



فن الخط العربي



الخط : الثلث

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رتبه : بشرى ياسمين عازفي

هيئة القراءة الفنية العالمية
شيكاغو

INTRODUCING

IQRA' PROGRAM OF ISLAMIC STUDIES

IQRA' International Educational Foundation has given first priority to a pilot project entitled *A Comprehensive and Systematic Program of Islamic Studies*. This program includes five subjects:

1. Arabic Language
2. Qur'anic Studies
3. Sirah & Hadith
4. Aqidah, Fiqh, & Akhlaq
5. Islamic Social Studies

Educational Material:

The program is comprised of graded textbooks, workbooks, enrichment literature, educational aids, and curriculum and guidance books.

The Art of Arabic Calligraphy:

The Art of Arabic Calligraphy is part of the IQRA' program of Arabic and Qur'anic studies which addresses the educational needs of all age groups from preschool to college. *The Art of Arabic Calligraphy* teaches six major scripts: *Naskh*, *Fārisī* (Urdu), *Riq'ah*, *Thulth*, *Kūfī*, and *Dīwāni* (each in two parts).

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THE AUTHORS

Bushra Yāsmīn Ghazi, a student of Arabic, and Muhammad 'Uthmān Ahmad Ḥamzah, a traditional master calligrapher of Sudan, have combined their talents to produce this book of *The Art of Arabic Calligraphy*.

Miss Ghazi has been associated with the IQRA' program from its very inception in 1977 and has worked with her parents as an advisor, writer, graphic artist, and language editor. She has studied Arabic and Islamic Studies at Bryn Mawr - Haverford Colleges, The University of Chicago, Duke University, King Abdul Aziz University and the American University in Cairo.

Mr. Ḥamzah is a Sudanese calligrapher. He completed his diploma in fine arts with specialization in calligraphy from Khartoum's famous Institute of Fine Arts. He has wide experience of working with government departments and advertising agencies in Sudan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. He has calligraphed IQRA's charts of the short *Sūrah*s with great love and diligence and has worked with the IQRA' team in the spirit of *Da'wah*.

THE DIVINE WORD

The Holy Qur'ān says that when Allah ﷺ wishes something, He has only to say, "Be!" and it is (*Kun fa yakūn*). This formula precisely reveals the tremendous creative power of divine language, of the Word, in the Islamic tradition. The miracle of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was the book called the Qur'ān, or recitation, the first revealed word of which, "Iqra!" commands, "Read!" or "Recite!"

*Recite in the name of your Lord who created
Created the human for a clot of blood.
Recite and your Lord is most generous
It is He who taught by the pen
Taught the human what he knew not*
(al-'Alaq 96: 1-5)

From this verse we understand the importance from the earliest Islamic period of both the reciter and the scribe. For each makes manifest the glory of revelation, one to the ears and the other to the eyes. While the scribes were initially instruments for Allāh's promise to preserve the Book in its purity, they soon developed calligraphy as Islam's exemplary visual art, a sacred art which is not only art, but also a mode of '*Ibādat*' or worship. For "Allāh is Beautiful and loves beauty" (*Hadīth*).

Muslim societies accord great reverence to paper with Arabic writing on it. They traditionally dispose of it only by pure methods such as burning it or throwing it in the sea, for Qur'anic passages and the names of Allāh ﷺ may be included therein. Public buildings employ calligraphic and geometric patterns primary decorative elements, and the same motifs are woven, embroidered, painted or inscribed in every Muslim home. Those hand-written manuscripts which are not in museums are generally treasured heirlooms of devout families, for whom the beauty of words is a *dhikr* (remembrance, reminder) of Allāh ﷺ and of the beauty and

harmony His words inspire in the heart.

