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CHAPTER 1: PROFILE

Introduction

Jordan, officially the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, is a small Middle Eastern nation that is distinct from its neighbors. Formed by a British mandate, it developed in the wake of World War I and eventually gained independence. Despite its relatively recent emergence on the world stage, Jordan has a long history. Some of civilization’s oldest artifacts have been found in Jordan; it is home to a number of unique geographic and man-made sites including the ancient city of Petra, which is carved into sandstone mountains, and a Roman theater in Amman.



© CIA World Factbook
Map of Jordan

Jordan’s people are influenced by the region’s past as a physical crossroads as well as the tensions and conflicts of recent decades. A small number of Circassians and Armenians, descendants of 19th-century political refugees, have settled in Jordan. Palestinians make up the majority of the population, having come to the country in waves since the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948. Most recently, nearly half a million Iraqis arrived in Jordan because of the conflict in Iraq that began in 2003.

Geography

Area

Jordan is a relatively small country in the Middle East that bridges the Mediterranean Levantine region with the oil-rich Arab Gulf. With a total area of 89,342 sq km (34,495 sq mi), Jordan is slightly smaller than Portugal or the American state of Indiana. Jordan’s Levantine neighbors are Israel and the Palestinian West Bank to the west and Syria to the north. Gulf neighbors include Iraq in the northeast and Saudi Arabia to the east and south. Although Jordan does not share a land border with Egypt, the two are separated by the narrow northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba.¹



© Beivushtang / Wikipedia.org
The Jordan River Valley

Some of Jordan’s borders are natural while others are artificial—the product of a 20th-century colonial mandate.^{2,3} The valley of Wadi al-Jayb and the Jordan River Valley form a natural border on Jordan’s west, as does the Yarmuk River in the northwest. The remaining borders are primarily the product of the British mandate following World War I and subsequent international

¹ Central Intelligence Agency, “Jordan,” in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

² John A. Shoup, *Cultures and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), 19–20.

³ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., “Chapter 2: Geography: Boundaries,” in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 66–67, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/25.htm>

accords. Jordan's longest border, at 744 km (462 mi), is with Saudi Arabia. The border with Syria is 375 km (233 mi). Israel's border is 238 km (148 mi), Iraq's border is 181 km (112 mi), and the border with the Palestinian West Bank—the shortest land border—is 97 km (60 mi).⁴

Geographic Divisions and Topographic Features

Three geographic divisions make up Jordan: the Jordan Rift Valley, the highlands of the Jordanian Plateau, and the desert steppe.

The Jordan Rift Valley is part of a massive continental rift running from Syria, south through Jordan and the Red Sea, on into eastern Africa, and eventually to Madagascar. Jordan's western border is defined by the Rift Valley. Beginning at the coastal city of Aqaba, the Rift Valley runs north forming the Wadi al-Jayb Valley (also known as Wadi al-Araba) for 180 km (112 mi) to the Southern Ghor (depression). The Rift Valley then includes the Dead Sea and further north the Jordan River Valley, eventually running beyond Jordan's borders to Lake Tiberias (the Sea of Galilee).^{5, 6, 7}



© Robert Hoffman
Wadi Rum

A narrow strip of highlands known as the Jordanian Plateau lies between the Jordan Rift Valley to the west and the desert steppe to the east. The highlands, averaging 900 m (2,953 ft), run primarily north-south and include many valleys and gorges. Summits reach 1,200 m (3,937 ft) in the north and 1,700 m (5,577 ft) in the south.⁸ Jabal Umm al-Dami, Jordan's highest mountain, is 1,854 m (6,083 ft) and lies in the south of the country.⁹ The highlands were home to a civilization known as the Nabateans, who carved habitations out of colored sandstone cliffs. Today the highlands are home to Jordan's major cities including Amman, Zarqa, and Irbid.¹⁰

Jordan's major geographic division is the desert steppe. Largely an extension of the Syrian Desert, this region covers more than 80% of the country. Granite and wind-eroded sandstone are common in the southern desert, while the southeast contains vast expanses of sand dunes. The northern desert has been known to the Bedouin for centuries as "the land of the devil" (*bilad al-*

⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

⁵ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 7.

⁶ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 2: Geography: Topography," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 67–69, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/26.htm>

⁷ Elias Salameh and Munther J. Haddadin, "The Population-Water Resources Equation," in *Water Resources in Jordan: Evolving Policies for Development, the Environment, and Conflict Resolution*, ed. Munther J. Haddadin (Washington, DC: Resources for the Future, 2006), 8.

⁸ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 2: Geography: Topography," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 67, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/26.htm>

⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹⁰ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 10, 23.

shaytan) because of its volcanic, craggy black rock and cinder. Salt flats are common throughout the desert.^{11, 12}

Climate

Jordan has an arid, warm climate with some variation across different geographic regions. The climate in western Jordan is Mediterranean but becomes more continental farther east.¹³ Precipitation primarily occurs in the northern highlands and, as a result, this area has the highest population concentrations.¹⁴ Jordan is especially dry between April–October, and only 3% of the country receives more than 30 cm (12 in) of rain a year, the minimal amount of water needed to grow rain-fed wheat.¹⁵ The desert steppe receives less than 13 cm (5 in) of rainfall a year.¹⁶



© Sean Long
Dust storm in Jordan

In Jordan’s south, the temperatures are typically warm year round. Aqaba, Jordan’s port city on the Red Sea, is known for consistent temperatures that rarely drop below 16°C (61°F) in the winter and hover above 32°C (90°F) in the summer. Temperatures in the Dead Sea Valley and the eastern desert in the summer can be even hotter, regularly exceeding 38°C (100°F). The highlands are the coolest areas in the country. Some areas, including Irbid, may experience snow in the winter.^{17, 18}

Summer winds from the Arabian Peninsula to the southeast bring the most uncomfortable weather. Known as the *khamsin*, these winds can raise temperatures 10°C (50°F)–15°C (59°F) in just a few hours. Although brief, *khamsin* windstorms can decimate crops in a single day. Eventually the winds shift to the east, carrying cooler Mediterranean air across the country. *Shamal* winds from the north cause cyclical patterns of continental warm air between June–September.^{19, 20}

¹¹ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 8.
¹² Helen Chapin Metz, ed., “Chapter 2: Geography: Topography,” in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 67, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/26.htm>
¹³ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., “Chapter 2: Geography: Climate,” in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 71, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/27.htm>
¹⁴ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., “Chapter 2: Geography: Climate,” in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 71, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/27.htm>
¹⁵ Elias Salameh and Munther J. Haddadin, “The Population-Water Resources Equation,” in *Water Resources in Jordan: Evolving Policies for Development, the Environment, and Conflict Resolution*, ed. Munther J. Haddadin (Washington, DC: Resources for the Future, 2006), 10.
¹⁶ John A. Shoup, *Cultures and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), 2.
¹⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Jordan,” 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>
¹⁸ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 13.
¹⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Jordan,” 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>
²⁰ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., “Chapter 2: Geography: Climate,” in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 72, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/27.htm>

Bodies of Water

The Jordan River, forming the northern third of the country's western border, is Jordan's most important river. The Jordan River has two main tributaries: the Yarmuk forms part of Jordan's northern border with Syria and the Zarqa begins north of Amman and flows west into the Jordan River. Most of the year the Yarmuk and Zarqa Rivers are depleted by heavy irrigation.²¹ Upriver dams and irrigation have depleted the amount of water in the Jordan River; it once carried 1.3 billion cubic m (343 billion gal) of water annually into the Dead Sea, but today it delivers only 100 million cubic m (26.4 billion gal), much of which is sewage.²²



© Effib / wikipedia.org
Yarmuk River

The Dead Sea, located on Jordan's western border, is the lowest area on earth's surface at 400 m (1,312 ft) below sea level. The high salt content, seven times higher than the earth's oceans, makes plant and animal life impossible and gives the sea a high degree of buoyancy.^{23, 24} This buoyancy, and the long-held belief in the restorative properties of the water and mud, have made the Dead Sea a popular destination for centuries. Decreased flow from the Jordan River has caused the Dead Sea to shrink by more than 30% in the last half century, dropping the water level more than 24 m (79 ft).^{25, 26}

Jordan's only access to sea shipping lanes comes from its southwestern border with the Gulf of Aqaba. Jordan uses the Gulf of Aqaba, the easternmost of two northern branches of the Red Sea, to export phosphates and import manufactured goods.²⁷ The port city of Aqaba is not only a hub for trade but also a popular vacation destination.²⁸

The only permanent water source in Jordan's eastern desert is the Azraq Oasis. Although the area has long provided important relief for travelers through the desert, its extensive wetlands have largely disappeared in recent decades.^{29, 30}

²¹ John A. Shoup, *Cultures and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), 2.

²² John Ward Anderson, "For Dead Sea, a Slow and Seemingly Inexorable Death," *Washington Post*, 19 May 2005, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/05/18/AR2005051802400.html>

²³ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Dead Sea," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/154254/Dead-Sea>

²⁴ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 15.

²⁵ John Ward Anderson, "For Dead Sea, a Slow and Seemingly Inexorable Death," *Washington Post*, 19 May 2005, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/05/18/AR2005051802400.html>

²⁶ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 50.

²⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Al-'Aqabah," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/30976/Al-Aqabah>

²⁸ Bradley Mayhew, *Lonely Planet: Jordan*, 6th ed. (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 2006), 216–17.

