méTfi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تعب</td>
<td>ta3baan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تعب</td>
<td>ta3baan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>سكر</td>
<td>sékraan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>سكر</td>
<td>sékraan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غافر</td>
<td>gheeraan</td>
<td>maghyuur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غافر</td>
<td>gheeraan</td>
<td>maghyuur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جاع</td>
<td>joo3aan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جاع</td>
<td>joo3aan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غلي</td>
<td>ghalyaan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غلي</td>
<td>ghalyaan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As you can see, as far as passive participles are concerned the differences from fuSHa are fairly minimal and limited to two cases:

- **Hollow verbs**, where the pattern is regularised to fall in line with the maf3uul pattern used elsewhere – producing mabyuu3 (rather than fuSHa مباع mubaa3). You might see this regularisation in MSA, too.
- **Defective verbs**, where in Syrian and Lebanese the vowel in the prefix (m- or ma-) is different from fuSHa (ma-). Of course, all of the fuSHa complications relating to tanwiin and so on in these forms (in fuSHa this form would be مطف matfin in nominative and genitive for example) can also safely be ignored.

With active participles, the situation is more complicated, because Shami has two basic patterns for form I active participles – faa3el and fa3laan – rather than the one (faa3il) typically used in fuSHa. For participles formed with faa3el the differences are again limited:

- The hamza in hollow verbs (e.g. fuSHa بائع baa2i3) is predictably replaced with a yaa2 (بايع baaye3).
- Doubled verbs’ participles are (for some speakers) regularised حاس حاس (حااس) 7aases rather than fuSHa 7aass (حاس).
- The initial hamze in the two hamzated verbs اخذ 2akhad ‘take’ and اكل 2akal ‘eat’ is replaced with an m- in Jordanian and Palestinian (maakhed, maakel).

However, verbs formed with fa3laan (or for some irregular verbs, like séker, fé3laan) have a completely different pattern, albeit one with fairly predictable variations:

- Hollow verbs’ participles are either feelaan (e.g. غيران gheeraan) or foolaan (جوون joo3aan) – depending on whether the middle letter of the root is w or y.
- Defective verbs’ participles are formed on fa3yaan (e.g. غليان ghalyaan), with no variation depending on the final underlying letter.

Whether a verb has a faa3el or a fa3laan participle is generally unpredictable and subject to quite a lot of regional variation. Many verbs of becoming –تعب té3eb ‘get tired’, غلي ghéli ‘get more expensive’, جاع jaa3 ‘get hungry’ – have fa3laan participles everywhere, and it is mostly intransitive verbs that have fa3laan participles across the Levantine area. But in Syria in particular, fa3laan forms have extended much further. Participles like وصلان waSlaan, شربان sharbaan and حكبان 7akyaan are characteristic of Syria.

Outside form I active and passive participles are formed straightforwardly along the same lines as fuSHa, with two exceptions:

- The prefix, rather than the fuSHa mu-, is either m- (before a single consonant) or mé- (before a consonant cluster): مترجم mtrjem, متعلم mét3allem.
- As with form I, defective active participles pose none of the tanwiin problems they pose in fuSHa: the participle of خليkhalla is always مخلي mhalli (not mukhallin etc).

For a comprehensive list of forms see the conjugation tables at the end of this PDF.

---

1. Note though that different speakers might consider the root to be different. The forms جوعان joo3aan and جيعان jee3aan both exist in different regions, for example.
2. This lines up with the swallowing-up of final-u defective verbs (e.g. يغلو) into the final-i and final-a categories.
Feminine and plural forms

Like adjectives, participles have feminine and plural forms. Unlike some adjectives, participles’ feminines and plurals are formed exclusively with *taa2 marbuuTa* (*-a/e*) and *-in*. The variety of different shapes of form I participles mean they require some special treatment, but they are basically predictable. Have a look at the forms of the active participles we’ve already seen above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>كتاب</td>
<td>كاتب</td>
<td>كاتبة</td>
<td>كتابين</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2akhad ‘take’ (hamzated)</td>
<td>2aakh</td>
<td>2akhde</td>
<td>2aakhdin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>وصل</td>
<td>waaSel</td>
<td>waaSle</td>
<td>waaSliin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>بائع</td>
<td>baay3a</td>
<td>baay3a</td>
<td>baay3iin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طاف</td>
<td>Taafye</td>
<td>Taafyiin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>حاس</td>
<td>7aasse</td>
<td>7aassiin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تعب</td>
<td>ta3baan</td>
<td>ta3baaniin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>سكر</td>
<td>sekraan</td>
<td>sekraaniin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غار</td>
<td>gheeraan</td>
<td>gheeraaniin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جاع</td>
<td>joo3aane</td>
<td>joo3aaniin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>غلي</td>
<td>ghalyaane</td>
<td>ghalyaaniin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The *fa3laan* forms are entirely stable and present no problems at all. The *faa3el* forms are slightly more complicated, but predictably so – they have the normal dropping of the short unstressed *e* vowel when the suffix is added. Note the common (and fuSHA-like) spelling change in doubled verbs, and the transformation of *-i* into *-ye* and *-yiin* in defective verbs.
Passive participles are even more straightforward. Since all participles have the same shape (*maf3uul*) except defective verbs, we’ll restrict ourselves to three examples:

### Form I Passive Participles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>كتاب</td>
<td>maktuub</td>
<td>maktuube</td>
<td>maktuubiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>بيع</td>
<td>mabyuu3</td>
<td>mabyuu3a</td>
<td>mabyuu3iin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تطاّن</td>
<td>maTfi</td>
<td>maTfiyye</td>
<td>maTfiyyiin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you can see, in the *maf3uul* forms suffixation is very straightforward. The only oddity here is that the -i in defective forms, rather than becoming -ye, becomes -iyye as if it was a nisbe adjective.

Sound verbs of other forms show similar behaviour to the form Is, dropping short unstressed e when suffixes are added – although not short unstressed a, which keeps the passive and active participles distinct in pronunciation even if they’re written the same.

### Sound Participles (Forms II-X)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>علم</td>
<td>m3allam</td>
<td>m3allme</td>
<td>m3allmiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>موافق</td>
<td>mwaafe2</td>
<td>mwaafa2a</td>
<td>mwaafa2iin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تعلم</td>
<td>mét3allem</td>
<td>mét3allme</td>
<td>mét3allmiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>توافق</td>
<td>métwaafe2</td>
<td>métwaaf2a</td>
<td>métwaaf2iin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اضرِب</td>
<td>mé7merr</td>
<td>mé7méerra</td>
<td>mé7mérriin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>افترض</td>
<td>méftéraD</td>
<td>méftéraDa</td>
<td>méftéraDiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>احمر</td>
<td>mé7merr</td>
<td>mé7méerra</td>
<td>mé7mérriin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Defective participles are also slightly more complicated, but follow the same basic principle:
Defective participles (Forms II-X)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>khabba</strong></td>
<td>mkhabbi</td>
<td>mkhabba</td>
<td>mkhabbyiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(II, defective)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7aaka</strong></td>
<td>m7aaki</td>
<td>m7aakye</td>
<td>m7aakyiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(III, defective)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>tkhabba</strong></td>
<td>métkhabbi</td>
<td>métkhabye</td>
<td>métkhabbyiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(V, defective)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>t7aaka</strong></td>
<td>mét7aaki</td>
<td>mét7aakye</td>
<td>mét7aakyiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(VI, defective)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>nshara</strong></td>
<td>ménshéri</td>
<td>ménshérye</td>
<td>ménshéryiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(VII, defective)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>stawa</strong></td>
<td>méstéwi</td>
<td>méstéwye</td>
<td>méstéwyiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(VIII, defective)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>starja</strong></td>
<td>méstarjji</td>
<td>méstarjye</td>
<td>méstarjiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(X, defective)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The active participles all end in -i, which becomes -ye and -yiin when the feminine and plural suffixes are added – just like the form I pattern faa3i. The passives, meanwhile, end with -a as we would expect from fuSHa. However, when suffixes are added to the feminine forms, a -y- is inserted (rather than dropping the -a as would happen in fuSHa).
Object pronouns

Paticiples can take object and indirect object pronouns just like other verbal fo
rms. For masculine
and plural forms, direct object pronouns trigger the expected vowel and stress changes
straightforwardly (depending on whether the pronoun begins with a consonant or a vowel):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object Pronoun</th>
<th>masculine</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>کاتب</td>
<td>کاتب-تو</td>
<td>کاتب-ها</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>کاتین</td>
<td>کاتین-تو</td>
<td>کاتین-ها</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مساوي</td>
<td>مساوي-(h)</td>
<td>مساوي-ها</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indirect object pronouns (-l- pronouns) similarly have the expected effects, including the shortening of long vowels (which normal object pronouns do not do).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indirect Pronoun</th>
<th>masculine</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مسموح</td>
<td>مسموح-نا</td>
<td>مسموح-نل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ضاربي</td>
<td>ضاربي-لك</td>
<td>ضاربي-لنا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The feminine forms are slightly more complicated. For many speakers, the dropping of the e in sound active participles (e.g. کاتب > کاتب، م3اللم > م3اللم) is reversed when pronouns beginning with vowels are added. Other speakers deal with the awkwardness of reversing sound change by lengthening and stressing the vowel of the taa2 marbuiTa. A final group of speakers – mainly southern Levantine – resolve the entire problem by replacing the taa marbuiTa with a final long -آ-.

The following examples show the three strategies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminine Pronoun</th>
<th>masculine</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>کاتبة</td>
<td>کاتبة-تو</td>
<td>کاتبة-ها</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>معلمته</td>
<td>معلمته-تا</td>
<td>معلمته-تا</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مساوية</td>
<td>مساوية-تا</td>
<td>مساوية-تا</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most common solution in Syrian is (1), but the other two are also both common throughout the Levantine area and you will probably hear all three.

Feminine participles with object pronouns also – unlike in fuSha, and unlike any other participle form – distinguish person. The forms given above as examples work for a non-second person subject. However, when the subject of a participle is second person singular feminine inti, a long -ii- is inserted between the -t of the taa marbuiTa and the pronoun:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminine Pronoun</th>
<th>masculine</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>کاتبة</td>
<td>کاتبة-تي</td>
<td>کاتبة-تي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>معلمته</td>
<td>معلمته-تي</td>
<td>معلمته-تي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مساوية</td>
<td>مساوية-تي</td>
<td>مساوية-تي</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

لیش عاملة حالك مو عرفانتينی؟
leesh 3aamle 7aalek muu 3arfaantiini?
Why are you pretending you [= feminine singular] don’t know me?
Active participles especially are very common in colloquial. The use you’ve probably encountered if you have any familiarity with any dialect at all is with certain verbs of motion. For these, the participle is often used in a continuous meaning:

وين رايح؟
\_ween raaye7?
Where are you **going**?

ماشيي
\_maashyiin
we’re leaving

This can of course be used in a future sense similar to the English continuous:

نازل هون؟
\_naazel hoon?
are you **getting off** [the bus] here?

This continuous sense also appears with a limited number of other verbs, primarily verbs of sensation, thought etc:

الي شجع منتخب النظام خلال المباريات الأخيرة
\_yalli shajja3 muntakhab énniZaam khilaal élmubaarayaat él2akhíra mé3taber énno

**The people** [= the one who] who supported the regime’s team in the last few matches **believe** that politics has nothing to do with sport

حاسس حالي مرضان شوي
\_7aases 7aali marDaan @shweyy
I **feel** [= am feeling myself] a bit ill

مالى سمعانة
\_maali sam3aane
I can’t **hear** [you].

ناظر تليفونك اه؟
\_naaTér telefoonak aah?
I’ll be [= I’m] **waiting** for you to call [= your phone call], OK?

مستنني
\_méstanniiuk
I’m **waiting for** you

With most verbs, however, the participle has the sense of completion of an action often lining up with the English present perfect. This is easiest to show with verbs of becoming. You probably already know تعب ‘get tired’ and its participle تعبان ‘tired’. Another good example

---

1 Though as you can see from the examples below, we could also see this as a participle of completion/result.
is طول Téwel ‘get long, tall’ and its causative equivalent Tawwal ‘lengthen, let grow longer’, whose participles contrast with simple طول ‘get long, tall’:

\[
\text{Tawwal} \quad \text{da2nak} \quad \text{Toolaan} \\
\text{lengthen, let grow longer, your beard has grown/is longer}
\]

\[
\text{mTawwel} \quad \text{da2nak} \\
\text{you’ve grown your beard out/let it grow longer}
\]

There are some verbs which typically have a ‘becoming’ sense in colloquial which are not necessarily used in the same way in fuSHA. لبس lèsbes for example in colloquial means ‘get dressed’ or with an object ‘put on’. بلبس bélbes means ‘I get dressed’ or ‘I put on’ or ‘I wear’ in a habitual sense. It doesn’t mean ‘I’m wearing’ – for that you need laabes. Contrast the two forms below:

\[
\text{مطول دقنك} \quad \text{da2nak Toolaan} \\
\text{your beard has got longer/is longer}
\]

\[
\text{مطول دقنك} \quad \text{da2nak} \\
\text{you’ve grown your beard out/let it grow longer}
\]

The same applies to نام naam, which usually means ‘go to sleep’ (thus نائم náim ‘I go to sleep’ and not ‘I’m sleeping’), سكان sakan, which usually means ‘take up residence’ (thus سكن نايم násken ‘living’), and many others.

The sense of completion, however, is not restricted to verbs of becoming or intransitive verbs. Do not mistake forms like كاتب kátab, دارض dárst for ‘writing’, ‘studying’. This will confuse your understanding and, if you use them that way, the meaning you’re trying to put across! Most verbs have a participle expressing completed action, the result of the action expressed by the equivalent verb, which in many cases can be most idiomatically translated with the English present perfect:

\[
\text{سمعت انو فاتح محامي} \quad \text{smé3@t énno faafe7 mu7aami} \\
\text{I heard he’s opened a lawyer’s practice}
\]

\[
\text{كاتبلك كل شيء ع الورقة} \quad \text{kaatéblak kél shi 3a-Iwara2a} \\
\text{I’ve written everything down for you on the paper}
\]

\[
\text{ماحضا بيعرف بعدين شورح بصير اكيد الله كاتبلك شي احسن وافضل} \quad \text{mao 7ada bya3ref ba3deen shuu ra7 ySiir akid aLLa kaatéblak shi a7san w afDal} \\
\text{Nobody knows what’s going to happen, God’s definitely got something better planned for you [= has written for you]}
\]

\[
\text{يلى الله رازقه صوت حلو ببجد يغي و اليوم عن نفسه من خلاله} \quad \text{yalli aLLa raazzé Soot 7élw byé2der yghanni w y3abber 3an nafso mén khilaalo} \\
\text{[People] who God has blessed with nice voices can sing and express themselves with them...}
\]

\[
\text{إهداء لكل شخص فاقد شخص} \quad \text{ihdaa2 lakull shakh@S faa2ed shakh@S} \\
\text{Dedicated [= a dedication] to everybody who’s lost somebody}
\]
It’s been five years since he stopped work on the project [= he’s been in a state of having stopped work on the project for five years].

Why’re you making this into a big thing [= why have you made the story big?]

With some verbs of sense there are cases which are debatable one way or the other – does ‘عرفان represent a continuous equivalent to ‘I know’, or does it express the result of ‘I found out’? Either way, it expresses a state of knowing. In cases like the one below, these verbs have a definite completed action:

It seems that sir has not heard of this hadith

Confusingly, even verbs of motion can have this sense. We saw رايح above in a continuous meaning, but it can also mean ‘have been’, depending on the context:

Participles can also be used in an emphatic future sense stressing the certainty (or impossibility) of an action:

and its other pronominal forms is usually used for ‘he’s been… for Y years’ and is often combined with an adjective but the combination of this and a participle (which carries the force of ‘having stopped’) makes it awkward to translate this even halfway literally into English.

is a fixed fuSha form used in colloquial in a way syntactically identical to شكو ‘it seems that’.
I'm not taking a single step [= a step I’m not stepping] outside this house!

Participles and nouns-from-participles

Some participles proper (i.e. parts of the verbal paradigm) are also nouns with a distinct meaning – كاتب kaatb and طالب Taaleb can either be participles ‘having written’ and ‘asked for’ or nouns meaning ‘writer’ or ‘student’. These are obviously etymologically derived from the participles, but they’re distinct in meaning and often have their own broken plurals (kéittaab and Téllaab in these cases) which do not work for the plurals of the participles. They also form iDaafe with their objects rather than taking direct objects normally:

هي كاتبة لكتاب
hiyye kaatbet léktaab
she’s the author of the book

Participles, on the other hand, do not form an iDaafe with their objects:

انا كاتبة رسالة
ana kaatb e risaale
I’ve written a letter

There are a number of cases with non-form I verbs where rather than using the colloquial participle, the noun equivalent is taken from fuSHa and has mu- instead (although in Arabic script they are indistinguishable):

مدرب mudarreb coach, mdarreb having trained (someone)

مفوض mafwwaD commissioner / mfawwaD (having been) commissioned

These are distinct. To use mdarreb for ‘coach’ (or, for that matter, mudarreb for ‘having trained’) is incorrect.
Compound tense structures

Future

There are various ways to express the future. One is by using the simple present with ِب- on its own:

ِبروح معيك
brru7 ma3ak
I’ll go with you

One is by using ِبَّد- (literally ‘want’):

بدي امرق لعندو بكرا
béddi émro2 la-3énda bukra
I’m going to go to his house tomorrow

Another common way is with the particle ِراح (also ِلح ِلـ in some parts of Syria and sometimes ِراح):

ِراح روحك
ra7 ruu7
I’ll go

ِشوفك بكرا
7a-shuufak bukra
I’ll see you tomorrow

There are differences in nuance between these different forms and the use of the bare present, as there are between ‘going to’, ‘will’ and the present continuous in English, but these differences are difficult to pin down. Native speakers have an intuition about what sounds right and wrong in different sentences, and the only way to gain that sort of intuition as a non-native speaker is from practice.

Continuous

The continuous is formed with ِةَم which can be combined with the subjunctive or ِب-present. It typically lines up with the English continuous form in that it suggests repetitive action over a specific period of time:

فعم ادرس
3am édros
I’m studying

ضَرِي ما عم يتوملي الليل
Dérsi maa 3am ynaawwémni élleel
my tooth is stopping me from sleeping at night [= is not letting me sleep]

One small difference in usage is that ِةَم can be used with many verbs that in English do not permit a continuous:
I can’t get the door open [= I’m not being able to...]

I’ve been reading a lot these days [= I’m reading...]

I used to study

I was studying

I was going to rain

I almost had a heart attack!

he was about to go in (or ‘he wanted to go in’)

he’d gone

he’d brought some coke

he must be studying, he’ll be studying
بكون خلص
*bikun khallaS*
he’ll have finished, he must have finished

بكون بدود يفوت
*bikun béddo yfuut*
he’ll be about to go in

The *b*-less form can be used similarly where it is triggered by something:

خايف يكون فات من الباب الثاني
*khaayef ykuun faat mn élbaab éttaani*
I’m afraid he *might have* come in through the other door
Possession

**iDaafe**

As we all know from fuSHa, two or more nouns can be put into a possessive structure by simply sticking them alongside one another in *iDaafe* (اضافة), literally ‘addition’ and fiddling about with the case and *tanwiin* suffixes. The absence of case suffixes and *tanwiin* makes this much simpler in Shami. Nouns that do not end with the suffix *ة* do not typically change at all when placed into *iDaafe* with another noun, other than predictable addition of helping vowels:

- مكتب أحمد *maktab a7mad* ‘Ahmed’s office’
- اسم حبيبب *is@m 7abiibti* ‘my lover’s name’

The ending *ة* always turns into *-et* on the first term of *iDaafe* (rather than *-at*- as in fuSHa). In line with the normal rules of vowel dropping, this can sometimes contract to simply *-t* before vowels:

- قطة اختي *2aTTet ékhti* ‘my sister’s cat’
- مدرسة أحمد *madras(e)jt a7mad* ‘Ahmad’s school’

As in fuSHa, the *iDaafe* can express all sorts of different relationships alongside possession:

- كيس النايلون *kiis énnaaylon* ‘the plastic bag’
- كاسة مي *kaaset moyy* ‘a glass of water’
- بيت المخدة *beet lémkhadde* ‘the pillowcase’
- رخصة سواقة *rékhSet @swaa2a* ‘driving licence’

As in fuSHa, only the final term of *iDaafe* can take a definite article. But in Syrian, the contracted ‘this/that’ *hal-,* which is clearly derived from the definite article, can appear at the beginning of an *iDaafe* as well:

- هل كاسة الي *halkaast élmoyy* ‘this glass of water’

**Taba3**

Apart from the *iDaafe* the main way of expressing possession is the particle تبع *taba3* (or تَبع *ta3*). This appears between the noun and its possessor. As with the *iDaafe* it can express various different types of relationship.

- حط السُئات مبتع الوابتي بكومنت *7étt lé-staatusz taba3 élwat@s bkooment* Put [your] Whatsapp status in a comment
اللون تبع جراباتك اللي انت لابس حاليا هو لون قلبك
élloon taba3 jaarbaaatak élli inte laabso 7aaliyyan huwwe loon 2albak
The colour of the socks you’re wearing now is the colour of your heart

بيقولك راح ناس تبع جمعيات خيرية يشوفو اللاجئين
bi2éllak raa7 naas taba3 jam3iyyat kheeriyye yshuufu llaaji2iin...
They say that people from/belonging to charity organisations went to see the refugees...

What triggers use of تبع as opposed to the iDaafe is not always clear. It’s common with compounds and with loanwords (like the first example here). But it is also often used in contexts where the iDaafe would also be fine.

For some speakers تبع agrees with the possessed noun. In Syrian this is optional, but in Palestinian for example it is compulsory. The feminine is تبعت taba3et. The plural has various different forms, including تبعون tab3uun and تبعوت tab3uut.

Taba3 differs from the iDaafe in that it can be used independently, providing the only easy way to translate expressions like ‘Ahmad’s’ or ‘mine’ where the possessed noun is dropped. As with its normal use, taba3 here can express all sorts of relationships (the only difference is it stands in for the noun it would normally follow):

كسرت تبعتو
kassar@t tab@3to
I broke his [one]

بدين لافي مثل تبع امبراح
béddkon laayv mét@l taba3 @mbaare7?
You want a Live [video] like yesterday’s?

