

How to look up a word in an Arabic to English Dictionary

Step 1: Figure out if the word you are looking for is an *Ism*, *Fi'al* or *Harf*

Depending on what kind of word you are looking for changes how you find it.

Jamid (non-derived) nouns are listed in the dictionary based on their spelling, Mushtaq (derived) nouns are listed under the verbs they share roots with. Hans wehr and many other dictionaries use the simplified arabic notation method (sarf sagheer) in listing entries. Which means when you look for root letters, you will first find a verb, its 'ayn kalimah harakah, and its masdar.

Take a look at this page of Hans Wehr. There are two columns. The left column is a continuation from the last page, notice the slight indentation of all the words. This is because they were derived from a verb that was listed on the last page. Look now to al -barqa, the region in E. Libya, notice how it is not indented? This is because it is a noun that is not derived. Same is Ibrīq and Istabraq, they are jamid knowns that have no relation to the root letters (ب ر ق).

Look at the word baraqasa, it is a verb, there is no letter after it because it is a 4 letter root word. All mujarad(no extra letters) four letter root words are in the same bab(verb category). The masdar is given and transliterated in english. The nouns that are derived from it(mushtaq) are listed under it with indentation.

The word barqa'a is also a 4 letter verb, so no letter is listed, it however also has a mazid fihi form. The mazid fihi forms are listed under numbers from 2 to 12. Its derived nouns are listed under it with indentation.

The word barquq is a jamid(underived) noun, it can refer to a group or an individual, and that information is listed with the translation.

برق <i>barq</i> pl. برق <i>burūq</i> lightning; flash of lightning; telegraph برق خلب <i>barqum kullabun</i> and <i>b. kullabin</i> lightning without a downpour; a disappointing, disillusioning matter; an unkept promise	برقشة <i>barqaša</i> colorful medley, variety, variegation
برقي <i>barqī</i> telegraphic, telegraph- (in compounds)	مبرقش <i>mubraqaš</i> colorful, variegated, many-colored
برقية <i>barqīya</i> pl. -āt telegram, wire, cable	برقع <i>barqa'a</i> to veil, drape (أ. s.o., s.th.) II <i>tabarqa'a</i> to put on a veil, veil o.s.
بريق <i>barīq</i> pl. برائق <i>barā'iq</i> glitter, shine, gloss, luster ذر بریق معدن <i>(ma'a dīni)</i> lustered, coated with metallic luster	برقع <i>barqu'</i> pl. برائع <i>barā'iq</i> veil (worn by women; long, leaving the eyes exposed)
براق <i>burāq</i> Alborak, name of the creature on which Mohammed made his ascension to the seven heavens (مراج)	برقوق <i>barqūq</i> (coll.; n. un. ة) plum (eg.) بری <i>(barri)</i> sloe plum
براق <i>barrāq</i> shining, lustrous, sparkling, flashing, glittering, twinkling	برك <i>baraka</i> u to kneel down II and IV to make (أ the camel) kneel down II to invoke a blessing (عل or ق on s.th., ل on s.o.) III to bless (ق or ة s.o., also ل or عل), invoke a blessing on; to give one's blessing (أ to s.th.), sanction (أ s.th.) بارك الله نيك God bless you! V to be blessed (ب by); to enjoy (ب s.th.), find pleasure, delight (ب in); to ask s.o.'s (ب) blessing; to seek a blessing (ب from a saint) VI to be blessed, be praised; ... الله <i>tabāraka</i> ... God bless ...! الله <i>(tabāraka wa-ta'ālā)</i> God the Blessed and Sublime X to be blessed
بارق <i>bāriq</i> glimpse of hope	بركة <i>birka</i> pl. بك <i>birak</i> pond, small lake; puddle, pool بركة السباحة <i>b. as-sibāḥa</i> swimming pool
بارقة <i>bāriqa</i> pl. بوارق <i>bawāriq</i> gleam, twinkle	بركة <i>baraka</i> pl. -āt blessing, benediction بركة الله <i>qillat al-b.</i> misfortune, bad luck
مبرق <i>mubriq</i> مبرق كاتب teletype; آلة مبرقة do.	أبرك <i>abraḥ</i> more blessed
البرقة <i>al-barqa</i> Cyrenaica (region of E Libya)	تبريك <i>tabrik</i> pl. -āt good wish; blessing, benediction
أبريق <i>ibrīq</i> pl. اباريق <i>abāriq</i> , (tum.) ابارقة <i>abāriqa</i> pitcher; jug	مبارك <i>mubārak</i> blessed; fortunate, lucky مبارک یا عزیزى congratulations, my friend!
أبريق <i>barīq</i> = أبريق	براريك <i>barārik</i> (mor.) barracks
استبرق look up alphabetically	بركار <i>birkār</i> compass, (pair of) dividers
برقش <i>barqaša</i> (برقشة <i>barqaša</i>) to variegate, paint or daub with many colors (أ s.th.); to embellish (أ s.th.; قوله one's speech) II <i>tabarqaša</i> reflex. and pass. of I	بركان <i>burkān</i> pl. براكين <i>barākin</i> volcano
برقش <i>birqāš</i> and أبراقش <i>abū barāqāš</i> bishop bird (zool.)	بركاني <i>burkānī</i> volcanic

Look now to the verb baraka, there is a u after it. That u is indicative of the fact that the mudari' form of the verb has a dammah in its 'ayn al-Kalimah. So it should be read بَرَكَ يَبْرُكُ and is thus in bab Nasara. It has no masdar in parenthesis () because it has more than one, you will almost always find the masdar or main derived noun defined as the first noun entry after the verb.

