

revised edition

Egyptian **C**olloquial **A**rabic **Vocabulary**



Matthew Aldrich



Egyptian Colloquial Arabic Vocabulary

Matthew Aldrich



lingualism

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Introduction

Vocabulary, much more than grammar, is the key to effective communication in Arabic. You need words to speak; you need words to listen and understand.

Knowing grammar inside and out won't save you if you don't have the right word to plug into the structure. You can walk into a shop armed with grammatical structures such as "I would like some ___." or "Do you have any ___?", but if you don't know the word for the thing you want, you may very well leave the shop empty handed. On the other hand, if you walk into that same shop and simply say "sugar", you're almost certain to get what went there for.

And without an extensive repertoire of vocabulary, you will understand very little of what others are talking about. Spoken Arabic, to your foreign ears, will remain little more than gibberish. But once you can understand the majority of what you hear, something magical happens. The input becomes manageable--you will be able to use contextual clues from what you do understand to guess the meaning of new words and start to make rapid progress in Arabic.

It is therefore very important to build up a large store of words as soon as possible. **Egyptian Colloquial Arabic Vocabulary** is an enormously effective means to this end. By presenting practical words and phrases categorized by topic and arranged with a logical flow, mental connections that assist in vocabulary retention are fostered. The page layout in parallel columns of English translation, phonemic transcription, and Arabic script provides a variety of ways to study the vocabulary by allowing you to cover columns and test yourself.

The accompanying MP3s, free to download from our website at www.lingualism.com/ecav, make up an invaluable part of the learning process, allowing you to hear and mimic native speakers' pronunciation, pitch, intonation, and rhythm. Additional study materials (Anki digital flashcards, premium audio, and an e-Book) are available separately from our website and provide even more powerful tools for rapid vocabulary acquisition.

Although extremely important, vocabulary still only makes up one aspect of learning a language. **Egyptian Colloquial Arabic Vocabulary** is the ideal supplementary tool to reinforce vocabulary acquisition. However, it is not meant to be a stand-alone course. It is expected that you have followed, are following, or plan to follow, a course in Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (ECA). Alternatively, you may have studied another dialect of Arabic, or Modern Standard Arabic (MSA),

and are curious to learn more about the ECA and tune your ears to the idiosyncrasies of this beautiful dialect.

The author would like to thank Mido Ali, Mostafa Said, and Mostafa El-Kassar for collaborating to provide authentic Egyptian Arabic translations of the items in this book, Lilia Khachroum, and Patrick Baggett for proof-reading the text, and Cameleons Group in Cairo for recording the MP3s.



The accompanying **MP3s** can be downloaded for free at:

www.lingualism.com/ecav

How to Use This Book

Egyptian Colloquial Arabic Vocabulary is made up of 57 thematic sections, each dedicated to a different topic. Each section is numbered to facilitate references from the index and the MP3s.

You may study the sections and individual vocabulary items in any order, or you may work through the book systematically. It is encouraged that you mark up and highlight the book as you use it. Make it your own. There is also a Notebook after the last section where you can add in more words you have learned from other sources.

Many words could logically belong to more than one topic. While some words do appear in more than one section, to avoid superfluous repetition of words, most appear only once. To your surprise, you might not be able to find common animals such as *cow* and *horse* in the section “Animals”, for instance. This is because farm animals appear in the section “Agriculture” instead. This might not be entirely intuitive, so to solve this, an index Alphabetical English index can be found at the back of the book.

- For guides to the Lingualism system of orthography (tashkeel rules) and phonemic transcription, see the Resources section on www.lingualism.com/ecav
- For nouns and adjectives having an irregular plural form, the plural appears in parentheses.
- If a noun is listed in its dual or plural ([pl.]) form, this is indicated.
- A noun ending in *ة* is feminine, and a noun *not* ending in *ة* is masculine. The gender is marked [m.] and [f.] for nouns which do not follow this rule.
- All countries, except those marked [m.] and all cities are feminine. Keep this in mind as countries and cities are not marked [f.].
- Only the masculine version of nouns denoting humans is listed when the feminine equivalent can be formed by adding *ة*. For example, مُدَرِّس *mudárris* is a male teacher. A female teacher would be مُدَرِّسَة *mudarrísa*.
- For the sake of consistency and simplicity, the masculine singular form is used in expressions. You will need to use your knowledge of Arabic grammar to produce the feminine or plural equivalents.
- Some nouns are classified as *collective nouns*. An explanation of the usage of collective nouns appears on page 61.