²⁹ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 14.

³⁰ Bradley Mayhew, *Lonely Planet: Jordan*, 6th ed. (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 2006), 130–31.

Major Cities

Amman

Jordan's capital, Amman, has grown substantially in the last 100 years. Although it was the ancient Ammonite capital and centuries later a Roman city named Philadelphia, by the 19th century it was little more than a village with several hundred residents. Waves of refugees, first Circassians from the Caucasus in the 19th century and then Palestinians in the 20th century, added new life to the city. Today Amman is Jordan's political and economic heart and is home to more than 1 million people.^{31, 32}



© CIA World Factbook
Aerial view of Amman

Zarqa

Located 19 km (12 mi) northeast of Amman, Zarqa has also grown significantly following Palestinian migration. Today the city is essentially a suburb for the capital. Zarqa is an industrial city and is home to the country's only oil refinery. With more than half a million residents, Zarqa is Jordan's second-largest city.^{33, 34, 35}

Irbid

Jordan's third-largest city has a population of roughly 431,000.³⁶ Located in the northwest of the country in close proximity to the Jordan, Yarmuk, and Zarqa Rivers, Irbid lies in one of Jordan's most fertile areas. As a result, the city is an agricultural hub.^{37, 38}

Aqaba

Tourism and trade bolster Aqaba, Jordan's port city on the banks of the Red Sea. Beaches, diving, and snorkeling are all popular.³⁹ Since 1961 the city has operated a deepwater port, making it Jordan's center for imports and exports. Once a fortified Ottoman outpost, Aqaba fell

³¹ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 12.

³² *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Amman," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/20889/Amman>

³³ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Al-Zarqā," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/655990/Al-Zarqa>

³⁴ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 12.

³⁵ Department of Statistics, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Estimated Kingdom Population Numbers According to Administrative Division in the End of 2009" (Arabic), n.d., http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb_pop/sdb_pop_a/ehsaat/alsokan/2004/2008/2-4.htm

³⁶ Department of Statistics, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Estimated Kingdom Population Numbers According to Administrative Division in the end of 2009" (Arabic), n.d., http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb_pop/sdb_pop_a/ehsaat/alsokan/2004/2008/2-4.htm

³⁷ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 12.

³⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Irbid," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/293738/Irbid>

³⁹ Bradley Mayhew, *Lonely Planet: Jordan*, 6th ed. (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 2006), 216–17.

to Arab warriors in 1917 under the leadership of British officer T.E. Lawrence. Today the population of Aqaba numbers roughly 108,000.^{40, 41}

History

Ancient Jordan

People have lived in Jordan since before the Stone Age, and by 1300 B.C.E., separate tribal kingdoms developed. These kingdoms contended for power at various times and eventually came into conflict with Israelites west of the Jordan River.^{42, 43} By the eighth century B.C.E., the region fell to Mesopotamia's (modern Iraq's) Assyrians, who divided Jordan into several administrative provinces. Assyria later fell to the Babylonians (also from modern Iraq), who in turn were defeated in 530 B.C.E. by the Persians (from modern Iran). Persians granted Jordan autonomy, leading to Arab migration into the area, including migration of a desert people called the Nabateans. After Alexander the Great's Greeks defeated the Persians in 333 B.C.E., Jordan eventually fell between competing Greek powers in Syria and Egypt. In 64 B.C.E., the region fell under the control of the Roman Empire.^{44, 45, 46}



© Bernard Gagnon
Petra

Although Rome was actively involved in the area of modern Israel (west of the Jordan River), it largely left the east bank alone. As a result, Jordan's Nabateans gained influence, eventually controlling trade between the Mediterranean and Yemen. During this time, they built the famed city of Petra out of western Jordan's sandstone hills. Eventually Rome took note of Nabatean success and annexed the kingdom in 106 C.E. After stewardship of the region fell to the Byzantines of Constantinople in 395, Jordan regained a degree of autonomy.^{47, 48, 49}

⁴⁰ Department of Statistics, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Estimated Kingdom Population Numbers According to Administrative Division in the end of 2009" (Arabic), n.d., http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb_pop/sdb_pop_a/ehsaat/alsokan/2004/2008/2-4.htm

⁴¹ William Ochsenswald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 379.

⁴² *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁴³ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 10.

⁴⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁴⁵ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 10–11.

⁴⁶ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: The Jordan Region in Antiquity," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 6–7, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/4.htm>

⁴⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁴⁸ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 11–12.

⁴⁹ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: The Jordan Region in Antiquity," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 7–10, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/4.htm>

Islam rose to power in Arabia in the 7th century and in 636 an Arab Muslim army ended the last vestiges of Byzantine control over Jordan. The arrival of Islam influenced not only the religion of the region's inhabitants, but also brought with it Arabic as a new lingua franca, replacing Greek and Aramaic.⁵⁰ By the mid-eighth century, Arab power and influence shifted to Baghdad and in the process left Jordan a frontier region once again.⁵¹ In the following centuries, the area reverted to old Bedouin patterns. European Crusaders came to Jordan in the 12th century, but their influence was short lived. By the 16th century the region fell to the Ottomans (from modern-day Turkey), but they viewed Jordan as little more than a crossroads. By the early 20th century Jordan's inhabitants viewed Ottoman rule with animosity.^{52, 53}

Modern Jordan

Jordan was born in the wake of World War I. Prior to the war, many in the region grew tired of Ottoman rule. Frustration led to revolts in 1905 and 1910. When the war in Europe erupted, the Ottoman Empire sided with Germany and Austria, so Britain encouraged local Arab rebellions, hoping to overextend Ottoman resources. The Arab rebellion was a success and at the war's end, many Arabs hoped for an independent Arab state.^{54, 55}



© Helene C. Stikkel
Abdullah bin Hussein

Immediate hopes for an Arab kingdom were quelled when European colonial powers divided up the former Ottoman Empire. The area that is today Jordan became a British mandate, known as Transjordan, under the leadership of Abdullah bin Hussein. Abdullah's family, the longtime stewards of Mecca, had been closely involved in the Arab rebellion. He ruled Jordan for 30 years and led it to independence in 1946.^{56, 57} In 1948, the British withdrew from the region completely, and the new independent state of Israel was established. In the ensuing Arab-Israeli war, Abdullah gained control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, thereby gaining responsibility for half a million Palestinians. Palestinians from other parts of former Palestine flooded into Jordan. Some were embittered by Jordan's failure to actively promote Palestinian nationalism and a disaffected Palestinian assassinated Abdullah in 1951.^{58, 59}

⁵⁰ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: Islam and Arab Rule," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 11–12, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/5.htm>

⁵¹ Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991), 32.

⁵² John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 17–19.

⁵³ Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991), 316.

⁵⁴ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 17–19.

⁵⁵ Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991), 318.

⁵⁶ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 35–58.

⁵⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Jordan: History," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁵⁸ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 29–30, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/10.htm>

The crown eventually fell to Abdullah’s grandson, Hussein. Hussein’s rule of nearly 50 years saw regional and national tensions. Following a failed coup attempt in 1957, Hussein banned political parties. In 1967 he signed a military alliance with Egypt and was pulled into the Six-Day War against Israel, losing the West Bank and East Jerusalem in the process. Conflict with Palestinian liberation fighters in 1970 and another war with Israel in 1973 left Jordan and the region strained.^{60, 61}

In the latter years of Hussein’s rule, increased cooperation with Israel culminated in peace between the two countries in 1994. This action also helped smooth relations with the United States—relations that had deteriorated since Hussein failed to condemn Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990.^{62, 63} Hussein died in 1999, and the kingdom passed to his son Abdullah. Abdullah’s reign has been characterized by market privatizations, continued cooperation with the West, and a degree of political liberalization.^{64, 65}

Government

Jordan is a constitutional monarchy, its ruling family having been in place since the creation of the country and its constitution having been in effect since 1952 (although amended many times).⁶⁶ The king is the country’s head of state. He wields control over all branches of the government. The king appoints the country’s prime minister as well as the cabinet, who are collectively responsible for coordinating the work of various government agencies.⁶⁷ The crown has typically passed from father to firstborn son, although the king may decree a change in the line of accession. For many years King Hussein’s brother, Hassan, was the country’s crown prince and heir apparent. But just before his death, Hussein named his son Abdullah heir. Despite less than a century’s residence in Jordan, the royal family has found legitimacy in religious terms. The family claims descent from the Prophet Muhammad through the Hashem family, giving the country the official name of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.⁶⁸



© Wayan Vota
Jordanian election posters

⁵⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Jordan: History,” 2011,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁶⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Jordan: History,” 2011,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁶¹ William Ochsenswald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 559–60.

⁶² *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Jordan: History,” 2011,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁶³ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 184–85.

⁶⁴ Sufyan Alissa, “Rethinking Economic Reform in Jordan: Confronting Socioeconomic Realities” (paper, Carnegie Paper Series, Carnegie Middle East Center, August 2007), <http://carnegie-mec.org/publications/?fa=19465>

⁶⁵ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 28.

⁶⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, “Jordan,” in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

⁶⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Jordan: Government,” 2011,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁶⁸ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 40–41.

