

LESSON 2

The Sounds of Farsi I: â · a · kh

Two sounds carry your whole accent. Master the deep **â** and the famous **kh** now, and every word for the next 98 lessons comes out sounding Persian.

AFTER THIS LESSON YOU CAN...

- Produce a deep, unhurried **â** — and hear the difference between *bad* and *bâd*.
- Make the **kh** sound without fear (it's air, not a k).
- Sound local with the street shift: *nân* → *nun*, *khâne* → *khune*.
- Understand Leila's five coaching words — the classroom language of this course.

THE WORD MAP

Say each one out loud as you read — stretch every **â**.

âb

water

just two sounds — let the â ring

nun

bread

street form of nân — what Tehran actually says

khune

house · home

street form of khâne — kh + the deep u

bâbâ

dad

two long â's — bâ-bâ, equal and calm

âre

yeah (casual yes)

the everyday yes — formal "bale" comes later

âghâ

sir · Mr.

that middle gh is Lesson 3's star — today just copy the â's

SOUND 1 — THE DEEP Â

How to make it

Like the **a** in "father," but **rounder and longer**. Drop your jaw, open the throat, and never rush it. If your â is lazy, the whole word collapses: Farsi ears listen for that vowel first.

You already own it: **sa-lâm**. Now it's in **âb**, **âre**, **bâbâ**, **âghâ** — and in the â of **khodâhâfez**.

One vowel, two worlds: bad vs bâd

Farsi also has a short **a** (like the u in "cup," said quickly). The word **bad** means *bad* — same as English. Stretch that vowel into **â** and you get **bâd** — *the wind*. One vowel, completely different word. This pair is your daily warm-up: **bad... bâd... bad... bâd**.

SOUND 2 — THE FAMOUS KH

How to make it

It is not a k. Raise the back of your tongue close to the roof of your mouth and push air through — like gently fogging a mirror, the *ch* in German "Bach," or Scottish "loch." Practice ladder: **kh hh → khu → khub → khune**.

Common beginner slip: saying "kub" for **khube**. If someone hears a plain k, add more air, less contact.

STRESS, BY EAR

Copy the melody straight from the audio — don't compute it. When in doubt, hum the word first, then add the consonants. **bâbâ**: two equal, calm syllables.

STREET FARSI: THE ÂN → UN SHIFT

Textbook Farsi and street Farsi differ in one famous way: **ân** relaxes into **un**. This course teaches the street form first — it's what you'll hear in movies, songs, and any Iranian home.

books say: nân (bread)

Tehran says: nun

books say: khâne (house)

everyone says: khune

books say: Tehrân

Tehran says: Tehrun

Both forms are correct — you'll learn to read the formal one later. You'll belong in the conversation now.

THE SCENE — LEILA COACHES SAM

SPEAKER	FARSI	ENGLISH
Leila	Begu: âb.	Say: water.
Sam	Âb!	Water!
Leila	Âfarin! Begu: nun.	Well done! Say: bread.
Sam	Nun!	Bread!
Leila	Khube! Begu: khune.	Nice! Say: house.
Sam	Khune...	House... (almost!)
Leila	Nazdik bud! Dobâre!	Close! Again!
Sam	Khune!	House!
Leila	Âfarin, Sam!	Well done, Sam!

LEILA'S COACHING KIT — LEARN THESE FIVE FOREVER

begu = say it · **âfarin!** = well done! · **khube!** = good! · **nazdik bud!** = close! · **dobâre!** = again!

She'll coach with exactly these words for the next 98 lessons.

EXERCISES — PART 1

Do these **after** the drill track. Say every answer out loud, not just in your head.

1 • Match

- | | |
|----------|--------------|
| 1. âb | a. dad |
| 2. nun | b. sir · Mr. |
| 3. khune | c. water |
| 4. bâbâ | d. yeah |
| 5. âre | e. bread |
| 6. âghâ | f. house |

2 • Short a or deep â?

Say each word out loud, then circle the vowel you used:

bad (a / â) bâd (a / â) bâbâ (a / â) man (a / â) salâm — second syllable (a / â)

3 • Street-ify it

Rewrite each textbook form the way Tehran says it:

nân → _____ khâne → _____ Tehrân → _____

4 • Complete the coach

Fill in Leila's words:

"_____! Begu: nun." (well done!) "_____ bud! Dobâre!" (close!)

"_____! Begu: khune." (good!)

EXERCISES — PART 2

5 • You're Sam

Answer Leila out loud:

Leila: "Begu: âb." → You: _____!

Leila: "Begu: nun." → You: _____!

Leila: "Nazdik bud! Dobâre!" → You (again, better): _____!

6 • kh or plain k?

Circle the words that need the **kh** air sound:

khub • âb • khune • nun • khodâhâfez • bâbâ

7 • Order the coaching

Number Leila's phrases in the order they appeared in the scene:

___ Nazdik bud! Dobâre! ___ Begu: âb. ___ Âfarin, Sam! ___ Khube! Begu: khune.

8 • The mirror test (out loud)

Hold your palm in front of your mouth. Say **khub — khune — khodâhâfez**. If you feel a steady stream of air on every kh, you've got it. Then read the whole scene on page 3, playing **both** roles, twice.

DAILY 5-MINUTE ROUTINE UNTIL LESSON 3

1) bad... bâd ×5 2) khhh → khub → khune ×5 3) the scene, both roles, once 4) drill track on a walk. Small, loud, daily — that's the whole secret.

ANSWER KEY

- **1 • Match:** 1-c · 2-e · 3-f · 4-a · 5-d · 6-b
- **2 • Vowels:** bad = a · bâd = â · bâbâ = â (twice) · man = a · salâm's second syllable = â
- **3 • Street-ify:** nân → nun · khâne → khune · Tehrân → Tehrun
- **4 • Coach:** Âfarin! · Nazdik · Khube!
- **5 • You're Sam:** Âb! · Nun! · Khune!
- **6 • kh words:** khub, khune, khodâhâfez
- **7 • Order:** Begu: âb. (1) → Khube! Begu: khune. (2) → Nazdik bud! Dobâre! (3) → Âfarin, Sam! (4)
- **8 •** If the mirror fogs on every kh — âfarin!

WORDS YOU OWN NOW

âb

nun

khune

bâbâ

âre

âghâ

bad → bâd

begu

âfarin!

khube!

nazdik bud!

dobâre!

NEXT — LESSON 3: THE SOUNDS OF FARSI II

The **gh** (âghâ's middle sound), the tapped **r**... and the sound that isn't there — the tiny catch in *man'am*. After Lesson 3, no Farsi word will scare you.