بس تبع اللون الأخضر وبنات العمارة شغلة
bass taba3 élloon él2akhDar, wbanaat él3emaara shéghle
Only the green one, [because] the architecture girls are something else

طلع تبع
Téle3 taba3 éD电厂eT
It turned out to belong to the officer/be the officer’s!

هو مو تبع هيك حركات
huwwe muu taba3 heek 7arakaat
He’s not the sort of person to do that sort of thing [= he’s not taba3 such movements]

ويهم تبعون الإنجليش؟
weenhom tab3uun élinglish?
Where are the English crew? [= the ones who study ‘Inglish’]

You have to be careful with this usage, however, because تبع can sometimes be a euphemism for genitalia.

---

1 This is in response to a question about which cafeteria students at Damascus University prefer.
Open conditionals

As in fuSha, iza is used for ‘open conditionals’ like ‘if it rains, we can go’ or ‘if he’s not happy, let him come and see me’. Unlike fuSha, any tense form can appear in the conditional clause:

إذا بتشوفو بكرا خيرني
iza bétéshufo bukra khabbérni
if you see him tomorrow tell me

أذا بديك فيي احكي معو
iza béddak fiini é7ki ma3o
if you want I can talk to him

The past can be used with future meaning in the conditional clause as in fuSha. For some people at least this implies a less certain emphasis on likelihood (allowing for more politeness – ‘if you happen to be free [but no pressure]’):

إذا فضيت خيرني
iza fDéit khabbérni
if you’re free (= become free) then tell me

It can also be used with actual past meaning, as in the following sentence. Note that usually ‘if he left’ in English is actually hypothetical, and does not have a past but a non-factual meaning (‘if he left now he’d…’), which would be translated typically with لو and not إذا.

إذا طلع امبارح بوصل بكرا
iza Téle3 @mbaare7 biwaSSel élyoom
if he left yesterday, he’ll get there today

In the literal opposite of fuSha, the result clause cannot (typically) be in the past directly. As in English – where we have to say ‘if he left yesterday, he’ll have arrived today’ (and ‘if he left yesterday he arrived today’ is a bit odd) we have to use a construction with يكون to express an assumption:

إذا طلع امبارح يكون وصل اليوم
iza Téle3 @mbaare7 bikuun waSSal élyoom
if he left yesterday he’ll’ve got there today

Sometimes iza is dropped:

دعفت هلق شو بصير؟
dafa3@t halla2, shu biSiir?
(if) I paid now, what would happen?

---

1 This distinction is made in one place in formal English using different verb forms – ‘if he were at the party I’d say hi to him’ vs ‘if he was at the party, it must have been him I saw’. But even this distinction is lost for a lot of us in speech, unfortunately for those trying to get their heads around Arabic forms.
Hypothetical and counterfactual conditionals

As in fuSHa, لو is used for counterfactuals. Counterfactual sentences refer to hypothetical situations that would/could be the case now (present counterfactuals) or would/could have been the case in the past (past counterfactuals) if a given condition were fulfilled/had been fulfilled. In both cases, it is assumed that the condition is unlikely or impossible to be fulfilled or has not been fulfilled.

In Levantine Arabic, this is the most basic use of law – similar to MSA (though iza is also sometimes used like this). These sorts of sentences, and the exact syntax of law, are subject to quite a lot of dialectal variation, but the basic principles stay the same.

The if-clause

In English, both parts of the conditional sentence – the if-clause and the result clause – both change for tense. This is not the case in Syrian and Lebanese, where the if-clause typically takes the simple past tense whatever, with tense being indicated by the result clause:

- لو درس ينجح
  law daras - byénja7
  If he studied, he’d do well.

- لو درس كاننجح
  law daras - kaan néje7
  If he had studied, he’d have done well.

A nominal (‘to be’) sentence can take kaan in a similar way – which depending on dialect may or may not be conjugated. In most situations, though, it’s more common to drop it. Some speakers reject the presence of kaan as ungrammatical or awkward, depending on their region.

 loi (kaan) (كان) آينشتاين لبناني كان هاجر على غير بلد
  law (kaan) ayntaayn lébnaani kaan haajar 3ala gheer balad
  If Einstein had been Lebanese he’d’ve emigrated to another country

 loi (كنت) محلك بقي بالبيت
  law (ként) ma3allak béb2a bi-lbeet
  If I were you I’d stay at home

The same applies to quasi-verbal expressions like ma3i, béddi, 3éndi and participles:

 loi ممي بعطيك
  law ma3i ba3Tiik
  If I had [money] on me I’d give you [some]

 loi (كان) كاتبين ثالث أو رابع واحد كان رح يكون حلو
  law (kaan) kaatbiin taalat aw raabe3 waa7ed kaan ra7 ykuun 7élw
  If they’d written the third or fourth one it would’ve been nice

A similar case concerns ‘stative’ verbs, like sentences which discuss ability or possibility, where an implied (dropped) kaan may result in a present tense verb with b- following law.

----

1 Some Syrians use iza synonymously with law and with the same syntax for counterfactuals, but this is non-standard:

إذا بدو يفور دمو كان فار من زمان
iza béddo yfuur dammo koan faar mén zamaan
If he was going to go crazy [= if his blood was going to boil over], it would have happened a long time ago.
If they loved one another they’d have got married a long time ago.

If I’d known, I wouldn’t have bought it for you.

If he was a studious sort/the type that studied, he’d succeed (contrasting with if he studied’).

If naps were measured in days, then I’d be 100 years worth of sleepy.

If animals could talk what would they say?

This has a different meaning from the same sentence with a past verb:

If the animals were to talk [on a specific occasion], what would they say?

law can be followed by énno ‘that’, with no significant change in meaning. énno can take suffixed pronouns:

If I’d taken them back what happened wouldn’t have happened!

As in fuSHa, a variant lawla exists meaning ‘if not for’, which can only be followed by a noun or a suffixed pronoun (which causes lengthening of the final vowel to lawlaa-):

You’ve warmed up my soul / and if not for you it would stay cold

It is possible to follow law with a subjunctive verb in a hypothetical conditional. This is linked to the meaning ‘if only’ discussed below. Unlike law jiiit, which can be either past (‘if you had come’) or present/future (‘if you came’), law téji can only have future reference (‘if you came/if you were to come’) and implies unlikeness.

1 This is an unusual example of this kaan triggering subjunctive. Normally it appears with a b-present.

2 You might hear some speakers using subjunctives with stative verbs too, like law a3ref ‘if I knew’. This is, however, just a variation on the law ba3ref above.
If you’d only come to Turkey, you’d benefit a lot

The result clause

The result clause varies much more than the if-clause in possible structure.

Presentation counterfactuals

The simplest kind of present counterfactual has a b-prefixed present tense verb in the result clause, with an optional *kaan* in front of it:

 لو كنت محلك ببقى بالبيت
*law (ként) ma7allak béb2a bi-lbeet*
If I were you I’d stay at home

 لو كان المناخ انشف بشوي
*law (kaan) élmanaakh anshaf bi-shweyy bikuuun a7san bi-ktiir*
If the climate was a bit drier, it would be much better

 لو كنتي مشتاقتلي كنتي بتيجي لعننا
*law (kénti) mèshtaa2tii-li kénti btiiji la-3éndi*
If you really missed me you’d come to our house

The future can also be used in the result clause, again with optional *kaan*:

 لو راحت ع الشام رح اعرف كل شي
*law raa7et 3a shshaam, ra7-a3ref kéll shi!*
If she’d gone to Damascus, I’d [lit. have been going to] find out everything [but she went to Homs, so I don’t].

 لو ما كنت عم غني كنت رح كون بالجيش
*law maa ként 3am ghanni, ként ra7 kuun bi-jjeesh*
If I wasn’t singing, I would have been in the army.

Past counterfactuals

Generally speaking, past counterfactuals have *kaan* plus a past verb in the result clause:

 لو أني رجعتو ما كان صار اللي صار
*law énni rajja3ton maa kaan Saar élli Saar*
If I’d taken them back what happened wouldn’t have happened!

 لو طلعت امبارحة كانت وصلت اليوم
*law Tél3et @mbaar7a kaanet wéSlet élyoom*
If she’d left yesterday she would have got here today.

 لو كنتي بعرف أنو هيك رح يصير لا كنت جبت ولا كنت وعدهت أنو تجي
*law ként ba3ref 2énno heek ra7 ySiir llaa ként jébtek wala ként wa3adtek 2énno béddi raij3ek*
If I’d known this would happen, I wouldn’t have brought you nor would I have promised you that I’d take you back.

 لو معي كنت عطبت
*law ma3i ként 3aTeetak*
If I’d had [money] on me I’d have given you [some].
Other uses of \textit{law}

\textit{Wlaw} ‘even if’

\textit{Wlaw} (\textit{walaw}), \textit{7atta law}, \textit{7atta wlaw} and sometimes just \textit{law} can all mean ‘even if’. They generally have similar structure to normal hypotheticals:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Wlaw maa daras byénja7}\hfill \textit{walaw maa daras byénja7}
  \item \textit{law byédrébni maa bé2bal}\hfill \textit{law byédrébni maa bé2bal}
\end{itemize}

Unlike normal sentences with \textit{law}, however, the ‘even if’ meaning is not restricted to hypotheticals and counterfactuals:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{law ala77eet 3aliyyi maani ra7 iiij}\hfill \textit{ala77eet 3aliyyi maani ra7 iiij}
  \item \textit{law b2uula 2ana}\hfill \textit{b2uula 2ana}
\end{itemize}

Some speakers accept present tense verbs here, presumably in a non-counterfactual meaning:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{law byédrébni maa bé2bal}\hfill \textit{law byédrébni maa bé2bal}
\end{itemize}

‘If only’

\textit{Law} can be used with the subjunctive or the \textit{b}-present in a meaning similar to ‘I wish’ or ‘if only’:\footnote{Walaw with an \textit{a} in the first syllable has a number of other meanings that can be confused with this meaning, including ‘really?’ (\textit{walaw éstaaz?}), ‘no problem’ and (confusingly) ‘of course’: \textit{walaw b2uula 2ana} ‘of course I say [that word]!’}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{law ta3ref 2addeesh b7ébbak!}\hfill \textit{law ta3ref 2addeesh b7ébbak!}
  \item \textit{law 3ala ha-TTari2i3 ysalam 3aliyyi shi rfi2i}\hfill \textit{law 3ala ha-TTari2i3 ysalam 3aliyyi shi rfi2i}
\end{itemize}

\footnote{Some Lebanese speakers use \textit{law} + subjunctive, confusingly enough, in the meaning of \textit{iza} – for example in the Nancy Ajram couplet: صدفة لو علی هالطريق پسم علی خی رشق
\textit{Sédfi law 3ala ha-TTari2i3 ysalam 3aliyyi shi rfi2i}
And if by chance on the street a friend should say hello to me...}
If only we could reach the people in pictures..

These can also have result clauses:

 لو يحكيلو كلمة واحدة 

 If only he’d say something for once the problem would be solved

 لو بس بتقللي شو في ممكن ساعدك

 If you’d just say what’s wrong I might be able to help you.

In a similar sense, law often appears in combination with other expressions of hope:

فاي أغاني يمتنع لو صوتي حلو عشان غنيها للشخص اللي بحبو

 There are some songs that [make me] wish that my voice was nice so I could sing them to the person I love.

ولا ساعدك

 I wish I could come to Lebanon and watch you tomorrow

كلمك ولي ما كلمك حبيت سويا

Like it or not, I’m doing it

Other conditional expressions

Conditions with no ‘if’

As in English there are a few constructions that can take the place of a normal ‘condition’ clause:

 ممكن ساعدك

 I might be able to help you.

 لو بس بتقللي شو في ممكن ساعدك

 If you’d just say what’s wrong I might be able to help you.

 لو يحكيلو كلمة واحدة 

 If only he’d say something for once the problem would be solved

 لو بس بتقللي شو في ممكن ساعدك

 If you’d just say what’s wrong I might be able to help you.

There are some songs that [make me] wish that my voice was nice so I could sing them to the person I love.

أليس يا ريت لو في إجي لبنان واحضرك بكرا

 Alissa my love, I wish I could come to Lebanon and watch you tomorrow

الكبار بالعمر إذا حبوك يا ريت لو عنا ابن بعمرك لنزوجه بيه

 Old people if they like you, they say I wish we had a son your age so we could marry him off to you

أليس يا ريت لو في إجي لبنان واحضرك بكرا

 Alissa my love, I wish I could come to Lebanon and watch you tomorrow

الكبار بالعمر إذا حبوك يا ريت لو عنا ابن بعمرك لنزوجه بيه

 Old people if they like you, they say I wish we had a son your age so we could marry him off to you

Other conditional expressions

Conditions with no ‘if’

As in English there are a few constructions that can take the place of a normal ‘condition’ clause:

 могу речь "если я" или "если бы"

 If I were in your place [ = my place were your place], I’d stay at home

If I were in your place [ = my place were your place], I’d stay at home

I wish I could come to Lebanon and watch you tomorrow

Like it or not, I’m doing it

1 Alluus is a pet name for Alissa, the famous singer.
-ever expressions

‘Whatever’, ‘whoever’, ‘however’, ‘however’ are all formed by adding –ma or –man to the end of question words. They can take either present or past verbs without tense implications:

-ever expressions

The equivalent for قد ما 2add ma ‘however (much)’:

 الزلامة قد ما كان قلبٌ طيبٌ بضل اهل
ézzalame 2add ma kaan 2albo Tayyeb béDéll 2ahbal
The guy’s still an idiot, no matter how good a heart he has

In Syrian at least law can appear before these expressions. Here it has no additional meaning and can be deleted:

بتوظف لو شو ما كنت دارس... ما هيك؟
bétwaZZaf (law) shu ma ként daares... maa heek?
I can get a job no matter what I’ve studied… Right?

The more, the more

The expression used for ‘the more... the more’ (a kind of conditional expression) isKelly ma... kelma..., either with two presents or two pasts:

السيارة كل ما تكون أغلى كل ما تكون أحسن
ésséyyaara kélma békkuun 2aghlá kélma békkuun 2a7san
the more expensive a car is, the better it is

كل ما درسنا كل ما حسيت حالي اجنب
kélma darasna kélma 7asseet 7aali 2ajdab
the more we study/studied, the more I felt/feel like an idiot

طالما Taalama ‘as long as’

Taalama can also introduce conditional clauses which may have past verbs:
طالما راضينتي ما بتطع من عدي إلا رضيان

Taalama raaDeetni maa btéTla3 mén 3éndi 2élla réDyaan
As long as you keep me happy, I’ll keep you happy [= you won’t leave me except happy]
Relative clauses

Definites

As in fuSHa, relative clauses require a relativising particle when attached to a definite noun and no particle if attached to an indefinite noun. Unlike fuSHa – where this particle declines for case, gender, and number – in colloquial it is invariable, either élli/illi or yalli (depending on speaker and region):

الرجال اللي يعرفو
érréijaal élli ba3rfo
the man (that) I know

البنت اللي شفتها فايت عالبناية
élbén@t yalli shéfta faayte 3a-Ibinaaye
the girl (that) you saw going into the building

اليوم من الأيام اللي ما بقدر احك فيها
élyoom mn él2éyyaam élli maa bé2der é7ki fiyya
today is one of those days (that) I can’t even talk about

élli/illi’s initial vowel drops when preceded by a vowel, as if it was the definite article:

انا اسفة ع اللي صار امبارح
ana 2aasfe 3a-illi Saar @mbaare7
I’m sorry for what happened yesterday

Note that just like in fuSHa, a pronoun has to appear in the relative clause in the place of the noun you’ve ‘extracted’ unless it is the subject of the relative clause (I saw the girl who I know her), either as a direct object or attached to a pronoun.

élli/illi is sometimes shortened to él-/il-. In this case it looks the same as the definite article, but does not assimilate to sun letters:

شو الفكرة الأخدنينا عن السوريين؟
shu élfékra él-2aakhdiina 3an éssuuriyyiin?
what do you know about Syrians? [= what’s the idea that you’ve taken…]

élli is also used where man and maa are used in fuSHa as relative pronouns for ‘the one who’ and ‘the thing that’/’what’ (ما الموصولة). Whilst in fuSHa a direct object pronoun in the relative clause here is optional, with élli it is compulsory:

انا اسفة ع اللي صار امبارح
ana 2aasfe 3a-illi Saar @mbaare7
I’m sorry for what happened yesterday

الي بدك ياه
élli bédidak yaa
what you want
اللي صايرة بالبلد
élli Saayre bi-ibalad
what’s happened in the country

Note that in line with the general rule that definite singulars are often used to talk about generics, the phrase ‘اللي’ very commonly translates idiomatically as ‘people who’ or ‘someone who’:

من الل ي مييثو اخ
méli élli mayyetlo akh
Like someone who’s lost a brother

انا هيك الل ي عاجبو عاجبو والي ما عاجبو ينسانيا
ana heek. élli 3aajbo 3aajbo wéllí muu 3aajbo yénsaani
this is how I am – those who it pleases it pleasures and those who it doesn’t please should forget me

Relative clauses are often used for emphasis, lining up with English ‘it’s... who...’ or ‘it’s... that...’:

شو الل ي بدهك يا بذات
shuu élli béddak yaa bizzaat
What exactly is it that you want

انا الل ي عطلت الاصنصر
ana élli 3aTTalt éll2asonSeer
It was me who broke the lift/I’m the one who broke the lift

**Indefinites**

Indefinite nouns require no particle, as in fuSHa:

واحد اسمو جان
waa7ed ésmo jaan
a guy whose name is Jaan

واحد بيعرف انجليزي
waa7ed bya3ref ingliizi
a guy who knows English

When the indefinite noun in question is not only grammatically indefinite but also does not refer to a specific thing, the relative clause has the b-less verb form:

مااا رايحة لمطرح ما يكون فيه ولادي حوالي
maani raay7a la-maTra7 maa ykuun fii wlaadi 7awaaleyi
I’m not going anywhere where my children won’t be around me

بدي بنت تعرف انجليزي
béddi bén@ t ta3ref ingliizi
I want a girl who knows English
This contrasts with a sentence like عم دور على بن بتحكي انجلزي, which would also translate as ‘I’m looking for a girl who speaks English’ – but in this case the speaker has a specific girl in mind they are looking for. This distinction is basically identical to one found in French and explained at length here. The use of these sorts of relative clauses often lines up with ‘an X to Y’ structures in English:

شباك اهرب منو
شباك اهرب منو
a window to escape from

مقفاة افتح فيه هالياب
مقفاة افتح فيه هالياب
a key to open/with which I can open this door

**Structures with ma**

The particle ما ma can be attached to a number of nouns, producing constructions that translate as English relative clauses even though they are not strictly speaking relative clauses in Arabic. These structures have no equivalent in fuSHa:

لحظة ما
لحظة ما
the moment that

وقت ما
وقت ما
the time that (when)

يوم ما
يوم ما
the day that (when)

ساعة ما
ساعة ما
the hour that (when)

محل ما, قرنة ما
محل ما, قرنة ما
the place that

ما7all ma, 2ërnet ma/2urnet ma
ما7all ma, 2ërnet ma/2urnet ma
the place that

Most productively this appears with superlatives:

أحسن ما يمكن
أحسن ما يمكن
as good as/the best possible

اقرب ما يكون
اقرب ما يكون
as close as/the closest there is

**Agreement**

When a pronoun is used before a relative clause, the verb in the clause usually agrees with that pronoun (unlike in modern English, which usually puts the relative clause in the third person whatever):

انا يلي عطلت الاسوتسير
انا يلي عطلت الاسوتسير
I’m the one who broke the lift

انا الي بعرف
انا الي بعرف
of course I know (I’m the one who knows!)
With certain expressions like *X mén noo3 él-... élli* (X is the type of... who’), you sometimes see odd agreement patterns with the subject rather than with the noun the relative clause is actually attached to:

سوسن من نوع البنات بيبتغي عنها
*sawsan mén noo3 élvanaat yalli byétghanna 3anha*
*Sawsan is the type of girl that you hear about in songs (= that is sung about her)*
Other ‘That’-clauses

Anybody who has studied fuSHa will probably have torn at least a little bit of hair out over the uses and abuses of انّ إنّ and أن إن. You’ll be happy to know that in colloquial there is only one ‘that’, انّو énno/inno, which is used in place of all of these. إنّو can take other pronoun suffixes in place of the -o, like fuSHa anna, but the form with -o can stand in for other pronouns as well.

Statements of fact

For normal statements of fact or assertions, all tenses can appear in that-clauses:

مش متأكد بس بعتقد انّو هيدا المحل بيرج حمود
mish mét2akked bass bé3ta2ed énno heeda lma7all @bbérj 7ammuud
I’m not sure but I think this shop is in Burj Hammoud

بدي فلك انّو يحبب
béddi 2él-lak énno b7ébbak
I want to tell you that I love you

من فلك انّو راح؟
miin 2él-lak énno raa7?
who told you that he’s gone?

Unlike English, spoken Arabic does not usually have ‘backshifting’ or sequence of tenses where the tense in a that-clause changes depending on the tense of the main clause – ‘he says he’ll come’ but ‘he told me he would come’. In the following examples, for example, the that-clause has present marking but is translated with past because of the tense of the main verb:

قال انّو مرضان
2aal énno marDaan
he said he was ill

حلمت انّو عم نظم و نظف غرفة نوم جدتي
7lém@t 2énno 3am naZZem w naZZef ghérfet noom jéddti
I dreamt I was tidying and cleaning my grandma’s bedroom

A future verb is then interpreted as future-in-past:

قلني رح بعي بعد ساعة
2él-li ra7 yéji ba3@d saa3a
he told me he’d come after an hour

A past verb is typically interpreted as pluperfect, although occasionally it lines up with English:

قالتك انّو رجعت
2éltéllak énni rjé3@t
I told you I had come back
I dreamt I was in heaven [this one has tense-shifting]

Subjunctives

There are quite a lot of cases where énno comes before an expression of a wish or a hope or something similarly subjunctive-y and is thus followed by the subjunctive:

بتنمي انو يعجبكم
batmanne inno yi3jebkom
I hope you like it

إلى حابب انو يتعلم بيت بوكس يحك مع
illi 7aabeb inno yit3allam biit boks yi7ki ma3i
those (anyone) who want to learn to beatbox should speak to me

عبوده خايف انو نأكل و
3abbuude khaayef énno naakl!
Aboudeh is worried we’re going to eat him!

