

علم الصرف

More on the past tense verb



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Passive voice (مَجْهُول)

The pattern for the passive voice conjugation table is constructed from the active by:

- a) Changing the vowelling of the second to last letter to ِ if it is not already ِ and
- b) Changing the vowel of the ف position to ُ .

So in the 1st and 2nd patterns, نَصَرَ (he helped) will become نُصِرَ (he was helped), and سَمِعَ (he heard) will become سُمِعَ (he was heard). The third pattern (i.e. فَعَلَ) will never have a passive because all the meanings associated with this pattern are 'intransitive' and due to the absence of objects (مفعول به) the meaning will never support passive voice. The method of making the passive voice from a verb that has more than three letters will be discussed in a later section.

Negative Verbs (مَنْفِي)

By placing the particle 'ما' in front of both the active and passive voice patterns, the verbs become negative e.g. مَا نَصَرَ (he did not help), مَا نُصِرَ (he was not helped).

The suffixes for all of these past-tense tables are the same. By memorizing the first, then merely understanding the slight differences in the others, one will have covered four distinct conjugation tables:

فَعَلَ : simple past-tense active positive (ماضي مَعْرُوف مُثَبَّت)

مَا فَعَلَ : simple past-tense active negative (ماضي مَعْرُوف مَنْفِي)

فُعِلَ : simple past-tense passive positive (ماضي مَجْهُول مُثَبَّت)

مَا فُعِلَ : simple past-tense passive negative (ماضي مَجْهُول مَنْفِي)

مُثَبَّت means affirmative

Present-perfect (ماضي قريب - near past)

Adding the particle 'قَدْ' to both the active and passive voice conjugation tables will alter the simple past-tense to a 'present perfect' tense: e.g. قَدْ نَصَرَ (he has helped), and قَدْ نُصِرَ (he has been helped). In the Arabic language there is no negative for this particular structure, meaning the particle 'قَدْ' will not couple with the negation particle 'مَا'.

(ماضي قريب مَعْرُوف) : قَدْ فَعَلَ present perfect active

(ماضي قريب جَهْلُول) : قَدْ فُعِلَ present-perfect passive

Past-perfect (ماضي بعيد - distant past)

Coupling the simple past-tense verb فَعَلَ, with the auxiliary verb كَانَ (was, had, would), produces the past-perfect tense. In this case, the meaning of كَانَ is a fixed 'had' e.g. كَانَ نَصَرَ (he had helped), كَانَ نُصِرَ (he had been helped), مَا كَانَ نَصَرَ (he had not helped), and مَا كَانَ نُصِرَ (he had not been helped). Due to كَانَ not being a particle such as قَدْ and مَا, but a verb like فَعَلَ, كَانَ will **also require a conjugation table**. It will change alongside the verb with the corresponding pronouns. The suffixes will be the same for كَانَ as they are for the verb it is coupled to.

(ماضي بعيد مَعْرُوف مثبت) : كَانَ فَعَلَ past-perfect active positive

(ماضي بعيد جَهْلُول مثبت) : كَانَ فُعِلَ past-perfect passive positive

(ماضي بعيد مَعْرُوف منفي) : مَا كَانَ فَعَلَ past-perfect active negative

(ماضي بعيد جَهْلُول منفي) : مَا كَانَ فُعِلَ past-perfect passive negative