



## Arabic Subtitle Style Guide v1 (as of January 23, 2017)

**These standards apply to and should be followed for all English subtitles.**

Also take note that all iflix subtitles should **not** contain any form of credits and/or special mentions of any third party outside of iflix.

### Arabic Language Form

- Classical Arabic (Modern Standard Arabic) only.
- Refrain from dialectal words.
- When there is no alternative to the word in Classical Arabic, use the word closest in meaning.

### Character Per Line (CPL)

42 characters per line

### Line Treatment

Maximum of 2 lines in one subtitle line

### Reading Speed

30 characters per second (CPS) for all types of content.

### Character Names

- Do not translate proper names (e.g., Peter, Suzanne), unless the distributor provides specific translations.
- If no translations are provided, the names should be transliterated.
- Nicknames should only be translated if they convey a specific meaning.
- Use language-specific translations for historical/mythical characters (e.g., Santa Claus).

### Continuity

- Do not use ellipses or dashes to split a sentence between two subtitle frames or lines.
- Use an ellipsis to indicate a dramatic pause in a phrase.
- Use ellipsis without a space in the first subtitle when there is a pause between a sentence running over two subtitles.
- Use ellipsis followed by no space to indicate mid-sentence pick-ups. Connected on both sides.
- A sentence that is interrupted by a second speaker and then continues must have an ellipsis at the end of the sentence that was interrupted. The interrupted speaker's sentence may begin without another ellipsis.
- Incomplete speech should end with ellipsis.

### Documentary

- Only translate a speaker's title once - the first time the speaker appears in the documentary.
- When a speaker's title interrupts an ongoing dialogue, do not use ellipses at the end of the sentence in the subtitle that precedes it and at the beginning of the sentence in the subtitle that follows it.

### Dual Speakers

- Use a hyphen followed by a space if two characters speak in one subtitle with a maximum of one character speaking per line.



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- Alignment of dual speakers: Both lines should be centred on-screen.

- يمكنك أن تقرأ العربية؟  
- نعم فعلا

### Font Settings

Font style : Arial as a generic placeholder for proportional SansSerif  
Font size : Relative to video resolution and ability to fit 42 characters across screen  
Font color : White

### (Scripted) Foreign Dialogue

- Foreign dialogue should only be translated if the viewer was meant to understand it (i.e., if it was subtitled in the original version. For MPAA content it will normally be present in the production script and translated into English).
- Foreign words should be transliterated, unless they have become part of regular usage in English or the original production language (examples in the case of MPAA production: bon appétit, RSVP, rendezvous, doppelgänger, zeitgeist, persona non grata).

### Forced Narrative (On-Screen Text)

- Forced narrative on-screen text should only be included if it is plot pertinent and meant to be read in the original version.
- Forced narratives that are redundant (e.g., identical letter-for-letter to onscreen text or spoken in the dubbed dialogue track) must be deleted.
- Never combine a forced narrative with written dialogue in the same subtitle line.
- When a forced narrative interrupts dialogue, use an ellipsis at the end of the sentence in the subtitle line that precedes it. There should be no ellipses at the beginning of the sentence that follows it.

### Italicization

Do not use italics.

### Usage of Punctuation for Quotes

- Regular double quotation marks (“ ”) without spaces
- **Use parentheses ( )** for quotes within quotes.
- Quotes should be used at the start and end of a sentence and not at the start of every subtitle.
- Closing quotes follow the end of the phrase that is intended to be quoted. No period/full stop is required in Arabic subs.
- Direct speech is introduced by a colon or a comma. Either may be used, but must be used consistently throughout.
- Comma goes outside of the quotes.
- **Use parentheses to wrap all foreign names:** proper names of persons and places. Do not insert any space between these two symbols and the name they wrap. If there is a name inside a quotation, the name should be in parentheses.

### Repetition

Do not translate words or phrases repeated more than once in a sequence.

If the repeated word or phrase is said twice in a row in a single shot, time subtitles to the audio but



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translate only once. (Original: Let's go, go, go!, Output: Let's go! {in AR})

### Songs

- Only subtitle plot-pertinent songs (if absolutely part of the storyline ex: a musical narrative).
- Use an ellipsis when a song continues in the background but is no longer subtitled to give precedence to dialogue (this shows that the lyrics have trailed-off in favor of dialog).
- Punctuation: Only question marks and exclamation marks should be used in song lyrics.
- Use double quotes around song lyrics. One quote at the start line of the subtitle frame with lyrics in it and one at the end of the 2nd frame is enough. No need to quote each subtitle line in and out.

### Titles

- Main titles and episode titles: Transliterate unless an approved translation is provided by the distributor or iflix (Some online research may be required).
- Titles of published works, existing movies and TV shows: Use official or well-known translations. If none are available, transliterate the titles. (Some online research may be required).

### Profanity Treatment

- Dialogue subject matter that is offensive according to our censorship guidelines must be complied to our guidelines for MENA region.
- Dialogue wording that passes censorship (including expletives) should be rendered as faithfully as possible, without using dialect or words that would otherwise introduce a level of obscenity not implied in the content.

### Special Instructions

- Plot-pertinent dialogue always takes precedence over background dialogue.
- Months of the year must follow the Gregorian calendar, for example:  
April should be أبريل  
March should be مارس
- Percentage (%) has to be spelled out to ensure correct sentence formatting. ex: 20% should be written as: 20 بالمائة (joined together on one line)
- From 1 to 10, Arabic numbers should be spelled out. Above 10, Arabic numbers should be written numerically.
- Clock time should be spelled out: الرابعة والنصف and not ٤:٣٠ unless character limitation or reading speed are an issue.