‘For X to…’

انو انو plus a b-less verb is also used very commonly in a construction which is similar in usage to fuSHA’s ان an + subjunctive. This structure replaces a maSdar and can be used with adjectives:

بس انك تفوت ع البيت بلا ما اعرف
bass énnak @tfuut 3albeet bala ma a3ref...
but for you to come into the house without me knowing...

كتير صعب انو حدا منحبو كتي يسقط من عيننا فجأة
ktiir Sa3b énno 7ada mén7ébbo ktiir yés2oT mén 3eenna faj2a
it’s very difficult for someone we really love to suddenly [do something to] lose our respect [fall from our eye]

Obviously this same structure is not always best translated with English ‘for X to’. Sometimes there are more elegant ways of doing it, especially when the adjective comes first:

مستحيل انك تجي
musta7il énnak téji
it’s impossible that you’ll come

Generally the énno can be dropped when comes after the adjective:

ما اصعبها نهاية غرامك تكتبها بايدك
ma2aS3aba nihaayet gharaamak téktéba b2iidak
how difficult it is to write your love’s end with your own hand

In expressions with comparatives, énno is used with a b-less verb to compare sentences (in English we have to use a gerund for this):
When comparing two actions, however, the form منما is used instead:

بحكي احسن منما بفهم
bé7ki a7san ménma béfham
I speak better than I understand

Exceptions with élli

Although élli is usually a relative pronoun, with a few adjectives expressing feelings it can be used instead of إنه:

منيح اللي ذكرتي
mni7 élli zakkartni
it’s good (that) you reminded me

ميسوط اللي جيت
mabsuuT élli jiit
I’m happy (that) you came
MaSdars and nouns of instance

MaSdars (مصادر) or verbal nouns are very common in fuSha. Cursory treatments of 3aamiyye (usually the same ones that claim that all 3aamiyye sentences are subject-verb-object or that the grammar is ‘very simplified fuSha’) usually claim that the maSdar simply isn’t used in colloquial. There is an element of truth to this in that certain very common uses of the maSdar in fuSha are usually or always replaced by structures with conjugated verbs:

- قبل ما يوصل > قبل وصوله  – before he gets here
- حب القراءة > حب القراءة  – I like reading

However, this doesn’t mean that the maSdar isn’t used at all (or the اسم مرّة or noun of instance which we’ll also deal with here). This post will deal with the places that they are common.

Formation of maSdars

As in fuSha, maSdars are unpredictably formed. This goes especially for form I verbs, where they can take any number of shapes (مصادر) although there are a few very common patterns (particularly fa3l). A number of verbs which also exist in fuSha have different (often regular) common maSdars in 3aamiyye: نسي nési is usually nasy ‘forgetfulness’, for example (and not e.g. نسيان which is instead the participle).

ضرب Dar@b ‘hitting’
نسي nasy ‘forgetting’
عزف 3azaf ‘playing’
جنان jnaan ‘going crazy. madness’

It also applies, as in fuSha (think takallama > kalaam) to some verbs in other forms as well:

دور عل dawwar 3ala ‘look for’ > دوارة dwaara ‘looking for’

The form III pattern mufaa3ala has a fully Shami equivalent in mfaa3ale:

مشاركة shaarak ‘go into partnership with’ > mshaarake ‘going into partnership’
مساعدة saa3ad ‘help’ > msa3ade ‘help’

There are also a few regular forms (in 3aamiyye) which nonetheless do not line up with their equivalent forms in fuSha. Form II defective verbs for example have maSdars in téf3aaye (or in Pal/Jor, tif3aay):

على 3abba ‘to fill’ > té3baaye ‘filling’
سل ‘to entertain’ > tészlaaye ‘entertainment’
The regular form for all quadrilateral verbs with the t- prefix is fa3lane:

	تولدن 
twaldan ‘act childish’ > 
	ولدنة 
waldane ‘acting childish’

	تحيون 
t7eewan ‘act like a moron’ > 
	7eewane ‘acting like a moron’.

Finally, some verbs have both colloquial and fuSha ma3daras used in different contexts:

	تولدن 
twaldan ‘act childish’ > 
	ولدنة 
waldane ‘acting childish’

	تحيون 
t7eewan ‘act like a moron’ > 
	7eewane ‘acting like a moron’.

Ma3daras are best learnt individually with each verb.

**Formation of the اسم مرة**

The formation of the noun of instance is simple and identical to fuSha. All nouns of instance take the form fa3le (or fa3we, foo3a etc for defective and hollow verbs). These nouns express the meaning of a single instance of the verb:

ضربة Darbe ‘a blow’, ‘a hit’, ‘a strike’ etc (contrast with ضرب Darb ‘hitting’)

خطوة khaTwe ‘a step’, ‘a single act of stepping’ (contrast with خطو khaTw ‘stepping’)

Most nouns of instance are derived from form I verbs. Generally the ma3dar can be used in the sense of a noun of instance for non-form I verbs.

**Normal gerund uses**

Although as discussed above there are some fuSha contexts where the ma3dar is not much used – particularly where in fuSha it stands in for a normal sentence (e.g. بعد وصوله للمطار) – it is quite commonly used as a gerund that lines up with the English usage:

بُحِبِ القراءة
b7ébb élqiraa2a
I like reading (equivalent to أَحْبَيْ قَرَايَة
القراءة صعبة
élqiraa2a Sa3be
reading is hard

المشي مفيد للضغط
élmashy mufiid la-DDagh@T
walking is good [= useful] for blood pressure

The noun of instance is used (intuitively) in expressions like the following:

اِخْيَاءُ مِن مِنِبَهُ اَنَّ فُوُتَاتَاتِي عَلَى الْمِجَالِ كِرَانَة
akhí méntabeh énno footaati 3a-lma7all kétaraane
my brother has noticed that I’m coming here a lot [= that my comings in to the shop have become more]
هلحك بروح ولا بالرجعة؟
ha-i7aki bé-7rro7a wélle bé-raj3a?
was this on the way there or on the way back? [= is this talk in the going or the returning?]

قدينس بدفع روح رجعة؟
2addeesh btédfa3 roo7a raj3a?
how much do you pay there and back?

As mentioned with normal nouns, some verbs always take indefinite direct objects. This includes maSdars, which appear with verbs like the following in a construction quite similar to the English:

كل حكي kammel 7aki – keep on talking
وقف الول wá22ef ak@l – stop eating
خلصت قراءة khallaSt @2raaye – I’ve finished reading

Cognate accusative

More interesting is its usage in the مفعول مطلق (cognate accusative) structure, whose existence in 3aamiyye is usually denied wholesale. In fact it is quite common, especially with accompanying adjectives (very commonly مرتب mrattab, literally ‘tidy’) and especially especially when telling stories colourfully. Of course, these nouns do not take accusative case marking since cases do not exist in 3aamiyye:

ضربيتو ضرب مرتب Darabto Dar@b mrattab
I gave him a real beating [= beat him a tidy beating]

عم تدور على مشاكل دوارة 3am @tdawwer 3ala mashaakel @dwaara
you’re looking really hard for problems [= searching a searching]

حكيت حكي ما بينحك 7akeet 7aki maa byén7aka
I said things that shouldn’t be said [= talked talking that is not talked]

مسكوني مسك اليد méskuuni mask élyad
they caught me red-handed [= the catching of the hand]

The noun of instance can also be used here (when it exists), giving a slightly different meaning of a single instance:

هلق روح نملك احلي نومة halla2 ruu7 némlak a7la noome
now go and have a lovely sleep [= the nicest sleeping]

هاد أكيد يكون ابوه هابشلو شي هبشة مرتبه واشترالو السيارة haad akiid bikuun abuu habéshlo shi habshe mrattabe w-@shtaraalo éssiyyaara
no, this guy’s dad must have got himself a nice little kickback and bought him the car [= will have got a tidy getting]

These can be counted:

ضربي تلت ضريات
Darabni tlét Darbaat
he hit me three times (= three hittings)

Some maSdars can be used in the same construction as the maf3uul muTlaq but with a different verb from the one they are derived from. The most common of these refer to motion. Note that whilst the idiomatic and the literal translations could have ‘-ing’, the English ‘-ing’ of the literal translation is the -ing of the gerund (‘running is good for you’) and not of the participle (‘I’m running’) – that is, the English forms are identical but the Arabic words here are maSdars, not participles:

نروح مشي؟
nruu7 mashy?
shall we walk there? [= go a walking]

جينا ركيد
jiina rgiid
we ran here [= we came a running]

مو جايبتي لهون شحط مشان تقليل هيك حكي
muu jaayebtiini lahoon shaH@T mishaan t2éliii heek 7aki?
surely you haven’t dragged me here just to tell me this nonsense? [= you haven’t brought me here a dragging to tell me this sort of speech?]
Passive

The fuSHa internal passive (e.g. دُرِس) is not productive in Shami, although it exists in a number of commonly used set expressions and classicisms and may be used when someone is speaking in elevated language, fuSHa-style. This may seem like good news, but in fact it is not; the passive in Shami is actually much less regular than fuSHa as a result and not all verbs have a passive form.

Conjugation

Generally, although not exclusively, form I verbs correspond to an equivalent passive on form VII (nfa3al) or less commonly form VIII (fta3al):

قرى انقرى 2ara n2ara ‘read, to be read’
مسك انمسك mések nmasak ‘catch, to be caught’
نسي انتسى nési ntasa “forget, be forgotten’

Form II and form III verbs usually correspond to a passive on forms V and VI:

غّي تغيّر ghayyar tghayyar ‘change, be changed’
صاحب تصاحب Saa7ab tSaa7ab ‘date, be dated’

Form X verbs, and form V and VI verbs with a non-passive meaning, do not usually have a passive, although there are some exceptions:

انحمل تحمل انحمل تحمل t7ammal n7amal ‘bear, be borne’

As in fuSHa, the passive equivalent of an active verb usually has as its subject the direct object of a verb. If the verb normally takes an object with a preposition, the preposition is retained and the verb remains in the masculine singular:

ما بينهرب من حالسجن
maa byénhareb mén has-séj@n
you can’t escape from this prison [= is not escaped from]

If the subject does not follow the preposition directly a pronoun stands in for it:

ما ببنتمشي معها
maa byénmasha ma3a
she’s impossible to get along with

أبي تخت تنام فيه
béddi takh@t yénnaam fii(h)
I want a bed that can be slept in [= is slept in it]

Usage

The passive is often used in a way that lines up with English:
Its more idiomatic use which is very common in colloquial is to express things that should or should not be/can or cannot be done:

شغلات ما يتحكي
shéghlaat maa btén7aka
things that should not be said

الزلمة ما يبتقاوى عليه
ézzalame maa byét2aawa 3alee
the guy can’t be overpowered

ولله خطك ما يقتري
waLLah khaTTak maa byén2ara
I swear to God, your handwriting is illegible [ = is not read]

ما في ولا بنت تتصاحب
maa fii wala bént tétSaa7ab
there’s not a single girl worth getting together with

With many expressions it can be used in a way that distances an agent from an action, similar to English ‘I can’t get X to...’

ما عم يفتح مي
maa 3am yénfate7 ma3i
I can’t get it to open [ = it’s not being opened with me]
**Reflexives**

**The reflexive pronoun**

In English we have the reflexive pronouns formed with possessives and 'self', and in fuSHa we have basically the same system with نفس 'spirit' plus possessive pronouns. Whilst there are contexts in which you might hear نفس with reflexive meaning in colloquial, far and away the most common reflexive pronoun in Shami is not formed with نفس but with حال plus possessive pronouns:

احكي عن حالك
é7ki 3an 7aalak
speak for yourself!

ليش عم تجاكر حالك؟
leesh 3am @tjaaker 7aalak?
why are you spiting yourself?

مفكر حالوشي خربة كبيرة
mfakker 7aalo shi kharye kbiire
he thinks he’s the shit [thinks himself some big shit]

With plural pronouns 7aal remains the same and does not pluralise like English ‘self’:

شايفين حالون
shaayfiin 7aalon
they’re arrogant [they’ve seen themselves]

The same word is used in لحالو ‘on X’s own’:

فتح لحالو
fata7 la7aalo
it opened on its own

قاعد لحالك
2aa3ed la7aalo
sitting on your own

And in the expression خليه بحالو khallii b7aalo ‘leave him alone’.

**Reflexives without 7aal**

In some limited situations normal pronouns are used with a reflexive meaning:

غصن عنك ghaSbin 3annak – in spite of yourself

**Reflexive-style verbs**

There are some verbs which in and of themselves are often best translated as reflexive despite the absence of a reflexive pronoun:
Reciprocals

These are expressions like ‘they hit one another’ where the action is being carried out by two parties on one another at the same time.

The reciprocal pronoun

Lining up with English ‘one another’ or ‘each other’, fuSHa has various expressions formed with بعض, probably originally in the sense of ‘some’ (like the long fuSHa structure, ضرب بعضُهم البعض, which probably originally meant ‘some of them hit some [others]’ or ‘one of them hit the [other]’). In Syrian the most common way of phrasing it is just to use بعض ba3@D on its own as a catchall ‘one another’ or ‘each other’:

- ضرب بعض Darabu ba3@D – they hit one another
- مثل بعض mét@l ba3@D – like one another, similar
- نفس بعض naf@s ba3@D – the same thing, the same as one another
- تطلعو بعض TTalla3u bba3@D – they looked at one another

Reciprocal verbs

As in fuSHa, some verbs are inherently reciprocal, typically form V or form VI:

- تصالحو tSaala7u – they made up (with one another – compare صالحو Saala7o ‘he made up with him’)
- تحاكو t7aaku – they spoke (with one another compare حاكاه ‘he spoke to him’)

When they are really reciprocal the subject is usually plural. However, there are lots of cases where these reciprocals actually may appear with a singular subject and an object expressed with مع. Here, of course, ‘one another’ is not an appropriate translation.

- تصالحت معو tSaala7@t ma3o – I made up with him (functionally a synonym of صالحتو)
Causatives

You’ve probably already encountered the idea of the causative (make someone do something) in fuSHa with reference to forms II (fa33ala) and IV (2af3ala) of the verb. In many ways causatives work similarly in fuSHa and in colloquial, but the structures are a bit different and causatives are perhaps more common in dialect.

Unlike English, which distinguishes compulsorily between ‘make’ and ‘let’ (both kinds of causative), Arabic combines the two under one basic causative. The causative can be formed with خلى khalla plus a verb or with an independent verb form – both can mean either ‘let X do’ or ‘make X do’, or related meanings.

خلى khalla

Khalla ykhalli is probably derived from the fuSHa for ‘to empty’, but it is used in the sense of ‘allow’ or ‘make’. It is combined with an object and a verb conjugated in the b-less present, quite simply:

خليتو يفوت khalleeto yfuut ‘I made him go in’, ‘I let him go in’.
خالاني اقرأ khallaani é2ra ‘he made me read’, ‘he let me read’
خلوني روح khalluuni ruu7 ‘let me go!’

It can also be used in a way that is not a command but expresses a suggestion, similar to English ‘let’s’:

خليينا نجرب khalliina njarreb ‘let’s give it a go’

It can also mean ‘leave’ or ‘keep’:

خلي معك khalliyya ma3ak ‘keep it with you’

Relatedly, it can mean ‘stay’, ‘keep on’ etc, in which case the singular masculine imperative is combined with pronouns indicating the subject:

خليك دغري khalliik déghri – (you) keep going straight on
خليكون هون khalliikon hoon – (all of you) stay here

Other verbs

There are a few other similar constructions which distinguish between ‘making’ and ‘letting’ or have other implications. Their syntax is generally the same:

تركو يمشي tréko yémshi ‘let him go’ (= leave him to go)
جبرني ايجي jabarni iiji ‘he forced me to come’
Derived verbal forms

In fuSHa you might expect most causatives to be produced from form I verbs using form IV (af3al), although you are probably also familiar with some form II verbs with causative meanings. In Shami form IV is almost nonexistent, except with some recent fuSHa re-borrowings, and causatives are formed almost exclusively on form II (although not all form IIs are causative by any means – see the section on form IIs for details).

Causatives often have a bewildering number of possible idiomatic English translations. Most have an underlying/equivalent non-causative verb. Often these are form I:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English (idiomatic)</th>
<th>English (underlying/equivalent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>فوات fawwat</td>
<td>‘let X in(side)’</td>
<td>‘go in, enter’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘put X in(side)’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘take/bring X in(side)’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>سمّك sammak</td>
<td>‘make X thicker, thicken X’</td>
<td>‘go in, enter’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘make X wider’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>خفّ khaffaf</td>
<td>‘lighten X, make X lighter’</td>
<td>‘go lighter’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘reduce [the burden of] X’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘go light(er) on X’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مشّ mashsha</td>
<td>‘walk [a dog]’</td>
<td>‘walk, move’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘make X to walk, let X walk’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘get X moving’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘let X go’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>فيّق fayya2</td>
<td>‘wake X up, awaken X’</td>
<td>‘wake up’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some cases the usual equivalent is not form I but form V. Since this is often used for passives of form II, the relationship here is a bit more ambiguous, but we don’t need to worry too much about which one is derived from the other here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English (idiomatic)</th>
<th>English (underlying/equivalent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>غيّ ghayyar</td>
<td>‘change X’</td>
<td>‘change’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>تغيّ tghayyar `change’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جوز jawwaz</td>
<td>‘marry X off’</td>
<td>‘marry, get married’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are a few form IIs which can be both causatives and synonyms of an underlying verb:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English (idiomatic)</th>
<th>English (underlying/equivalent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>قفّ wa22af</td>
<td>‘stand, stop’</td>
<td>‘stand, stop’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘cause X to stand, stop’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>وصل waSSal</td>
<td>‘arrive’</td>
<td>‘arrive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘deliver X, cause X to arrive’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘give a lift to X’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1 This one can also have a passive meaning ‘be changed/be changeable’, as in ‘the ticket can’t be changed’.

2 This can also mean ‘marry’ in the sense of ‘be the presiding official at the marriage ceremony of’, as in the uncomfortably ambiguous ‘his father, despite being a minister, refused to marry him and his wife’.
Syntax

Syntax of derived causatives is pretty predictable. The subject of the underlying verb becomes its object, and the object of the underlying verb – if there is one – stays as a second object, making the verb into a double-object verb.

 سمّعتو الغنية > سمّعت الغنية
samma3to lghénniyye  seme3 lghénniyye
I played him the song  He listened to the song

 غلبت الي < غلبت اليمني
ghalleet elmoyy  ghalet elmoyy
I boiled the water  The water boiled

As with other double object verbs, when both objects are pronouns the carrier yaa- is used:

 سمّعتو ياها
samma3to yaaha
I played it [= the song] to him

If the underlying verb takes a preposition, this almost invariably stays:

 فهمنا خالد عليها
fahhamna khaaled 3aleeha
We made Khaaled understand her

 فؤدوه المكتب
fawwatuu 3almaktab
They took him into the office

Causatives in context

Here are a few example sentences showing off causatives in actual context.

With khalla:

شو اللي مخلبتك تعمل هيك؟
shu lli mkhallik tekem heek?
What made you do/act like that?

المعلم يا مخلبتك تحب مادة للأبد يا مخلبتك تكره مادة للألد
lém3allem yaa bikhalliiik @t7ébb maadde lal2abad yaa bikhalliiik tékrah maadde lal2abad
Teachers either make you love a subject forever or make you hate a subject forever

بخلبك تسرد وتشرح وبالأخير برذ عليك بارك طيب معليش
bikhalliiik tésr̩od w téshr̩a7 w bil2akhiir birédd 3aleek b- “2ooke, Tayyeb, ma3leesh”
He lets you go on [= narrate] and explain and in the end he responds with ‘OK, well, nevermind’
Some straightforward examples with derived verbs:

If you’re going to grow your beard out...

Qatar won’t let you in without a visa

The scariest thing [= most thing that makes you fear] in any horror film is this sentence: ‘based on a true story’

What are you going to give me to drink?

I can’t sleep at night because of my tooth [= my tooth is not letting me sleep at night]

Take us back [= make us return] to the place you picked us up

The word ‘spinster’ will be the death of me [= will make me die]

Some examples which are perhaps a bit more metaphorical:

Put a few layers on [= thicken your clothes] so you don’t get cold

Don’t put too much [= overdo the] charcoal on the head [of the shisha pipe]

The word ‘spinster’ will be the death of me [= will make me die]

---

¹ This one, uniquely, can also be Taala3 or Teela3 in Lebanese – i.e. the causative can be form III not form II.
You are probably familiar with the fun (or not-so-fun) phenomenon of so-called tamyiz (تمييز, sometimes translated into English as “specification”). In fuSHa, tamyiz is one of the many uses of the accusative — you take a noun, stick it in the accusative, and it turns into something that can be (often clunkily) translated as ‘in terms of’ or ‘by way of’. This handy PDF gives some nice examples: 

- ايمانًا 'increase in belief',
- علوًا 'differ in height',
- أجمل 'more pleasant with regard to style'. You’re probably most familiar with it from the last usage, with superlatives and comparatives.

Some arguable examples of the fuSHa forms are occasionally used in speech too (كتابةً kitaabatan ‘in writing’ for example) especially in higher registers, but productively tamyiz constructions are formed in 3aammiyye without any case ending. This makes them more difficult to spot, but lots of examples of similar constructions do occur – and it’s important to understanding that you can recognise them.

Modifying verbs:

Tamyiz constructions often appear modifying verbs in an adverbial sense. They can frequently but not always be translated with English ‘as’:

- بشغل مهندس
  béshtéghel muhandes
  I work as an engineer (ک here sounds funny and is a common non-native mistake)

- جيت لجوء
  jiit lujuu2
  I came as a refugee [= I came refuge]

- المصاري بجو شيكات
  élmaSaari biju sheekaat
  the money comes in/as cheques

Sometimes they modify not the verb itself, but the object:

- عطاني ياه هدية
  3aTaani yaa hdiyye
  he gave me it as a present

- انت زودت الطين بلة اه
  inte zawwadt éTTiin bille aah
  you’ve made the situation worse [increased the clay in terms of wetness]

They can modify participles, too – as in the following:

- الكاس مليان مي
  élkaas mélyaan moyy
  the glass is full of water
Mabluul moyy
wet (with water)

compare:

3abbeeto moyy
I filled it with water

nballeet moyy
I got wet (with water)

They can also modify the subject:

n2asamu 2ésmeen
they were divided (into) two groups

I’m not sure my divisions into modifying the subject, object and verb are particularly scientific, but hopefully these examples give a decent impression of the breadth of possible semantics.