Jordan's parliament is divided into two houses; the upper house (*Majlis al-Ayan*) consists of individuals appointed by the king while members of the lower house (*Majlis al-Nuwaab*) are elected. Quotas exist in the lower house for the number of women, Christians, Bedouin, and Jordanians of Chechen or Circassian descent.^{69, 70}

All citizens age 18 and over can vote, including Palestinians. Although members of the *Majlis al-Nuwaab* are elected every four years, elections have been cancelled or postponed on many occasions.^{71, 72} When the wave of unrest that swept the Arab world in 2011 reached Jordan, protestors took to the streets of Amman and other cities demanding further democratization of the political process in addition to economic reform. Unlike other uprisings in the region, Jordanian protestors did not demand the removal of the ultimate head of state, in Jordan's case the king. They were largely pacified when King Abdullah II dismissed the government and appointed a new prime minister. He also promised further reforms including the future election of government cabinets.⁷³

Media

Jordan has a mixed record of media freedom. In 2005 Jordan was one of only three Arab countries (the others being Qatar and the United Arab Emirates) with "relative freedom" in internet usage; all other Arab countries endeavored to tightly control the internet.⁷⁴ According to 2009 statistics, there are more than 1.6 million internet users in Jordan. The state owns and operates television networks and some radio and internet companies. The state-owned Jordan Radio and Television Corporation is the country's major television company and runs a number of networks including sports, film, and satellite channels. Independent television networks did not broadcast in Jordan until 2007. Many of Jordan's other media outlets are privately owned, including major press outlets and some radio and internet companies.^{75, 76}



© Bilal Randeree
Jordanian radio

Despite the growing number of independent media outlets and the constitutional protection of speech, the state influences media through several avenues. Journalists must join the Jordanian

⁶⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

⁷⁰ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 39.

⁷¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Jordan: Government," 2011,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁷² Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 39.

⁷³ Dale Gavlak, "Jordan's King Abdullah Vows to Allow Elected Cabinets," BBC News, 12 June 2011,

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13744640>

⁷⁴ UN Development Programme, Regional Bureau for Arab States, "The Arab Human Development Report 2005: Towards the Rise of Women in the Arab World," 2006, 37, <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/ahdr/ahdr2005e.pdf>

⁷⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

⁷⁶ BBC News, "Jordan Country Profile: Media," 23 August 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14636310>

Press Association, which is run by the government.⁷⁷ The government, especially the monarchy, and religion are topics that are largely off limits to criticism. Despite constitutional protections, press laws can be vague. Journalists may be charged nearly USD 40,000 for speaking against the government.⁷⁸ Tensions between journalists and government security forces were especially high in 2011 as antigovernment protests swept the country. In some instances, police have been accused of specifically targeting journalists.⁷⁹

Economy

Jordan, lacking oil resources and a suitable climate for agriculture, has one of the smallest economies in the Middle East. Among other Arab countries, only Bahrain has a smaller gross domestic product (GDP), yet Bahrain's economy is offset by its small population. Bahrain's GDP per capita is nearly eight times higher than that of Jordan.^{80, 81, 82} In 2010, Jordan's GDP was USD 34.5 billion. The service sector drives two-thirds of the economy while industry accounts for 30%.



© Katchooo / flickr.com
Tourists at Petra

Agriculture makes up the remaining 4%.⁸³ Tourism accounts for 14% of the country's GDP. Jordan relies on tourism to spur its economy, which in turn makes the country's economy dependent upon regional stability.⁸⁴ Following the United States' invasion of Iraq in 2003, more than 450,000 Iraqi refugees fled to Jordan, placing a new strain on the economy.⁸⁵

Since taking the throne in 1999, King Abdullah II has made a number of economic reforms including opening trade markets and encouraging privatization.⁸⁶ Privatization has primarily occurred through the selling of government shares of public companies. Despite progress in the last decade, unemployment remains high (official numbers are 12.5%, but actual unemployment is likely much higher), and the standard of living remains low.⁸⁷

⁷⁷ Reporters Without Borders, "Jordan," 2011, <http://en.rsf.org/report-jordan,155.html>

⁷⁸ Freedom House, "Freedom of the Press: Jordan," 2011, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=251&year=2011&country=8064>

⁷⁹ Lamis Andoni, "Jordan's Hostility Towards Media," Doha Centre for Media Freedom, 19 July 2011, <http://www.dc4mf.org/en/node/336>

⁸⁰ Gross domestic product (GDP) is the total value of all finished goods and services produced in the country.

⁸¹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Country Comparison: GDP (Purchasing Power Parity)," in *The World Factbook*, n.d., <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2001rank.html?countryName=Jordan&countryCode=jo®ionCode=mde&rank=103#jo>

⁸² Central Intelligence Agency, "Bahrain," in *The World Factbook*, 28 July 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ba.html>

⁸³ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

⁸⁴ Mohammad Tayseer, "Jordan Tourism Revenue Drops 12% in First Half on Unrest," Bloomberg, 19 July 2011, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-07-19/jordan-tourism-revenue-drops-12-in-first-half-on-unrest.html>

⁸⁵ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "2011 UNHCR Country Operations Profile—Jordan," 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e486566#>

⁸⁶ Amman Stock Exchange, "Privatization in Jordan," 2011, <http://www.ase.com.jo/en/privatization-jordan>

⁸⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

Jordan imports far more than it exports and this trade deficit has left the country reliant upon foreign aid.⁸⁸ Despite Jordan's lack of natural resources it has been closely allied to the United States for years. The United States has provided aid to Jordan since 1951 and total assistance between 1951–2010 amounted to USD 11.38 billion.⁸⁹ As of 2010, the United States was providing both economic and military aid to Jordan. Economic aid comes as cash and as U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) programs. Yearly economic aid totals USD 360 million. Military aid totals an additional USD 300 million annually.^{90,91} In 2011 the U.S. government announced it would add an additional USD 100 million a year to focus on Jordan's poor.⁹²

Ethnic Groups and Languages

Jordan's population, although it has few ethnic differences, is characterized by nationalist divisions. The population is 98% Arab, but that figure is divided among several groups.⁹³ Native Jordanians are descendents of the region's indigenous Bedouin inhabitants. The Palestinian Arab population makes up roughly 60% of the population. This group came to Jordan primarily in 1948 and 1967, fleeing Palestine because of regional conflict with Israel. Although Palestinians often feel distant from the Jordanian government because of a perceived lack of effort to secure an independent Palestinian state, they are loyal to the monarchy. Iraqi refugees, also primarily Arab, have flooded into Jordan since the American invasion of Iraq in 2003.⁹⁴



© Gusjer / flickr.com
Bedouin woman in Jordan

The remaining 2% of the population are primarily Armenian and Circassian. These groups came to the region as refugees during Ottoman rule in the 19th century.^{95,96}

Arabic is Jordan's official language although English is widely spoken, especially among the country's upper and middle classes. Modern Standard Arabic is the primary written language and

⁸⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Jordan: Economy," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan/23347/Economy>

⁸⁹ Jeremy M. Sharp, "U.S. Foreign Assistance to the Middle East: Historical Background, Recent Trends, and the FY2011 Request," Congressional Research Service, 15 June 2010, 7, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL32260.pdf>

⁹⁰ Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Washington, DC, "U.S.-Jordan Relation [sic]," n.d., <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/aboutjordan/uj1.shtml>

⁹¹ Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Assistance to Jordan," 17 May 2011, <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/163555.htm>

⁹² Associated Press, "U.S. Increases Aid to Jordan," *New York Times*, 12 January 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/13/world/africa/13briefs-Jordan.html?_r=2

⁹³ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

⁹⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Jordan," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁹⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

⁹⁶ Helen Chapin Metz, ed., "Chapter 1: History: Ottoman Rule," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 16, <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/6.htm>

is used for official purposes. In terms of colloquial speech, several dialects and local accents exist in the country. Palestinian and Jordanian Arabic are similar and are commonly understood. Although Iraqi Arabic differs from its eastern Mediterranean cousins, it is essentially intelligible to other Arabic speakers. Circassians and Armenians who retain their original languages speak Arabic as well.^{97,98,99}

⁹⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

⁹⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Jordan: People," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

⁹⁹ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 83, 89.

Chapter 1 Assessment

1. Jordan's major geographic division is the desert steppe, which covers more than 80% of the country.

TRUE

The southern desert features granite and sandstone, while the southeast is characterized by vast expanses of sand dunes. The northern desert is known for its volcanic black rock.

2. Jordan's wet season is between April–October.

FALSE

Jordan is particularly dry between April–October. Only 3% of the country receives enough water to grow rain-fed wheat. The desert steppe receives less than 13 cm (5 in) of rainfall a year.

3. Amman has been a vibrant metropolis for centuries.

FALSE

Although Amman was the capital of the ancient Ammonite kingdom as well as a Roman city known as Philadelphia, by the 19th century it was merely a village with a few hundred residents.

4. During World War I the Ottomans supported Arab rebellion against the British.

FALSE

When the Ottomans sided with Germany and Austria in World War I, the British supported Arab rebellion against the Ottomans. Britain hoped to overextend Ottoman defenses.

5. Jordan is reliant on foreign aid.

TRUE

Jordan imports more than it exports, creating a trade deficit that makes the country reliant on foreign aid. Between 1951–2010, U.S. foreign aid to Jordan totaled USD 11.38 billion.

