Signs Spanning Numbers

Some characters in Arabic script are signs that span (or enclose) numbers, such as U+06DD End of Ayah and U+0605 Number Mark Above:

Spanning sign examples

Over time these have been variously called:

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

For the purposes of this document, we will use the term *spanning signs* (or more simply, *signs*) to refer to these characters and *sign glyphs* for the glyphs within the font that will represent them.

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 appear are shown below using varying numbers of digits with *hamza* used as a separator.

Characters	Glyph	max # digits
0600 ARABIC NUMBER SIGN	ءعاءع١٢ءع١٢٣ء	3
0601 ARABIC SIGN SANAH (year sign)	ءلءع١لءع١٢٣ءغ١٢٣٤لء	4
0602 ARABIC FOOTNOTE MARKER	ءلهء١لهء	2
0603 ARABIC SIGN SAFHA	ءصاءص١٢ءص١٢٣ءص١٢٣٤ء	4
0604 ARABIC SIGN SAMVAT	ءسماءسم١٢ءسم١٢٣ءسم١٢٣٤ء	4
0605 ARABIC NUMBER MARK ABOVE	ءآءآ١٢ءآ١٢٣ء١٢٣٤ء	4
0890 ARABIC POUND MARK ABOVE	ءاءآ١٢ءآ١٢٣ء١٢٣٤ء	4
0891 ARABIC PIASTRE MARK ABOVE	ءاءآ١٢ءآ١٢٣ء١٢٣٤ء	4
06DD ARABIC END OF AYAH	ءاءآ١٢ءآ١٢٣ء	3
08E2 ARABIC DISPUTED END OF AYAH	ءاءآ١٢ءآ١٢٣ء	3

For more Unicode information about these characters, see *Signs Spanning Numbers* in Section 9.2 and *Prepended Concatenation Marks* in Section 23.2 of The Unicode Standard.