- Some adjectives are invariable and are marked [invar.]. These do not have a feminine or plural form.
- Each verb appears in its base form (its most basic form without any prefixes or suffixes), which is the masculine singular past tense, literally “he did”; however, the English translation appears in its standard citation form: “to do”. In order to use a verb in a sentence, it must be conjugated.
- Every verb is followed by small square brackets with a reference to its corresponding table in the book **Egyptian Colloquial Arabic Verbs**, which presents conjugation tables to model all the possible conjugated forms of any verb in ECA.
- The Arabic script reflects common spelling conventions used by Egyptians.
- A few words, which are vulgar or taboo, do not appear on the MP3s because of their sensitive nature. These are marked with an asterisk (*).

1

Life and Death

life	<i>ḥáya, ḥayāʔ</i>	حَيَاة
to live	<i>3āš</i> ^[1h2]	عاش
I live in Egypt, the mother of the world.	<i>ána 3āyiš fi mašr, umm iddúnya.</i>	أنا عايش في مصر أمّ الدُّنيا.
Long live the king!	<i>yī3īš ilmálik!</i>	يَعِيش المَلِك!
alive	<i>bi-lḥáya</i> <i>3āyiš</i>	بِالْحَيَاة عايش
to give birth to	<i>wílid</i> ^[1s5]	وَلِد
to be born	<i>itwálad</i> ^[7s1]	إِتَوَلَد
birth	<i>wilāda</i>	وِلَادَة
newborn	<i>mawlūd (mawalīd)</i>	مَوْلُود (مَوْلِيد)
baby	<i>nūnu (nunuhāt)</i> <i>bībi (bibihāt)</i> <i>3áyyil šuyáyyar</i> <i>(3iyāl šuyār)</i>	نونو (نونوهات) بيبي (بيبيهات) عَيْلٌ صَغِيرٌ (عِيَال صُغَار)
infant (who is still being breastfed)	<i>raqī3 (rúḍa3)</i>	رَضِيع (رُضْع)
to be breastfed, suckle	<i>ríqī3</i> ^[1s4]	رَضِع
to breastfeed	<i>ráḍḍa3</i> ^[2s2]	رَضَع
toddler	<i>tīfl^p šuyáyyar (atfāl šuyār)</i>	طِفْلٌ صَغِيرٌ (أَطْفَال صُغَار)
diaper (UK: nappy)	<i>ḥafāḍa</i>	حَفَاضَة
child (0-17 years old)	<i>3áyyil (3iyāl)</i> <i>tīfl (atfāl)</i>	عَيْلٌ (عِيَال) طِفْلٌ (أَطْفَال)

well-behaved	<i>mitrábbi</i> <i>muḡáddab</i>	مِثْرَبِّي مُؤَدَّب
naughty, mischievous	<i>šáʔi (ašʔíya)</i>	شَقِي (أَشْقِيَا)
childish, immature	<i>3áyyil (fi tašarrufātu)</i>	عَيْل (فِي تَصَرُّفَاتِهِ)
mature(-acting)	<i>sābiʔ sínnu</i>	سَابِق سِنِّهِ

The second words listed below for ‘boy’ and ‘girl’ may be considered disparaging in many contexts. You are advised only to use the first (standard) words.

boy	<i>wálad, wād (awlād, wilād)</i>	وَلَد، وَاد (أَوْلَاد، وَلَاد)
girl	<i>bint [f.], bitt [f.] (banāt)</i>	بِنْت، بِتْ (بَنَات)
adolescent, teenager	<i>murāhiq</i>	مَرَاهِق
to grow up, get older	<i>kíbir</i> ^[1s4]	كَبِر

person	<i>šaxš (ašxāš)</i>	شَخْص (أَشْخَاص)
people	<i>nās [f. or pl.]</i>	نَاس
young man	<i>šabb (šubbān)</i>	شَابَّب (شُبَّان)
young woman	<i>šábba</i>	شَابَّة
man	<i>rāgil (rigāla)</i>	رَاجِل (رِجَالَة)
woman	<i>sitt [f.]</i>	سِتّ
adult	<i>bāliḡ</i>	بَالِغ
adults, grown-ups	<i>kubār [pl.]</i>	كُبَار
young people, youth	<i>šabāb [coll.]</i>	شَبَاب
young	<i>šuyáyyar (šuyār)</i>	صُغَيْر (صُغَار)