CHAPTER 2: RELIGION

Overview

Jordan's proximity to holy sites from several faiths has shaped the country. Mount Nebo, northeast of the Dead Sea, is the traditional site from which Moses, after fleeing from Egypt, surveyed the promised land for the House of Israel. The wilderness near the Jordan River was home to John the Baptist, and the river itself is where Jesus was supposedly baptized. Following the advent of Islam, the religion quickly spread from its origins in the Arabian Peninsula to Jordan and beyond. For centuries Jerusalem, just 70 km (44 mi) southwest of Jordan's capital, has been considered the third holiest place in Islam, following Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia.



© B10m / flickr.com
Ruins at Mount Nebo

Today most of the country is Sunni Muslim (roughly 92%). Only 2% of the country's total population are Shi'ites and Druze. Christians account for nearly all the remaining 6%.^{100, 101} Most of Jordan's Christians are concentrated in the cities of Husn, Fuheis, Madaba, and Karak.¹⁰²

There are roughly 20,000 Druze in Jordan. Druze are an 11th-century offshoot of Isma'ili Shi'ism and are found primarily in Lebanon and Syria, countries north of Jordan. Some came to Jordan in 1925 after a Syrian rebellion against the French. The Druze tend to be an isolated group, and many Muslims consider them heretical.^{103, 104} They are concentrated in Jordan's north.¹⁰⁵ Although minority religions are subject to heightened scrutiny from the government, hostility or tension among religious groups is rare in Jordan.¹⁰⁶

Major Religions

Islam

Islam is a monotheistic religion, meaning that its followers believe in a single deity. The Muslim community, or *umma*, calls this deity Allah. The Arabic term *islam* means "to submit" or "to surrender." So a Muslim is one who submits to the will of Allah. Muslims believe that Allah

¹⁰⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 21 June 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹⁰¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Jordan: People," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹⁰² Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan: International Religious Freedom Report 2010," 17 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148826.htm>

¹⁰³ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Druze," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/172195/Druze>

¹⁰⁴ William Ochsenwald and Sydney Nettleton Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, 6th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 93.

¹⁰⁵ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan: International Religious Freedom Report 2010," 17 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148826.htm>

¹⁰⁶ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 38–39.

revealed his message to the Prophet Muhammad, a merchant who lived in Arabia from 570–632 C.E. They consider Muhammad the last in a long line of prophets including Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. Allah’s message, as relayed by Muhammad, is delivered in the Quran, the sacred text of Islam. Additional doctrinal guides include the hadith, a collection of the sayings of Muhammad, and the sunna, which describes the practices of Islam based on Muhammad’s example.^{107, 108}

After the death of Muhammad, the *umma* fractured, primarily over the succession of authority.¹⁰⁹ Some felt Abu Bakr, a longtime companion to Muhammad, should lead the community while others felt Ali, Muhammad’s cousin and son-in-law, was the rightful leader. Supporters of Ali and his family became known as the Shi’ites (*shiat Ali* in Arabic, meaning “the party or sect of Ali”). They have long felt abused and mistreated by Islam’s majority sect, the Sunni (supporters of Abu Bakr). Roughly 85% of the world’s Muslims are Sunni; Shi’ites are primarily centered in Iran and Iraq, with a notable presence in Lebanon.¹¹⁰



© Courtesy of Wikipedia.org
Pages of Quran manuscripts

The essential beliefs and rites of the Muslim faith are embodied in the five pillars of Islam. The first and central pillar is the faithful recitation of the shahada, or Islamic creed (literally “witness” or “attestation”): “There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is Allah’s messenger.” The remaining pillars include performing ritual prayers five times a day, giving alms to the poor and needy, fasting during the holy month of Ramadan, and undertaking a pilgrimage to the Islamic holy city of Mecca.¹¹¹ Muslims believe that Allah will judge them for their actions on earth. This judgment determines whether the follower’s afterlife is spent in heaven or hell.¹¹²

Christianity

Jordan is home to roughly 400,000 Christians (6% of the total population) and lies next to the area of Christianity’s founding.¹¹³ Much of the narrative of Christianity’s origins took place just west of Jordan, in modern-day Israel and the Palestinian territories. Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem, and the Sea of Galilee (now known as Lake Tiberias) are all important Christian sites near Jordan’s borders. The site where John the Baptist is believed to have baptized Jesus in the Jordan River, just north of the Dead Sea, is a major tourist attraction in Jordan.^{114, 115}

¹⁰⁷ Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1994), 158–59.

¹⁰⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Islam,” 2009, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/295507/Islam>

¹⁰⁹ Jonathan Porter Berkey, *The Formation of Islam* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 83–90.

¹¹⁰ John Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think* (New York: Gallup Press, 2007), 2–3.

¹¹¹ Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1994), 118–36.

¹¹² Michael Anthony Sells, *Approaching the Qur’an: The Early Revelations* (Ashland, OR: White Cloud Press, 1999), 35–40.

¹¹³ Central Intelligence Agency, “Jordan,” in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹¹⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Jordan: History,” 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

Jordan's Christians are predominantly Greek Orthodox (two-thirds of the Christian population). Like other Eastern Orthodox churches that split from Western Christianity in the 11th century, adherents of Greek Orthodoxy do not recognize the authority of the Catholic Pope. Burning incense and praying in front of important religious icons are typical religious practices. Remaining Christians include Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics, Syrian Jacobites, and Protestants.



© discopalace / flickr.com
Greek Orthodox church

^{116, 117, 118} A Christian Bedouin group near Jordan's central western border claims descent from the Ghassanid Christians, who had ruled the region as Byzantine proxies before the Muslim conquest in the 7th century.¹¹⁹

Role of Religion in Government

Religion gives legitimacy to Jordan's ruling family. The first part of the country's full name, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, refers to the monarch's claim to be part of the Hashem clan of the Quraish tribe, Muhammad's own clan. By claiming descent from Islam's prophet, Jordan's monarchs have found legitimacy, despite that fact that just a century ago the family was not based in Amman, but in the Arabian Peninsula.^{120, 121} Moderate rule and the claim to religious authority have helped Jordan's monarchs remain firmly in power, as evidenced by anti-government protests in the spring of 2011. Although protestors called for political and economic reforms, they did not demand that King Abdullah II step down.¹²²



© Courtesy of Wikipedia.org
Jordan Coat of Arms

Jordanian law is a mixture of both civil and Islamic law.¹²³ The country's 1952 constitution outlines the government's two-house legislature and provides for an independent judiciary. It also declares freedom of religion. Yet the constitution establishes Islam as the state religion and provides for a special category of religious courts. Any religious practice that contradicts Islamic law is strictly forbidden.¹²⁴ Shari'a courts, based on Islamic law, may rule on issues of personal

¹¹⁵ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 35.

¹¹⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Jordan: People," 2011,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹¹⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 21 June 2011,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹¹⁸ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 80.

¹¹⁹ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 29.

¹²⁰ Margaret K. Nydell, *Understanding Arabs: A Guide for Westerners*, 4th ed. (Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, Inc., 2006), 168.

¹²¹ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 40.

¹²² Rober Danin, "Why Jordan Is Not a Regional Domino," Council on Foreign Relations, 1 February 2011,

<http://www.cfr.org/jordan/why-jordan-not-regional-domino/p23962>

¹²³ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 25 October 2011,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹²⁴ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan: International Religious Freedom Report 2010," 17 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148826.htm>

status such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance. In addition to Shari'a courts, the constitution allows religious courts for non-Muslims to deal with similar issues.^{125, 126}

Non-Muslim religious organizations must register with the government. Although they may be tax-exempt, non-Muslim institutions do not receive religious subsidies. In addition, the government mandates religious education in public schools, but Christian students may be excused from Islamic education. The government allows some Christian churches, including Jehovah's Witnesses and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to hold services without officially recognizing them. Proselytizing is prohibited.¹²⁷

Some religious minorities are not recognized by the government. Druze are listed as "Muslim" on government identification, and another group, the Baha'is (who number fewer than 800 in the country), are listed as "no religion." Muslims converting to other faiths face the strongest persecution in Jordan. Shari'a courts have convicted individuals of apostasy for converting from Islam to Christianity.¹²⁸

Religion in Daily Life

A typical Jordanian, whether Muslim or Christian, lives life according to religious moral principles. Man's dependence on God is so ingrained in the Jordanian psyche that "Praise be to God" (*al-Hamdullah*) is a typical response when one is asked how they are doing. Answers to other questions, or statements about the future, often include the phrase "if God wills it" (*in sha' allah*).¹²⁹



© zz77 / flickr.com
Prayer on Friday

Islam permeates many aspects of daily life in Jordan. Food is generally influenced by halal prescriptions, meaning it conforms to Islamic law. Alcohol is forbidden in Islam, but Jordan's liberal stance, compared to some of its neighbors, means that alcohol is available. Alcohol is most easily found in hotels and bars, although some supermarkets carry alcoholic beverages. As in other Muslim nations, pork is virtually nonexistent.¹³⁰

Religion is also evident in Jordanian daily life through the observance of salat. Five times a day, the community mosque rings out the call to prayer. Some mosques are intended for only small congregations, while others accommodate large crowds for the weekly Friday sermon. Before entering the mosque to pray, Jordanians, like other Muslims, cleanse themselves by washing

¹²⁵ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Jordan: Government and Society," 2011, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan>

¹²⁶ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan: International Freedom Report 2006," 2006, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2006/71424.htm>

¹²⁷ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan: International Religious Freedom Report 2010," 17 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148826.htm>

¹²⁸ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan: International Religious Freedom Report 2010," 17 November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148826.htm>

¹²⁹ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 66, 77.

