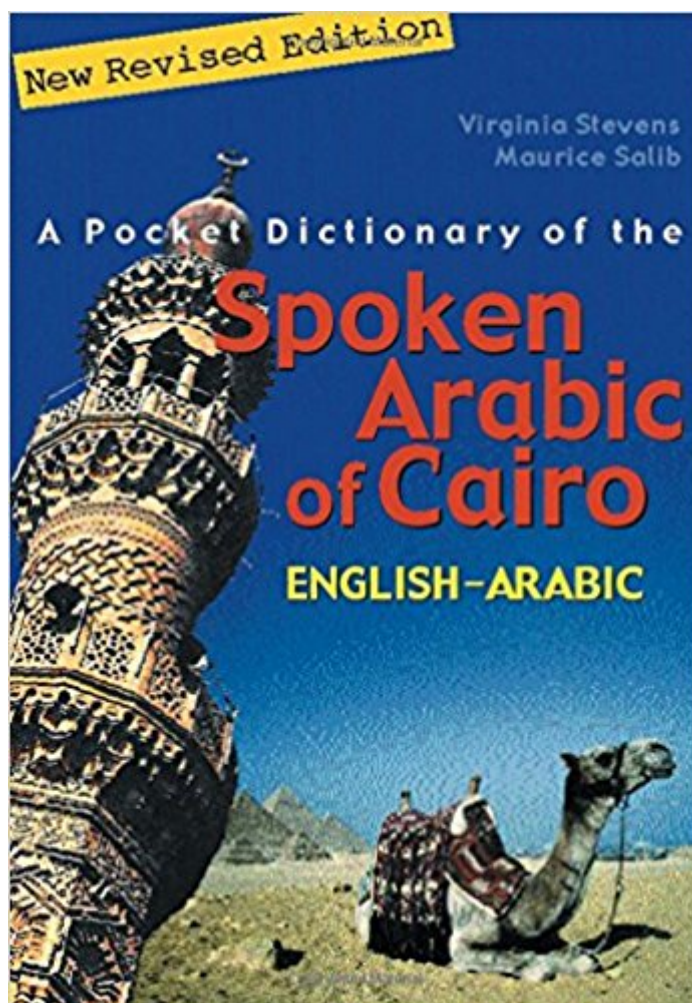


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A Pocket Dictionary Of The Spoken Arabic Of Cairo: English-Arabic



Synopsis

Whether you are newly arrived in Egypt and need to know the words for bread and apartment, or a long-term resident who suddenly needs to know how to ask for a picture frame or complain of a sore throat, this dictionary is for you. Fully revised and expanded, the third edition of this unique and invaluable dictionary presents 6,500 words commonly needed by foreigners speaking Arabic in Egypt. Arabic words are written in a clear and consistent transcription system, plurals are given for all nouns, plurals and feminine forms are provided for all adjectives, and past tenses are given for all verbs. The dictionary also provides stress rules and basic charts of verb endings, negation of verbs, form and use of numbers, pronominal suffixes, and comparatives and superlatives.

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Customer Reviews

Virginia Stevens is an instructor of English as a Foreign Language at the American University in Cairo and has taught foreign languages for twenty-seven years. Maurice Salib has taught, spoken, and written Arabic at the American University in Cairo and the University of California at Berkeley. He is the author of *Spoken Arabic of Cairo*.

This is a practical guide to speaking commonly understood Arabic as the average Man on the street uses the language. The book is a dictionary of English terms with the corresponding Arabic phrases detailed in phonetic detail. A couple of caveats ... There are a couple small sections on grammar, but you're not going to master Arabic diction. Many verbs are irregular, and you are just as likely to sound silly as to sound erudite if you apply the general rules. Also, Egypt and Syria are considered

by many to be the centers of modern, spoken Arabic. You'll be understood in other parts of the Arabic speaking world if you use this dictionary, but you won't be speaking the local dialect. There are at least five different variations on ballpoint pen that I've run across in practice. All in all, this is a very good, pocket sized guide.

Looked for a long time for an Egyptian Arabic - English dictionary. This one is good and has a well chosen selection of words, but no Arabic script. For translating signs and shop notices, and to show an Egyptian who didn't speak English and couldn't get my pronunciation. With the Arabic script too it would be perfect. I took the Pimsleur Egyptian Arabic audio course, which was fantastic, and with this book for extra vocabulary made myself understood all over Egypt - not much choice on the market (at a reasonable price) for this type of book - so I will probably spend the time to put the Arabic in myself for next time.

