

At the Post Office

Objective: By the end of the chapter, you will be able to:

- buy stamps and send letters and parcels
- use prepositions correctly with verbs

The Post Office

Stamps are available at tobacco stores in addition to the post office. It is best to mail your letters at the mail slot outside the post office since pick-ups can be infrequent at other mail boxes. When sending packages out of the country, you are required to fill out a customs declaration form. Be sure to leave the package open because an official is required to see the contents before it is sealed.

Vocabulary

post office	l-bostā	البوستة	address	ladrisa	أدريسة
envelope	jwa	جوا		l-عunwan	العنوان
letter	bra	برا	post card	karṭ ppostāl	كارط پوسطال
stamp	tanbr	تنبر	money order	l-maṇḍa	المانضة
stamps	tnabr	تنابر	package	kulya	كولية
registered letter	bra rikomandi	برا رِكوماندي	normal	عadi	عادي
postman	l-faktur	الفاكتور	express	ixpres	إكسپريس
post box	bwaṭ ppostāl	بواط پوسطال	customs	d-diwana	الديوانة
box (for a package)	karṭona	كارطونة	tape	s-skotš	السكوتش
			glue	lṣaq	لصاق

Verbs

to send	ṣift	صيفط	to close / seal	šdd	شدّ
to paste	lṣṣq	لصق	to receive	twṣṣl b	توصل ب
to fill in (a form)	عممر	عمر			

Expressions

I want a stamp for the US / Morocco please.	bḡit waḥd t-tanbr dyaḷ mirikan / l-mḡrib عafak.	بغيت واحد التنبر ديال مريكان / المغرب عفاك.
I want to send this letter / this package.	bḡit n-ṣift had l-bra / had l-kulya.	بغيت نصيفط هدّ البرا / هدّ الكولية.
How much will I pay to send this...?	bšhal ḡadi n-ṣift had ... ?	بشحال عادي نصيفط هدّ ... ?
How much time will it take for it to arrive to ... ?	šhal d l-wqt kay-xṣ baš t-wṣl l ... ?	شحال د الوقت كيخص باش توصل ل ... ?
Why don't letters arrive quickly?	عlaš l-brawat	علاش البروات ما كيوصلوش دغية.

ma-kay-wšlu-š dġiya.

Dialogue

f l-bosṭa

ف البوسطة

- Judy: bġit t-tnabr, lla y-xllik. دجودي: بغيت التنابر، الله يخليك.
- l-muwḍḍaf: fin ġadya t-šifṭi l-brawat? الموضّف: فين غادية تصيفطي البرّوات؟
- Judy: bġit n-šifṭ wħda عاديya l mirikan u wħda rikumandi hna f l-mġrib. دجودي: بغيت نصيفط وحدة عادية ل مريكان و وحدة ركوماندي هنا ف المغرب.
- l-muwḍḍaf: waxxa a lalla, endk 22.50 drhm. الموضّف: وڤا أَلّا، عندك 22.50 درهم.
- Paul: ana bġit n-šifṭ kulya l mirikan. پول: أنا بغيت نصيفط كولية ل مريكان.
- l-muwḍḍaf: ara n-šuf šnu fiha. الموضّف: أرا نشوف شنو فيها.
- Paul: hak a sidi. پول: هاك أسيدي.
- l-muwḍḍaf: عممر had l-mṭbuع افاك. الموضّف: عمّر هد المطبوع عفاك.
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- l-muwḍḍaf: weš t-šifṭha عادي wlla ixpres? الموضّف: واش تصيفطها عادي ولا إكسپريس؟
- Paul: ġir عادي عافاك. پول: غير عادي عفاك.
- l-muwḍḍaf: waxxa a sidi, endk 250 drhm. الموضّف: وڤا أسيدي، عندك 250 درهم.
- Paul & Judy: šukran, bslama. پول و دجودي: شكراً، ب السلامة.
- l-muwḍḍaf: lla y-عawn. الموضّف: الله يعاون.

