Learning Arabic Grammar from the basics

Lesson 1:

Parts of Speech

In English language there are 8 Parts of Speech namely:
- Noun
- Pronoun
- Verb
- Adjective
- Adverb
- Preposition
- Conjunction
- Interjection

The Arabic language is made up of كَلِمَاتٌ (words) and these words are of 3 types i.e. In Arabic language there are 3 Parts of Speech, but these three Parts encompass all eight Parts of Speech of the English Language. They are known as:

Letter/Particle – حَرْفٌ	Verb/Action – فِعْلٌ	Noun – اِسْمٌ
• Preposition • Conjunction	• Verb (same as in English)	• Noun • Pronoun • Adjective • Adverb • Interjection
Example: إِلَى - (ila) meaning "to" فِي - (fee) meaning "in" وَ - (wa) meaning "and"	Example: ذَهَبَ - (duhaba) meaning "to go/went"	Example: بَيْتٌ - (baytu-n) meaning "a house"

Note: More examples will be given as we move on and learn each of the parts of speech separately Insha'Allah. As of now in the beginning, we will be focusing on Nouns and Particles and not Verbs.

3 Cases of Nouns in Arabic

Arabic nouns have three cases:

1) **Nominative Case:** مَرْفُوْعٌ (marfoo').

   Generally indicated by a dhammah or dhammataan on the last letter - This is the normal case of nouns

   Example: الْبَيْتُ / بَيْتٌ (al-baitu / baitu-n)

2) **Accusative Case:** مَنْصُوْبٌ (mansoob).

Generally indicated by a fatha or fathataan on the last letter.

Example: بَيْتاً / الْبَيْتَ (al-baita / baita-n)

3) **Genitive Case:** مَجْرُوْرٌ (majroor).

Generally indicated by a khasrah or khasrataan on the last letter.

Example: بَيْتٍ / الْبَيْتِ (al-baiti / baiti-n)

Vocabulary

• أَنَا (ana) which means "I" • نَحْنُ (nahnu) which means "We"	• بَيْتٌ (baytu-n) which means "A House / home" • بُيُوتٌ (buyootu-n) which means "Houses / homes"

Note: Learn the Vocabulary before proceeding further.

Arabic nouns are either definite or indefinite.

The Indefinite Particle   حَرْفٌ نَكِرَةٌ

There is no word in Arabic corresponding to "a" in English as in "A book". Indefinite nouns are indicated by doubling the last vowel of the noun tanween (nunation) (ٌ) , which is generally translated as 'a/an'. It is equivalent to adding an "n" to the last vowel of the noun. Example : A House – بَيْتٌ (Baytu-n)

Preposition: في - (fee)

In Arabic prepositions are called (harfu jarr) حَرْفُ الْجَرِّ

The Most commonly used word in Arabic is the preposition "Fee" في, although it has many translations depending on context, the most common translation is 'in'.

Important Point to Note:

A noun which appears after a preposition will be in the Genitive Case i.e; Prepositions like "fee", "min" etc changes the state of the noun to the Genitive case مَجْرُوْرٌ (majroor), meaning the dhammah on the last letter of the noun changes into kasrah/kasrataan.

Example:

When we write fee before baitu-n, it will become فِيْ بَيْتٍ "fee baiti-n" and <u>NOT</u> فِيْ بَيْتٌ "fee baitu-n". The dhammahtaan at the end changes to a khasrataan. In a similar way, "Fee Buyutun" becomes "Fee Buyutin".

Example from the Qur'an:

(...أَذِنَ ٱللَّهُ <u>فِى بُيُوتٍ</u>) (<u>Fee Buyutin</u> 'Adhina Allahu…)

"<u>In houses</u> which Allah has ordered…" [**Qur'an 24:36**]

Note: It is not "Fee Buyutun" but "Fee Buyutin" because of the presence of the Preposition "Fee" which changes the case of the noun into a Genitive one.

The Verb "to be" i.e. "is/are/am"

The Arabic verb 'to be' in its present tense "is/are/am" is not written in Arabic, rather it is understood to be there by default.

Example: أَنَا فِيْ بَيْتٍ "Ana fee baytin", though it literally means "I in a house", but it would mean – "I <u>am</u> in a house"

Similarly,

نَحْنُ فِى بُيُوتٍ "Nahnu fee buyutin" meaning "We <u>are</u> in houses"

نَحْنُ فِى بَيْتٍ "Nahnu fee baytin" meaning "We <u>are</u> in a house"

أنا خَالِدٌ "Ana Khaalid" meaning "I <u>am</u> Khaalid"

Note: أَنَا فِى بُيُوتٍ "Ana fee buyutin" meaning "I am in houses" is wrong grammatically both from the English as well as Arabic perspective, as this sentence doesn't make any sense. One cannot be at many houses at a time.