Important Phrases (العبارات المهمة)
007

Nouns and Gender(الأسماء و الجنس)

In Arabic, all nouns have grammatical gender. For living things, the gender matches that of the living creatures.

رجل   /rajul   /man (masculine)

إمرأة/imraa'a/ woman (feminine)

زوَج/zaowj/ husband (masculine)

زوَجة/zaowja /wife (feminine)

Look at the endings of "woman" and "wife" and notice that they both end in a taa marbuuta. The taa marbuuta signifies that the noun or adjective it ends is feminine. Not all feminine nouns and adjectives have taa marbuuta, so you must be on the look out for the words that do not end in taa marbuuta, but are still feminine.

An example of this would be:
شمس   /shams/sun (feminine)

For inanimate nouns, gender is completely arbitrary. In the above example, you see that "sun" is feminine, but since the actual sun is

not a living creature with a gender of its own, its gender is arbitrary. Here are a couple of examples of inanimate object nouns and their genders.

كرْسي / kursi/ chair (masculine)

طاوِلة /Taawila/table (feminine)

قَلِم /qalim/pen (masculine)

قَهوة /qahuwa /Coffee (feminine)

Lastly, words referring to humans generally have both a masculine and feminine form. Most of the time, the masculine form is changed into the feminine form by adding the taa marbuta to the end of it.

زميل /zamil/ Friend (masculine)

زميلة /zamila / friend (feminine)

موظّف /muwadhuf/ Employee (masculine)

موظّفة /muwadhufa/ Employee (feminine)

زميل+ ة = زميلة
موظفَّ + ة = موظفَّة