With question words

With questions with 2addeesh (‘how much’) and shu (‘what’), there is often a tamyiiz which narrows the specification of the question word. Unlike in English (‘what houses’, ‘how much change’), the tamyiiz typically appears later on:

قديش معك فراطة؟
2addeesh ma3ak @fraaTa?
how much change do you have? [how much do you have (by way of) change?]

شو عندك أفكار لتطوير البلد
shu 3éndak 2afkaar la-taTwiir élbalad?
what ideas do you have [have (in the way of ideas)] for developing the country?

They don’t necessarily have to be actual questions, either:

الله وحدو بيعلم شو ممكن تجيني أحاسيس و مشاعر
aLLa wa7do bya3lem shu mémken tijiini a7aasiiis w mashaa3iiir
only God knows what feelings I might have [= what can come to me (by way of) feelings and feelings]

These are of course a subset of the versions above with subjects and objects.

Other uses in fuSHa
In fuSHa *tamyiiz* is also used for expressions of quantity (‘a glass of water’, ‘a kilo of sugar’) and for superlatives/comparatives where an *afDal* noun cannot be readily used (‘more complicated’ for example). In *3aammiyye* the former is usually expressed with an *iDaafe* (*kaasét moyy, kaast élmoyy*) and the latter with a combination of a normal adjective and an *afDal* (*mu3aqqad 2aktar*).
**Numbers**

In fuSHa numbers are famously terrible and impossible to master. In Shami, they are much better.

**One**

The number one has two forms: واحد waa7ed (in Jor/Pal waa7ad) and واحدة waa7de/wa7de. As in fuSHa, this typically follows the singular noun as an adjective to emphasise ‘one’:

في شلغة واحدة بس
fii shéghle waa7de bass
there’s just one thing

With certain collective nouns (like foods and currencies) it can be placed before as a counter:

واحدة بيتزا waa7de biitza ‘one pizza’

Or it can stand alone, of course:

كم شخص معك؟ واحد
kam shakh@S ma3ak? waa7ed.
how many people do you have with you? one.

واحد and واحدة are very commonly used to mean ‘somebody’ or ‘some guy/some woman’:

معي واحد يعرفو
ma3i waa7ed bta3rfo
I’ve got a guy here you know

 واحدة ثانية waa7de taanye ‘someone else’, ‘another woman’

قديش ع الواحد؟
2addeesh 3a lwaa7ed?
how much per person?

It can also appear with (animate) nouns as a kind of indefinite article:

انت عن جد واحد اهيل
inte 3an jadd waa7ed 2ahbal
you really are an idiot

As in fuSHa, the ordinal form (‘first’) is أول awwal. This can either appear before the noun like a superlative (أول واحد awwal waa7ed ‘the first one’) or after it as in fuSHa, in which case it has a feminine form أولى uula.

**Two**
‘Two’ has two forms: اتنين tneen and its feminine equivalent تنتين téenteen/tinteen. It can be used to emphasise a dual:

شغالتين تنتين shégh@lteen téenteen ‘two things’

تنين can also be used, unlike in fuSHa, before a plural noun (in which it does not have a feminine):

تنين اشخاص tneen ashkhaasS ‘two people’

In front of certain collective nouns (like foodstuffs, currencies, and collective plurals) it can be used to count:

تنين بيتزا tneen biitza ‘two pizzas’

Its ordinal form is تاني taani, fem. تانية taanye, which can be placed before the noun like a superlative (in which case it has no feminine) or after it as in fuSHa. This doubles up as the normal word for ‘other’:

تاني واحد taani waa7ed ‘the second one’

3-10

Each number from 3-10 has two forms, one used before nouns and one used independently. Although with 3-10 these forms resemble the fuSHa feminine and masculine, they have nothing to do with gender in Shami:

تاالاتة تللت tlaate tlétt
اربعة اربع arba3a arba3
خمسة خمس khamse kham@s
ستة ست sétte sétt
سبعة سبع sab3a sab@3
تماني تمن tmaani (tamaanye in Jor/Pal) tmén
تسعة تسع tés3a tés@3
عشرة عشر 3ashara 3ashar

The counting forms are followed as in fuSHa by plural nouns:

تنين اشخاص tneen ashkhaasS ‘eight people’

A few common words (yoom, shahr, alf) have special plurals (téyyaam, téshor, taalaaf) when counted in this fashion:
A few sort-of-collective nouns like names of foods, currencies and a few irregular plurals like 3arab are counted with the full forms:

- تلاة بيرة (tlaate biira) ‘three beers’
- خمسة بوند (khamse boond) ‘five pounds’

The ordinal versions are as expected: تالت رابع خامس سادس سابع تامن تاسع عاشر (taalet raabe3 khaames saaedes saabe3 taamen taase3 3aasher), with the predictable feminines. They are commonly put before a noun with no definite article, like superlatives:

- تامن واحد (taamen waa7ed) ‘the eighth one’

11-19

Like 3-9 11-19 have independent and counting forms, but they are usually followed by singular nouns. In this case the counting forms, counterintuitively, are longer (with the -ar suffix):

- احدعش احدعشر (é7da3sh é7da3shar)
- انتعش انتعشر (étna3sh étna3shar)
- تتلعش تتلعشر (tléTTa3sh tléTTa3shar)
- اربععش اربعش (arba3Ta3sh arba3Ta3shar)
- خمستعش خمستعشر (kham@STSa3sh kham@sTa3shar)
- ستعش ستعشر (séTTa3sh séTTa3shar)
- سبععش سبععشر (sab@3Sa3sh sab@3Ta3shar)
- تمتععش تمتعشر (tménTa3sh tménTa3shar)
- تسععش تسعشر (tés3aTa3sh tés3aTa3shar)

Many Syrian speakers use the first form even in front of nouns:

- تمتععش واحد (tménTa3sh waa7ed) ‘eighteen guys’

The most common way to turn these into ordinals is just to place them after the noun:

- الدرس الخمستعش (éddars élkham@sTa3sh) ‘the fifteenth lesson’
The round numbers are basically as expected. They have only one form each, independently or with nouns. They are followed by the singular, as in fuSHa, and have no distinct ordinals, again as in fuSHa.

عشرين 3éshriin
ثلاثين tlaatiin
أربعين arba3iin
خمسين khamsiin
ستين séttiin
سبعين sab3iin
ثمانين tmaaniin
تسعين tés3iin

The compound forms with units are formed, invariably for gender, as follows:

واحدة وعشرين wa7daa w3éshriin
تنين وعشرين tneen w3éshriin
ثلاثة وعشرين tlaataa w3éshriin
اربعاء وعشرين arba3aa w3éshriin
خمسة وعشرين khamssaa w3éshriin
ستة وعشرين sittaa w3éshriin
سبعة وعشرين sab3aa w3éshriin
ثمانية وعشرين tmaani w3éshriin
تسعة وعشرين tés3a w3éshriin

100, 1,000, 1,000,000, 1,000,000,000

The words here are مية ألف مليون ميلار miyye alf milyoon milyaar. All are followed by singulars:

الف شخص alf shakh@ $ ‘a thousand people’
المليون دولار milyoon dolaar ‘a million dollars’
Miyye has a special form, *miit*, used when it is followed by a noun:

\[ \text{ميت واحد} \quad \text{miit waa7ed} \] ‘a hundred guys’

To say for example ‘150’, ‘50’ is attached to larger numbers with *w- ‘and’*:

\[ \text{مئة وخمسين واحد} \quad \text{miyye w-khaamsiin} \quad \text{– 150} \]

\[ \text{مئة وستة وستين} \quad \text{miyye w-sittaa w-sittiin} \quad \text{– 166} \]

All of these numbers have dual forms: ميتيين الفين مليونين مليارين *miiteen alfeen milyooneen milyaareen*:

\[ \text{ميتين دولار} \quad \text{miiteen doolar} \] ‘two hundred dollars’

They can also be counted themselves, as in English:

\[ \text{ثلاث ميت واحد} \quad \text{tlét miit waa7ed} \] ‘three hundred people’ (*miyye* does not have a plural)

\[ \text{خمسة تألاف سوري} \quad \text{kham@s taalaaf suuri} \] ‘500 Syrians’

**Fractions**

Fractions up to ten, like fuSHa, are formed on *fé3l* (*‘half’ and ‘sixth’ are irregular):

\[ \text{نص ثلاث ربع خمس سدس سبع تمن تسع عشر} \quad \text{néSS tél@t réb@3 khém@s séd@s séb@3 tém@n tés@3 3ésh@r} \]

These have plurals formed on *af3aal*:

\[ \text{بانصاص الليل} \quad \text{b2anSaas élleel} \]

In the middle [= the halves] of the night

\[ \text{عم يضربو اخماس باسداس} \quad \text{3am yéD@rbu 2akhmaas b2asdaas} \]

they’re putting two ant two together [multiplying 5ths by 6ths]

\[ \text{ثلاث أرباعون} \quad \text{tlétt arbaa3on} \]

three quarters of them

**(Basic) maths**

Addition is expressed either with *w- ‘and’* or زائد *zaa2ed* ‘plus’ (the verb is جمع *jama3*):

\[ \text{واحد زائد تنين بسائري ثلاثة} \quad \text{waa7ed zaa2ed @tnee bismaari tlaate} \quad 1 + 2 = 3 \]

\[ \text{واحد وتين بسائري ثلاثة} \quad \text{waa7ed w@tnee bismaari tlaate} \quad 1 + 2 = 3 \]
Subtraction is expressed with ناقص naaqeS (the verb is طرح Tara7): 
	تلتة ناقص واحد tlaate naaqeS waa7ed – 3 - 2

Multiplication is expressed by ضرب Dar@b or b- (the verb is ضرب Darab):
	تلتة ضرب تلتة tlaate Darb @tlaate – 3 x 3
	تلتة بتلتة tlaate b@tlaate – 3 x 3

Division is expressed by مقسم على maqsuum 3ala or simply على 3ala (the verb is قسم qasam):
	تلتة على تلتة tlaate 3ala tlaate – 3/3
Expressing possibility, obligation, etc

Possibility

ممكن mumken/mémken

This one literally means ‘is possible’ and is usually best translated as ‘can’, ‘could’ or ‘might’ depending on context. As an auxiliary, it is followed by a subjunctive verb:

ممكن تروح معنا اذا بدك
mémken @truu7 ma3na iza béddak
you can go with us if you want

بتعرف اني الواحد احيانا ممكن يطلع خلقه
bta3ref énno ilwaa7ed a7yaanan mumken yéTla3 khél2o
you know that sometimes, a person can lose their temper... [= that one sometimes their temper can rise]

الله وحدو ببعلم لا ممكن يجيبي أحساس و مشاعر
aLLa wa7do bya3lem shu mémken tijiini a7aasiis w mashaa3iir
only God knows what feelings I might have [= what feelings and feelings might come to me]

For the past, we have to use كان as an auxiliary. This gives a counterfactual meaning (could have, but didn’t).

كان ممكن يعمل فتنة بيني وبين أمي
kaan mémken ya3mel fitne beeni wbeen émmi
it could’ve caused real trouble between me and my mum

كان ممكن يعمل اي شيء يInterested
kaan mumken ya3mel 2eyy shi béddo yaa
he could have done anything he wanted

It can also be used with subjunctive كان plus a past verb:

ممكن يكون راح يجيب بيكيت دخان
mémken ykuun raa7 yjiib baakeet dékhkhaan
he might have gone to get a packet of cigarettes

It can be used in requests as well, like English ‘could’:

لو سمحت ممكن تسكر الشباك؟
law sama7@t mumken tsakker éshshébaak?
excuse me, could you close the window?

In this sense it can appear without a verb:

ممكن قلم؟
mumken 2alam?
could I have a pen?
It appears on its own as well:

إولا ممكن
wala mumken!
it’s just not possible (anymore!)

اي ممكن
ee mumken
yeah, possibly (or yes, I can/could, yes it can/could etc)

كل شي ممكن
kéll shi mémken
anything’s possible

 اذا ممكن
iza mumken
if that’s possible (if you can, etc etc)

يمكن yémken

Yémken is a frozen verbal form without a b- prefix. It is an adverbial form and often means ‘perhaps’ or ‘possibly’. In this sense it is much freer in terms of where it can go in the sentence than mémken is:

يمكن أكثر المشاكل التي تنصير بالحياة سببها انو
yémken aktaririt élmashaakel élli béétSiir bi-I7ayaat sababa énno...
perhaps the reason for most of the problems that happen in life is...

لحتا تترجمها بدك يمكن تكتب هامش صفحتين شرح لالها حتا يفهمها القارئ
la7atta ttarjémha béddak yémken téktob haamesh Séf@7teen shar@7 la2élha 7atta yéfhamha lqaare2
in order to translate it you’d need to write maybe a two-page long footnote explaining it for the reader to understand...

مو مكتوبة بصيغة صح يمكن
muu maktuube bSiigha Sa77 yémken
it might not be written right

يمكن عمر بن الخطاب كان ناجح نوعا ما
yémken 3omar bin al-khäTTaab kaan naajie7 naajie7 naw3an ma
I guess/maybe (the TV series) Umar bin al-Khattab was sort of good

You can use it with the past too:

يمكن راح يمكن ما راح
yémken raa7 yémken maa raa7
maybe he went, maybe he didn’t

It is also used like mémken as an auxiliary with a subjunctive:
يمكن ما يتوفّر معي

yémken maa yétwaffar 3éndi
I might not be able to get it (= the money) [= it might not become available with me]

It occasionally acts like a proper verb meaning ‘be possible’:

اكتئ ممكن
Zaktar ma yémken
as much as possible

 بصي biSiir

This is typically an auxiliary and means approximately ‘is it possible/acceptable?’ It appears with subjunctive verbs:

ما بصير تحكي هيك قدم الضيوف
maa biSiir té7ki heek 2éddaam léDyuuf
it’s not right for you to talk like that in front of the guests!

ما بصير احكيك لا الجديدة لئلي عندك بيغ؟
maa biSiir té7kiilak @shta2télilak wélila léjdiide lli 3éndak bétghaar?
am I allowed to tell you I miss you or is your new (girlfriend) the jealous type?

بصير احول خطى من جيمان لخط زيّن الجديد؟
biSiir 2a7awwel khaTTi min ijtimaΩ3i la-khaTT zeen lijdiid?
is it possible to change my (phone) contract from ‘sociable’ to Zain’s new contract?
[‘sociable’ was the name of one of Zain’s phone contracts]

Like mémken it can be used with nouns too:

؟ بصير سؤال صغير؟
biSiir su2aal @zghiir?
can I just ask one question? [= a small question]

Generally this form is invariable (and should not be confused with other uses of Saar like ‘become’ and ‘happen’ which conjugate normally) but some Syrians accept the plural form with nouns like in the following sentence:

التين بصيرو
léttneen biSiiru
both are possible, both work

كنا kéenna...

This is strictly speaking an extension of the past law conditional:

لشي ما اخدتنا معك ع فرنسا كنا تغدينا مع الرئيس
leesh maa 2akhadtna ma3ak 3a faransa kéenna tghaddeena ma3 érraΩiis
why didn’t you take us to France? We could have eaten lunch with the President!
كآن كسر!
kaan kasar!
You could have broken it!

بجوز bajuuz

is another frozen verbal form used similar to يمكن, meaning ‘possibly’ or ‘might’:

في من بجوز اصل من السويدa
fii ménnon bajuuz aSlon mn éssweeda
there are some of them who might be originally from Sweida [= that their origin might be from Sweida]

بجوز اقول رح يشتك عليون
bajuuz 2éllon ra7 yéshtéki 3aleyyon
maybe he told them he was going to make a complaint about them

It can appear with normal b-presents like this – if the verb refers to something general or actually present (as opposed to future):

بجوز يرمز لدئ أو لشخص
bajuuz byérmoz la-shi aw la-shakh@5
it might be a reference to a thing or a person

It can also appear in counterfactuals meaning ‘might have’ or ‘perhaps’ (depending on context):

لو هربو بجوز كانو نفدو
law hérbu bajuuz kaanu nafadu
if they’d run away perhaps they’d have escaped/they might have escaped

Or it can act like mémken with future reference:

كماان في كلمة بجوز نفكرة مشابهة
kamaan fii kélme bajuuz tfakkérha mushaabiha
there’s another word you might think is similar...

بجوز احتاج مساعدتك
bajuuz é7taaj musaa3adtak
I might need your help

بركي، belki

This one is a loanword from Turkish belki. In Damascus belki (a corruption) is more common but you will hear both. Belki is the normal form in Jordan and Palestine, I think. It is used almost exclusively with future reference, most commonly with b-present verbs:

بركبي جيلك كل يوم بيتزا
bérki jéblek kéll yoom biitza
maybe I’ll bring you pizza every day
بركي منشوفك عن قريب
bérki mënshuufak 3an 2ariib
maybe (hopefully) we’ll see you sometime soon

It is sometimes used with a past tense verb, but this also has future reference and carries a very specific meaning which is something like ‘but what if...’:

بركي انمسكت؟
bérki nmasak@t?
what if you get caught?!

وبركي ما قدرت ترجع؟
w-bérki maa 2dér@t térja3
and what if you can’t come back?!

It is also used to connect two clauses with a sense that is sort of difficult to translate concisely into English. Usually the format is like this: ‘do X, bérki you’ll do Y’ and it means something like ‘so that you might’ in archaic English:

احكيلو بركي بزورنا
talk to him and maybe he’ll visit us

This joke illustrates this use well even if it doesn’t say much about marital life:

وحدة قالت لزوجها: حلمت انك متب السواقة و جبتل سيارة كمان ، قلها زوجها ؛ كمل نومك بركي بتعمل حادث 
wa7de 2alet la-zoojha: 7alam@t énnak 3allamtni léswaa2a w-jébtéli siyyaara kamaan!
2éllha zoojha kamml noomek bérki bta3mlí 7aades w-aLLa yaakhdík!
a woman said to her husband: ‘I dreamt you’d bought me a car and taught me to drive too!’ Her husband said: ‘go back to sleep and maybe (hopefully) you’ll have an accident!’ [= that you might have an accident, and God take you!]

مستحيل

‘Impossible’, ‘it’s impossible’. Used with a subjunctive verb:

مستحيل انساكي
musta7iil énsaaki
it would be impossible for me to forget you

The passive

The passive is often used to express general possibility/ability:

الزلمة ما ينمشي معو
ézzalame maa byénmasha ma3o
you can’t get along with the guy [= he is not walked with]
ما بينهرب من هالسجن

you can’t escape from this prison
Likelihood

اكيد akiid

Certainly, definitely, surely.

انتي أكيد مالك مقتنعة بسبي عم تقولي
2inti 2akiid maalek méqtan3a byalli 3am t2uulii
you definitely/surely don’t believe what you’re saying

بيجي ع الاكيد خلال اسبوع
byiji 3al2akiid khilaal ésbuu3
it’ll definitely come within a week

اع الغلب 3al2aghlab

Probably, most likely.

اع الغلب ما في دوام لول الشهر
3al2aghlab maa fii dawaam la-zawwal éshshah@r
most likely there’ll be no work ‘til the beginning of next month

بكون bikuun

Bikuun is often used to express judgements about likelihood in a way similar to ‘must be’.

بدو يكون béddo ykuun

This construction is used to express judgements about likelihood in a way similar to ‘he must be’:

هلق يبدو يكون مشي
halla2 béddo ykuun méshi
by now he’ll have left

إجباري ijaari

Literally ‘compulsory’, but used to mean ‘certainly’, ‘definitely’.

Ability

قدر / بيقدر 2éder/byé2der

This is the normal equivalent to ‘can’, but typically expresses ability of a person rather than possibility. It uses subjunctive:

بقدر تقول مثلا بطلت من الشغل
bté2der @t2uul masalan baTTal@t mn éshshégh@l
you can say for example ‘I stopped working...’

It can be used in the past to mean ‘couldn’t’, if it refers to one specific time:
بس وله ما قدرت اعمل شي
*bass waLLa maa 2dér@t a3mel shi*
buts I swear, I couldn’t do anything

It can also be used in participle form (**2édraan**) referring to a specific time-delimited period:

مثل اللي عبان ومـو قدران يمشي
*mét@l élli ta3baan w-muu 2édraan yémsi*
like someone who’s worn out and can’t walk (normally)

With the preposition **على** it can also be used with nouns and pronouns:

الأتي بتقدر عليه
élli bté2der 3alee
what you can do, what you’re capable of

ahsan bi7hsn
*a7san byé7sen*

Sometimes *7asan* instead of *a7san*. In fuSHA this means ‘to do well’ or ‘do properly’ but in Syrian it’s used for simple ‘be able to’ or ‘can’ as a slightly less common synonym of *2éder*:

ما احسنت نام
*maa a7san@t naam* – I couldn’t sleep

Its participle is *hasnan*

مو حسنن نام
*muu 7asnaan naam*
I can’t sleep

عرف / بيعرف
*3éref bya3ref*

Literally ‘to know’. Used with a subjunctive verb to indicate ‘know how to’:

انا يعرف سوق
*ana ba3ref suu2*
I know how to drive

Its semantics however often cover things we use ‘can’ for in English:

ما عم اعرف افتح الباب
*maa 3am a3ref éfta7élbaab*
I can’t work out how to open the door

لو سمحت وظغي صوتك شوي! خليني اعرف كمل شغل
*law sama7@t waTTi Sootak shweyy, khalliini a3ref kammel shéghli*
please lower your voice and let me do my job [= know how to finish my work]**
The pronominal forms of the preposition b- or a slightly different variation with an n added (fiini, fiik/fiinak, fiiki/fiinek, fii/fiino, fiyya/fiina, fiina, fiikon, fiyyon/fiinon) can be used with a subjunctive verb to express ability:

فينك تقول انو
fiinak @t2uul énno
you could say that...

