

WORLD LANGUAGES COURSES

- ARABIC
- GERMAN
- OTTOMAN
- PERSIAN
- TURKISH

ARABIC

Arabic is the official language of over 20 countries and there are well over 300 million native speakers of the language. These speakers are largely concentrated in the Middle East, but there are minority groups of native speakers throughout the world. It is also an official language of the United Nations, the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the African Union. Arabs contributed a great deal to the advancement of science, medicine, and philosophy. Much learning from the Greek, Roman, and Byzantine cultures was preserved for the world through the Arab libraries. Arabs have also made significant contributions in such areas as literature, mathematics, navigation, astrology, and architecture. A knowledge of Arabic enables the exploration of this vast body of knowledge in their original language. The Arab world has its own unique art, music, literature, cuisine, and way of life. In exploring the Arabic world, you will learn to appreciate its distinct cultural products and practices. Those who learn Arabic gain deeper insights into the cultural, political, and religious values that motivate people in those cultures. People who know Arabic can negotiate the cultural and linguistic gap between nations, assist in solving and avoiding intercultural conflict, and help businesses successfully engage in international trade.

With the growing importance of the Middle East in international affairs, there is thus an extreme shortage of workers in the West who are versed in Arabic language and culture. Those who study Arabic can find careers in a variety of fields: journalism, business and industry, education, finance and banking, translation and interpretation, consulting, foreign service and intelligence, and many others. Initiatives to integrate the Arab world into the global economy are opening up numerous potential new business opportunities. The Arab region with its rapidly growing population provides a huge export market for goods and services. In order to do business effectively, one must understand the language and culture of the people with whom one hopes to negotiate and conduct trade.

The Arabic courses taught at Sabancı University are based on three textbooks forming a series (namely *Alif Baa with DVDs Introduction to Arabic Letters and Sounds* and partly *Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allumi al-'Arabiyya / الكتاب في تعلم العربية / A Textbook for Beginning Arabic, Part I and II*) developed by a team of experienced native and non-native Arabic language instructors, and are widely used in most American and great many European universities.

GERMAN

The German classes at Sabancı University are designed to develop competence in oral and written communication and to provide insights into language form, usage and meaning. These classes also feature topic-based practice of skills in German (listening, reading, speaking and writing) and systematic coverage of the German grammar. The use of autonomous interaction and simulated communication activities form the basis of instruction and are aimed at bridging the gap between the acquisition of language features and skills and their use. These activities help promote greater learner self-confidence and autonomy.

Why study German? There are many reasons to start learning German or to improve your German. It is the native tongue of more than 100 million people and it has an excellent and rich background in literature, philosophy and science. A significant number of business and trade deals are conducted between Germany and Turkey. In addition to this, "more texts are translated into German than into any other language." (Tatsachen über Deutschland, 1999, p.11).

Students who would like to have official documentation of their level of German can contact the Goethe Institut Istanbul.

In his poem *Vergnügungen*, Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) writes about the concept of 'fun'. Learning German can definitely be included in that concept!

Vergnügungen

Der erste Blick aus dem Fenster am Morgen

Das wiedergefundene alte Buch

Begeisterte Gesichter

Schnee, der Wechsel der Jahreszeiten

Die Zeitung

Der Hund

Die Dialektik

Duschen, Schwimmen

Alte Musik

Bequeme Schuhe

Begreifen

Neue Musik

Schreiben, Pflanzen

Reisen

Singen

Freundlich sein.

PERSIAN

Persian is an ancient language that has developed through three historical stages. Old Persian dates back to at least 514 B.C. and was used until about A.D. 250. It was written in cuneiform and used exclusively for royal proclamations and announcements. Middle Persian, also known as Pahlavi, was in use from about A.D. 250 to 900. It was the official language of the Sassanid Empire and of the Zoroastrian priesthood. It was written in an ideographic script called Huzvaresh.

As part of the Indo-European family of languages, Persian is distantly related to Latin, Greek, the Slavic and Teutonic languages and English. This relationship can be seen in such cognates as *beradar* (brother), *pedar* (father), and *mader* (mother). It is a relatively easy language for English-speaking people to learn compared with any other major language of the Middle East.

Since Persian has not changed significantly in over a millennium, the basic grammar for the classical and modern forms of the language is virtually the same and is relatively easy to learn. After one year, students can begin to read both classical poems and modern short stories and poetry in the original, and watch Iranian films without subtitles. Both BBC and VOA have extensive Persian programs and reports online that allow students to practice their listening and reading skills and become acquainted with the three main varieties of the language.

Persian is the most important of a group of several related languages that linguists classify as Indo-Iranian, provides an entry into a rich and diverse culture that produced major epic and verses of medieval poets such as Ferdowsi, Khayyám, Sa'adi, Rûmî and Hâfez. The language is a living link with the past and has been important in binding the nation together.

TURKISH

Turkish is a historically rooted and culturally significant language that has developed through several major stages. The earliest written records of the language appear in the 8th-century Orhun Yazıtları (Orkhon Inscriptions), which reflect the political, social, and cultural life of early Turkic communities. The Middle Turkic period (13th–15th centuries) encompasses a diverse literary tradition, including Uighur, Khwarezm, and Chagatai texts. From the 15th century until the early 20th century, Ottoman Turkish served as the administrative and literary language of the Ottoman Empire.

Modern Turkish emerged through a series of language reforms introduced in the early Republican period, most notably the adoption of the Latin-based alphabet on 1 November 1928, which greatly increased accessibility, standardization, and literacy. Modern Turkish continues to evolve in parallel with contemporary cultural and technological developments.

From a typological perspective, Turkish belongs to the Turkic language family, a classification used in modern linguistics to describe a group of languages sharing historical connections and structural affinities. Turkish exhibits hallmark features such as vowel harmony, agglutinative morphology, SOV (subject–object–verb) word order, productive derivation, and regular phonological processes. It is closely related to other Turkic languages, including Azerbaijani, Turkmen, Uzbek, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Tatar. Turkish is spoken primarily in Türkiye and holds cultural and historical significance across regions shaped by Turkic-speaking communities.

Beyond its structural features, studying Turkish provides access to a diverse cultural heritage shaped by centuries of poetry, music, philosophy, and modern literature. It also opens the door to a rich literary tradition, ranging from classical figures such as Yunus Emre, Karacaoğlu, and Fuzûlî to modern and contemporary authors including Nazım Hikmet, Elif Şafak, and Nobel laureate Orhan Pamuk.

At Sabancı University’s School of Languages, the Turkish course follows the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Through authentic materials, a communicative teaching approach, and a learner-centered environment, students develop the linguistic competence and cultural understanding necessary to navigate academic and everyday contexts in Türkiye.