I got this book from a friend while I was in Egypt visiting. I realized that even with the phonetic spelling of the Arabic equivalent, you may still mispronounce the words and get strange looks if the person(s) you are speaking to knows the same amount of English as you know of Arabic. You still need the Arabic written so you can show someone when the pronunciation is not working.

It's nearly impossible to find a good dictionary of actual spoken Arabic but this fits the bill. It has many of the words you want to know but hardly ever use like "screw driver" and "fumigation". You won't find those in a travel dictionary, and God only knows what archaic words the MSA dictionary will have. I'm disappointed that the actual Arabic spelling of the actual words was not included. Also, as is somewhat common among transliterated dictionaries, Greek characters are used for the letters which do not exist in English. I am at a complete loss as to why Greek characters are somehow more understandable than the actual letter from the language that I'm learning. I'm learning Arabic, not Greek. Also the Greek letters they chose are of course different than the Greek letters chosen by other authors, which only increases my confusion. The transliteration key does not even include the Arabic characters, leaving me to guess what letter "similar to the 'ch' in German 'doch'" refers to. I also don't speak German. I would think anyone who would find this dictionary useful would also have at least an elementary grasp on what sounds Arabic letters make, and if not it seems using the Arabic letters would help force them down that path a bit better than Greek letters.

I had this in my back pocket for years and carried it where ever I went when I lived in Cairo. It was a

really handy reference guide as I learned Arabic.

It complemented my 30 disc Pimsleur Egyptian Arabic language course, especially for use in hotel and restaurants. Pocket size especially appreciated.

I think this is the only English-Egyptian Arabic dictionary with significant availability. So it's also the best! There's a lot that would make it a good dictionary even if it weren't unique: It's got just shy of 7,000 words, which means that it gives you the lexicon you need to say most anything, even if you can't find the specific English word you'd like to use. For nouns & adjectives, it gives the plural form, even when that form is regular; for verbs, it gives both the perfect

(*ʔafâ, ʕā* & *ʔafʕā* & *ʔafʕā* & *ʔafʕā* & *ʔafʕā*) & the imperfect

(*ʔafâ, ʕā* & *ʔafʕā* & *ʔafʕā* & *ʔafʕā* & *ʔafʕā*) forms. The transliteration distinguishes

between the hamza glottal stop & the qāf glottal stop, which means that it can be used

fairly easily to transition to Upper Egyptian Arabic (which, unlike Cairene Arabic, regularly distinguishes between the pronunciations of the two letters), & will make Egyptian colloquial words more familiar to those who know formal Arabic or another dialect. The transliteration is pretty easy to pick up, & a quick guide is conveniently placed on the inside cover. There are very good grammatical tables at the back of the book. The book fits nicely in a back jeans pocket, making it as convenient as any phrase book, but far more comprehensive. But there are also some problems:

While 6,800 words is a great learner's vocabulary, there are a surprising number of useful terms that can't be found in the book. I'm sure that the authors must have done some consultation of English word frequency lists, but it would be nice if a third edition included words like 'murder' or 'ethnicity' or 'reject' that are all among the 5,000 most common words in English. The grammatical notes on the words are useful, but incomplete: Most problematically, the verb entries don't include the verbal noun, or *maʔfāʔ* (*ʔafâ, ʕā* & *ʔafʕā* & *ʔafʕā* & *ʔafʕā*).

Maʔfāʔ & *ʔafʕā* are not fully predictable, & thus need to be part of an entry. I recognise that the dictionary needed a Romanisation scheme, as Arabic doesn't offer adequately complex vowel diacritics for the Egyptian colloquial, but it would be useful for the learner who's working with both speech & writing to see the spelling of the Arabic words. Beyond these issues *ʔafâ, ʕā* & *ʔafʕā* which I think are actually shortcomings of the dictionary *ʔafâ, ʕā* & *ʔafʕā* there are a few fantasy qualities that I would love to see in such a dictionary: First, I wish there were example sentences, to see the Arabic terms in context. If you're given two lexemes under an English entry, how do you know the difference? Example sentences would probably more than double the size of the dictionary, & it

might become less of a pocket tool. I can understand why this doesn't happen. Second, I wish there were some indication of register. Again, for the individual who is learning both colloquial & formal Arabic, it's useful to know when a word is common to the two, & when it sounds too colloquial for writing. This is a very important learner's need.

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