¹³⁰ Jordan Tourism Board, "Alcohol," 2010, http://visitjordan.com/visitjordan_cms/Default.aspx?tabid=101

their face, neck, hands, arms, and feet. Men and women perform this ritual cleansing in separate areas and remain segregated during prayers in the mosque.^{131, 132}

Religious Holidays

Muslim Holidays

The two major holidays in Jordan, as in the rest of the Muslim world, are Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Fitr. Eid al-Adha, the Feast of the Sacrifice, commemorates Abraham’s willingness to offer his son Isma’il (Ishmael) as a sacrifice. The holiday occurs in conjunction with the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca. Eid al-Adha is Islam’s highest holy day and is also known as the “greater Eid.” Jordanians celebrate the Eid by feasting on lamb. Typically each household has its own sheep, which is divided among the household, extended family, and the poor. The lamb is a reminder of the sheep God provided to Abraham to sacrifice in place of Isma’il.^{133, 134, 135}



© hopeless128 / flickr.com
Sweets for Eid in Jordan

Eid al-Fitr marks the end of the month of Ramadan. Jordanians celebrate the “lesser Eid” by feasting. Many people gather in mosques for morning prayers the day the Eid begins, and then celebrate for two to three days. Children often receive gifts of new clothes.^{136, 137, 138}

Exchange 1: When does Ramadan start?

Soldier:	When does Ramadan start?	mata beebalish RamaDaan?
Local:	Tomorrow.	bukRaa

Other Muslim holidays include Mawlid al-Nabi and Ashura. Mawlid al-Nabi celebrates the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. Although Muslim dynasties celebrated the Prophet’s birth centuries after Muhammad, there is no evidence that birthday celebrations were practiced among Islam’s earliest generations. As a result, the day is a public holiday in Jordan, but there are few additional celebrations. Ashura is especially important to Shi’ites because it marks the day Husayn ibn Ali was killed at Karbala. But the day also holds meaning to Sunnis (the majority of Jordan’s population). Although originally a day of fasting for Muslims, today in Jordan it is primarily a day for children to receive treats. It is not a public holiday.¹³⁹

¹³¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Islam,” 2009, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/295507/Islam>

¹³² Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 77.

¹³³ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 33–34.

¹³⁴ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 110.

¹³⁵ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “‘Īd al-Adḥā,” 2009, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/281649/Id-al-Adha>

¹³⁶ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 33–34.

¹³⁷ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 110.

¹³⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “‘Īd al-Fitr,” 2009, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/295507/Islam>

¹³⁹ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 35.

Because all of Islam’s holidays are based on the Islamic lunar calendar, their dates shift slightly every year against the Western Gregorian calendar. Each lunar year is slightly less than two weeks shorter than solar years.¹⁴⁰

Christian Holidays

For most of Jordan’s Christians, Easter is the holiest day (typical among Eastern Christian churches). Easter is preceded by 40 days of fasting and preparation (known as the Great Lent) in which observers avoid meat, typically eating meals with fish, cheeses, and fruit. Easter is celebrated with lengthy church services followed by feasts.



© Jordan and Marisa Magnuson
Christmas decorations in Amman

Protestants commemorate Christ’s birth on 25 December while Eastern Christians celebrate Christmas on 7 January. Because of the influence of the West on Jordan, Christmas has come to look similar to Christmas celebrations in other parts of the world. Christmas trees, presents in bright wrapping paper, candies, and many other recognizable elements have come to characterize a Jordanian Christmas. Christmas Lent, or 40 days of fasting, precedes Christmas.¹⁴¹

Buildings of Worship

Mosques

The central place of worship in Islam is the mosque. Most mosques consist of a large room where a prayer leader (known as the imam) directs long rows of worshippers. The direction of Mecca is marked in a niche (*mihrab*) in the wall so that worshippers know in which direction to pray. A pulpit (*minbar*) often rests near the *mihrab* and offers a place for sermons to be given during Friday prayers. Towers, known as minarets, attached to or directly adjacent to the mosque allow the muezzin to call worshippers to prayer throughout the day.¹⁴²



© Kara Newhouse
Mosque in Jordan

Exchange 2: May I enter the mosque?

Soldier:	May I enter the mosque?	ba-daR afoot 'al jaami'?
Local:	Yes.	aah

Most of Jordan’s mosques are 20th-century buildings. The Grand Husseini Mosque was built in 1924, replacing a mosque that had stood since 640 C.E.¹⁴³ The Abu Darwish Mosque in Amman,

¹⁴⁰ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 111.

¹⁴¹ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 35–37.

¹⁴² Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991), 28.

built in the 1960s, has become one of the city’s major landmarks. The mosque is identifiable by its chessboard-style exterior, which features geometric patterns of white-and-black stone. A large central dome and a minaret, rising 36 m (118 ft), are also adorned in stone of white and black.¹⁴⁴ The King Abdullah I Mosque, completed in 1989, is famous for its large, flat dome painted sky blue. It can accommodate 7,000 worshippers in its interior and an additional 3,000 in the outside courtyard.¹⁴⁵

Churches

Jordan’s Christian history dates back to the beginning of Christianity. Churches exist in several parts of Jordan. One archeological site claims to be the oldest place of Christian worship ever found, dating to the years immediately following Jesus’ death.¹⁴⁶ St. George’s Church, a Greek Orthodox Church in Madaba, was built in the 19th century, but is home to a mosaic that dates to the 6th century. Included in the mosaic is a detailed map of ancient Jerusalem.¹⁴⁷ Churches are typically small, reflecting small congregations, and are located in cities with Christian populations or near significant sites, such as the baptism site of Jesus at the Jordan River.¹⁴⁸



© Seetheholyland.net / flickr.com
Church near Jordan River

Behavior in Places of Worship

It is important to dress modestly in mosques or other places of worship in Jordan. Women especially should cover their arms and legs and wear loose-fitting clothing. The headscarf, which Jordanian women commonly wear in the streets, should be worn in the mosque.¹⁴⁹

Exchange 3: Do I need to cover my head?

Soldier:	Do I need to cover my head?	laazim agha Tee Raasee?
Local:	Yes.	aah

¹⁴³ Lonely Planet, “King Hussein Mosque,” 2011, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/amman/sights/architecture/king-hussein-mosque>
¹⁴⁴ Muath Freij, “Abu Darwish Mosque: A Symbol of Amman’s Diverse Heritage,” *Jordan Times*, 8 September 2010, <http://jordantimes.com/index.php?news=29895>
¹⁴⁵ Lonely Planet, “King Abdullah Mosque,” 2011, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/amman/sights/mosque/king-abdullah-mosque>
¹⁴⁶ Tim Butcher, “World’s ‘Oldest Christian Church’ Discovered in Jordan,” *Telegraph*, 10 June 2008, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/jordan/2106752/Worlds-oldest-Christian-church-discovered-in-Jordan.html>
¹⁴⁷ Visit Jordan, “Fragments of the Past Are Revealed in and Around this Famous City of Mosaics,” 2010, <http://visitjordan.com/default.aspx?tabid=189>
¹⁴⁸ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), “The Baptismal Site (Bethany Beyond Jordan), 1999–2012, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1556/>
¹⁴⁹ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 57.

Shoes are never worn in the mosque and should be removed before entering the building. Look for an area with mats or carpets and a collection of shoes outside the walls of the mosque. Sometimes this area is considered an extension of the mosque itself, and therefore shoes may not be placed on the mats. Observe what others do before placing your shoes. Most mosques in Jordan, with the exception of Amman’s King Abdullah I Mosque, are not open to non-Muslims.¹⁵⁰



© Ben Jeffrey
Shoes at Amman Mosque

Exchange 4: Must I take off my shoes inside the mosque?

Soldier:	Must I take off my shoes inside the mosque?	fee ilzoom ashlaH buSTaaRee juwaa il jaami'?
Local:	Yes.	aah

The inside of the mosque may be decorated with elaborate calligraphy or carvings, but taking photographs may be seen as inappropriate.

¹⁵⁰ Lonely Planet, “King Abdullah Mosque,” 2011, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/amman/sights/mosque/king-abdullah-mosque>

Chapter 2 Assessment

1. Minority religions are subject to heightened government scrutiny in Jordan.
TRUE
Although minority religions are subject to heightened government scrutiny, hostility or tension among religious groups is rare. Non-Muslim religions must register with the government, but some, like the Baha'i faith, are not recognized.
2. Jordan's Christians are predominantly Protestant.
FALSE
Two-thirds of the Christian population is Greek Orthodox. Remaining Christians include Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics, Syrian Jacobites, and Protestants.
3. Jordan has some Islamic law courts that deal with personal status.
TRUE
Shari'a courts deal with issues of marriage, divorce, and inheritance. According to the country's constitution, Islam is the state religion.
4. Alcohol is unavailable in Jordan because Islam forbids it.
FALSE
Although alcohol is prohibited in Islam, it may be found in Jordan. Hotels, bars, and some supermarkets carry alcoholic beverages.
5. The *minbar* is a prayer leader in a mosque.
FALSE
A *minbar* is a pulpit from which an imam (prayer leader) may offer sermons during Friday prayers.