ما فيبني امشي
maa fiini émshi
I can’t walk

For the past, it requires kaan:

ما كان فيب اعملشي
maa kaan fiini a3mel shi
I wasn’t able to do anything

Obligation

لازم laazem

‘Must’, ‘have to’, ‘should’. Used with a subjunctive verb:

لازم تروح
laazem @truu7
you have to go, you should go

With a negative (either muu or maa works, though maa is more common) it usually means ‘you shouldn’t/mustn’t’ etc and not ‘you don’t have to’:

ما لازم تروح
maa laazem @truu7
you shouldn’t go

It can be used in the past, but then its meaning is almost always counterfactual ‘should have (but didn’t)’. In order to say ‘I had to’ or ‘I was forced to’ you have to make use of other verbs (e.g. njabar@t). Laazem can either be placed into the past with كان or have a past verb used directly after it:

كان لازم تروح
kaan laazem @truu7
you should have gone

لازم رحت
laazem ré7@t
you should have gone

لازم can also be used as a normal adjective meaning ‘necessary’:
In this sense it can take a direct pronominal object:

المصاري لازمینی
elmSaari laazmiinni
I need the money [note maSaari is plural]

Often laazem + object suffix is used almost like a verb meaning ‘to need’ which then takes direct objects normally and uses yaa- with pronoun objects:

لازمنی یاهون
laazémni yaahon
I need it (the money) [= I need them]

ضروری Daruuri

Usually ‘urgent’ or ‘absolutely necessary’, used with a subjunctive verb:

ضروری تضوج هیک دغیری؟
Daruuri TDuuj heek déghri?
do you have to get upset like that straight away??

اضطر مضطر DTarr méDTarr

Generally stronger than laazem and can be used to express obligation in the past (unlike laazem, which if used in the past gives a counterfactual reading). Often appears with انو:

اضطريت ان اشتری واحد جدید
DTarreet énni éshtéri waa7ed @jdiid
I had to buy a new one

It can take a noun object with علی:

مانی مضطر علیون
maoni méDTarr 3aleywon
I don’t need them urgently

انجبر مجبور majuur njabar

‘Obligated’, ‘forced’. Majuur is the participle, انجبیر is the verb.

مجبور سافر
majuur saafer
I have to/I’m obliged to go abroad

کانت الطرق مسدودة فانجبیرت ارجع
kaant éTTarii2a masduude fa-njabar@t érja3
the road was blocked so I had to come back
Simple prepositions

**b- or bé-**

*b-* perhaps most commonly expresses static location and lines up with English ‘in’, ‘at’ or *fuSHa* في.

بالبيت *bi-lbeet* – at home

بالسارة *bi-ssiiyaara* – in the car

It is also used to express the instrument or means by which something is done (one of the uses of English ‘with’):

عملتو بايدي *3mélto b-2idi* – I made it myself [= with my hand]

بسرعة *b-sér3a* – quickly [= with speed]

It is also commonly used with the meaning ‘about’:

اليوم ما بقدر احكي فيه *élyoom maa bé2der é7ki fiī*  
I can’t talk about today

It is also idiomatically used in names of food, etc to mean ‘with’:

رز بعدس *rézz b-3adas* – rice and lentils (i.e. Jordanian-style *mjaddara*)

You probably know constructions in *fuSHa* like *جاء بـ ‘bring’* (literally ‘came with’). Although in colloquial *jaab/yjiib* is a verb of its own distinct from *éja/yéji ‘come’*, *b-* occasionally does appear with verbs in this meaning in colloquial too:

اليوم ما بقدر احكي فيه *élyoom maa bé2der é7ki fiī*  
I can’t talk about today

**It is often used with pronouns in the meaning ‘among’ or ‘of’ as in the following sentence:**

ما حدا فينا منيح *maa 7ada fiina mnii7*  
None of us is all right

بهبك اكتر واحد فيكون *bi7ébbek 2aktar waa7ed fiikon*  
*He loves you the most of all of you*

It is also used idiomatically replacing normal direct objects in a way that adds a nuance of long, continuous action (like the colloquial English use of ‘on’):
With a number of verbs of emotion, *b*- takes on a very specific use which basically expresses the source of the emotion in question.

- **بسمхи فيك اتك أبي**
  bésté7i fiik 2énmak 2abi
  *I’m ashamed that you’re my father, you make me ashamed [= I’m ashamed in you...]*

- **بخجل فيك**
  békhjol fiik
  *I feel shy around you*

- **بموت فيك**
  bmuut fiik
  *I love you so much [= I die in you]*

As with other prepositions it is also used commonly with verbs in senses that seem relatively unconnected to its independent use:

- **اتطلع بـ**
  TTalla3 b-
  *‘look at’*

- **التقى بـ**
  lta2a b-
  *‘meet with’*

Most speakers do not have في as an independent preposition, but when pronoun suffixes are added to *b*- it becomes في. In Syrian the pronoun forms are فيني فيك فيكي فيه فينا فيكون فيون في١١ فيني فيك فيكي فيه فينا فيكون فيون في١١ (occasionally fiíha, fiíhon) – فيني is irregular. The regular form fiyyi is found in other dialects. In Pal/Jor fiyyo (for fi), fiikom and fiïhom are used.

In Syrian and Lebanese, *fîi*- is also very commonly used as a pseudoverb with subjunctive constructions, expressing ability:

- **ما فيني احكي هلق**
  maa fiini é7ki halla2
  *I can’t talk now [in Lebanese, maa fiyye/fiyyi...]*

### مع *ma3*

مع as a preposition almost always means ‘with’:

- مع اختي *ma3 ékhti – with my sister*

There are occasions when it is idiomatically translated using another preposition in English, but its basic meaning is the same:

- ما عم ينفتح معني
  maa 3am yénfate7 ma3i
  *I can’t get it to open [= it’s not opening with me]*
شو صار معك
shu Saar ma3ak
what happened to you [= what’s happened with you?]

كيفني معك؟
kiifni ma3ak?
what do you think of me? [= how am I with you?]

It is also used as a pseudoverb meaning ‘to have on you’, ‘to have with you’:

اي معي المصاري
ee ma3i lmaSaari
I’ve got the money with me, yeah

In Jor/Pal, some speakers use the Egyptian-style form ma3aa- with suffix (معاي ma3aay) rather than the expected form ma3- (ma3i).

عند 3énd

3énd (or sometimes in Syr/Leb 3and) expresses location near something or in the vicinity of something:

عند المدخل
3énd élmadkhal
by the entrance

انا عند الكازية
ana 3énd élkaaziyye
I’m by the petrol station

It is commonly used in ways which are tricky to translate into English directly but preserve this meaning intuitively (often it can be translated with French chez):

كنت عند خالد
ként 3énd khaaled
I was at Khaled’s

المشكلة عندك
élmésh@kle 3éndak
the problem’s at your end

وقف عندك
wa22ef 3éndak
stop where you are

It is frequently used as a pseudoverb meaning ‘have’, as in fuShA:

عندى ثلاث اخوات
3éndi tlett ékhwaat
I have three brothers
Its pronoun forms are regular, except the 1pl form: عنا 3énna ‘we have’/’by us’.

عن 3an

3an commonly expresses distance or movement away from something:

قديش يتبعد عن البيت؟
2addeesh btéb3od 3an élbeet?
how far away is it from the house?

اذا نفصل راسو عن جسمو نهائيا
2iza nfaSal raaso 3an jésmo nihaa2iyyan...
if his head was totally separated from his body…

It also commonly means ‘about’:

الي قلتلك عنو
2élli 2éltéllak 3anno
the one I told you about

It means ‘for’ in the sense of ‘instead of’, as in these examples:

شيل عنك؟
shiil 3annak?
should I carry [it] for you [= instead of you]?

بدفع عنك
bédfa3 3annak
I’ll pay for you

It also expresses, occasionally, duration (e.g. of a contract):

العقد عن سنة
él3aq@d 3an séne
the contract is for a year

With pronouns it acquires an extra n: عنو 3anno ‘about him’, for example.

من mén

Mén (sometimes reduced to mn before vowels) is most commonly translatable as ‘from’, expressing movement away from something:

جاية من بيروت
jaaye mén beeruut
I’m coming from Beirut

انا من بريطانيا
ana mén briTaanya
I’m from Britain
In this sense, it can be combined with other prepositions:

- **haat mén 3éndak**
  - *give me some of yours* [= from by you]

- **mén 3a-nneet**
  - *off the internet*

It also frequently means ‘by way of’ or ‘via’ or ‘through’:

- **mén hoon?**
  - *is it this way?* (this is the root of the common arabophone English mistake ‘from here?’)

- **faat mn élbaab éttaani**
  - *he came in through the other door*

- **élqiTaar byémro2 mén hoon**
  - *the train comes through here*

- **mén ta7t éjjés@r**
  - *(go) underneath the bridge*

It also very commonly expresses cause:

- **mén gheer shi métdaaye2**
  - *I’m annoyed because of something else*

As a time expression, it means ‘since’ or ‘ago’ (equivalent to fuSHa *mundhu*):

- **mén tlétt @sniin**
  - *three years ago*

Like **من** it gains an extra *n* when pronouns are attached: **منو ménno** ‘from him’.

**لا-**

**la-** generally lines up with fuSHa *li-*. It typically means ‘for’:

- **hdiyye la-marti**
  - *a present for my wife*
It is also used, as in fuSHa, to express belonging outside the iDaafe construction:

لمين الشنطة؟
la-miin éshshanTa?
whose is the bag?

غنية لفيروز
ghanniyye la-feeruz
a song by Feyrouz, a song of Feyrouz’s (thus the common Arabophone mistake ‘a song for Feyrouz’, which means something else in English)

In some other limited contexts (mainly with function words) it expresses motion to or reason:

لوين؟
laween?
where to?

لندنك
la3éndak
to your house

لهيك
laheek
because of that, as a result

It also means ‘until’:

لهلٌق سهرانين؟
lahalla2 sahraaniin?
you’re still up? [= until now staying up?]

سهرانين للصباح
sahraaniin la-SSébâ7
we’re staying up until morning!

It is also commonly associated with verbs:

دقّ لـ da22 la- ‘ring up, phone’

حكي لـ 7aka la– ‘speak to’

In particular, many loaned verbs take la-:

تلفن لـ talfan la- ‘telephone’

فرمت لـ farmat la- ‘format’ (a computer)

It is also often combined with a normal object or possessive pronoun and a following noun for emphasis or, sometimes, for unclear reasons:
la- has two sets of pronominal forms, one independent and one which commonly attaches to verbs (and occasionally other parts of speech). We have discussed the attaching set already in the object pronoun section. The independent set are formed by attaching pronouns not to la- but to él-: 

الك الولão élak elo etc. These sometimes come with an additional la- prefixed to them: للالك la2élak:

الشنتة للالة؟

These independent forms are sometimes used as a pseudoverb expressing possession, as in fuSHa:

الك الاخوات؟

ک ka-

Ka- is comparatively rarely used in colloquial. It is usually used in the sense of ‘as’ you see in the following sentence:

ما بقدر انكر اصلي كعربي

I can’t deny my origins as an Arab (or ‘as an Arab, I can’t…’ depending on pause)

In a related usage you may occasionally hear it in a difficult-to-translate sense meaning something like English -wise:

هلق انا كوضعي المالي تمام

now I’m, money-wise, fine

علي 3ala

This is by far the most complicated and multi-meaning preposition in both colloquial and probably fuSHa as well. It has two forms: علي and simple 3a-. The contracted form is always used before the definite article (3a-lbeet) and optionally used elsewhere too (3a raasi ‘on my head’).

It often means ‘on’ or ‘onto’, as in fuSHa:

علقو ع الحيط 3all2o 3al7eeT – hang it on the wall

علع التخت 3a-ttakh@t – on the bed

It also often translates English ‘at’ in the sense of alongside, by:

علع الشباک 3a-shshébbaak – at the window
3a-shshaara – at the (traffic) lights

It has a similar translation (‘at’) with a few other verbs:

2awwaS 3aleyyi – he shot at me

In colloquial it is also the most common way of expressing movement towards or into something, replacing إلى in fuSha (which does not exist):

raay7iin 3a-jjaam3a
we’re going to university

faat 3a-lghérfe
he came into the room

In this meaning, it can appear alongside other expressions of location, particularly لُندو:

ré7@t la3éndo 3a-lbeet
I went [to see him] at his house

It can also express metaphorical movement:

2ana béddi 2addem 3ala hal-manSeb
I want to apply for this job [= go forward, put forward for]

It is translated by ‘for/to’ in expressions like the following:

3aziiz 3aleyyi – dear to me
zghiir 3aleek – it’s (too) small for you

It often means something along the lines of ‘according to’:

3a-ddoor – take it in turns/you have to wait your turn [= (it works) according to (a system of) turns]

maashi 3a-nniZaam – operating according to a system, in an orderly fashion

3ala keefak–kiifak – up to you, right up your street [= according to your mood]

3ala zoo2ak – what you think is best, ‘surprise me’ [= according to your taste]
It can express a meaning of being in a particular state, as in the following expression:

قديش صارلو على هالحالة؟
2addeesh Sallo 3ala hal7aale?
how long’s he been in this state?

It is used in a large number of adverbial and adjectival expressions in a related sense:

على انفراد 3ala infiraad – in private
على رواق 3ala rawaa2 – in peace and quiet
على مهل 3ala mahl-o – slowly, taking his time (with pronoun agreement)

ع القديم 3a-l2adiim – old-fashioned
ع السريع 3a-ssarii3 – quickly
ع البطيء 3a-lbaTii2 – slowly

ع المظبوط 3a-lmaZbuuT – precisely

ع المضمون 3a-lmaDmuun – guaranteed
ع الاغلب 3a-l2aghlab – most likely

ع الماشي 3a-lmaashi – in passing

على مراقي 3ala maraa2i – to my taste, to my liking, my type

على لبناني 3ala lēbnaani – Lebanese style

ع الساكت 3a-ssaaket ‘hush-hush, quietly’

It also often expresses that its object is negatively affected by a verb, as in the following expressions:

تجوز عليي
tjawwaz 3aleyyi
he married [a second wife, to my detriment] (this expression means ‘he married a second wife whilst I was still married to him’ and is difficult to translate pithily into English for obvious reasons)

طلّع عليي إشاعات
Talla3 3aleyyi 2ishaa3aat
he started rumours about me
I’ve been turning the heating off on the kids at night [i.e. to the kids’ detriment]

I knocked on the door [of the room he was in]

you missed the bus [the bus went, to your detriment]

As in the second example, it can mean ‘about’, often in a negative context: حكي على and حكي عن are supposedly distinct, with the first meaning ‘talk negatively about’ and the second a more neutral ‘talk about’. In reality it seems that علي is increasingly becoming a neutral ‘about’ in some expressions:

what I told you about

It can express ‘in spite of’:

even though you’re a moron, you’re right

you’re a petty thug, but I like you in spite of your flaws

Finally, it can express (like English ‘on’) that someone will pay for something or is responsible for something:

the (cost of) the wedding’s on me!

who’s paying? [= on whose account?]

leave the rest to me [= on me]

In a related sense, it can be used as a pseudoverb with a subjunctive verb following it in the meaning ‘must’ (also found in fuSHa):
The pronominal forms are attached to the root 3alee-: علي 3aleyi etc.
Complex prepositions

قدام 2éddaam

Literally ‘in front of’:

قدام البيت 2éddaam élbeet – in front of the house

لا تفضحونا قدام الآجانب
lā ta7fDa7uuna 2éddaam él2ajaaneb
don’t make us look bad in front of the foreigners!

Can be used with la- indicating motion:

لقدام شوي
la2éddaam shwayy
a bit further on (keep going)

Can be used independently meaning approximately ‘in front’:

انا قاعد قدام وهي قاعدة ورا
ana 2aa3ed 2éddaam w-hiyye 2aa3de wara
I’m sitting in the front and she’s sitting in the back [of a car]

قد 2add

2add essentially means ‘the size of’ or ‘the extent of’, and has a number of idiomatic uses:

من يحبك قد؟
mīn bi7ébbak 2addi?
who loves you as much as me?

ما في كرسي قد
maa fī kérsci 2addi
there’s no chair big enough for me

انت قد؟
énte 2addha?
are you up to the task?

انا قد كلامي
ana 2add kalaami
I keep my word

بحبك قد الدنيا
b7ébbak 2add éddinye
I love you to the moon and back [= as much as the world]

عن قد or على قد has its own idiomatic uses:
الكراسي على قدننا؟
*élkaraasi 3ala 2addna*
there are enough chairs for us [the chairs are on our number]

احلامنا على قدننا
*a7laamna 3ala 2addna*
our dreams are appropriate to our standing

بيت صغير على الدي وفلك
*beet @zghiir 3ala 2addi w-2addek*
a little house just right for me and you

نشفت على قد ما سحبو مني دم
*nashshafat 3ala 2add ma7abu minni dam*
I’ve dried up they’ve taken that much blood from me

قبل 2ab@l ‘before’

قبل الحرب 2abl él7arb – before the war

Can be used independently in the meaning ‘the time before’:

كل هادا كان قبل
*kéll haada kaan 2ab@l*
all that was before

With constructions like ‘two days before the war’, there are two possible structures:

قبل الحرب بستنين
*2abl él7arb bsénteen*
Two years before the war

قبل ستنين من الحرب
*2ab@l sénteen mn él7arb*
Two years before the war

برا barra

برا البيت *barra lbeet* – outside the house

*barra* has an iDaafe form, *barraat*, which is used with pronouns and optionally with nouns:

برات البيت *barraat élbeet* – not at home [= outside the house]

It can be used with *la-* indicating motion:

إطلاع برا
*Tlaa3 la-barra!*
get out!
It can be used independently meaning ‘outside’:

القعدة إحلى برا
él2a3de 2a7la barra
the atmosphere’s nicer outside [= the sitting]

**بقلب b2alb ‘inside’**

Generally used for confined spaces:

قلب الظرف b2alb éZZar@f – in the envelope

Literally ‘in the heart of’, and sometimes can translate that way in English too:

نحنا بقلب السفارة هلق
né7na b2alb éssafaara halla2
we’re in the heart of the embassy now! (or perhaps, ‘we’re well inside the embassy!’)

**بعد ba3@d ‘after’**

بعد الحادث ba3d él7aades – after the accident

With constructions like ‘two days after the accent’, there are two possible constructions:

بعد الحادث بيومين
ba3d él7aades byoomeen
Two days after the accident

بعد يومين من الحادث
ba3d yoomeen mn él7aades

**بين been ‘among, between’**

بين البيوت been lébyuut – among the houses, between the houses

When pronouns are added, been usually takes the form beenaat:

وأنا بعلم اننا بينائتون
waLLa yaa m3allem 2ana beenaat
and I swear, boss, I’m one of them! [= among them]

**بنص bnéSS ‘in the middle of’**

Perhaps not really worth analysing as a preposition per se since bnéSS in itself means ‘middle’ (ركز بالنص rakkez bé-néSS ‘concentrate on the middle’) but worth considering for completeness’ sake:

بنص الطريق bnéSS éTTarii2 – in the middle of the road
Has an independent form بالنص **bé-nnéSS** ‘in the middle’:

انا بالنص *ana bé-nnéSS* – I’m [the one] in the middle (of the picture)

**داير** *daayer*

Used in the sense of ‘around the border of’ and also ‘around’ a defined mass (a pole, tree etc):

بنو حيط داير لجئينة
*banu 7eeT daayer léjneene*
they built a wall around the garden

ربطو داير حوالي الشجرة
*rabaTu 7ab@l daayer shshajara*
they tied a rope around the tree

رح تشوف اضاءة مشعشعة ع داير مندارك ليل نهار
*ra7 @tshuuf 2iDaa2a msha3@sh3a 3a-daayer méndaarak leel @nhaar*
you’ll see shining lights all around you day and night

These two forms of ‘around’ are used markedly less than their English equivalent however since the sense is often included in the meaning of specific verbs:

لف الدوار
*léff édduwaar*
go around the roundabout

لفو الحبل على رقيتو
*laffu l7abel 3ala ra2ebto*
they put the rope around his neck

**ضد** *Dédd* ‘against’

انا اكيد ضد هالفكرة
*2ana 2akiid Dédd hal-fukra*
of course, I’m against this idea

**فوق** *foo2* ‘above’

Usually means above, but can also mean ‘up in’ or ‘on top of’:

اللي ساكن فوقنا
*2élli saaken foo2na*
the guy living above us

الطناجر معدلة فوق الشجرة
*éTTanaajer m3alla2a foo2 éshshajara*
the pots are hanging up in the tree
لا تستحي حط المعلقة فوق السكر
ləa təstɛtɛ7i 7ɛtt elɛmæ3la2a f oo2 ëssɛkkɛr
don’t worry, leave the spoon in the sugar [after using it to put sugar in your tea]

Can be used with la- to indicate motion:

طِلِع لَفُوق
Talle3 la-f oo2
look up

Can be used independently, usually meaning ‘upstairs’ (or ‘further up’, ‘above’ etc depending on context):

الأسِتَاذ فُوق
elɛ2ɛstaaz f oo2
the gentleman is upstairs

جانب janb, jamb ‘next to’

تعال عود جنبي
ta3aal 3ood jambi
come and sit next to me

جْوا juwwa ‘inside’

COME, juwwa lbeet – inside the house

juwwa has an iDaafe form, juwwaat, which is used with pronouns and optionally with nouns:

جوات البلد juwwaat elbalad – inside the country

جواتو juwwaat el juwwaato – inside it

Can be used with la- indicating motion:

فِوت لَجْوَا
fuut la-juwwa
go inwards, further in

Can be used independently meaning ‘inside’:

مرتي جْوَا
marti juwwa
my wife’s inside
مواجيه مواجيه *mwaajeh, mwaajiih* ‘opposite’

These are synonymous variants and mean ‘opposite’:

سأكن مواجيه بيتون بنفس الحارة
*saaKen mwaajiih beetoN bnafs él7aara*
he lived opposite their house in the same neighbourhood

**قفا 2afa**

2afa is literally the back side of something (e.g. a card, a book...) and can appear in the meaning ‘behind’ or ‘after’:

بهشرب خيتين قفا بعضون
*béshrab 7abteen 2afa ba3Don*
I drink two pills one after the other

تحت *ta7@t*

Usually means ‘below’ or ‘underneath’:

تحت الطاولة
*ta77 éTTaawle* – under the table

Can be used with *la-* to indicate motion:

نزيل تحت
*nzeel la-ta7@t* – go downstairs

Can be used independently, usually meaning ‘downstairs’ (but also ‘further down’ etc depending on context):

انا تحت
*ana ta7@t* – I’m downstairs

**طول Tool**

Clearly derived from ‘length’, this is used for both physical description in the meaning of ‘along the length of, all along’ and time in the meaning of ‘throughout, all… long’.