THE IQRA' CALLIGRAPHY SERIES

These books have been especially designed to teach a beginner the art of Arabic calligraphy. There are ten books in the series, two books for each of the six major Arabic scripts (*Naskh*, *Farisi*, *Thulth*, *Kūfi*, *Riq'a*, and *Dīwāni*). The first book of a pair introduces the single alphabets and the second the combinations of letters in running script. The IQRA' Calligraphy Series is distinct from its series designed to teach simple Arabic reading and writing. Aspiring calligraphers, young or adult, who practice diligently every day will soon discover the joys of this Islamic art as an absorbing discipline, recreation, and mode of spiritual expression.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

Like any art, Arabic calligraphy requires specialized tools. You will need paper, ink, and a pen (IQRA' hopes to provide these soon). In the meantime, keep the following things in mind.

Paper: It is important for the pen to glide, so calligraphy paper always has a smooth glossy glazed surface. The practice space provided in the book is only a beginning. Collect old magazines with glossy pages, and practice your letters in them. News magazines are better than fashion magazines, because photographs resist ink. Simply write on top of the old copy. Sketch pencil lines to guide your work using the printed columns for alignment. When you begin to acquire some skill, graduate to the glazed calligraphy paper available in any art store.

Ink: Begin with any black waterbased ink such as Parker's "Quink." Pour some in an inkpot, thin it with water for a smoother glide, and drop in a rolled piece of fine cotton cloth as a blotter. If the ink dries as the water evaporates, just add more water or more ink. Later you will want to use water-proof India ink or *encre de*

chine for strong dark lines. (Rotring is a good brand.) The inkpot may be any small bottle with a tight lid.

Pen: We cannot over-emphasize the importance of having a good pen. The best calligrapher cannot coax beautiful letters from a poorly made pen. Even a well-made pen must be free from dried ink and other impurities if it is to function well. Furthermore, your pen should not be used by other people, especially if they are not calligraphers. A pen becomes set for your hand, and another person who uses it will destroy the delicate balance of the nib. Needless to say, the pens should be protected from injury when they are not in use. One method of doing this is storing them in a cloth or felt-lined box.

There are three kinds of pens from which you may choose.

1. **Bamboo Pens:** From a traditional perspective, the reed pen carved from a dry bamboo stalk is certainly the essential beginners' tool. These pens are still widely available where traditional calligraphy flourishes, for example, Egypt, Turkey, and the Indian Subcontinent. The harder or more mature the bamboo, the less trouble it will give you once carved. Soft bamboo tends to absorb the water in the ink and the nib swells out of shape. Carving the pen is an art best learned in the traditional way at the hands of a master calligrapher. Most of us ruin many pens before perfecting the art, but one can always cut away the old nib and begin further down the stalk. For the enterprising among you who have no access to a teacher, following is a brief guide to carving your own pen:

A. Drop the bamboo pen on a table or flat surface, allowing it to roll till it stops. The side which is now facing the ceiling is the side you will carve.

B. In the side of the pen which fell face up, carve a hollow that is the length of the first digit of your thumb. As

you carve, shave away some of the thickness at the tip of the nib, but make sure that you do not shave away so much that the nib becomes weak or paper-thin.

C. Gently and evenly peel the two sides of the hollow from the opening to the tip of the nib so they are smooth and the tip is the approximate width you desire.

D. Make a vertical slit in the nib. Locate the slit slightly right of center, that is, closer to what will be the point of the pen. This way the right-half-nib (the nib containing the point) is thinner than the left-half-nib. This allows a free flow of ink when you use only the point of the pen to write delicate strokes such as the point of the *jim*, the tail of the *waw*, or the vowel markings *fathah*, *dammah*, and *kasrah*.

E. Make a small round hole at the base of the vertical slit. The hole stores ink, allowing it to flow evenly through the slit to the tip as you write.

F. Cut the tip of the nib at the desired angle (usually 35-40 degrees) as follows.

***Place the hallowed nib of the pen upon the edge of a flat table or wooden box. The back or uncarved side should be facing the ceiling.

***Position the knife on top of the nib at an angle such that the right side of the nib will be pointed.

***Press down the knife, while holding the pen steady.

G. Peel a shallow .5 cm long indentation into the smooth back of the nib all the way to the tip. This indentation allows ink to flow evenly from the back of the

pen to the tip.