CHAPTER 3: TRADITIONS

Introduction

The land that makes up present-day Jordan, once part of the historical region known as the Fertile Crescent, claims a long and rich history.¹⁵¹ The people of the area, surrounded by larger and more powerful groups, have a past marked by accommodation and alliances. These influences have helped make Jordanian society one of the more open societies in the region.



© Charles Roffey
Rural Jordanian

The people of Jordan are predominantly Arab (98%), and most are Sunni Muslims (92%).¹⁵² Nearly 80% of the people live in cities and have been greatly influenced by Palestinian migration.¹⁵³ The traditional Bedouin influence is stronger in rural areas, although the tradition of hospitality remains firmly rooted in the general culture. Jordanians are a friendly and good-natured people. Many embrace Western culture, which has created growing expectations of individual freedoms, especially among women. Jordanian loyalty to traditional roots and values sometimes clashes with the demands of a more modern society. Nevertheless, even in the face of social change, many shared values remain fundamental. Jordanians have a deep pride in their culture and nation. Islam significantly influences the view of most Jordanians, and a belief in surrendering to the will of God underlies many aspects of life. Although religious devotion is generally seen as positive, some Jordanians consider it an indicator of extremism.^{154, 155}

Family is an important part of life and the basis of social structure. Both immediate and extended family members are a source of support, and family connections are important in the job market, for marriage, and in other arenas. Families tend to be close, both physically and emotionally. Close-knit familial relations spill over into the broader society, affecting virtually all aspects of life in Jordan.^{156, 157}

¹⁵¹ U.S. Department of State, “Jordan (12/30/11),” 30 December 2011, <http://www.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/jordan/192420.htm>

¹⁵² Central Intelligence Agency, “Jordan: People and Society,” in *The World Factbook*, 20 June 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹⁵³ Central Intelligence Agency, “Jordan: People and Society,” in *The World Factbook*, 20 June 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

¹⁵⁴ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

¹⁵⁵ Anthony Ham, “Jordan,” in *Lonely Planet: Middle East ebook Edition* (Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet Publications, 2009), 339–40.

¹⁵⁶ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

¹⁵⁷ Meghan Flaherty, “Meghan Flaherty on the Importance of Family in Jordanian Culture,” Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University, 24 March 2010, <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/letters/meghan-flaherty-on-the-importance-of-family-in-jordanian-culture>

Codes of Politeness

Greetings

The handshake is a common form of greeting in Jordan. One should shake hands with everyone in a group, beginning with the person on the right and continuing to the last person in the group.^{158, 159} But among Muslims, such contact between a man and a woman may be seen as inappropriate. Even Christians may refrain from cross-gender handshakes in public.¹⁶⁰



© Roba Al-Assi
Smiling girls

Close friends of the same sex often greet each other with a kiss on both cheeks.¹⁶¹ Sometimes acquaintances greet each other with as many as five kisses. Kisses are always given in sequence beginning on the left cheek. The remaining kisses, up to four, are always given on the right cheek.¹⁶² It is customary to ask about the health or well-being of the other person, but males should not ask about female members of the other person’s family.¹⁶³

Exchange 5: May peace be upon you.

Soldier:	May peace be upon you.	as salaamu 'alaykum
Local:	And upon you be peace.	wa 'alaykum as salaam

Exchange 6: Good morning.

Soldier:	Good morning.	SabaaH il KhayR
Local:	Good morning.	SabaaH il nooR

One of the most common greetings is *al salam alaykum* (Peace be with you), to which one may respond *ahlan wa sahlam* (You are welcome in this place). Other greetings include “good morning,” “good evening,” and the informal hello (*marhaba*).¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁸ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

¹⁵⁹ Culture Crossing, “Jordan: Greetings,” n.d., http://www.culturecrossing.net/basics_business_student_details.php?Id=7&CID=105

¹⁶⁰ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

¹⁶¹ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” ProQuest, 2012.

¹⁶² Culture Crossing, “Jordan: Greetings,” n.d., http://www.culturecrossing.net/basics_business_student_details.php?Id=7&CID=105

¹⁶³ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

¹⁶⁴ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

Exchange 7: How are you?

Soldier:	How are you?	kayfak?
Local:	Very well.	ikteeR imneeH

Names and Titles

In Jordan, people are commonly referred to by both their first and last names. People of the same age or sex can use each other’s first name if they have been previously introduced. Titles are frequently used when addressing adults. For women, the title *um* (mother) is both common and respectful. *Abu* (father) is used for men. These titles are generally followed by the name of the oldest son. For instance, if the oldest son were named Ahmed, then his parents would be addressed as *um Ahmed* and *abu Ahmed*.¹⁶⁵



© Itinerant Tightwad / flickr.com
Men having a discussion

Exchange 8: Hi, Mr. Ahmed.

Soldier:	Hi, Mr. Ahmed.	maRHabaa sayid aHmad
Local:	Hello!	maRHabaa!
Soldier:	Are you doing well?	keyfak imneeH?
Local:	Yes.	aah

More formal titles, such as *al haj* (for men) and *al hajjah* (for women), show great respect and indicate that the person has completed a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca. More informal titles, including *akhi* (my brother) and *ukhti* (my sister), are common among acquaintances. Younger people often address older persons as “uncle” or “aunt” even if they are unrelated.¹⁶⁶

Eye Contact and Physical Distance

Eye contact varies with the situation. As a sign of respect for older and more senior persons, direct eye contact is common, especially if a tribal leader or family elder is talking. Among friends, in less formal settings, direct eye



© Michael Coghlan
Friends in Amman

¹⁶⁵ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

¹⁶⁶ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

contact is not required.¹⁶⁷ Prolonged eye contact between men and women, particularly if they do not know each other well, is likely to be seen as inappropriate.¹⁶⁸ Jordanians generally prefer the same amount of personal space with strangers as do people from the United States and other Western countries. Same sex persons who are familiar with each other may stand closer and express their closeness by holding hands or draping arms over each other's shoulders.^{169, 170}

Gender Issues

Although the country is driven by its strong Muslim and Bedouin heritages, Jordan is relatively liberal.¹⁷¹ Males and females are not segregated, official dress codes do not exist, and women can file for divorce.^{172, 173, 174} The Jordanian Constitution does not explicitly prohibit sexual discrimination, although it states that all citizens are equal.¹⁷⁵ As a result of this ambiguity, women face discrimination in pension and social security benefits, inheritance policies, divorce, and freedom of movement, including travel. Women, under shari'a law, receive only about 50% of what a male heir receives. Non-Muslim widows have no inheritance rights.¹⁷⁶ Women, regardless of nationality or citizenship, can be prevented from leaving the country by any adult male relative registering a hold on travel with the authorities, who regard such issues as private family matters.¹⁷⁷ Domestic violence, spousal rape, and honor killings are not uncommon.^{178, 179} Approximately 15–20 women are murdered each year in honor killings in



© seaan / flickr.com
Woman in jilbab

¹⁶⁷ Culture Crossing, "Jordan: Eye Contact," n.d.,

http://www.culturecrossing.net/basics_business_student_details.php?Id=10&CID=105

¹⁶⁸ Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada, Centre for Intercultural Learning, "Cultural Information: Jordan," 15 October 2009, <http://www.intercultures.ca/cil-cai/ci-ic-eng.asp?iso=jo>

¹⁶⁹ Culture Crossing, "Jordan: Eye Contact," n.d.,

http://www.culturecrossing.net/basics_business_student_details.php?Id=10&CID=105

¹⁷⁰ Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada, Centre for Intercultural Learning, "Cultural Information: Jordan," 15 October 2009, <http://www.intercultures.ca/cil-cai/ci-ic-eng.asp?iso=jo>

¹⁷¹ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 91.

¹⁷² Suha Philip Ma'ayeh, "Civil Groups Back Woman Suing an Islamic Bank Over Dress Code Sacking," *The National*, 6 June 2012, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/civil-groups-back-woman-suing-an-islamic-bank-over-dress-code-sacking>

¹⁷³ Jenny Walker and Matthew D. Firestone, *Lonely Planet: Jordan ebook Edition* (Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet Publications, 2009), 60–61.