There is no common equivalent in Arabic for ‘middle-aged’. Instead, a more precise description, such as ‘in one’s forties/fifties/sixties’ can be used.

in one’s fifties, middle-aged	<i>fi -lɣamsiniyāt (min il3úmr)</i>	فِي الْخَمْسِينِيَّات (مِنْ الْعُمْر)
old	<i>kibīr (kubār) fi -ssinn</i> <i>3agūz (3awagīz)</i>	كَبِير (كُبَار) فِي السَّن عَجُوز (عَوَاجِيز)

old man	<i>rāgil 3agūz</i> <i>rāgil kibīr</i>	راجل عجوز راجل كبير
old woman	<i>sitt³ 3agūza</i> <i>sitt³ kbīra</i>	سيت عجوزة سيت كبيرة
to age, grow old	<i>3ággiz</i> ^[2s1]	عجّز
Everyone gets old.	<i>kull innās bit3ággiz.</i>	كُلّ النَّاسِ يَنْعَجِّزُ.
childhood	<i>tufūla</i>	طفولة
in one's childhood	<i>fi tfúltu</i>	في طفولته
adolescence	<i>murāhaqa</i>	مراهقة
youth	<i>šabāb</i>	شباب
in one's youth	<i>fi šabābu</i>	في شبابه
old age	<i>sinn³ kbīr</i>	سن كبير
birthday	<i>3īd milād</i>	عيد ميلاد
Happy Birthday!	<i>kull³ sána w ínta táyyib!</i> (lit. May you be well every year!)	كُلّ سنة و إنتَ طيّب!
Thank you! (response to 'Happy Birthday!')	<i>w ínta táyyib!</i> (lit. 'May you too be well!')	و إنتَ طيّب!
Happy birthday and may you have many more!, ... and many happy returns!	<i>kull³ sána w ínta táyyib wi 3uʔbāl mīt sána, in šāʔ aḥḥāh!</i> (lit. ... and the same for 100 years, God willing!)	كُلّ سنة و إنتَ طيّب و عَقْبَال مِية سنة إن شاء الله!
When is your birthday?	<i>ímta 3īd milādak?</i>	إمتي عيد ميلادك؟
My birthday is in May.	<i>3īd milādi f māyu.</i>	عيد ميلادي في مايو.
age, life span	<i>3umr (a3mār)</i>	عُمُر (أعمار)

all one's life	<i>tūl 3úmru</i>	طول عُمُرُه
year	<i>sána (sinīn)</i>	سنة (سِنين)
How old are you?	<i>3ándak kam sána?</i>	عندك كام سنة؟
I'm 20 years old.	<i>3ándi 3išrīn sána.</i>	عندي عِشْرين سنة.
to turn __ years old	<i>tamm ^[1g3] __ sána</i>	تمَّ __ سنة
He's turning ten years old next week.	<i>haytīm^a 3ášar sinīn ilʔisbū3 ilgáyy.</i>	هَيَّيْمَ عَشْر سِنين الإِسْبوع الجايّ.
I turned thirty last month.	<i>tammēt talatīn sána -ššahr illi fāt.</i>	تَمَّيْتُ ثلاثين سنة الشَّهر اللي فات.
a ten-year-old boy/child	<i>wálad/wād/3áyyil/ʔifl^a 3ándu 3ášar sinīn</i>	وَلَد/وَاد/عِيْل/طِفْل عندُه عَشْر سِنين
a fifty-year-old woman	<i>sitt^a 3andáha xamsīn sána</i>	سِتَّ عندُها خَمْسِين سنة
When were you born?	<i>itwaládt^a ʔímta?</i>	إِتَوْلَدْتُ إِمْتى؟
What year were you born?	<i>itwaládt^a sánit kām?</i>	إِتَوْلَدْتُ سَنَةً كام؟
I was born in 1980.	<i>itwaládt^a sánit alʔ tús3u míyya w tamanīn.</i>	إِتَوْلَدْتُ سَنَةً أَلْف تُسْعُمِيَّة و تمانين.
death	<i>mōt</i>	مَوْت
to die	<i>māt ^[1h1]</i>	مَات
dead	<i>máyyit (amwāt)</i>	مَيِّت (أَمَوَات)
death, passing	<i>wafāh (wafiyāt)</i>	وَفَاة (وَفِيَّات)
to pass away	<i>itwáffa ^[5d]</i>	إِتَوَفَّى
deceased	<i>mutawáffi</i>	مُتَوَفَّى
corpse, body	<i>gússa (gúsas)</i>	جُثَّة (جُثَث)
funeral	<i>ganāza</i>	جَنَازَة
to bury	<i>dáfan ^[1s2]</i>	دَفَن