1. šnu kat-dir Judy f l-bosṭa? 1. شنو كتدير دجودي ف البوسطة؟
2. weš bġat t-šifṭ l-brawat ixpres? 2. واش بڡات تصيفط البرّوات إكسپريس؟
3. šnu bġa y-šifṭ Paul? 3. شنو بڡي يصيفط پول؟
4. šnu xššu y-dir? 4. شنو خصّو يدير؟

Exercise: Make as many sentences as you can using the following words. You may need to add some of your own words.

mšit	مشيت			bġau	بڡاو	šra	شري	manḍa	مانضة
mša	مشي			bġina	بڡينا	šaf	شاف	kulya	كولية
mšat	مشات	l l-bosṭa	ع la hqqaš	bġit	بڡيت	xda	خدي	tnabr	تنابر
mšina	مشينا	ل البوسطة	على حقاّش	bġat	بڡات	šifṭ	صيفط	mirikan	مريكان
mšau	مشاو			bġa	بڡي	šrf	صرف	bwaṭ	بواط
mšitu	مشيتو			bġitu	بڡيتو			ppostal	پوسطال

Using Prepositions with Pronoun Endings & Verbs

Learning how to use prepositions correctly can sometimes be tricky. First, the prepositions don't always correspond directly to English prepositions. Thus, at different times in Moroccan Arabic we will use different prepositions for what would be the same preposition in English. Second, prepositions sometimes change in meaning depending upon the verb they are used with. This is true in English, too:

*She spoke **on** the rights of homeless people. (**on** means "on the subject of")*

*I put the book **on** the table. (**on** means "on top of")*

With these challenges, it may take awhile for you to be a master of Darija prepositions. But with continued use and exposure, they will become natural for you, just as greetings are now natural for you. In this section, we will look at two aspects of prepositions: 1. how to connect prepositions with pronoun endings, and 2. which verbs use certain prepositions.

Some prepositions you have already learned (such as **ɗya1**) simply add the normal pronoun endings (ex. **ɗya1i**, **ɗya1k**, etc.). The following prepositions, however, change slightly when pronoun endings are added:

to / for	l	ل
on / about	عla	على
with	معa	مع
in / at / about	f	ف
with / by	b	ب

The Preposition "l"

The preposition l (ل) often means "to" (ex. I gave something **to** you) or "for" (ex. I did something **for** you). It may also be used with certain verbs simply to express the meaning of the verb; in these cases, it doesn't translate into anything in English. To add the pronoun endings:

to / for	l	ل
to / for me	liya / li	ليّا / لي
to / for you (sing.)	lik	ليك
to / for him	lih / lu	ليه / لو
to / for her	liha	ليها
to / for us	lina	لينا
to / for you (plur.)	likum	ليكم
to / for them	lihum	ليهم

Some verbs that go with this preposition:

excuse	smH l	سمح ل	send (to)	ʃiftɔ (l)	صيفط (ل)
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explain (to)	fssr (l)	فسّر (ل)	bring (to)	jab (l)	جاب (ل)
say (to)	gal (l)	قال (ل)	to be possible (for...)	ymkn (l)	يمكن (ل)

Some examples:

Kristin sent a letter to Chad.	Kristin šifṭat bra l Chad.	كرستن صيفطات برا ل تشاد.
Kristin sent a letter to him .	Kristin šifṭat bra lih.	كرستن صيفطات برا ليه.
Thomas bought a present for Jessica on her birthday.	Thomas šra waḥd l-kadu l Jessica f عيد l-milad dyaḥa.	طوماس شري واحد الكادو ل دجيسكا ف عيد الميلاد ديالها.
Thomas bought it for her .	Thomas šrah liha.	طوماس شراه ليها.
Excuse me .	smḥ liya.	سمح ليّا.
Can I (i.e. is it possible for me) talk with you?	weš ymkn liya n-ḥḍr mḥak?	واش يمكن ليّا نهضر معاك؟
I can't (i.e. it is not possible for me) go out now.	ma-ymkn-š liya n-xrj deba.	ما يمكنش ليّا نخرج دبا.