وصلوا يلحقوني طول الليل
*w-Dallu yél7a2uuni Tool élleel*
they kept chasing me all night long

It often appears with *3ala:*

قاعد يفلح فينا على طول الجمعة
*2aa3ed yéfla7 fiina 3ala Tool éjjém3a*
they sit there going on at us, all week long [= sitting ploughing in us]

---

¹ There’s also the more sweary بطئ ‘in the arse of’ used in a similar meaning.
not just this painting, there are others all along the street

With as you are probably aware it has an adverbial meaning ‘straight on’:

روح على طول ruu7 3ala Tool – go straight on

وسط wasT ‘in the middle of’

وسط البلد bwasT élbalad – downtown [= in the city centre]

وسط هالتخاذل كلو wasT ha-ttakhaazul kéllo – in the midst of all this disappointment

ورا wara

Literally ‘behind’ or ‘beyond’:

ورا البيت wara lbeet – behind, beyond the house

Can be used with la- to indicate motion:

رجاع لورا rjaa3 la-wara – go backwards, back

Can be used independently with the approximate meaning ‘behind’:

انا قاعد قدام وهي قاعد لورا
ana 2aa3ed 2éddaam w-hiyye 2aa3de wara
I’m sitting in the front and she’s sitting in the back [of a car]

حوالي 7awaali, 7awaalee ‘around’

Used in all the senses of English ‘around’ and the fuShA sense of ‘approximately [a number]’:

صارت شوف كل يل حواليي بوضوح وعلى حقيقتهم
Sér@t shuuf kéll yalli 7awaaleyyi b-wuDuu7 w-3ala 7aqiiqathum
I started to see all those around me clearly and as they were [= on their truth]

بنو حيط حوالي لجينة
banu 7eeT 7awaali léjneene
they built a wall around the garden

ربطوا حبل حوالي الشجرة
rabTu 7ab@l 7awaali shshajara
they tied a rope around the tree

The fuShA form حول 7awl is occasionally used in the sense of ‘on the subject of’ (e.g. ktaab 7awl élmawDuu3).
Conjunctions

أصبح aSba7

Syrian. Means ‘in that case’, ‘then’ (and NOT ‘became’ as in fuSHa):

أصبح بكرا بشوفك
aSba7 bukra bshuufak
then I’ll see you tomorrow

او aw

‘Or’, as in fuSHa. However in colloquial aw almost never coordinates nouns, only sentences:

او فينك تحكي معها انت اذا بدك
2aw fiinak té7kí ma3ha inte éza bédú
or you can talk to her yourself if you want

بقى ba2a

Syr/Leb. Generally means ‘then, in that case’:

بقى شو بدنا نعمل؟
ba2a shu béddna na3mel
so, what are we going to do?

It can also be attached after imperatives and similar expressions. In this context it has no direct English translation but adds force to the imperative (maybe it’s equivalent to American ‘already’?):

لك خلصني بقى
lak khalleSni ba2a
stop it already! [= save me already]

بعدين ba3deen

Literally ‘afterwards’ or ‘later’ and often used in this meaning:

بعدين بتعرف
ba3deen @bta3ref
I’ll tell you know [= you’ll find out later]

طب ممكن تطلع من قبرك تحضني بحضنك وترجع بعدين؟
Tabb mémken téTla3 mén 2abrak taakhédni b-7aDnak w-térja3 ba3deen?
OK, can you please come back from the grave and just hug me and go back later?

Also commonly expresses ‘then’, ‘in that case’, and ‘anyway’:
بعدين أنا شو ذنبي؟
*ba3deen 2ana shu zanbi?*
in any case, what have *I* done? [= what’s my sin?]

ومعدين؟
*w-ba3deen?*
yeah, and what then? / so what?

بس *bass*

The normal word for ‘but’ or ‘just’, much more common than classicising 

بس ما بحبو
*bass maa b7ébbo!*
but I don’t love him!

هدول بس
*hadoop bass*
just these

It also commonly mean ‘as soon as’, ‘when’. In this case it is usually followed by a subjunctive or a past:

امي بس تمرض ما بتركها
*émmi bass témroD ma bétrékha*
when my mother gets ill I don’t abandon her

بس بدلك تيجي لعندي اتصل فيني
*bass béddak tiiji la-3éndi ttaSel fiini*
when you want to come here tell me

بس قضيبت خبرني
*bass @fDiit khabbérni*
as soon as you’re free [= get free] tell me

ف *fa-*

Used commonly for ‘so’. Can trail off at the end like English ‘so…’:

بعدين ما شفتو فـ
*ba3deen maa shéfto, faaaaaaa ~*
anyway, I didn’t see him, so...

كانتو *ka2énno*

Means ‘as if’:
Like *la2énno* it can be shifted to the end of the sentence:

> ما حنشوفو اليوم كإنو
> *maa 7a-nshuufo élyoom ka2énno*
> seems like we’re not going to see him today

It can be used on its own or with a sentence to mean something like ‘looks like…’, ‘looks that way’.

> أي كإنو
> *ee ka2énno*
> yeah, it looks that way

**لا-، َلا7atta**

Both of these mean ‘until’ and ‘in order to’. The latter is distinctively Syrian:

> نستنى لييجي
> *néstanna la-ýéji*
> let’s wait ‘til he comes back

> نكتشت البيت لحتى جبتها
> *nakasht élbeet la7atta jébta!*
> I had to turn the house upside down to get it [= I rifled through the house until I got it]

It can be combined with *leesh* to mean ‘why would’, ‘why should’:

> ليش لحتى لحكي معو؟
> *leesh la7atta é7ki ma3o?*
> why should I speak to him?

It is used in the following two constructions with expressions of time:

> للاسبوع الجاية لشوفو
> *la-l2ésbuu3 éjjaaye la-shuufo*
> I won’t see him until next week [= until next week for me to see him]

> بالصدفة لشوفو
> *béSSédfe la-shuufo*
> I only see him rarely [= by chance for me to see him]

*La-* is also sometimes affixed to first person subjunctives meaning ‘let’s’ or ‘let me’:
لشوف واحد ثاني
lashuuf waa7ed taani
let’s speak to [= see] someone else

It also often appears in oaths after الله ‘I swear to God’:

وَلله لاكسرلك رجليك
WaLLa la-2éskérlak réjleek
I swear to God, I’ll break your legs

لا لا laa… laa

The structure laa… laa or لا لا لا لا wala means ‘neither… nor’:

لا شاي ولا قهوة
laa shaay wala 2ahwe
neither tea nor coffee

لا رحت ولا حروح
laa ré7@t wala 7a-ruu7
I didn’t go, nor will I

لإنو la2énn(o)

The equivalent to fuShHa li2anna and the normal word for ‘because’ in Syrian. Unlike in fuShHa it can be shifted to the end of the sentence as a kind of afterthought:

كل هاد لإنو قللا انو شعرا مو مظبط
kéll haad la2énn(o) 2élla énno sha3ra muu mZabbaT
all that because he told her her hair didn’t look good!

ما رح شوفو اليوم لإنو
maa ra7 shuufo lyoom la2enn(o)
because I’m not going to see him today

مادام maadaam

‘Since’ or ‘while’. Takes pronoun suffixes:

مبسوط مادامك معي موجود
mabsuuT maadaamak ma3i mawjuud
I’m happy as long as you’re with me

مادامك بالبيت
maadaamak bilbeet
since you’re at home

ما عاد maa3aad, مابقى maaba2a
‘No longer’, ‘not anymore’. Clearly etymologically ‘he did not return’ and ‘he did not remain’. These typically trigger subjunctive. For some people they conjugate, especially with third person feminine, though they are often invariable:

ماعاد اعرف شو بدي احكي
ma3aad a3ref shu béddi é7ki
I don’t know what to say anymore/I no longer know what to say

They can also mean ‘never again’, including in negative imperatives:

ما بقى تحكي معي
maaba2a té7ki ma3i
never talk to me again/stop talking to me

معقول ما بقى نرجع؟
ma32uul maaba2a nérja3?
can it be we’ll never go back? [= is it reasonable we’ll no longer return?]

مشتان متشان عشان méshaan ménshaan 3ashaan

Méshaan, ménshaan, 3ashaan all mean ‘in order to’:

منشان تروح معو
méshaan @truu7 ma3o
so you (can) go with him

They are also prepositions which can be used with nouns to mean ‘because of’ or ‘for the benefit of’:

منشان هيك méshaan heek – for that reason
منشان الله ménshaan aLLah – for God’s sake

In Jor/Pal (like Egyptian) these words can be used in the sense of ‘because’ (i.e. equivalent to لإنو). This is not found in Syria.

كرمال kurmaal/kérmaal

Probably originally derived from the fuSHa kurma(tan) la- ‘in X’s honour’ this is a less common alternative to ménsaan meaning ‘in order to’, ‘for the sake of’, ‘because of’ etc. Like ménsaan it is mainly a preposition but is worth mentioning here because like ménsaan it can be used with subjunctive verbs to mean ‘in order to’.

شي، شي shi… shi

This means approximately ‘sometimes like… and sometimes…’ or ‘some… and some…’ Effectively it expresses two exclusive, alternative, but related situations:
عندون أعلى مؤهلات، شي عندو شهادة، شي عندو دكتوراه
3éndon 2a3la mu2ahhilaat, shi 3éndo shahaade, shi 3éndo doktuuraa
they had the highest qualifications – some of them have degrees, some of them
doctorates…

هلق كثير مهم وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لأنو كل واحد صار بمكان شي بالشام شي بحلب
halla2 ktiir mohumm wasaa2el éttawaaSul él2ijitmaa3i la2énno kéll waa7ed Saar b-
makaan, shi bi-shshaam, shi b-7alab...
nowadays social media is very important because everybody’s in a different place,
some in Damascus, some in Aleppo…

مااني عايش هون طول حياتي،انا شي باسطنبول،شي بالشام
maani 3aayesh hoon Tool 7ayaati. 2ana shi b-isTanbuul shi bi-shshaam
I haven’t lived here all my life – sometimes in Istanbul, sometimes in Damascus

و و

Used as ‘and’ to coordinate sentences, nouns etc:

خز وملح
khébz w-mél@7
bread and salt

As in fuSHa, it can be used to form 7aal sentences with present tense sentences, including
verbs and participles. In this case it must be followed by a noun:

بغني وانا سايق
bghan ni w-2ana saaye2
I sing when I’m driving

وهو ماشي سمع صوت
w-huwwé maashi séme3 Soot
as he was walking along he heard a sound

Occasionally in Syrian/Lebanese w- can precede the predicate:

انا وصغير كنت اقرى كتير
ana w-@zghiir ként é2ra ktiir
when I was young I used to read a lot

It can also be used with all tenses in a very specific meaning of ‘when’, ‘given that’, when the
first clause is a a rhetorical question:

كيف بدي ادفع عنك وراتبي خلص من يومين؟
kiif béddi 2édfa3 3annak w-raatbi khéleS mén yoomeen?
how am I supposed to pay for you when I used up my salary [= my salary finished]
two days ago?

و لا wala
A difficult one to translate directly into English. We could awkwardly sum its meaning up as ‘as long as X doesn’t’. It is followed by a subjunctive, and often occurs with kéll shi ‘anything’:

زقوني ولا تنسوني
zé22uuni wala ténsuuni
Leave me out/exclude me, just don’t forget about me

كل شي ولا هادا
kéll shi wala haada
Anything but that!

كل شي ولا عطلك عن شغلك
kéll shi wala 3aTTlak 3an shéghlak!
[I’d rather do] anything than distract you from your work! [sarcastically]

A different wala appears in double negatives:

ما شفت ولا شي
maa shéf@t wala shi
I didn’t see anything

ولأ، willa
‘Or’. Used to offer two contradictory options:

بدك شاي ولا فقه؟
béddak shaay wélla 2ahwe?
do you want tea or coffee?

Also used to mean ‘or else’, sometimes triggering the past:

سكت ولا بضربك
skoot wélla beD@rbak
shut up or [else] I’ll hit you

يا، ياما ya2émma

Yaa/ya2émma means ‘or’, and offers two contradictory options. It is most commonly used in the structure يا… ياما… yaa… yaa ‘either… or’:

يا بتروح معني ياما بتضل هون
yaa bétruu7 ma3i, yaa bétDéll hoon
either you go with me or you stay here

Forms with -ma

ما ma
On its own, *ma* is used to link together two sentences with a kind of causal relationship (this should not be mistaken for the occasional use of *maa*, with a long vowel, in various negative meanings).

ناميين فوق ما هنن ما نامو من امبارح

*naaymiin foo2 – ma hennenn maa naamu mén @mbaare7*
they’re asleep upstairs. I mean, they haven’t slept since yesterday

Here *ma* adds the nuance that the listener and the speaker both understand the obvious intuitive causal connection between what was said before and the sentence prefixed with *ma*. The same applies in the following sentence although here it can be translated with ‘but’:

مو صايم؟ ما الدنيا رمضان

*muu Saayem? ma ddénye ramaDaan*
you’re not fasting? but it’s Ramadan!

**ا7san ma ‘lest’**

Means ‘in case’ or more precisely ‘lest’ (but obviously English stylistic concerns prevent us from translating it that way):

ما تضحك على حدا احسن ما تصير مثلو

*maa téD7ak 3ala 7ada a7san ma tSiir métlo*
don’t laugh at/trick anyone lest you become like them

For some Syrian speakers it can also be used in a way synonymous with احسن من انو ‘better than…’ with a following sentence.

**élla ma ‘certainly’, ‘it is always the case that’**

المجرم الا ما يرجع ع مسرح الجريمة

*élmujrem élla ma yérja3 3a masra7 éljariime*
the criminal always returns to the scene of the crime

**yaama ‘how much!’**

يااما في ناس هيك

*yaama fii naas heek*
there are so many people like that

**Nouns + ma**

مكان ما *makaan ma*, محل ما *ma7all ma*, مطرح ما *maTra7 ma*, قرنة ما *2érnet ma* ‘(in, from etc) the place that’

لحظة ما *la7Zet ma* ‘the moment that’

مجرد ما *mjarrad ma* ‘as soon as’, ‘the very moment that’

وقت ما *wa2 @t ma* ‘(at) the time when’, ‘when’
ساعة ما saa2et ma ‘(at) the time when’, ‘when’

يوم ما yoom ma ‘(on) the day when’, ‘when’

Prepositions + ma

بدال ما badaal ma, عواض ما 3awaaD ma ‘instead of’

بادلا ما تعمل مظاهرات وتوقف بالشارع … روح وقف عباد النائب الذي أنتخبته وخليه يمثلك
badaal ma ta3mel muZaaharaat w-@twa22ef bé-shshaare3… ruu7 wa22ef 3a baab daar énnaa2eb élli ntakhabo w khallii ymasslak
instead of demonstrating and standing around in the street, go and stand at the door of
the MP you elected and make him represent you

بلا ما bala ma, بدون ما biduun ma ‘without’

مسمح بارغ سي بل بلا ما يطلع دخان بالغرفة
masmuu7 y2argel bass bala ma yéTla3 dékkhaan bé-lghérfe
he’s allowed to smoke shisha but [only] without smoke filling up the room

واحدة نزلتو بالصفحة من دون ما تتأكد من مصدر الخبر
waa7de nazzaléto béSSéf7a mén duun ma tét2akkad mén maSdar élkhabar
someone uploaded it to the page without making sure of its source

بعد ما ba3@d ma ‘after’

بعد ما تقرأ عن الله
ba3@d ma téq ra323an aLLah
after you read about God

فوق ما foo2 ma ‘on top of’

فوق ماني كذاب
foo2 maani kazzaab
on top of me being a liar

ليبن ما labeen ma ‘until’ or ‘by the time’

ليبن ما ييجي منكون خلصنا
labeen ma yiij ménkuun khallaSna
by the time he gets here we’ll be finished

لما lamma ‘when’

لما شفتو استغربت
lamma shéfto staghrab@t
when I saw him I was surprised

لحد ما la7add ma ‘until’
لحد ما تموت من الضحك
la7add ma tmuut mn éDDa7@k
until you die of laughing

مثل ما mét@l ma ‘like, as’ (in Jor/Pal زي ما zayy ma)

مثل ما بدك mét@l ma béddak
as you like

مثل مانك عرفان mét@l maanak 3arfaan
as you know

زي ما قلت zayy ma 2ult
as I said

طول ما Tool ma ‘as long as, while’

طول مانك عم تنتنفس عندك فرصة لواقع أفضل
Tool maanak 3am tétnaffas 3éndak fé rSa la-waæq3 aDf@l
as long as you’re breathing you have the opportunity for a better reality

قبل ما 2ab@l ma ‘before’

This is usually followed by a subjunctive, even when the meaning is past:

قبل ما يوصل 2ab@l ma yuuSal
before he arrived/arrives

قد ما 2add ma ‘however much’, ‘as much as’, ‘as long as’

قد ما احكي عن ريال مدريد ما بوفي حقك 2add ma 2é7ki 3an reyaal madriid maa bwaffi 7aqqak
however much I talk about RM I won’t be doing you justice

حسب ما 7asab ma ‘according to how’, ‘depending on’, ‘as’

بس حسب ما شفبت bass 7asab ma shéf@t
but as far as I know [= as I’ve seen]

Question words with -ma

Question forms can be combined with -ma to create words meaning ‘ever’. These are typically combined with a past form or a subjunctive. Note that 2addeesh has no direct -ma form – its equivalent is formed from the the preposition 2add. From some speakers you may hear man instead of ma in these expressions.
‘Whenever’

Whenever we turned on the radio in the morning we’d find they’d put Feyrouz on all the channels.

‘Wherever’

God make your morning happy wherever you might be, o Syrians!

‘Whatever’

Whatever happens to you, I’ll be there.

Note also that as in fuSHa, you will sometimes here the irregular ‘mehma’:

Whatever his reason was...

‘However’

As good as possible

Superlatives + ma

Af3al superlatives can be combined with ma in the meaning of ‘the Xest...’:

As good as possible

Combinations with énno

‘since, given that’

‘because’

‘although’

‘to the extent that’

‘as long as’
Verb tables

Form I

Form I verbs are not associated with any one particular meaning and have a range of possible vowellings. For ‘sound verbs’ (no semivowels in their root) there are several alternative past (fa3al, fê3el) and present (yêf3el, yêf3al, yêf3al) vowellings. Fê3el-yêf3al and fa3al-yêf3al/yêf3el are the most common combinations, but all combinations occur. All possible present and past vowellings (though not all possible combinations) are shown by these three examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>كتّب kaatêb</td>
<td>مكتوب maktuub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MaSdar</td>
<td>Noun of Instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كتّبة kitaâbe</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Imperative:

كتّب كتبي كتبو
ktoob ktébi ktébu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>éktob bêktob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>téktob btéktob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>ték@tbi bték@tbi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>yéktob byéktob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>téktob btéktob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>néktob mnéktob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>ték@tbu bték@tbu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>yék@tbu byék@tbu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

مسك mések
‘to hold, catch’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ماسك maasek</td>
<td>ممسوك mamsuuk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MaSdar</td>
<td>Noun of Instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مسك mas@k</td>
<td>مسكة maske</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Imperative:

مسك مسكي مسكو
mseek mséki mséku

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>émsek bémsek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>témsek btémsek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>tém@ski btém@ski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>yémsék byémsék</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>témsék btémsek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>némsek mnémsek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>tém@sku btém@sku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>yém@sku byém@sku</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows examples for two verbs: 'to write' (katab) and 'to hold, catch' (mések). Each verb has a form with no semivowels in its root, and thus has several alternative past and present vowellings. The combinations of past and present vowellings are shown for each verb, with the most common combinations highlighted. The table includes examples for each combination, with the full form and the shortened form for each conjugation.

The table is structured in a tabular format, with columns for the active and passive participles, the noun of instance, and the imperative forms. The table is well-organized, with clear headings and examples for each verb.

The text provides a detailed explanation of the vowellings for each verb, including the most common combinations and all possible present and past vowellings. The examples in the table are highlighted to show the different combinations and the full and shortened forms for each conjugation.
### تعب té3eb 'get tired'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تعبان ta3baan</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MaSdar</td>
<td>Noun of Instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>تعب ta3@b</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

تتعب تتعب تعبو

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>ét3ab bét3ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>tét3ab btét3ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>tét3abi btét3abi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwie</td>
<td>yét3ab byét3ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>tét3ab btét3ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>nét3ab mnét3ab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>tét3abu btét3abu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>yét3abu byét3abu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So-called ‘assimilating verbs’ (those with a semi-vowel as their initial root consonant) do not necessarily assimilate in colloquial. In fact, generally – other than the assimilation of -éw- to -uu- – they are effectively regular. These are the forms given in the chart below. Some speakers, however, have a fuSHa-icised set of ‘assimilated’ forms where the w is dropped. Note however that some speakers have an alternative set of fuSHa-like present forms where the w is dropped and the prefixes are (b)a-Sal, (b)té-Sal, (b)té-Sali, and so on. These prefixes occur practically compulsorily with fuSHa verbs like بثق بـ baséq b- ‘I trust’.

### وصل wéSel ‘arrive’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>وصل وصلان waasSel waSlaan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MaSdar</td>
<td>Noun of Instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>وصل wSuul</td>
<td>وصلة waSle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

وصل وصل وصل

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>uuSel buuSel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>tuuSel btuuSel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>tuuSli btuuSli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwie</td>
<td>yuuSel byuuSel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>tuuSel btuuSel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>nuuSel mnuuSel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>tuuSel btuuSli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>yuuSli byuuSli</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the a- prefix, fuSHa-style.