to be buried	<i>itdāfan</i> ^[7s1]	إِتْدَفَن
burial	<i>dāfna</i>	دَفْنَة
coffin	<i>tabūt (tawabīt)</i>	تَابُوت (تَوَابِيت)
cemetary	<i>mádfan (madāfin)</i>	مَدْفَن (مَدَافِن)
	<i>maqbára (maqābir)</i>	مَقْبَرَة (مَقَابِر)
grave	<i>qabr (qubūr)</i>	قَبْر (قُبُور)
gravestone, headstone	<i>šāhid (šawāhid) qabr</i>	شَاهِد (شَوَاهِد) قَبْر
to mourn	<i>hízín</i> ^[1s4]	حِزِن
mourning	<i>huzn</i>	حُزْن
period of mourning	<i>múddit huzn</i>	مُدَّة حُزْن
to cremate	<i>hára?</i> ^[1s1] <i>gussítu</i>	حَرَق جُثَّتَه
cremation	<i>hára?</i>	حَرَق

2

Family

(extended) family	3ēla	عائلة
(immediate) family	úśra (úśar)	أسرة (أسر)
relative	ʔarīb (ʔarāyib)	قُرَيْب (قرايب)
I have some relatives that live in New York.	ána 3ándi ʔarāyib 3ayšīn fi nyuyōrk.	أنا عندي قرايب عايشين في نيويورك.
to be related to	yíʔrab ^[1s4] li-	يَقْرِب لـ
Are you two related?	húwwa -ntu -lʔitnēn tiʔrábu l-ba3dʔ?	هو إنتو الإثنين تقربوا لبعض؟
I'm not related to him.	ána maʔrablūš.	أنا مقربلوش.
father	abb (abbahāt) wālīd	أَب (أَبَّهَات) والد
mother	umm [f.] (ummahāt) wālīda	أُم (أُمَّهَات) والدة
When in a possessive construction, أَب abb becomes أبو abū-. But أُم umm is unchanged.		
my mother and father	úmmi w abūya	أُمِّي و أبويا
dad	bāba [m.]	بابا
mom (UK: mum)	māma [f.]	ماما
my mom and dad	mámti wi babāya	مامتي و بابايا
Hi, Dad!	izzáyyak ya bāba! izzáyyak ya ʔábi!	إزِّيك يا بابا! إزِّيك يا أبي!
Where are you, Mom?	fēnik ya māma? fēnik ya ʔúmmi?	فينك يا ماما؟ فينك يا أُمِّي؟
parents	ahl	أهل

city	<i>madīna (múḍun)</i>	مدينة (مُدُن)
town	<i>bálad [f.] (bilād)</i>	بلد (بِلَاد)
village	<i>qárya (qúra)</i>	قَرْيَة (قُرَى)
downtown	<i>wisṭ ilbálad</i>	وِسْطُ الْبَلَد
square	<i>midān (mayadīn)</i>	مِيدَان (مَيَادِين)
park	<i>ginēna (ganāyin)</i>	جِنِينَة (جَنَائِين)
fountain	<i>nafūra</i>	نفورة
street	<i>šāri3 (šawāri3)</i>	شَارِع (شَوَارِع)
alley, narrow street	<i>ḥāra zuṭāṭ (azíṭṭa)</i>	حَارَة زُقَاق (أَزِقَّة)
corner	<i>náṣya (nawāṣi)</i>	نَاصِيَة (نَوَاسِي)
bakery	<i>máxbaz (maxābiz)</i>	مَخْبَز (مَخَابِز)
bank	<i>bank (bunūk)</i>	بَنْك (بُنُوك)
butcher shop	<i>gazzār</i>	جَزَّار
city hall	<i>baladíyya</i>	بلدية
fire station	<i>núṭṭit maṭāfi (núṭaṭ maṭāfi)</i>	نُقْطَة مَطَافِي (نُقْط مَطَافِي)
grocery store	<i>biṭāla</i>	بِقَالَة
museum	<i>mátḥaf (matāḥif)</i>	مَتْحَف (مَتَاحِف)