H. With gentle vertical and horizontal strokes, sand the back and front of the nib, on fine sandpaper, so the tip is smooth. Now write the letters *alif*, *bā*, *wāw*, *nūn*, and a big *yā* on sandpaper as if it were paper. Don't write roughly or press down hard! If you sense roughness or resistance when writing any of the letters, write them two or three times on the sandpaper until they can be written smoothly. When sanding a pen always hold it at the angle at which you would write the same letter.

I. Dip your pen in ink until the vertical slit and hole are covered, but no further. Wipe the tip on the cloth blotter and write. If any of the letters can't be written smoothly, gently write them two or three times on the sandpaper and text with ink again. Repeat this process until satisfied.

2. Nib Pens: Contemporary Arabic calligraphers most commonly use nib pens for their work. These pens consist of a steel nib inserted in a wooden holder. Like the bamboo pens, they must be dipped in an inkpot. The nibs are available in many sizes, and you can get a much finer line than with a bamboo pen. When you buy a nib, the tip is completely flat. You must prepare it for writing by sanding a comfortable angle onto it. Once a nib has been prepared, it can last for months if cleaned after every use and kept free of dried ink which stretches the nib-halves out of shape. Following are instructions for preparing the nib.

A. Insert the nib in its holder.

B. Hold the pen as if you were going to write, but press one finger or your thumb against the nib between the hole and the tip, so that the two teeth do not separate

when sanding. If the teeth separate and are sanded unevenly, the pen will not write properly.

C. Holding the pen at the angle at which you could write, and protecting the teeth with one finger, sand the pen from right to left and left to right several times. Since the nib is flat and you wish to put an angle on it, you will initially be sanding only the left or bottom half of the nib. As you continue, the nib will acquire an angle and both top (right) and bottom (left) teeth will be sanded. Examine the sandpaper as you proceed. You will know you are done when the sound of sanding changes and the horizontal mark from sanding is the width of the full nib. If you look at the nib now, it should be angled instead of straight. When held in writing position, the right tooth should contain the point of the pen.

D. Examine the pen with its back facing you and the hallowed concave side facing away. There is a slit down the nib which separates the two teeth. The slit should be slightly off center to the right, so the right tooth (with the point) is thinner than the left tooth. If the slit is directly down the center of the nib you must turn the nib on its right side and sand the right tooth several times from right to left and left to right on the edge of your sanding block. Sand until the right tooth (with the point) is slightly thinner than the left tooth. This allows ink to flow freely to the point of the pen when it is used alone for delicate strokes that do not require the entire nib width.

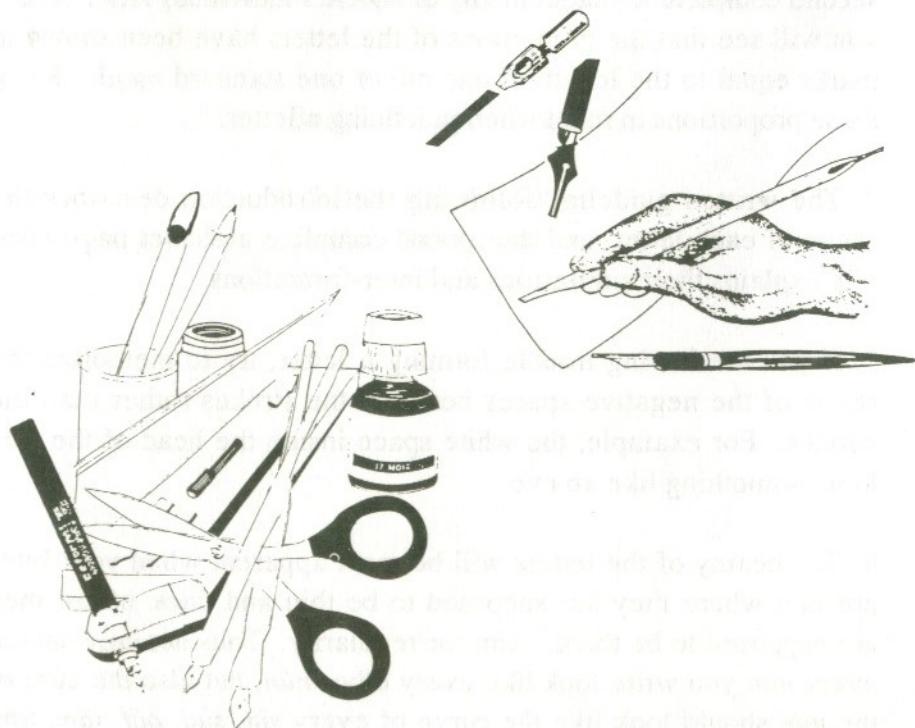
E. Gently write *alif*, *bā*, *wāw*, *nūn*, and a big *yā* two or three times on the sandpaper. If you sense any resistance, write them again until they can be written smoothly.