¹⁷⁴ Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada, Centre for Intercultural Learning, "Cultural Information: Jordan," 15 October 2009, <http://www.intercultures.ca/cil-cai/ci-ic-eng.asp?iso=jo>

¹⁷⁵ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "2010 Human Rights Report: Jordan," 8 April 2011, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/nea/154464.htm>

¹⁷⁶ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "2010 Human Rights Report: Jordan," 8 April 2011, <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/nea/154464.htm>

¹⁷⁷ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan: Country Specific Information," 1 August 2011, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1149.html#special_circumstance

¹⁷⁸ Social Institutions and Gender Index, "Jordan," 2011, <http://genderindex.org/country/jordan>

¹⁷⁹ Euromed Gender Equality Programme, "National Situation Analysis Report: Women's Human Rights and Gender Equality: Jordan" (report, Enhancing Equality Between Men and Women in the Euromed Region, 22 October 2010), 21–23, http://www.enpi-info.eu/mainmed.php?id=425&id_type=9&lang_id=450

Jordan.^{180, 181, 182} The legal code exempts close male relatives from prosecution for the murder of a wife caught in an act of adultery. Although honor killing is considered a crime, penalties are relatively weak, sending the message that it is acceptable.^{183, 184}

Women in Jordan have made strides in virtually all areas of cultural life. They have access to the same education as men, they can vote, and they are allowed to drive.¹⁸⁵ Although underrepresented, women hold political office at both the national and local levels.^{186, 187} In spite of relatively high levels of education, women make up about 25% of the workforce, with some female workers in traditionally male-dominated professions. Most women are at the lowest levels of occupational ladders and work in the lowest-paying professions, including health and education.^{188, 189}

Despite some positive developments, women in Jordan have some distance to go before achieving an even footing with men.¹⁹⁰ On a number of major indices, including the Global Gender Gap index (117/135) and the Gender Inequality Index (95/187), the country continues to rank low on gender parity.^{191, 192}

Hospitality and Gift Giving

Jordanians are a social people for whom hospitality is often regarded as a duty. Close friends and family in urban areas often visit without notice, although, in some cases, it is considered polite to

¹⁸⁰ Lubna Dawany Nimry, "Crimes of Honor in Jordan and the Arab World," Ahewar, 28 August 2009, <http://www.ahewar.org/eng/show.art.asp?aid=749>

¹⁸¹ Social Institutions and Gender Index, "Jordan," 2011, <http://genderindex.org/country/jordan>

¹⁸² UN Development Programme, "The Arab Human Development Report 2005: Towards the Rise of Women in the Arab World," 2006, 116, <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/ahdr/ahdr2005e.pdf>

¹⁸³ Jenny Walker and Matthew D. Firestone, *Lonely Planet: Jordan ebook Edition* (Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet Publications, 2009), 62.

¹⁸⁴ Kerry Kennedy Cuomo, "Honor Killings: An Interview with Rana Husseini," Public Broadcasting Service, n.d., <http://www.pbs.org/speaktruthtopower/rana.html>

¹⁸⁵ Jenny Walker and Matthew D. Firestone, *Lonely Planet: Jordan ebook Edition* (Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet Publications, 2009), 60–61.

¹⁸⁶ Social Institutions and Gender Index, "Jordan," 2011, <http://genderindex.org/country/jordan>

¹⁸⁷ Jenny Walker and Matthew D. Firestone, *Lonely Planet: Jordan ebook Edition* (Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet Publications, 2009), 60–61.

¹⁸⁸ Jenny Walker and Matthew D. Firestone, *Lonely Planet: Jordan ebook Edition* (Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet Publications, 2009), 60–61.

¹⁸⁹ Social and Economic Development Group, Middle East and North Africa Region, "The Economic Advancement of Women in Jordan: A Country Gender Assessment" (report, World Bank, May 2005), 3, 10–12, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTJORDAN/Data%20and%20Reference/20507631/Jordan%20Gender%20Assessment05.pdf>

¹⁹⁰ World Bank, "Jordan: New Work Opportunities for Women Pilot Project," 2011, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/MENAEXT/0,,contentMDK:22872667~menuPK:3949143~pagePK:146736~piPK:226340~theSitePK:256299,00.html>

¹⁹¹ Ricardo Hausmann, Laura D. Tyson, and Saadia Zahidi, "The Global Gender Gap Report 2011" (Insight Report, World Economic Forum, Geneva, Switzerland, 2011), 11, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2011.pdf

¹⁹² UN Development Programme, "Gender Inequality Index and Related Indicators," 2011, http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_EN_Table4.pdf

make arrangements before visiting. The sexes frequently socialize in different rooms. Close relatives or families who are more Westernized may socialize in mixed company.¹⁹³

Exchange 9: I really appreciate your hospitality.

Soldier:	I really appreciate your hospitality.	il Ha-ee-a bidee ashkuRkum 'aDeeyaafitkum
Local:	It is nothing.	maa fee shee min waajbak

Any visitor, no matter how long the visit, is likely to be offered a beverage such as tea, coffee, soda, or fruit juice. For longer visits, guests are expected to leave shortly after being served coffee. If guests are visiting the area, they may be invited to dinner. Rules of politeness dictate that initial offers should be politely declined as many as three times before being accepted.¹⁹⁴



© Muhammad Badi
Man with son in Amman

Exchange 10: The food tastes so good.

Soldier:	The food tastes so good.	il akel Ta'moo Tayeb ikteeR
Local:	Thank you.	shukRan

Visitors often bring a small gift for their hosts. Appropriate gifts include sweets, flowers, or fruit. Hosts usually do not immediately accept a gift and, if wrapped, the gift is not opened in front of the giver.¹⁹⁵ Expensive gifts might be viewed as an insult, so it is advisable to bring gifts of moderate value.¹⁹⁶

Exchange 11: This gift is for you.

Soldier:	This gift is for you.	haay il hadeeye laa ilak
Local:	I cannot accept this.	maa ba-daR a-balhaa

¹⁹³ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

¹⁹⁴ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

¹⁹⁵ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

¹⁹⁶ Culture Crossing, "Jordan: Gift Giving," n.d.,

http://www.culturecrossing.net/basics_business_student_details.php?Id=23&CID=105

Eating Habits and Types of Food

Jordan’s elaborate and sophisticated dishes have mostly been adapted from cuisine of other countries.^{197, 198} The most common meats are lamb and chicken. Pork is prohibited. Vegetables often include onions, eggplant, tomatoes, and cabbage. Seasonal fruits, including grapes, apricots, watermelon, and figs, often end a meal. Other desserts include sweet pastries similar to baklava.^{199, 200}



© ORG Buzz / flickr.com
Mansaf

Jordan’s national dish is *mansaf*, made with rice, chunks of stewed lamb accompanied by *jameed* (a sauce made from yogurt).²⁰¹ Other popular dishes are *mahshi* (stuffed vegetables), *musakhan* (chicken served with onions, olive oil, and pine nuts), and *meshwi* (a kebab).²⁰² Bread is a common accompaniment and is often dipped in *zayt* (olive oil) and *zatar* (a mixture containing sesame seeds, oregano, and other spices).²⁰³

Exchange 12: What is the name of this dish?

Soldier:	What is the name of this dish?	shoo isim haT TabKha?
Local:	This is Mansaf.	haThaa mansaf

Exchange 13: What ingredients are used to make Mansaf?

Soldier:	What ingredients are used to make Mansaf?	shoo il mawaad ilee bitsta'maloohaa latiTibKhoo il mansaf?
Local:	Rice, meat and salty yogurt.	Ruz, laHmeh wa laban jameed

Breakfast is usually light, often consisting of cheese, olives, bread and jam, or a bowl of boiled fava beans mashed with lemon juice, olive oil, and chopped chilies (*fuul*).^{204, 205} Lunch, eaten between 2 and 4 p.m., is the main meal. Like breakfast, dinners are generally small.²⁰⁶

¹⁹⁷ John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 71.
¹⁹⁸ Amal Daraiseh and Adel Iskandar, “Jordanians,” in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life*, vol. 3, eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 440.
¹⁹⁹ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.
²⁰⁰ Amal Daraiseh and Adel Iskandar, “Jordanians,” in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life*, vol. 3, eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 440.
²⁰¹ Amal Daraiseh and Adel Iskandar, “Jordanians,” in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life*, vol. 3, eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 440.
²⁰² CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” ProQuest, 2012.
²⁰³ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” ProQuest, 2012.
²⁰⁴ Matthew Teller, *The Rough Guide to Jordan* (Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet Publications, 2002), 40.
²⁰⁵ Coleman South, *Cultures of the World: Jordan*, 2nd ed. (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Benchmark, 2007), 126.

Eating conventions differ from those in the United States. Unlike urban families who sit at a table, rural families commonly sit on the floor. In both urban and rural families, food is served from a common plate (*sidr*) and eaten with the fingers of the right hand. Small pieces of bread are used as scoops. Food is not passed on plates; people pick up a food item with the fingers of the right hand and pass it to others. When you are done eating, it is polite to move away from the table slightly, say *al hamdu li lah* (praise be to God), and then wash your hands.^{207, 208}



© Hicham Souilmi
Jordanian breakfast

Turkish coffee is offered at the end of each meal. It should be drunk slowly and never stirred. The bitter Bedouin coffee, *qahwah saadah*, should be drunk quickly and is often served at events such as weddings and funerals.²⁰⁹

Dress Codes

Jordanian men typically dress in Western-style clothing, although some wear the traditional headgear known as the *kuffiyah*. Also called the *hattah*, the *kuffiyah* comes in two sets of colors: red-and-white checked (typical of Jordanians) or black-and-white checked (typical of Palestinians).²¹⁰ The headpiece is folded into a triangle and secured to the head with a double-coiled rope known as an '*aqal*'.²¹¹ The '*aqal*' may yield several clues about the wearer. For instance, if the '*aqal*' is worn at an angle, the man is single. An '*aqal*' worn straight on the head indicates that the man is married.^{212, 213}



© zilverbat / flickr.com
Man in Amman

Women are not required to wear a veil (*niqab*) or a head scarf (*hijab*).²¹⁴ Urban women prefer trendy Western-style clothing. Muslim women typically wear a head scarf, which is becoming increasingly popular among most women in the country. More traditional Muslim women, who wear long flowing gowns (*libis shar'i* or *jilbab*) and head scarves, are referred to as *muhajabas*.^{215, 216, 217, 218} Women commonly wear jewelry as a symbol of their wealth.²¹⁹

²⁰⁶ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

²⁰⁷ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

²⁰⁸ Executive Planet, "Jordan: Prosperous Entertaining: Part 3," 29 June 2012,

http://www.executiveplanet.com/index.php?title=Jordan:_Prosperous_Entertaining_-_Part_3

²⁰⁹ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

²¹⁰ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

²¹¹ Amal Daraiseh and Adel Iskandar, "Jordanians," in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life*, vol. 3, eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 440.