crime	<i>garīma (garāyim)</i>	جريمة (جرايم)
criminal	<i>múgrim</i>	مُجْرِم
to commit a crime	<i>irtákab</i> ^[8s1] <i>garīma</i>	ارْتَكَبَ جَرِيمَةً
to break the law	<i>xáraq</i> ^[1s1] <i>ilqanūn</i>	خَرَقَ الْقَانُون
theft	<i>sírʔa (sirʔāt)</i>	سِرْقَةٌ (سِرْقَات)
to steal, rob	<i>sáraʔ</i> ^[1s1]	سَرَقَ
thief	<i>ḥarāmi</i>	حَرَامِي
to break into a house	<i>iqtáḥam</i> ^[8s1] <i>bēt</i>	اِقْتَحَمَ بَيْتَ
rape	<i>iytišāb</i>	اِغْتَصَابَ
to rape	<i>iytášab</i> ^[8s1]	اِغْتَصَبَ
murder	<i>ʔatl</i>	قَتَلَ
to murder, kill	<i>ʔatal</i> ^[1s2]	قَتَلَ
murderer	<i>ʔātil (ʔátala)</i>	قَاتِلَ (قَتْلَةٌ)
assault	<i>i3tidāʔ</i>	اِعْتَدَاءَ
to assault, attack	<i>i3táda</i> ^[8d] <i>3ála</i> <i>hāgim</i> ^[3s]	اِعْتَدَى عَلَى هَاجِمٍ
vandalism	<i>taxrīb</i>	تَخْرِيبَ
to vandalize	<i>xárrab</i> ^[2s2]	خَرَّبَ
to pickpocket	<i>nášal</i> ^[1s2]	نَشَلَ
a pickpocket	<i>náššāl</i>	نَشَّال

Greater Cairo

ilqāhíra -lkúbra

القاهرة الكبرى

Greater Cairo is made up Cairo itself, as well as the cities of Giza, Shubra El-Kheima, Helwan, 6th of October City, and Obour City.

Cairo (on the east bank
of the Nile)

ilqāhíra
maṣr

القاهرة
مصر

Egyptians, especially those in rural areas, habitually refer to Cairo as **مصر** *maṣr* 'Egypt.' Context, of course, makes it clear whether the country of Egypt or the city of Cairo is being referred to.

I'm going into Cairo to
sell my tomatoes.

ána nāzil maṣr abī3
maḥṣūl ilʔūṭa.

أنا نازل مصر أبيع
محصول القوطة.

Shubra El-Kheima

šúbra -lxēma

شبرا الخيمة

Helwan

ḥilwān

حِلْوَان

6th of October City

assādis min uktōbar
sitta -ktōbar

السادس من أكتوبر
ستة أكتوبر

Obour City

madīnit il3ubūr

مدينة العبور

Tahrir Square

midān ittaḥrīr

ميدان التحرير

The Egyptian Museum

ilmáthaf ilmáṣri

المتحف المصري

Mogamma (government
building including
immigration office)

ilmugámma3

المجمع

Qasr al-Ainy Street

šāri3 ilʔáṣr il3ēni

شارع القصر العيني

The American University
in Cairo (AUC)

