

علم الصرف

Past tense verbs



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The Past-Tense Verb (الفعل الماضي)

The past-tense pattern:

The selected patterns for the active voice past-tense in three-lettered verbs (verb form 1) are three:

فَعَلَ – Each of the three base letters is vowelled with a َ e.g. نَصَرَ (he helped), جَلَسَ (he sat).

فَعِلَ – The ‘ف position’ and ‘ل position’ are vowelled with َ , whereas the middle letter from the three base letters (the ‘ع position’) is vowelled with a ِ e.g. سَمِعَ (he heard), شَرِبَ (he drank).

فَعُلَ – First and last with َ and middle with ُ e.g. كَرُمَ (he became noble).

These are three possibilities, meaning all the different meanings in the language conveyed via three base letters will fall on ANY ONE of the above three patterns. Although there are certain clues to make the guessing process slightly easier, for the most part ascertaining the exact pattern from the above three for any given verb is a matter of memorization and vocabulary.

Suffixes for the past-tense verb

Recall that verb conjugation in Arabic is done with designated letters coming at the end of the verbs to reflect the three aspects; gender, plurality and person of the subject. This arrangement results in a table of 14 “seeghas”: six for the third person, three masculine and three feminine, six for the second person, and just two for the first person (see Table 2-A).

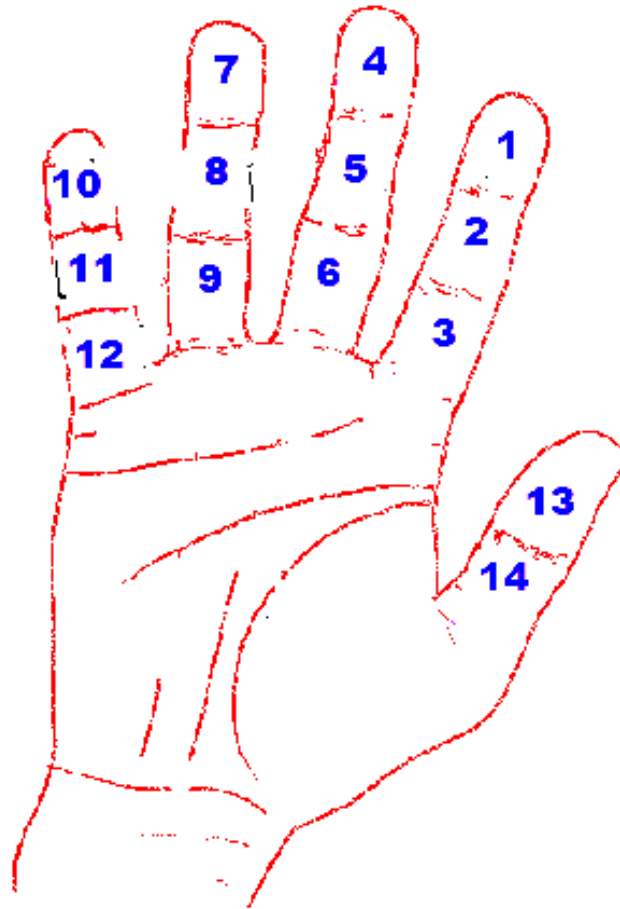
Person	Gender	Plurality	English Equivalent	Arabic	صيغه
3 rd	Masculine	Singular	He	فَعَلَ	1
		Dual (2)	They (M2)	فَعَلَا	2
		Plural (>2)	They (M>2)	فَعَلُوا	3
	Feminine	Singular	She	فَعَلَتْ	4
		Dual (2)	They (F2)	فَعَلَتَا	5
		Plural (>2)	They (F>2)	فَعَلْنَ	6
2 nd	Masculine	Singular	You (M)	فَعَلْتَ	7
		Dual (2)	You (M2)	فَعَلْتُمَا	8
		Plural (>2)	You (M>2)	فَعَلْتُمْ	9
	Feminine	Singular	You (F)	فَعَلْتِ	10
		Dual (2)	You (F2)	فَعَلْتُمَا	11
		Plural (>2)	You (F>2)	فَعَلْتُنَّ	12
1 st	Masculine and Feminine	Singular	I (M/F)	فَعَلْتُ	13
		Plural (≥2)	We (M/F≥2)	فَعَلْنَا	14

Table 0-A : Pronoun Suffixes for the Past Tense

Summary of Pronoun Suffixes for the Past Tense (Table 2-A)

1. The first conjugation, singular masculine third person does not have a suffix. The pronoun for it i.e. 'he' is always implied - فَعَلَ
2. For the dual, the suffix is an ا after the last base letter - فَعَلَا
3. For the plural masculine, it is a وُ with a ُ on the third base letter - فَعَلُوا
4. For the singular feminine third person, the ending is a تْ - فَعَلَتْ
5. For the dual, it is a تا - فَعَلَتَا

6. From number six (3rd person feminine plural) onwards, something unique happens. The third base letter i.e. the 'ل' position' becomes sakin and remains this way until the end of the table. The suffix is added after the sukoon. For the third person feminine plural, the suffix is **فَعَلْنَ - نَ**
7. For singular masculine second person it's **فَعَلْتَ - تَ**
8. For dual, **فَعَلْتُمَا - تُمَا**
9. For plural, **فَعَلْتُمْ - تُم**
10. For singular feminine second person, **فَعَلْتِ - تِ**
11. For dual, **فَعَلْتُمَا - تُمَا**
12. For plural, **فَعَلْتُنَّ - نَّ**
13. For the singular first person, **فَعَلْتُ - تُ**
14. For the dual and plural first person (both masculine and feminine), **فَعَلْنَا - نا**



To practice, you can use your right hand to conjugate all 14 forms.