F. Test the pen with ink on paper. If any letters cannot be written smoothly write them again on sandpaper. Repeat this process until you are satisfied.

3. Calligraphy Sets: If you are living in North America or Europe these are certainly the most accessible pens. Often they include one pen with a refillable ink cartridge and several pre-prepared nibs of various sizes. Just remember to check the angle on the nibs. It should be around 35-40 degrees. Test them to see how they feel in Arabic, and try to obtain one nib which approximates the size of the practice letters in the book.

OTHER: Keep your ink and pens in a tray or box to prevent accidental spillage. Also include in this box:

- A pencil and ruler for sketching lines.
- Sponge or soft cotton cloth for wiping the pens.
- A fine-grained sanding board for shaping nibs.



WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

Holding the Pen: Write holding the pen between your thumb and the fleshy part of your middle finger. The pointer finger sits gently on top and acts as a guide. Aim for a grip which is firm but not tense. Write resting the heel of your hand on the page. Make the strokes by expanding and contracting your fingers rather than moving your whole arm. Practice rotating the pen between your finger and thumb as you write. This rotation will be essential to the delicacy and elasticity of your letters. When a letter requires that you change the angle of your pen, make this change by rotating or rolling the pen between your fingers, not by changing the angle of your entire hand. Don't worry if you feel awkward at first, the movements will soon become second nature. *Sabr* (patience, perseverance) is a great Islamic virtue!

Sitting: Many contemporary calligraphers have exchanged the traditional sitting position for a desk and chair. Most, however, would still agree that beginners are best off sitting on the floor as novice calligraphers have sat for centuries. In the traditional sitting position you will sit with your left leg tucked under you and your right leg bent, acting as a table. Your weight is distributed between your left shin and right foot. Your back is straight against a wall or similar supporting surface. Keep at least twelve inches between your face and the page as you write. Don't be tempted to compromise this distance, as it enables you to judge the balance of your letters in relation to each other and to the whole page.

You are probably used to writing on hard flat surfaces, but the best surface for Arabic calligraphy is fairly flexible. Try clipping your calligraphy paper on a magazine or a couple of sections of the daily newspaper folded in half. Hold the paper with your left hand against your right thigh close to the knee, and write with your right hand. If you are practicing as suggested earlier in a glossy magazine, you probably will not need any support other than the magazine itself. When using a magazine or newspaper as a writing sup-

port, keep the open side (the side you can flip through) facing up and the closed side (the side folded) facing down. Try to breathe in before each stroke, hold your breath during the stroke, and breath out after completing a stroke. Again do not be distressed if your legs fall asleep and your back aches! Simply stand up and walk around every ten minutes or so. Writing for even a brief period each day will make this position feel natural in a matter of weeks. You may soon find your self uncomfortable practicing calligraphy at a table.