1. Note the a- prefix, fuSHa-style.
Two verbs with initial hamze, اكل akal ‘eat’ and اخد akhad ‘take’, have a similar set of forms (the past basically regular, the present replaces -é2- with -aa-.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>اخد 2akhad</td>
<td>مأخود maakhud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MaSdar</td>
<td>Noun of Instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اخد 2akh@d</td>
<td>اخذ 2akhde</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>كحود خدي خدو</td>
<td>Khod khédi khédu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Form I hollow verbs (verbs with a semivowel for their middle root consonant) have almost as many possible forms. As in fuSHa, three possible present vowellings exist: yfiil, yfuul, yfaal. In Syr/Leb, where short ù and ì merge to é in stressed syllables, there is only one possible past vowelling: faal (fél@t). In Jor/Pal, where the merger is not made, two options (faal-fulet and faal-filet) exist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>جاب jaab</td>
<td>مجيب majyuub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MaSdar</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>جيب جيبي جيبو</td>
<td>Jiib jiibi jiibu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>جيب بجيب</td>
<td>jéb@t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جيب بجيب</td>
<td>jéb@t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جيب بجيب</td>
<td>jébti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جيب بجيب</td>
<td>jaab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جيب بجيب</td>
<td>jaabet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جيب بجيب</td>
<td>jébna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جيب بجيب</td>
<td>jébtu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>جيب بجيب</td>
<td>jaabu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### داق *daa2*
"to taste"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>داق <em>daaye2</em></td>
<td>منوق <em>maduu2</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MaSdar</td>
<td>Noun of Instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>نوق <em>doo2</em></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperative</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>نام نامي نامو</td>
<td><em>naam naami naamu</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ana</th>
<th>duu2 bduu2</th>
<th>نوق بدوق</th>
<th>dé2@t</th>
<th>نام نام بنام</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>tduu2 bétduu2</td>
<td>نوق بتدوق</td>
<td>dé2@t</td>
<td>تنام بنام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>tduu2i bétduu2i</td>
<td>نوق بتدوقي</td>
<td>dé2ti</td>
<td>تنامي بتنامي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huuwe</td>
<td>yduu2 biduu2</td>
<td>نوق بدوق</td>
<td><em>daa2</em></td>
<td>نام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>tduu2 bétduu2</td>
<td>نوق بتدوق</td>
<td><em>daa2et</em></td>
<td>نام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>nduu2 ménduu2</td>
<td>نوق منوق</td>
<td>dé2na</td>
<td>نام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>tduu2u bétduu2u</td>
<td>نوق بتدوق</td>
<td><em>dée2tu</em></td>
<td>نام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>yduu2u biduu2u</td>
<td>نوق بدوق</td>
<td><em>daa2u</em></td>
<td>نام</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### نام *naam*
"to sleep"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>نام <em>naayem</em></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MaSdar</td>
<td>Noun of Instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>نوم <em>noom</em></td>
<td>نومة <em>noome</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperative</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>نام نامي نامو</td>
<td><em>naam naami naamu</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ana</th>
<th>naam bnaam</th>
<th>نام نام بنام</th>
<th>ném@t</th>
<th>نمت</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>tnaam bétnaam</td>
<td>تنام بنام</td>
<td>ném@t</td>
<td>نمت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>tnaami bétnami</td>
<td>تنامي بتنامي</td>
<td>ném@t</td>
<td>نمت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huuwe</td>
<td>ynaam binaam</td>
<td>نام بنام</td>
<td><em>naam</em></td>
<td>نام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>tnaam bétnaam</td>
<td>تنام بنام</td>
<td><em>naamet</em></td>
<td>نام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>nnaam béennaam</td>
<td>نام نام منام</td>
<td><em>némana</em></td>
<td>نام</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>tnaamu bétnamu</td>
<td>تنام بنام</td>
<td><em>némtu</em></td>
<td>ننمو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>ynaamu binaamu</td>
<td>نام بنام</td>
<td><em>naamu</em></td>
<td>نام</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Weak verbs (those with a final semivowel root consonant) have two possible present vowellings (yéf3a, yéf3i) and two past vowellings (fa3a fé3i). By far the most common combinations are fa3a-yéf3i, fé3i-yéf3a, but there are some common exceptions (béki-yébki ‘cry’, méshi yémshi ‘walk’).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>نسي nési</td>
<td>نسي ménši</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>نسيان nésyaan</td>
<td>نسيان ménšyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>نسي nasy</td>
<td>نسي N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>نسي انسي انسيو énsa énsi énsu</td>
<td>نسيت N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طفى Tafa</td>
<td>مطفى mTfi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفى Tafy</td>
<td>طفى N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طفى طفى طفو éTfi éTfi éTfu</td>
<td>طفیت N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MaSdar</th>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>نسي nési</td>
<td>منسي ménši</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفى Tafy</td>
<td>طفى N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeeti</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeeti</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeeti</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeeti</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeeti</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeeti</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeeti</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeeti</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeeti</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeeti</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>طفیت طفیت طفیتو طفیت</td>
<td>Tafeet</td>
<td>Tafeetu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Doubled verbs (those with identical second and third root consonants) only have one possible set of vowellings, \(fa33\)-\(\text{yfé33}\). In dialects without the merger of \(e\) and \(o\) to \(é\), there are two possible present vowellings \((yfe33, yfo33)\). In both cases, doubled verbs are more straightforward than in fuSHa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>دقيق</th>
<th>ماشير</th>
<th>للذينهم</th>
<th>ماشير للذينهم</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Participle</strong></td>
<td><strong>Passive Participle</strong></td>
<td><strong>Active Participle</strong></td>
<td><strong>Passive Participle</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دقيق</td>
<td>ماشير للذينهم</td>
<td>ماشير</td>
<td>للذينهم</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imparative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>دقيق</th>
<th>ميشي</th>
<th>للذينهم</th>
<th>ميشي للذينهم</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق</td>
<td>دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيق دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة دقيقة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(3aTa\) ‘give’ is regular in the past, but has an irregular imperative (\(3aTi\)). The present is formed with \(a\) in all of the prefixes, which it shares with \(3émel\) (\(ya3mel\)) and \(3éref\) (\(ya3ref\)).
Éja ‘come’ is very irregular. In the past it has two sets of forms, one with the prefix é- one without it. The active participle is jaaye (which is used for the masculine and the feminine). There is no actual imperative: forms based on ta3aal- or ta3- stand in. For some speakers the prefixes have a long vowel (iiji, tiiji) or, more standardly, are as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jaaye</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jaayiin</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MaSdar: N/A  
Noun of Instance: jaaye

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ana</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>éji béli</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>éji béji</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inte: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inti</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>téji btéji</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>téji btéji</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Huww: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Huww</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yéji byéji</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yéji byéji</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Híyye: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Híyye</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>téji btéji</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>téji btéji</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Né7na: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Né7na</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>néji mnéji</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>néji mnéji</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intu: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intu</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>téju btéju</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>téju btéju</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hénnen: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hénnen</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yéju béléju</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yéju béléju</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
<td>حيث إنه</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

La2a ‘to find’ is slightly irregular – the past is a normal form I fa3a verb, the present conjugates like a form 3 faa3a-yfaa3i.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mlaa2i</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MaSdar: N/A  
Noun of Instance: N/A

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ana</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la2i blaa2i</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la2i blaa2i</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inte: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inti</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tla2i bétlaa2i</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tla2i bétlaa2i</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Huww: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Huww</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yla2i bilaa2i</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yla2i bilaa2i</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Híyye: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Híyye</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tla2i bétlaa2i</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tla2i bétlaa2i</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Né7na: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Né7na</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nla2i ménlaa2i</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nla2i ménlaa2i</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intu: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intu</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tla2u bétlaa2u</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tla2u bétlaa2u</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hénnen: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hénnen</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yla2u bilaa2u</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yla2u bilaa2u</td>
<td>لاقتي بلاقي</td>
<td>لقي</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Form II

There are only two types of form II verbs – defective roots and all other types of roots. Form II is one of the most common patterns. Its most well-known and perhaps common use, of course, is for causatives or transitive equivalents of form I verbs or form V verbs:

- **درّس** (darras) ‘teach’ *(daras ‘study’)*
- **خرب** (kharrab) ‘mess up, break’ *(khéreb ‘be broken’)*
- **فوت** (fawwat) ‘take in, bring in, put in, let/make enter’ *(faat ‘enter’)*
- **علم** (3allam) ‘teach, show how to do’ *(t3allam ‘learn’)*

A second common use also recognised by classical grammar is ‘intensive’, i.e. expressing an *intense* version of the action of the underlying verb (and sometimes implies repetitive action):

- **كبس** (kabbas) ‘press hard and repeatedly’ *(kabas ‘press’)*
- **قتل** (2attal) ‘slaughter’ *(2atal ‘kill’)*
- **قطع** (2aTTa3) ‘chop up [into multiple pieces]’ *(2aTa3 ‘cut’)*

It is also used to derive verbs from e.g. materials meaning ‘put X on’ or ‘add X to’ or ‘apply X’ (etc):

- **جبن** (jabbaS) ‘put plaster on’ *(jabSuun ‘plaster’)*
- **ملح** (malla7) ‘salt’ *(mél@7 ‘salt’)*
- **سكر** (sakkar) ‘add sugar to’, ‘sweeten’ *(sékkar ‘sugar’)*

A very small number of form II verbs mean ‘consider somebody to be X’:

- **صدق** (sadda2) ‘believe’ *(Saadi2 ‘honest’)*
- **كذب** (kazzab) ‘disbelieve, think a liar’ *(kazzaab ‘liar’)*
- **كفر** (kaffar) ‘consider to be a non-Muslim’ *(kaafir ‘unbeliever’)*

And another small number mean ‘to say X’, where X is a specific (usually religious) expression:

- **كبر** (kabbar) ‘say aLLaahu 2okbar’
- **سمّل** (sammal) ‘say bismillaah’ *(the fuHa equivalent is basmal)*
- **سلم** (sallam) ‘say hi to, greet’ *(originally ‘say salaam’)*

A few form II verbs mean ‘spend [a specific time]’:

- **مسى** (massa) ‘spend an evening’
- **صيف** (Sayaf) ‘to summer’
Quite a few form II verbs are actually verbs of becoming:

- **shawab** ‘get hot’ (*shoob* ‘hot’)
- **rashsha7** ‘develop a cold, catch a cold’ (*rash@7* ‘a cold’)
- **3aTTal** ‘take the day off’ (*3éTle* ‘holiday’)

Quite a lot of form IIs are basically causative but have (sometimes additional) meanings which are not quite predictable from a basic combination of underlying verb + causative meaning:

- **darras** ‘teach’
  - ‘put through school, send to school’
- **ra22aS** ‘dance with’
- **la33ab** ‘play with’ [e.g. a child]

Many form IIs actually have several different meanings depending on context, derived from different underlying words or from different meanings of the same underlying word:

- **sakkar** ‘get/make someone drunk’ (*séker* ‘get drunk’)
  - ‘add sugar to’ (*sékkaar* ‘sugar’)
  - ‘close’ (transitive or intransitive)
- **3aTTal** ‘break down’ [of a mechanical thing] (*3aaTel* ‘not functioning’)
  - ‘break, cause to break down’ (causative of above)
  - ‘have a day off’ (*3éTle* ‘holiday’)
  - ‘distract, take away from’ [work]
- **2aTTa3** ‘chop into pieces, chop up’ (*2aTa3* ‘cut’)
  - ‘allow, let, make cross’ (*2aTa3* ‘cross’)

A number of form II verbs, including some of those above, can be either intransitive (often synonymously with a form I verb where one exists) or transitive/causeative equivalents of that verb:

- **wa22af** ‘stop, stand’ (synonym of rare/regional *wé2ef*)
  - ‘stop, make stop, make stand’
- **waSSal** ‘arrive’ (synonym of *wéSel*)
  - ‘deliver, make arrive’
- **fakkar** ‘think about’ (no form I synonym)
  - ‘cause to think about’

Finally, in a few unusual cases, form IIs have very similar semantics to form Is but are used in different contexts:

- **ghassal** ‘wash [a body part]’ (*ghasal* ‘wash’).
### Fa33al, yfa33el

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مزبط mzabbeT</td>
<td>نزبط mzabbaT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MaSdar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تزبط tazbiT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

زبط زبطي زبطو

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>زبطي زبطي زبطو</td>
<td>zabbTaT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fa33a, yfa33i

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>معبي m3abbi</td>
<td>معبى m3abba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MaSdar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تعبي tew3baaye (f)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

عبي عبي عبو

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عبي عبي عبو</td>
<td>3abbeet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fa33a, yfa33i

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>معبي m3abbi</td>
<td>معبى m3abba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MaSdar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تعبي tew3baaye (f)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

عبي عبي عبو

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عبي عبي عبو</td>
<td>3abbeet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fa33a, yfa33i

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عبي عبي عبو</td>
<td>3abbeet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MaSdar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تعبي tew3baaye (f)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

عبي عبي عبو

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عبي عبي عبو</td>
<td>3abbeet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fa33a, yfa33i

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عبي عبي عبو</td>
<td>3abbeet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MaSdar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تعبي tew3baaye (f)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

عبي عبي عبو

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>عبي عبي عبو</td>
<td>3abbeet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Form III

Form III (\textit{faa3al}) verbs can be a variety of different things. Although they’re not the most common pattern, there are still quite a lot of them. In their conjugation they’re pretty similar to fuSHa, with the normal exceptions of \textit{mu} being replaced by \textit{m} (including in most \textit{maSdar}s, although some verbs typically have fuSHa-style \textit{maSdar}s instead).

A lot of form IIIIs are transitive verbs with direct objects equivalent to a form I verb plus a preposition:

- حاك ‘talk to’ < 7aka ma3
- كتب ‘write to’ < katab \textit{la-}
- طالب ‘demand from’ < Talab \textit{mén}

Some of them have a strange relationship with form I verbs from the same root where the form III expresses something like ‘try to X’ or ‘seek to X’. Most of the examples of this though are kind of metaphorical and it’s probably not worth getting too bound up in the exact derivational meaning of form III:

- خنق ‘fight, argue with’ < khaana2 ma3
- سبق ‘come ahead of, precede’ < saaba2 ma3
- قتل ‘kill’ < 2atal ma3
- شريك ‘partner’ < shaarak ma3

A small number are causatives, usually alternatives to form IIIs:

- طالع ‘take, bring up’ (causative of طلع ‘go up’), alternative to \textit{Talla3}

Finally, lots of them have no obvious relationship with other verbs:

- عاني ‘suffer from’ < 3aana mén
- جاكر ‘tease, spite’ < jaakar
### Faa3al, yfaa3el

**جاكر (jaakar)**

- Active Participle: مجاكر (mjaaker)
- Passive Participle: مجاكر (mjaakar)
- ماسدار (MaSdar): مجاكر (mjaakara)
- Noun of Instance: N/A

**Imperative:**

- جاكر جاكرت (jaaker jaakri jaakru)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>jaakar@t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>jaakart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>نجاكر منجاكر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>jaakar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hlyye</td>
<td>jaakaret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>jaakarta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>نجاكر منجاكر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>jaakaru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Faa3a yfaa3i

**حاكى (7aaka)**

- Active Participle: محاكي (m7aaki)
- Passive Participle: محاكي (m7aaka)
- ماسدار (MaSdar): N/A
- Noun of Instance: N/A

**Imperative:**

- حاكي حاكى حاكو (7aaki 7aaki 7aaku)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>7aakeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>7aakeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>7aakeeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>7aakeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hlyye</td>
<td>7aakeen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>7aakeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>7aakeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>7aakeetu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Form V

Form V (tfa33al) verbs are very common, one of the most common patterns. They are similar to fuSha except that the fuSha ta- prefix is t- instead. They have fuSha-style maSdars on the shape tafa33ul/tafa33i, but these are very commonly replaced in practice by the maSdars of their form II equivalents (تعلم for example often uses ta3liim as its maSdar in practice despite the existence of تعلم ta3allum).

Form V is particularly productive as a passive/reciprocal/etc counterpart to form II (fa33al) verbs:

- تغير tghayyar ‘be changeable, changed’ < غير ghayyar ‘change’
- تصوّر tSawwar ‘be photographed’ < صور Sawwar ‘photograph’
- تلون tlawwan ‘be coloured’ < لون lawwan ‘to colour’

Related (possibly even the same category) but with a slightly different translation in English are the intransitive equivalents to form II transitive verbs:

- تغير tghayyar ‘change’ (intransitive)
- تسرب tsarrab ‘leak’ (intransitive)

Some are verbs expressing ‘act like’ or ‘act...’ (although these are more common on pattern VI or as quadriliteral verbs):

- تمنن tmannan ‘ungraciously remind someone of a favour you did them to make them do favours for you’ (< منية ménniyye)
- تبنت tbannat ‘act girly’
- تفنن tfannan ‘be artistic, do skillfully’
- تكلف b- ‘take responsibility for’ (be a كفيل for)

Some are synonyms of underlying form II or form I verbs (or both, in some cases):

- ضحك tDa77ak ‘laugh’ (ضحك Da7ak, Da77ak)
- تركّز trakkaz ‘concentrate’ (رّكز rakaz)

Some are verbs of becoming:

- تحسن t7assan ‘improve’

Lots of form Vs have no clear underlying verb:

- تفضل tfaDDal ‘go ahead and...’
### Tfa33al yéťfa33al

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>متعلم</td>
<td>متعلم</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MaȘdar**
- تعلم t3allam

**Noun of Instance**
- تعلم t3allum

**Imperative:**
- تعلم تعليمو t3allam t3allami t3allamu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>تعلم t3allam بتعلم متتعلم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>تعلم بتتعلم متتعلم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>تعلم يتعلم يتعلم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>تعلم t3allam بتتعلم متتعلم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hîyye</td>
<td>تعلم t3allam بتتعلم متتعلم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>تعلم t3allam بتتعلم متتعلم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>تعلم t3allamu بتتعلم متتعلم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>تعلم t3allamu بتتعلم متتعلم</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tfa33a yéťfa33a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>متخبى</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MaȘdar**
- تخبى tkhabba

**Noun of Instance**
- تخبى takhabbi

**Imperative:**
- تخيبى تخبي تخبو tkhabba tkhabbi tkhabbu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>تخيبى تخبي تخبو tkhabeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>تخيبى تخبي تخبو tkhabeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>تخيبى تخبي تخبو tkhabeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>تخيبى تخبي تخبو tkhabeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hîyye</td>
<td>تخيبى تخبي تخبو tkhabeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>تخيبى تخبي تخبو tkhabeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>تخيبى تخبي تخبو tkhabeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>تخيبى تخبي تخبو tkhabeet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Form VI

Form VI (faa3al) verbs are very common, one of the most common patterns. They are similar to fuSha except that the fuSha ta- prefix is t- instead.

Form VI is particularly productive as a passive/reciprocal/etc counterpart to form III (faa3al) verbs:

- تحاكى مع t7aaka ma3 ‘talk with, be spoken to’
- تخاق مع tkhaana2 ma3 ‘argue with, be argued with’
- تسابق مع tsaaba2 ma3 ‘race with, be raced with’
- توافق مع twaafa2 ma3 ‘agree with, be agreed with’

Some of them are verbs expressing ‘act like’:

- تغاشم tghaasham ‘be naive’ (> غشيم ghashiim)
- تناس tnaasa ‘pretend to have forgotten’
- تماثيح tmaaya3 ‘act rudely, naughtily’ (> مابع maaye3)
- تبالد tbaalad ‘act slowly, irritatingly’ (> بليد baliid)

Some senses don’t seem to have obvious underlying verbs:

- تجاوب مع tjaawab ma3 ‘respond positively to’
### Tfaa3al yétfaa3al

**Active Participle** | **Passive Participle**
---|---
منجاب métjaaweb | N/A

**Maṣdar** | **Noun of Instance**
---|---
تجاوب tajaawub | N/A

#### Imperative:
تجاوب تجاوبي تجاوبو

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>étjaawab bétjaawab</td>
<td>tjaawab@t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>tétjaawab btétjaawab</td>
<td>tjaawab@t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>tétjaawabi btétjaawabi</td>
<td>tjaawabti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>yétjaawab byétjaawab</td>
<td>tjaawab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>tétjaawab btétjaawab</td>
<td>tjaawabet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>né7jaawab mnétjaawab</td>
<td>tjaawabna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>tétjaawabu btétjaawabu</td>
<td>tjaawabtu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>yétjaawabu byétjaawabu</td>
<td>tjaawabu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tfaa3a yétfaa3a

**Active Participle** | **Passive Participle**
---|---
منحلاك mét7aaki | N/A

**Maṣdar** | **Noun of Instance**
---|---
تحاكي ta7aaki | N/A

#### Imperative:
تحاكي تحاكي تحاكي

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>ét7aaka bét7aaka</td>
<td>t7aakeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>tét7aaka btét7aaka</td>
<td>t7aakeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>tét7aaki btét7aaki</td>
<td>t7aakeeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>yét7aaka byét7aaka</td>
<td>t7aka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>té7aaka bté7aaka</td>
<td>t7aaket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>né7aaka mnét7aaka</td>
<td>t7aakeena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>tét7aaku btét7aaku</td>
<td>t7aakeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>yét7aaku byét7aaku</td>
<td>t7aaku</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Form VII

Form VII is exclusively a passive of form I:

انضرب nDarab ‘be hit’

انقرى n2ara ‘be read’

Nfa3al/yénfa3al

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>منمسك</td>
<td>نمسك</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MaSdar

N/A

Noun of Instance

N/A

Imperative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>انمسك بنمسك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>تنمسك بتنمسك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>تنمسكي بتنمسكي</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>ينمسك بينمسك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>تنمسك بتنمسك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>ننمسك مننمسك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>تنمسكو بتنمسكو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>ينمسكو بينمسكو</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nfaal/yénfaal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>منشف</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MaSdar

N/A

Noun of Instance

N/A

Imperative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>انشف بنشف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>تنشف بتنشف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>تنشفاني بتنشفاني</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>ينشف بينشف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>تنشف بتنشف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>ننشف مننشف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>تنشفاني بتنشفاني</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>ينشفاني بينشفاني</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

انضاف nshaaf ‘be seen’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>انضاف بنضاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>تنضاف بتنضاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>تنضافاني بتنضافاني</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>ينضاف بينضاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>تنضاف بتنضاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>ننضاف مننضاف</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>تنضافاني بتنضافاني</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>ينضافاني بينضافاني</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Nfa3a/yénfa3a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>منعطلي</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Imperative:

انعطى انعطى انعطى انعطى

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>呈式</th>
<th>ناطب</th>
<th>ناطب</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>én3aTa bén3aTa</td>
<td>انعطى بنعطى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>tén3aTa btén3aTa</td>
<td>انعطى بنعطى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>tén3aTi btén3aTi</td>
<td>انعطى بنعطى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>yén3aTa byén3aTa</td>
<td>انعطى بنعطى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>tén3aTa btén3aTa</td>
<td>انعطى بنعطى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>nén3aTa mnén3aTa</td>
<td>انعطى منعطى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>tén3aTu btén3aTu</td>
<td>انعطى بنعطى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>yén3aTu byén3aTu</td>
<td>انعطى بنعطى</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Nfa33/yénfa33

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>منكب</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Imperative:

انكب انكبي انكبو

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>呈式</th>
<th>ناطب</th>
<th>ناطب</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>énkabb bénkabb</td>
<td>انكب بنك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>ténkabb bténkabb</td>
<td>انكب بنك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>ténkabb bténkabb</td>
<td>انكب بنك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>yénkabb byénkabb</td>
<td>انكب بنك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>ténkabb bténkabb</td>
<td>انكب بنك</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>nénkabb mnénkabb</td>
<td>انكب منكب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>ténkabbu bténkabbu</td>
<td>انكب بنكب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>yénkabbu byénkabbu</td>
<td>انكب بنكب</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Form VIII

The meaning of form VIII is famously difficult to pin down, and its formation is also quite difficult. In terms of vowelling it is basically identical to form VII, but it’s formed (in colloquial as in fuSHa) by the insertion of a -tt- after the first root consonant. As in fuSHa this t undergoes and causes some strange assimilations, which it’s important to be aware of, but these are explained elsewhere and since you’re unlikely to need to derive form VIII verbs it’s more important to be familiar with the shapes:

- اتکل *ttakal < wakkal* ‘depend’
- اضطر *DTarr < Daruurra* ‘be obligated to’
- اتخذ *ttakhaz < 2akhaz* ‘take (a decision)’

Many form VIIIs are reflexive/reciprocal /etc versions of form I (or occasionally non-form I) verbs:

- ارتباط بـ *rtabaT b rabaT* ‘tie’
- استوى *stawa* ‘be cooked, finish cooking’
- التق *Ita2a* ‘meet (one another)’
- ازهر *zdahar* ‘flower’

Many are passive, sometimes alternatives of form VIIIs:

- اقتنع بـ *qtana3 b qana3* ‘be convinced of’
- انسى *ntasa < nési* ‘be forgotten’
- استلم *stalam < sallam* ‘give to’

Some are more specific/abstract versions of form I verbs:

- افتتح *ftata7* ‘open (a meeting, a shopping centre)
- اتخذ *ttakhaz* ‘take on, adopt’

1 Lots of the assimilations reflected in spelling in form VIII verbs actually occur naturally in terms of how the language is actually pronounced.
2 Though this one maybe doesn’t count since it presumably exists in fuSHa instead and akhaz is not a common verb in 3aamiyye.
### Ftaal/yéftaal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مبادر</td>
<td>Noun of Instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شغل shégh@l</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperative:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>اشتغل اشتغلي اشتغلو</td>
<td>shtaghal@t shtaghal shtaghu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>منOUTH</td>
<td>shtaghalna shtaghaltu shtaghalu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اشتغل بتشغلي</td>
<td>اشتغلت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اشتغل بتشغلي</td>
<td>اشتغلت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اشتغل بشتغل</td>
<td>اشتغلت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>اشتغل بشتغل</td>
<td>اشتغلت</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Ftaal/yéftaal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مبادر</td>
<td>Noun of Instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ارتاح irtiyaa7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperative:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ارتاح ارتحي ارتحو</td>
<td>rtta7 rtta7i rtta7u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ارتاح برتاح</td>
<td>rté7@t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ارتاح برتاح</td>
<td>rté7@t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ارتاح برتاح</td>
<td>rté7ti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ارتاح برتاح</td>
<td>rtta7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ارتاح برتاح</td>
<td>rtta7et</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ارتاح برتاح</td>
<td>rté7eta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ارتاح برتاح</td>
<td>rté7tu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ارتاح برتاح</td>
<td>rtta7u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ارتاح برتاح</td>
<td>rtta7u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ارتاح برتاح</td>
<td>rtta7u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### النقي `ita2a` 

**‘meet’**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ملتقي <code>mélta2i</code></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مسدر <code>iltiqaa2</code></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

##### Imperative:

التقي التقي التقو

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>élta2i</code></td>
<td><code>Ita2eet</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>btélta2i</code></td>
<td><code>Ita2eet</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>iltiqaa2</code></td>
<td><code>Ita2eeeti</code></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### النقي `ftall/yéftall` 

**‘be obliged to’**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مضطر <code>méDTarr</code></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مسدر <code>N/A</code></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

##### Imperative:

اضطر اضطردو اضطرو

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>éDTarr béDTarr</code></td>
<td><code>DTarreetu</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>téDTarr btéDTarr</code></td>
<td><code>DTarreeti</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>yéDTarr byéDTarr</code></td>
<td><code>DTarret</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>néDTarr mnéDTarr</code></td>
<td><code>DTarreena</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>btéDTarru btéDTarru</code></td>
<td><code>DTarreetu</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>yéDTarru byéDTarru</code></td>
<td><code>DTarru</code></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Form IX**

Form IX verbs are quite rare, and only a few of them exist. In fuSha all if3alla verbs are by their nature doubled verbs in terms of conjugation, and the same applies in colloquial, but like other doubled verbs the conjugation strategy used for form IXs is formed by analogy with finally-weak/defective verbs and avoids breaking up the cluster: 7marr-ee7 for example.

All (almost all?) form IX verbs are associated with an af3al adjective of colour or defect and are verbs of becoming:

- أسود swadd 'turn black' < أسود aswad 'black'
- أحمر 7marr 'turn red' < أاحمر a7mar 'red'
- أسمر smarr 'turn brown-skinned, tan' < اسمر asmar 'tanned, brown-skinned'

**F3all/yéf3all**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مسود méswadd</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MaSdar</th>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

اسود أسودي أسودو swadd swadddi swaddu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana</td>
<td>éSwadd béSwadd</td>
<td>اسود swaddeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>téSwadd btéSwadd</td>
<td>اسود swaddeeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>téSwadd btéSwadd</td>
<td>اسود swaddeeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>yéSwadd byéSwadd</td>
<td>اسود swadddu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>téSwadd btéSwadd</td>
<td>اسود swaddet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>néSwadd mnéSwadd</td>
<td>اسود swaddeena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>btéSwaddu btéSwaddu</td>
<td>اسود swaddeetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>yéSwaddu byéSwaddu</td>
<td>اسود swaddu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Form X

Form X (staf3al) verbs are formed relatively simply and in a way similar to fuSHa. In fuSHa teaching some bright spark hit on the idea of explaining them in terms of ‘seek to do X’, which is actually a reasonably good approximation of the meaning of quite a lot of form Xs assuming you don’t get too excited and literally go about translating them that way instead of using it as a handy guide to guess the meaning. If we want to approach it more accurately, however, staf3al verbs have quite a few different meanings.

Many common form Xs are derived from adjectives and express ‘consider something X’:

- استغرب (staghrab) ‘find strange’
- استحسن (sta7san) ‘consider good, better’
- استهبل على (stahbal 3ala) ‘treat like an idiot’

Some are verbs of becoming (-anise):

- استعرب (sta3rab) ‘become Arab’, ‘act like an Arab’
- استغرب (staghrab) ‘become Westernised’, ‘act westernised’

Some (including these two in some contexts) are verbs of action:

- استجل (starjal) ‘act masculine (of a woman)’

The pattern is also used in a few cases to translate the –ist of English e.g. ‘Orientalist’, with accompanying (though rare) verbs:

- مستشرق (mustashreq) ‘Orientalist’

Some (and these are the ones that most fit ‘seek’) are derived from (typically but not exclusively form I) verbs with a meaning like ‘seek for X to do Y’ where Y is the underlying verb:

- استعان (sta3aan) ‘ask for someone’s help’ < عان ‘help’
- استقال (staqaal) ‘resign’ < اقال ‘release from a job’

Many seem to straightforwardly fit with ‘seek to’ plus underlying verb (without any of the strange additional actor stuff going on above’):

- استولى (stawla) ‘take control of’
- استوطن (stawTan) ‘settle, colonise’
### استغرب staghrab

‘find strange, be surprised’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مستغرب méstaghreb</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MaSdar</th>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>استغراب istighraab</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Imperative:

استغرب استغربي استغربو

**Present**  

| Ana | ëStaghreb béStaghreb | استغرب بستغرب | staghrab@t | استغربت |
| Inte | téStaghreb btéStaghreb | تستغرب تستغرب | staghrab@t | استقريت |
| Inti | téStagh@rbi btéStagh@rbi | تسترغب بسترغب | staghrabti | استغربت |
| Huwwe | yéStaghreb byéStaghreb | يسترغب بسترغب | staghrab | استغرب |
| Hiyye | téStaghreb btéStaghreb | تسترغب بسترغب | staghrabet | استقريت |
| Né7na | néstaghreb mnéstaghreb | تسترغب مسترغب | staghrabna | استقرينا |
| Intu | btéStagh@rbi btéStagh@rbi | تسترغب بسترغب | staghrabtu | استقريتو |
| Hénnen | yéStagh@rbi byéStagh@rbi | يسترغب بسترغب | staghrabu | استغربو |

### استقال staqaal

‘resign’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مستقيل méstaqiil</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MaSdar</th>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>استقالة istiqqale</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Imperative:

استقيل استقلي استقيلو

**Present**  

| Ana | êStaqiiil bêStaqiiil | استقيل بستقيل | staqél | استقتل |
| Inte | téStaqiiil btéStaqiiil | تستقيل تستقلي | staqél | استقتل |
| Inti | téStaqiiil btéStaqiiil | تستقيل تستقلي | staqéliti | استقليت |
| Huwwe | yéStaqiiil byéStaqiiil | يستقيل يستقلي | staqaal | استقال |
| Hiyye | téStaqiiil btéStaqiiil | تستقيل تستقلي | staqqalet | استقلىت |
| Né7na | néstaqiiil mnStaqiiil | تستقيل مستقيل | staqélina | استقتينا |
| Intu | btéStaqiiilu btéStaqiiilu | تستقيل بستقيلو | staqélu | اضطترتو |
| Hénnen | yéStaqiiilu byéStaqiiilu | يستقيل بمستقيلو | staqaalu | اضطررو |
### stawla; yéstawli

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>méstawli</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MaSdar</th>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperative:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>استولي استولي استلولو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stawli stawli stawlu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ana</th>
<th>Inte</th>
<th>Inti</th>
<th>Huwwe</th>
<th>Hiyye</th>
<th>Né7na</th>
<th>Intu</th>
<th>Hénnen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>éstawli</td>
<td>téstawli</td>
<td>téstawli</td>
<td>yéstawli</td>
<td>téstawli</td>
<td>néstawli</td>
<td>téstawlu</td>
<td>yéstawlu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>béstawli</td>
<td>btéstawli</td>
<td>btéstawli</td>
<td>byéstawli</td>
<td>btéstawli</td>
<td>mnéstawli</td>
<td>btéstawlu</td>
<td>byéstawlu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### staghall; yéstaghell

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>méstaghéll</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MaSdar</th>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperative:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>استغل استغل استغللو</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staghéll staghéllu staghéllu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ana</th>
<th>Inte</th>
<th>Inti</th>
<th>Huwwe</th>
<th>Hiyye</th>
<th>Né7na</th>
<th>Intu</th>
<th>Hénnen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>éstaghéll</td>
<td>téstaghéll</td>
<td>téstaghéll</td>
<td>yéstaghéll</td>
<td>téstaghéll</td>
<td>néstaghéll</td>
<td>téstaghéll</td>
<td>yéstaghéll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>béstaghéll</td>
<td>btéstaghéll</td>
<td>btéstaghéll</td>
<td>byéstaghéll</td>
<td>btéstaghéll</td>
<td>mnéstaghéll</td>
<td>btéstaghéll</td>
<td>byéstaghéll</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Past

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ana</th>
<th>Inte</th>
<th>Inti</th>
<th>Huwwe</th>
<th>Hiyye</th>
<th>Né7na</th>
<th>Intu</th>
<th>Hénnen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>staghalleet</td>
<td>staghalleet</td>
<td>staghalleet</td>
<td>staghall</td>
<td>staghallet</td>
<td>staghalleen</td>
<td>staghalleetu</td>
<td>staghallu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quadriliteral verbs

Unlike the other patterns given here, quadriliteral verbs are not a derivational pattern in themselves – ‘quadriliteral’ simply describes any verb with four letters in its root instead of three. Although they are not unified by meaning, however, they do conveniently conjugate on the same four patterns.

According to an Arabic teacher I had once, quadriliterals are all supposedly either loanwords (albeit sometimes very old ones) or onomatopoeia. And in fact, many of them are foreign loans:

- سشور sashwar ‘blow-dry’<شثور
- تلفن talfan ‘phone up’<تليفون
- تشنق šangal ‘link arms with’<شناقل
- تشنتط tshanTaT ‘be tossed from place to place’<شنتطة
- برمج barmaj ‘programme’<برنامه

Many, however, are derived from other native words, and in any case lots of these borrowings are very solidly nativised to the extent speakers no longer recognise that they’re foreign:

- خوزق khooza2 ‘screw over’<خازوق
- بسبس basb<brass ‘but’

Many onomatopoeias are also quadriliteral:

- زقزق za2za2 ‘squeak’
- طقطق Ta2Ta2 ‘pop, crack’

Some are derived from other derived words whilst maintaining one of the added consonants:

- تمركز tmarkaz ‘be centred on’<مركز

Many verbs analysed as quadriliteral in fact have an identifiable underlying three-letter root and are actually derivations on one of a large number of less common derivational patterns not usually treated in fuSHa (although some of them exist there too). These patterns have various different meanings – many are verbs of becoming or action:

- تولدن twaldan ‘act childishly’<ولد
- صفرن Safran ‘turn yellow’<اصفر
- بوراد boorad ‘cool down’<برد

---

1 This one is old enough that the Persian word has lost the final –g borrowed into Arabic as –j.
Many have a meaning which is similar to their underlying verb but expresses drawn out action. These are probably the most common derivations which can be done on the fly, and are similar to the English transformation of verbs using adverbs like ‘around’:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{تنطوط (tnaTwaT) ‘jump around’} & \rightarrow \text{نط (naTT) ‘jump’ (tfa3wal)} \\
\text{ترقص (tra2waS) ‘dance around’} & \rightarrow \text{رقص (ra2aS) ‘dance’} \\
\text{ببك (bakbak) ‘sniffle, cry all the time’} & \rightarrow \text{بكي (béki) ‘cry’} \\
\text{nakwash ‘root around in’} & \rightarrow \text{nakash ‘root through’ (fa3wal)} \\
\text{لا7was ‘lick at’} & \rightarrow \text{لا7as ‘lick’} \\
\text{TazTaz ‘fart repeatedly, make a pooting noise’} & \rightarrow \text{طز (Tazz) ‘fart’} \\
\text{Tara2 ‘tap repeatedly’} & \rightarrow \text{طرق (Tara2) ‘hit’} \\
\text{بصبص (baSbaS) ‘look around, peek around’} & \rightarrow \text{بص (baSS) ‘look’}
\end{align*}
\]

Conjugation-wise, there are four major variations: sound (fa3lal etc), second-letter weak (f003al, fee3al) and their final-weak equivalents (fa3la, f003a/fée3a). These are modelled on form II and form IV. Each of these simple patterns also has an equivalent with the t- prefix (tfa3lal, tfo03al/tfée3al, tfa3la, tfo03a/tfée3a) modelled on form V and form VI. The uses of the t- forms generally line up with other t- forms. The passives of quadrilateral verbs for example is formed this way:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{تت مج (tbarmaj) ‘be programmed’} & \rightarrow \text{برمج (barmaj) ‘programme’} \\
\text{تخوزق (tkhooz) ‘get screwed over’} & \rightarrow \text{خوزق (khooza2) ‘screw over’} \\
\text{تشنطط (tshanTaT) ‘be tossed from place to place’} & \rightarrow \text{شنطط (shanTaT) ‘toss from place to place’}
\end{align*}
\]

Likewise, some t- verbs are the reciprocal (etc) equivalent of an underlying verb:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{تشنكل (tshangal) ‘link arms with one another’} & \rightarrow \text{شنكل (shangal) ‘link arms with’}
\end{align*}
\]

Generally verbs of action in particular are formed on the t- patterns.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{تفهمن (tfahman) ‘patronise, be a know-it-all’} & \rightarrow \text{فهم (féhem) ‘understand’} \\
\text{تفلسف (tfalsaf) ‘philosophise, act like a philosopher’} & \rightarrow \text{فلسفة (falsafe) ‘philosophy’} \\
\text{تفصحن (tfaShan) ‘use big words in an attempt to sound educated’} & \rightarrow \text{فصحي (fuSha) ‘educated’}
\end{align*}
\]

\(\text{1 The underlying verb here isn’t really used in Syrian.}\)

\(\text{2 This might also be a case of retaining a consonant from a different derived form, i.e. ‘make yourself out to be fr} \text{همان (fahmaan) ‘wise or knowledgeable’.}\)
### Fa3fa3, yfa3fe3

#### 'squeak'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مزقزق mza2ze2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مسدار MaSydar</td>
<td>Noun of Instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>زقزقة za2za2a</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

زقزق رزقزيق رزقزوق

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تدحرج تدحرجي تدحرجو</td>
<td>tda7raj tda7raj tda7raj</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tfa3lal yétfa3lal

#### 'roll'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>متدحرج métda7rej</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مسدار MaSydar</td>
<td>Noun of Instance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دحرجة da7raje</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

تدحرج تدحرجي تدحرجو

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تدحرج تدحرجي تدحرجو</td>
<td>tda7raj tda7raj tda7raj</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ana</th>
<th>تدحرج تدحرجو tda7raj</th>
<th>تدحرجت tda7raj@t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inte</td>
<td>تدحرج تدحرجو tda7raj</td>
<td>تدحرجت tda7raj@t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inti</td>
<td>تدحرج تدحرجو tda7raj</td>
<td>تدحرجت tda7raj@t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huwwe</td>
<td>تدحرج تدحرجو tda7raj</td>
<td>تدحرجتي tda7rajTi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiyye</td>
<td>تدحرج تدحرجو tda7raj</td>
<td>تدحرجنت tda7raj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Né7na</td>
<td>تدحرج تدحرجو tda7raj</td>
<td>تدحرجنا tda7rajna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intu</td>
<td>تدحرج تدحرجو tda7raj</td>
<td>تدحرجنا tda7rajTu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hénnen</td>
<td>تدحرج تدحرجو tda7raj</td>
<td>تدحرجو tda7rajju</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Fa3la, yfa3li

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طعمى mTa3mi</td>
<td>طعمى mTa3ma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MaSdar</th>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>طعميت</td>
<td>طعميت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ta3meet</td>
<td>Ta3meet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tfa3la yétfa3la

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>متفرشي métfarshi</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MaSdar</th>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تفشريت</td>
<td>تفشريت</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tfarshet</td>
<td>tfarshet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### فشرشى  بتفرشى

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تفشرشى  تفشرشى</td>
<td>تفشرشى  تفشرشى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tfarshet</td>
<td>tfarshet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### تفشرشى  بتفشرشى

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تفشرشى  تفشرشى</td>
<td>تفشرشى  تفشرشى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tfarshet</td>
<td>tfarshet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

###تبعرامى متبعرامى

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>متباعرامى متباعرامى</td>
<td>متباعرامى متباعرامى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>متفرشي متفرشي</td>
<td>متفرشي متفرشي</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### تفشرشى  بتحريرشى

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تفشرشى  تفشرشى</td>
<td>تفشرشى  تفشرشى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tfarshet</td>
<td>tfarshet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### تفشرشى  بتحريرشى

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>تفشرشى  تفشرشى</td>
<td>تفشرشى  تفشرشى</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tfarshet</td>
<td>tfarshet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### doozan 'tune'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مدوزن mtdoozen</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ماسدار Noun of Instance</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دوزنة doozane</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ανα</strong></td>
<td>doozen</td>
<td>doozent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>doozni</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dooznu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### tdoozan 'be tuned'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مدتووزن mtdoozen</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ماسدار Noun of Instance</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دوزنة doozane</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ανα</strong></td>
<td>tdoozan</td>
<td>tdoozent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tdoozani</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tdoozantu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### tüdoozan, yütdoozan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مدتووزن mtdoozen</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ماسدار Noun of Instance</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دوزنة doozane</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ανα</strong></td>
<td>tüdoozan</td>
<td>tüdoozent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tüdoozani</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tüdoozantu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### tüdoozan, yütdoozan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مدتووزن mtdoozen</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ماسدار Noun of Instance</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>دوزنة doozane</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ανα</strong></td>
<td>tüdoozan</td>
<td>tüdoozent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tüdoozani</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tüdoozantu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Boehma, ybooya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>مبوىy</td>
<td>مبوى</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masdar</th>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Imperative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>نويي نويي نويو</th>
<th>booyi booyi booyu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>booyi</td>
<td>booyet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bbooyi</td>
<td>booyeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooyi</td>
<td>booyet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooyi</td>
<td>booyeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooyi</td>
<td>booyeta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooyi</td>
<td>booyeeta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooyi</td>
<td>booyein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooyi</td>
<td>booyeet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooyi</td>
<td>booyu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tfoo3a, yétfoo3i

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active Participle</th>
<th>Passive Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>لمبوىy</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masdar</th>
<th>Noun of Instance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Imperative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>نويي نويي</th>
<th>tbooya tbooyi tbooyu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>étbooya</td>
<td>tbooyet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooya</td>
<td>tbooyeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooya</td>
<td>tbooyet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooya</td>
<td>tbooyena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooya</td>
<td>tbooyeto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooya</td>
<td>tbooyetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooya</td>
<td>tbooyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bétbooya</td>
<td>tbooyu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>booyet</td>
<td>booyet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>booyeti</td>
<td>booyeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>booyet</td>
<td>booyet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>booyena</td>
<td>booyena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>booyeto</td>
<td>booyeto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>booyetu</td>
<td>booyetu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>booyu</td>
<td>booyu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>