As you can see in the example “Excuse me” above, sometimes the Arabic verb requires the preposition in order to be equivalent to the English verb. In these cases, the English translation doesn't have a preposition, but the Arabic still requires it.

The Preposition “علا”

The preposition علا is used with many verbs and expressions, and as a result it translates into many English prepositions, including: “on,” “about,” “to,” “at,” and others. With pronoun endings:

on (and others)	علا	على
on me	عليya	عليّا
on you (sing.)	عليk	عليك
on him	عليh	عليه
on her	عليha	عليها
on us	عليna	علينا
on you (plur.)	عليkum	عليكم
on them	عليhum	عليهم

Some verbs that go with this preposition:

defend	dafع علا	دافع على	lie (to)	kdb (علا)	كذب (على)
look/search (for)	qllb (علا)	قَلّب (على)	laugh (at)	ḍhk (علا)	ضحك (على)
speak (about)	tkllm (علا)	تكلّم (على)	to love (i.e. to be dying for)	mat (علا)	مات (على)

In the first verb, “defend,” the preposition **عla** does not have an English translation since it is required in order to translate the Arabic verb into “defend.” In the second verb, “look/search,” however, the preposition **عla** is basically equivalent to the English “for.” Some examples:

Did we talk about the role of Peace Corps in Morocco?	weš tkllmna عla d-dawr dyal hay'at s-salam f l-mğrib?	واش تكلمنا على الدور ديال هيئة السلام ف المغرب؟
Yes, we talked about it .	iyeh, tkllmna عليه .	إيه، تكلمنا عليه.
Are you looking for a house to rent?	weš kat-qllb عla ðar l l-kra?	واش كتقلب على دار ل الكرا؟
Yes, I'm looking for one .	iyeh, kan-qllb عليها .	إيه، كتقلب عليها.
I love (am dying for) pizza.	kan-mut عla l-pitza.	كنموت على البيتزا.
I love it .	kan-mut عليها	كنموت عليها
Don't lie to me .	ma-tkdb-š عليا .	ما تكذبش عليا.
He's laughing at me .	kay-ðhk عليا .	كيدضحك عليا.

The Preposition “**mea**”

The preposition **mea** almost always translates into the English “with.” With pronouns:

with	mea	مع
with me	meaya	معيا
with you (sing.)	meak	معاك
with him	meah	معه
with her	meaha	معاها
with us	meana	معانا
with you (plur.)	meakum	معاكم
with them	meahum	معاهم

Some verbs that go with this preposition:

laugh (with)	ðhk (mea)	ضحك (مع)	meet (with)	tlaqa (mea)	تلاقى (مع)
be helpful (with)	tawn (mea)	تعاون (مع)	stay (with)	bqa (mea)	بقى (مع)
shake hands (with)	tsalm (mea)	تسالم (مع)	argue (with)	txašm (mea)	تخاصم (مع)

Some examples:

I met (with) Samir in the post office.	tlaqit mea Samir f l-bosṭa.	تلاقيت مع سمير ف البوسطة.
I met (with) him in the post office.	tlaqit meah f l-bosṭa.	تلاقيت معه ف البوسطة.

I'm just kidding! (**with you**)

ġir kan-ḡḡk mɛak!

غير كذحك معاك!

Would you like to come to the movies **with me**?

bġiti t-mši l s-sinima mɛaya?