Traditional sitting position



Modern sitting position

GOALS AND GUIDELINES

1. The unit of measure in Arabic calligraphy is called the *nuqta*, in English “rhombic dot.” The plural is *nuqāt*. The four sides of a *nuqta* are equal in length to the width of the pen nib. The dots on *bā*, *tā*, *jīm*, etc. are all *nuqāt*. The rules for each script are described in terms of *nuqāt*. If we take, for example, the *farisī* script, we see that the height of the letter *alif* is three *nuqāt*, the depth of the circular part of *nūn* is four *nuqāt*, and the length of the letter *ba* is also four *nuqāt*. These figures change for each script. In *Naskh* the *alif* is five *nuqāt* high, in *Thulth* it is seven *nuqāt* high, etc. Knowing the shape of the letters in terms of *nuqāt* allows you to check the proportions of any letter you are writing simply by measuring it with the nib of your pen. Are you writing *alif* in the *farisī* script? See if it is the height of three *nuqāt* or three straight vertical marks made with the nib of your pen. If you look at the second complete alphabet in any of IQRA’s individual letter books, you will see that the proportions of the letters have been shown in marks equal to the length of one nib or one standard *nuqāt*. Keep these proportions in mind when practicing a letter.
2. The written guideline following the introduction describes the shape of each letter, and the second complete alphabet page visually explains their similarities and inter-formations.
3. If you are having trouble forming a letter, try to memorize the shape of the negative spaces between the strokes rather than the strokes. For example, the white space inside the head of the ‘ain looks something like an eye.
4. The beauty of the letters will be most apparent when your lines are thin where they are supposed to be thin and thick where they are supposed to be thick. Aim for regularity. Thus not only should every *nūn* you write look like every other *nūn*, but also the curve of the *nūn* should look like the curve of every *sīn*, *sād*, *qāf*, *lām*, and

yā. Balance is essential. Keep referring back to the book as a mode, and don't forget to rotate the pen between your fingers. This motion gives your script fluidity.

5. Once you commit yourself to learning calligraphy, what you see is as important as what you write. Try to spend time looking at examples of fine calligraphy in your chosen script. As the shapes sink into your consciousness your hand will respond naturally. Do not look at poor calligraphy! Especially at the beginner's stage it can significantly harm your writing.

This course may initiate your future as a master calligrapher, but even if it doesn't, you will certainly do greater justice to the Arabic script. You may find yourself offering gifts of your pieces to friends and relations, earning reward with Allāh ﷻ for beautifying the language He chose for his final revelation, the Qur'ān.

Begin now with *Bismillāh al-Rahmān al-Rahīm*.

Bushra Yāsmīn Ghazi

7 Dhul Hijjah 1408
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

ARABIC LETTERS

Sin

Zâin (Zâ)