ilgám3a -lʔamrikíyya
fi -lqāhíra

الجامعة الأمريكية في
القاهرة

I	<i>ána</i>	أَنَا
we	<i>íḥna</i>	إِخْنَا
you	<i>ínta</i> [m. sing.]	إِنْتَ
you	<i>ínti</i> [f. sing.]	إِنْتِي
you, you guys	<i>íntu</i> [pl.]	إِنْتُو
he, it	<i>húwwa</i>	هُوَ
she, it	<i>híyya</i>	هِيَ
they	<i>húmma</i>	هُمَّا
this, that	<i>da</i>	دَـة
this, that, these, those	<i>dí</i>	دِي
these, those	<i>dōl</i>	دُول
everyone	<i>kull innās</i>	كُلُّ النَّاسِ
Everyone needs friends.	<i>kull innās miḥtagīn aṣḥāb.</i>	كُلُّ النَّاسِ مِخْتَاغِينَ أَصْحَاب.
someone	<i>ḥadd</i>	حَدّ
Someone is at the door.	<i>fī ḥadd³ 3ála -lbāb.</i>	فِيهِ حَدّ عَلَى الْبَاب.
anyone	<i>ayy³ ḥadd</i>	أَيّ حَدّ
Anyone can do it.	<i>ayy³ ḥadd³ múmkin yí3mil kída.</i>	أَيّ حَدّ مُمَكِّن يَعْْمَل كِدَه.

The following common verbs did not fit neatly into other categories. If you cannot find a verb here, try the index in the back of the book to see if it is listed under another category. Also, you can find over 1,000 verbs listed in the indexes of *Lingualism's Colloquial Arabic Verbs: Conjugation Tables and Grammar*.

to abandon, desert	<i>hágar</i> ^[1s3]	هجر
to accept	<i>wāfiʔ</i> ^[3s]	وافق
to accompany	<i>rāḥ</i> ^[1h1] <i>má3a</i> <i>míši</i> ^[1d5] <i>má3a</i>	راح مع مِشي مع
to adjust	<i>zábbaṭ</i> ^[2s2]	ظبط
to admit	<i>i3táraʔ</i> ^[8s1]	اعترف
to advise, recommend	<i>náṣaḥ</i> ^[1s1]	نصح
to affect	<i>ʔássa</i> ^[2s2] <i>3ála</i>	أثر على
to allow	<i>sámaḥ</i> ^[1s1]	سمح
to answer, respond, reply	<i>radd</i> ^[1g2] <i>3ála</i> <i>gāwib</i> ^[3s] <i>3ála</i>	ردّ على جاوب على
to apologize for	<i>i3tázar</i> ^[8s1] <i>3an</i>	اعتذر عن
to appear	<i>záhar</i> ^[1s1]	ظهر
to appreciate	<i>qáddar</i> ^[2s2]	قدّر
to approve of	<i>ríqi</i> ^[1d4] <i>bi-</i>	رضي بـ
to arrange, organize	<i>názzam</i> ^[2s2]	نظّم
to ascend, go up	<i>tíli3</i> ^[1s4]	طالع
to ask	<i>sáʔal</i> ^[1s1]	سأل

The following common adjectives did not fit neatly into other categories. If you cannot find a verb here, try the index in the back of the book to see if it is listed under another category.

good	<i>kuwáyyis</i>	كُوَيَّسَ
bad	<i>wíḥiṣ</i>	وَحِشَ
hard	<i>ṣulb</i>	صُلْبَ
soft	<i>ṭári</i>	طَرِي
difficult, hard	<i>ṣa3b</i>	صَعْبَ
easy	<i>sahl</i>	سَهْلَ
important	<i>muhímm</i>	مُهْمَمَّ
necessary	<i>ḡarūri</i>	ضروري
strong	<i>ḡáwi (aḡwíya)</i>	قَوِي (أَقْوِيَا)
weak	<i>ḡa3īf (ḡú3afa)</i>	ضعيف (ضَعُفَا)
deep	<i>3amīq</i>	عميق
shallow	<i>ḡaḥl</i>	ضَحْلَ
long; tall (person)	<i>ṭawīl (ṭuwāl)</i>	طَوِيل (طَوَال)
He's very tall.	<i>húwwa ṭawīl áwi.</i>	هُوَ طَوِيل أَوِي.
short	<i>ḡuṣáyyar (ḡuṣār)</i>	قُصِير (قُصَار)
She's quite short.	<i>híyya ḡuṣayyára ḡáwi.</i>	هِيَ قُصِيرَة أَوِي.
old, ancient	<i>ḡadīm (ḡudām)</i>	قديم (قَدَام)
new	<i>ḡidīd (ḡudād)</i>	جَدِيد (جُدَاد)
clear, obvious	<i>wāḡiḥ</i>	واضح

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