بغيتي تمشي ل السينيما معايا؟

The Preposition “f”

Like ɛ1a, the preposition f has many different English translations, including: “in,” “about,” “at,” “on,” and others. When used with pronouns:

in	f	ف
in me	fiya	فيّا
in you (sing.)	fik	فيك
in him	fih	فيه
in her	fiha	فيها
in us	fina	فينا
in you (plur.)	fikum	فيكم
in them	fihum	فيهم

Some verbs that go with this preposition:

ask (about)	suwl (f)	سوّل (ف)	participate (in)	šark (f)	شارك (ف)
think (about)	fkkrr (f)	فكّر (ف)	take care (of)	thlla (f)	تهلّى (ف)
talk (about) a person	hḡr (f)	هضّر (ف)	trust (in)	taq (f)	تاق (ف)

Some examples:

I came over (asked **about you**) yesterday, but I didn't find you.

suwlt **fik** l-barḡ, welakin ma-lqitk-š.

سوّلت فيك البارح، ولّكن ما لقيتكش.

We trusted (**in**) **him**, but he betrayed us.

tqna **fih**, u ġdr bina.

تقنا فيه، و غدر بيّنا.

Take care **of** yourself.

thlla **f** rask.

تهلّى ف راسك.

This preposition, with pronouns, can also have the meaning of the verb “to be.”

I am hungry.

fiya j-juɛ.

فيّا الجوع.

I am thirsty.

fiya l-ɛtš.

فيّا العطش.

He has a fever.

fih s-sxana.

فيه السخانة.

And sometimes it takes the meaning of “to have” in the expression “to have in it/them.”

This house has five rooms.

had ḡ-ḡar fiha xmsa d l-byut.

هدّ الدار فيها خمسة د البيوت.

The Preposition “b”

The preposition **b** usually has the meaning of “with” (I eat **with** my hands), but can also be used for: “by,” “in,” “about,” “for,” and others. With pronouns:

with	b	بـ
with me	biya	بِيَا
with you (sing.)	bik	بِيْكَ
with him	bih	بِيْه
with her	biha	بِيْهَا
with us	bina	بِيْنَا
with you (plur.)	bikum	بِيْكُمْ
with them	bihum	بِيْهُمْ

Some verbs that go with this preposition:

believe (in)	amn (b)	أَمِنَ (ب)	marry (with)	tzujj (b)	تَزَوَّجَ (ب)
dream (about)	hlm (b)	حَلِمَ (ب)	welcome	rhhb b	رَحَّبَ بـ
be responsible (for)	tkllf (b)	تَكَفَّفَ (ب)	want to be separated (from)	sxa (b)	سَخِيَ (ب)

Some examples:

She married (**with**) **him** last year. tzuwjat **bih** l-εam l-li fat. تزوّجات بيه العام اللي فات.

They welcomed **me** into their house. rhhbu **biya** f darhum. رحبو بيّا ف دارهم.

I dreamed **about him**. hlmt **bih**. حلمت بيه.

Exercise: Replace the underlined nouns with the corresponding pronouns. Sometimes you will need to use a preposition and pronoun together.

Example: l-qṭ kla l-hut. ⇔ l-qṭ klah.

1. Tony šrb l-hlib. 1. طوني شرب الحليب.
2. Ahmed šra ṭumubil. 2. أحمد شري طوموبيل.
3. l-mutaṭawwiεin mšau l s-suq. 3. المتطوّعين مشاؤ ل السوق.
4. Laṭifa ddat d-drari l l-mdrasa. 4. لطفة ذات الدراري ل المدرسة.
5. weš nsiti l-magana f ḍ-ḍar? 5. واش نسيتي المكانة ف الدار؟
6. Greg εṭa l-flus l Amy. 6. كريغ عطى الفلوس ل أيمي.
7. d-drari safro mεa šhabhum. 7. الدراري سافرو مع صحابهم.
8. Sara ma-kat-akul-š l-lhm. 8. سارة ما كتاكلش اللحم.
9. sllm εla mwalin ḍ-ḍar. 9. سلّم على موالين الدار.

10. Jerry kay-xaf mn Tom.

10. دجيري كيخاف من طوم.

Exercise: Make all of the above verb forms negative.