Râ

Râ

Zhâl

Dhâl

Khâ

Hâ

Jîm

Thâ

Tâ

Bâ

Alif

أ ب ت ث ح د ذ ر س ز

Fâ

◆ Ghain

'Ain

Zâ

Tâ

Dâd

Šâd

Sin

Shîn

ش س د ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف

Yâ

Hâm Zâ

Lâm Alif

Hâ

Hâ

Wâu

Nûn

Mîm

Lâm

Kâf

Kâf

Qâf

ق ك ل ل ه ر ن و ه ه ك ل ي م

1. Persian includes following letters.

Gâf

Zhâ

Châ

Pâ

2. Urdu further includes the following letters.

Rhâ

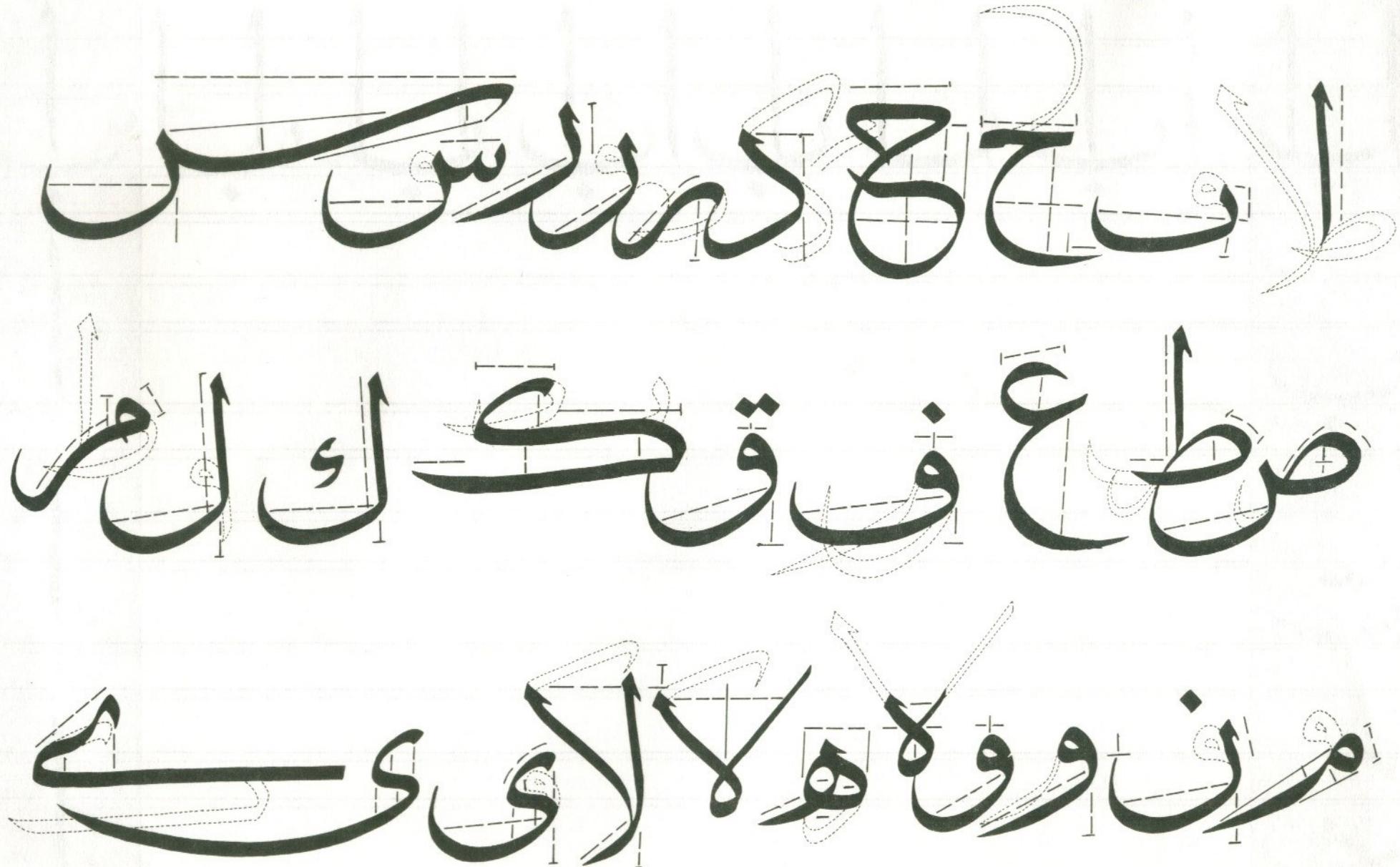
Dâl

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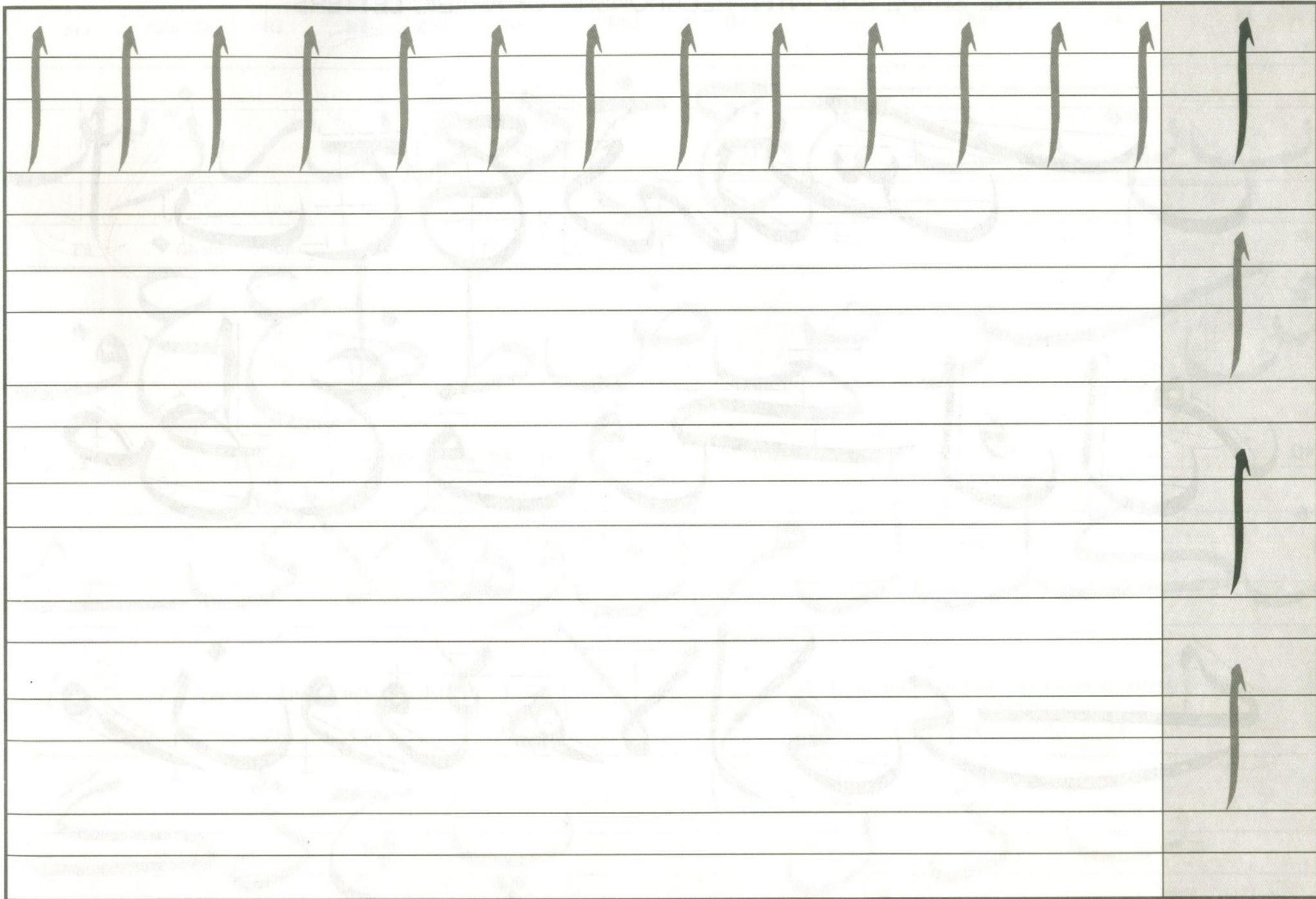
پ ح ڏ ڌ

ٻ ڻ ڦ ڻ

THE SHAPE AND INTER-RELATIONSHIP OF ARABIC LETTERS



Practice: Single letters.



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Arabic Numbers:

١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩ ٠

بِابِ بَشْرٍ بَلْ بَرِّ بَرِّ بَرِّ

بص بطّاع بع بف بق بل بى

بل بى بن بى بى بى بى بى

جـاـجـبـجـتـجـعـجـعـجـلـجـرـ

جـسـحـثـ

جـ حـ طـ جـ عـ جـ فـ جـ قـ جـ دـ

جـ لـ جـ زـ نـ جـ وـ جـ هـ بـ جـ لـ اـ جـ يـ بـ

سائبانست مجمع سالنیشن

سک سط سع سف سق سل سلی

سل سمن سوسن سلہ سلاسی یے

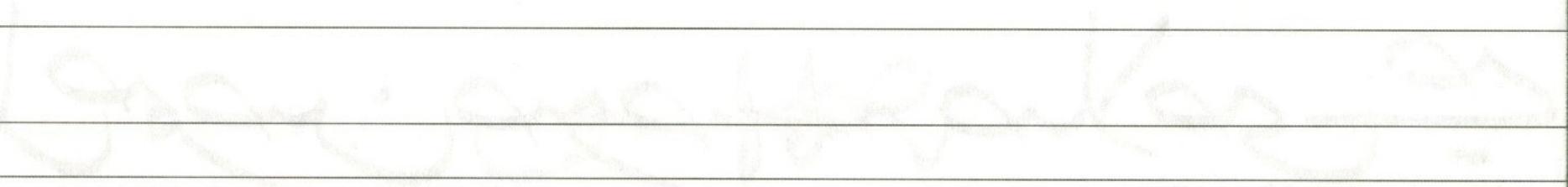
صاحب صيت مجمع صلوات حس

صتن

صحيح صحف صoricى

صلح من صوره مصالحي

طاطب طت میح طر طلا طس طش



لص طاطع طف طق طلے طلے

طلطم طنم طوطھہ طلاطی۔

اعصب علی عسعث رعنی

عطیع عف عق علی علی عم

عن عواعظ علایم

فافب فت فج فل فرن فش

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کلب سرکار

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مامبامست میخ ملامه مسیم شن

مِصْر مَطْمُوحَةٌ - مَقْمُولَةٌ مَلَكٌ

مَلَكُ مَلَمَ مَلَمَ مَلَمَ مَلَمَ

هابه هت هج هد هر هس

هشتن

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هـ لـ هـ مـ هـ فـ هـ وـ هـ هـ لـ هـ لـ هـ يـ

ہلکا ہمت جمعت جشن عظمت ملاح

شہید قفسہ بپس حطاں شمع بکاغ

فَفَعْلَهُ مُشْفِقَةً دَاهِمَلَهُ عَنْتَلَهُ

حَلَّهُ جَهَنَّمَ وَضُرُّهُ قَلْمَهُ طَلَاجَمَ فَهَنَّمَ

فِيْهِ لَبَرْ بِهِ فِي دَلْ جَمِيعِ فِيْهِ طَبْ يَعِيْ مُهِمَّةً

مُهِمَّةً مُهِمَّةً وَفَيْلَى طَفْلَى لَمْ تَسْكُنْ لَشْكَفَةً

سِفَرِ شَرِيفِ شِيخِتْ نِيَا جَنْجُونْ قَصْدَنْ

مَشَهِلْ مُضْطَرِبْ جَلِيشْ مُحَيْطْ مَجْمَعْ

مَصَنْفُ تَحْقِيقِ مَهْلِكٍ جَلِيلٍ مُصْبَرِ الْجَنْ كَهْفٍ

لَمْ يَرْقِي لَهُ خَطْوَيْجَهُ دُفْتِهِ لَمْ

وَانْ يَقُولُوا يُصِبُّ فَصَلَ الخَطَابُ فَمُرْ

فَاطْلُبُوا عِلْمَ الْذَّاتِ الْعَالِمِ

لَا شَهَادَاتٌ وَلَا رِبٌّ أَخْرَجَ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ السُّلَالَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ لَرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ اسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهِ

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ سُورَاللَّهُ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا كَرِيمٌ
لَا إِلَهَ بِإِلَهٍ لِّلَّهٍ

إِنَّا نَدْعُو إِلَيْهِ مُرْسَلًا
أَهْلًا وَسَهْلًا
إِنَّا نَدْعُو إِلَيْهِ مُرْسَلًا

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ بِسْمِكَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ مَلِيئُ

الْجَوَلِ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِكَ اللَّهُمَّ اعْلَمْ لِلْعَظِيمِ

إِذَا فَسَدَ الْزَمَانُ كَسَدَتِ الْفَضَّائِلُ وَنَفَقَتِ الرَّذَائِلُ

خَيْرُ الْكَلَامِ مَا قَلَّ وَجَلَ وَدَلَّ ، وَلَمْ يُبَلِّغْ

Part of a Comprehensive and Systematic Program of Islamic Studies

The Art of Arabic Calligraphy

**An Enrichment Book for
Arabic & Qur'anic Studies
General**

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