

Signs Spanning Numbers

Some characters in Arabic script are signs that span (or enclose) numbers. Over time these have been variously called:

- *prepending concatenation marks*
- *subtending marks*
- *prefixed format control characters*

Since digit choice is dependent on regional use, these marks may be used with European digits (U+0030..U+0039), ARABIC-INDIC digits (U+0660..U+0669) or with EXTENDED ARABIC-INDIC digits (U+06F0..U+06F9).

From a practical standpoint there isn't a need to support an arbitrary-length sequence of digits. For SIL fonts, we have found the maximum number of digits as documented in the following table to be sufficient for most uses.

Examples of how these are formatted are shown below using varying number of digits with *hamza* used as a separator.

| Characters | Glyph | max # digits |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| 0600 ARABIC NUMBER SIGN | ١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠ | 3 |
| 0601 ARABIC SIGN SANAH (year sign) | ١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠ | 4 |
| 0602 ARABIC FOOTNOTE MARKER | ١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠ | 2 |
| 0603 ARABIC SIGN SAFHA | ١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠ | 4 |
| 0604 ARABIC SIGN SAMVAT | ١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠ | 4 |
| 0605 ARABIC NUMBER MARK ABOVE | ١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠ | 4 |
| 0890 ARABIC POUND MARK ABOVE | ١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠ | 4 |
| 0891 ARABIC PIASTRE MARK ABOVE | ١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠ | 4 |
| 06DD ARABIC END OF AYAH | ١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠ | 3 |
| 08E2 ARABIC DISPUTED END OF AYAH | ١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠١٢٣٤٥٦٧٨٩٠ | 3 |

This guide is from the [font-arab-tools project](#) and is copyright © 2022-2023 SIL International.