

خَلِّينَا نَتَعَلَّمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ!

How do you drink your tea?

Do you drink it **with** sugar or **without** it?

Do you drink it **with** or **without** milk?

'With'

In Arabic, we express the concept of 'with' using a preposition *bi-* بِـ. In Arabic script, this preposition "attaches" to the following word, and the whole construction is also pronounced without any pauses. For example, if we want to talk about tea with 'sugar' (*as-sukkar* السُّكَّر), we do the following:

$$bi + as-sukkar = bi-s-sukkar \quad \text{بِـ + السُّكَّر = بِالسُّكَّر}$$

Now, let's consider some other things that you might want to drink with your milk. Following the example above, complete the chart by adding the Arabic preposition *bi-* بِـ to the given words:

Meaning	Word	+ bi	+ بِـ	بالعربية
sugar	<i>as-sukkar</i>	<i>bi-s-sukkar</i>	بِالسُّكَّر	السُّكَّر
milk	<i>al-Haliib</i>			الحَلِيب
honey	<i>al-3asal</i>			العَسَل
mint	<i>an-na3naa3</i>			النَّعْنَاع
wormwood	<i>ash-shiiba</i>			الشَّيْبَة
amber	<i>al-3anbar</i>			العَنْبَر
ice	<i>ath-thalj</i>			الثَّلْج

'Without'

Wait, though. What if you don't like tea with sugar? How would you say you don't want it?

In Arabic, we can express the concept of 'without' with a word *bla* بِلا. It works much like the word for 'with', but with two important differences. First, *bla* بِلا is an independent word, so it does not attach to the following noun in writing. Second, *bla* بِلا does not allow the following

noun to have the Arabic article *al-* ال , so we need to remove it. For example, if we want to talk about tea 'without sugar', we can do the following:

bila + as-sukkar = bila sukkar بِلا سُكَّر = بِلا + السُّكَّر

Now, use your understanding of the preposition *bla* بلا to again complete the chart, this time expressing things you'd rather have your tea without:

Meaning	Word	+ bila	+ بلا	بالعربية
sugar	<i>as-sukkar</i>	<i>bila sukkar</i>	بِلا سُكَّر	السُّكَّر
milk	<i>al-Haliib</i>			الحَلِيب
honey	<i>al-3asal</i>			العَسَل
mint	<i>an-na3naa3</i>			النَّعْنَاع
wormwood	<i>ash-shiiba</i>			الشَّيْبَة
amber	<i>al-3anbar</i>			العَنْبَر
ice	<i>ath-thalj</i>			التَّلْج

'With' a Person

Congratulations! You now know exactly how to request what sort of tea you'd like to drink. But who wants to drink tea alone? Wouldn't you like to drink it **with** a friend?

In English, we use the same word, 'with', in phrases such as both "tea with milk" and "with a friend." Arabic, however, makes a distinction between these two concepts. The preposition *bi-* بِـ , which you learned above, corresponds only with instrumental uses of 'with', meaning phrases that describe how something is done, like drinking tea (with milk) or writing (with a pencil). For talking about accompaniment, on the other hand – meaning being with a person – Arabic uses a different preposition *ma3a* مَعَ . This preposition is an independent word, so it does not attach to the following noun. For example, if we want to say "with my friend," we could just put in front of *SaaHibi* صَاحِبِي , as in the following:

ma3a SaaHibi مَعَ صَاحِبِي

Before you move on, use your knowledge of Arabic vocabulary to practice using ma3a مَعَ with some of the people (or animal friends) you might enjoy having a cup of tea with!

with my friend (m.)	
with my friend (f.)	
with my darling (m.)	
with my darling (f.)	
with my brother	
with my sister	
with my dog	
with my cat	