More examples

When looking up نصر you find this entry, first the verb with its 3 harakah are transliterated. Then you have the ayn' kalimah of madari' mentioned with is u (meaning dammah) then you have the masdar. Nasr نصر and second masdar nusur.

After this you have the definition. Nasr means to help, aid or assist someone against something or to deliver or save someone from something. The **على** in the first parenthesis means that **على** is the sillah of Nasr and should be used with it to give this specific meaning. The **•** means that this is a verb that needs a maf'ul. Thus to say **نَصَرَ الله** is incomplete the verb needs someone to help and someone to help over. So you would use it like:

نَصَرَ الله عَبْدًا عَلَى ظَالِمٍ

Allah helped **a slave** against an oppressor.

Same for the second entry with **من**, in this case min is the sillah through which that specific meaning is carried.

نَصَرَ الله عَبْدًا مِنْ ظَالِمٍ

Allah saved **a slave** from an oppressor.

The rest of the entry goes on to discuss the mazid fihi verb forms which need their own guide.

Which we will make soon inshallah. An important note is that unless you are specifically looking for a mazid fihi form, do not try to make the mazid fihi definitions substitutes for the mujarad definition.

نَصَرَ *naṣara u (naṣr, نَصُور nuṣūr)* to help, aid, assist (**على** • s.o. against); to render victorious, let triumph (**على** • s.o. over; of God); to deliver (**من** • s.o. from), keep, protect, save II to Christianize, convert to Christianity (• s.o.) III to help, aid, assist, support, defend, protect (• s.o.) V to try to help, seek to support (ل s.o.), stand up for s.o. (ل); to become a Christian VI to render mutual assistance, help each other VIII to come to s.o.'s (ل) aid, be on s.o.'s (ل) side, side with s.o. (ل); to stand up for, maintain (ل s.th., one's opinion); to be victorious; to gain a victory, triumph (**على** over); to take revenge (**من** on) X to ask (• s.o.) for assistance

نَصْر *naṣr* help, aid, assistance, support, backing; victory; triumph

نَصْرَة *nuṣra* help, aid, assistance, support, backing

نَصْرَانِي *naṣrānī* pl. **نَصَارَى** *naṣārā* Christian

نَصَرَ *naṣara u (naṣr, نَصُور nuṣūr)* to help, aid, assist (**على** • s.o. against); to render victorious, let triumph (**على** • s.o. over; of God); to deliver (**من** • s.o. from), keep, protect, save II to Christianize, convert to Christianity (• s.o.) III to help, aid, assist, support, defend, protect (• s.o.) V to try to help, seek to support (ل s.o.), stand up for s.o. (ل); to become a Christian VI to render mutual assistance, help each other VIII to come to s.o.'s (ل) aid, be on s.o.'s (ل) side, side with s.o. (ل); to stand up for, maintain (ل s.th., one's opinion); to be victorious; to gain a victory, triumph (**على** over); to take revenge (**من** on) X to ask (• s.o.) for assistance

Looking up difficult words

Sometime you might come across a word in a book or in quran that's very hard to look up. Chances are this word is either a jamid noun, in a mazid fihi bab, or has a weak original letter. Jamid nouns don't normally have root letters, and must be looked up alphabetically, like Istabraq from before. Mazid fihi babs require a teacher and memorization to fully grasp, looking up words with weak original letters however is easy but tedious.

Lets say you were reading quran and came across the word, يقيمون, you don't know what it means and wish to look it up. Before trying to look it up. Step 1 is, What is it? The word يقيمون begins with ya, ya is one of the signs of mudari' it also seems to be on the scale of يفعلون, that you memorized in sarf class. So we can assume within reason that this is a verb. It being a verb means that the ya, waw, and nun are all extra letters and we are left with ق ي م.

Weak Letters (ا و ي)

Alif, Yaa, and Waw (and sometimes hamza) are all weak letters, depending on harakah and wordforms they will change into each other, thus determining the original letter requires knowledge of the intricacies of sarf. The shortcut to looking up words with weak original letters is through the elimination method. To look up يقيمون for example, you will look up ق ا م, ق و م, ق ي م upon finding the correct entry note the root letters to help you catch on even more quickly in the future.