²¹² John A. Shoup, *Culture and Customs of Jordan* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 78–80.

²¹³ Coleman South, *Jordan: Cultures of the World* (New York: Marshall Cavendish, 1997), 57.

²¹⁴ Nicole McDermott, "Modernization of the Hijab in Amman, Jordan: A Symbol of Islam and Modernity" (paper 832, ISP Collection, 1 April 2010), 16–17, http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/832

²¹⁵ Alisa Roth, "In Jordan, Hijabs Inspire Style," Marketplace, 29 February 2008,

<http://www.marketplace.org/topics/world/middle-east-work/jordan-hijabs-inspire-style>

²¹⁶ Melanie Dostis, "Fashion Report: Observant Women in Jordan Modernize with Trendy Clothes," Northeastern University Journalism Abroad 2012, May–June 2012,

Another option for women is the traditional national costume. This handmade embroidered dress has cross-stitch patterns that vary by region. Black cotton dresses with embroidered multicolored triangles are from northern Jordan. Women from the central region have dresses made from over 16 m (52 ft) of cloth, with sleeves that measure 3 m (10 ft) and blue panels sewn around the hem and sleeves. The dress from southern Jordan is made from silk in a variety of colors. The silk cloak, or *abaya*, is worn draped over the head.²²⁰

Exchange 14: Is this acceptable to wear?

Soldier:	Is this acceptable to wear?	haThaa imnaasib laa albasu?
Local:	<i>Yes.</i>	aah

Modest dress is required for everyone. Shorts are appropriate for men while playing sports or at beach resorts. T-shirts are generally acceptable as long as they cover the upper arms and shoulders. Women should make sure that the nape of the neck is covered, and that clothing is opaque and covers the arms and legs.^{221, 222}

Non-Religious Holidays

Jordan celebrates a variety of national holidays during which banks and businesses close. These include New Year’s Day (1 January), King Abdullah’s accession to the throne (9 June), Arab Renaissance Day commemorating the Arab Revolt (10 June), Labor Day (1 May), and Independence Day (25 May). Other holidays are celebrated although businesses and government offices remain open. These holidays, marked with a variety of celebrations and events throughout the country, include King Hussein’s birthday (14 November), King Abdullah’s birthday (30 January), and Army Day (10 June).^{223, 224}

<http://northeasternuniversityjournalism2012.wordpress.com/2012/05/22/fashion-report-veiled-women-in-jordan-modernize-with-trendy-clothes/>

²¹⁷ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

²¹⁸ Countries and Their Cultures, “Jordanians: Clothing,” 2012, <http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Japan-to-Mali/Jordanians.html>

²¹⁹ CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

²²⁰ Amal Daraiseh and Adel Iskandar, “Jordanians,” in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life*, vol. 3, eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 439–40.

²²¹ Security Middle East, “Dress Code in Jordan,” n.d., <http://securitymiddleeast.com/articles/read/dress-code-in-jordan-2009-10-14>

²²² CultureGrams Online Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

²²³ Time and Date, “Holidays in Jordan in 2013,” 2012, <http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/jordan/2013>

²²⁴ Amal Daraiseh and Adel Iskandar, “Jordanians,” in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life*, vol. 3, eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 437.

Exchange 15: Will you be celebrating New Year?

Soldier:	Will you be celebrating New Year?	RaH tiHtafil bRaas is saneh?
Local:	Yes!	aah!

Dos and Don'ts

Do shake hands when meeting someone.

Do eat food with your right hand, with or without utensils.

Do remove your shoes before entering a Jordanian home.

Do stand when someone enters a room or when being introduced to a person.

Don't show the soles of your feet to another person.

Don't point the toe or heel of your foot at another person.

Don't eat or pass food with the left hand.

Don't put your thumb and forefinger together in the Western sign for OK.

Don't engage in public displays of affection.

Don't openly eat food, drink, or smoke during daylight hours during Ramadan.

Don't preach about or discuss any religion other than Islam.

Chapter 3 Assessment

1. When greeting an individual, it is inappropriate to ask about the person's health or well-being.
FALSE
Although it is customary to ask about the health or well-being of the other person, males should not ask about the other person's female family members.
2. Titles are frequently used when addressing adults.
TRUE
It is both common and respectful to use titles when addressing adults. The titles *um* (mother) and *abu* (father) are generally followed by the name of the oldest son.
3. Direct eye contact is rude and a sign of aggression.
FALSE
Direct eye contact is a sign of respect for older and more senior persons. Among friends, in less formal settings, direct eye contact is not required. Prolonged eye contact between men and women may be seen as inappropriate.
4. Bedouin coffee, *qahwah saadah*, should be sipped slowly.
FALSE
Turkish coffee, which is generally offered at the end of a meal, should be drunk slowly and never stirred. The bitter Bedouin coffee, *qahwah saadah*, should be drunk quickly.
5. Women in Jordan are not required to wear a veil or head scarf.
TRUE
Women are not required to wear either a veil (*niqab*) or a head scarf (*hijab*). Urban women prefer trendy Western-style clothing. Muslim women typically wear a head scarf, although the *hijab* is becoming increasingly popular among most women in the country.

CHAPTER 4: URBAN LIFE

Introduction

Jordan's urban centers are home to 80% of the population.²²⁵ Although Jordan was largely rural in the 1950s, the last 60 years have brought significant changes. In 1943, the country's largest city had only 30,000 residents.^{226, 227} Today, the nation's three largest cities, Amman, Zarqa, and Irbid, are home to 70% of all Jordanians.^{228, 229, 230} Rural migration to urban areas accounted for much of the growth, but a large influx of refugees also swelled the urban population.²³¹ Rapid and unplanned growth transformed the capital of Amman from a small, backwater town of about 3,000 in the 1920s to a modern metropolitan area of more than 2 million people. The city's population continues to increase with the influx of refugees trying to escape the violence in neighboring countries.^{232, 233}



© WaterpoloSam / flickr.com
Amman

Rapid urbanization has affected various aspects of Jordanian life and presents problems common to all rapidly expanding cities.²³⁴ The high cost of living has resulted in postponed marriages, increased divorce rates, reduced fertility rates, and a decline in the popularity of the extended family.²³⁵

²²⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan: People and Society," in *The World Factbook*, 20 June 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

²²⁶ El Hassan Science City and the Royal Scientific Society, "Jordan Drivers of Change: Urbanisation," 2010, <http://www.jordanchange.com/en/>

²²⁷ Office of Economic Development, "Jordan National Urban Development," 2001, <http://web.mit.edu/urbanupgrading/upgrading/case-examples/ce-JO-jor.html>

²²⁸ El Hassan Science City and the Royal Scientific Society, "Jordan Drivers of Change: Urbanisation," 2010, <http://www.jordanchange.com/en/>

²²⁹ Office of Economic Development, "Jordan National Urban Development," 2001, <http://web.mit.edu/urbanupgrading/upgrading/case-examples/ce-JO-jor.html>

²³⁰ UN Habitat, "The State of Arab Cities 2012: Challenges of Urban Transition" (Nairobi, Kenya: Habitat Publications, 2012), 33, <http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=3320>

²³¹ David L. Higgitt, "Urbanization and Environmental Degradation in Jordan," in *Human Settlement Development*, vol. 1, Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems, 354, <http://www.eolss.net/Sample-Chapters/C14/E1-18-02-03.pdf>

²³² Zeyad Makhamreh and Nazeeh Almanasyeh, "Analyzing the State and Pattern of Urban Growth and City Planning in Amman Using Satellite Images and GIS," *European Journal of Social Sciences* 24, no. 2 (2011): 255–56, http://www.eurojournals.com/EJSS_24_2_11.pdf

²³³ Dale Gavlak, "Jordan Opens New Refugee Camp for Syrians," *Denver Post*, 10 July 2012, http://www.denverpost.com/breakingnews/ci_21042084/jordan-sets-up-refugee-camps-syrians

²³⁴ El Hassan Science City and the Royal Scientific Society, "Jordan Drivers of Change: Urbanisation," 2010, <http://www.jordanchange.com/en/>

²³⁵ Rania Salem, "Trends and Differentials in Jordanian Marriage Behavior: Marriage Timing, Spousal Characteristics, Household Structure and Matrimonial Expenditures (working paper no. 668, Economic Research Forum, Harvard University, April 2012), 3–6, <http://www.erf.org.eg/CMS/uploads/pdf/668.pdf>

Urbanization Issues

Rapid and unplanned urban growth has created water supply problems and transportation and infrastructure issues; it has also led to insufficient housing, the growth of informal settlements, and large pockets of unemployment. In Amman, for example, the public water system is unable to meet current demands because of poor water infrastructure and a lack of reservoirs.²³⁶ Although nearly 98% of all households are connected to water supply networks, supplies have been rationed since 1987. Water is available only one or two days a week. Therefore, people must build cisterns or find other containers to store dwindling supplies of water.^{237, 238}



© Mr. Littlehand / flickr.com
Streets of Amman

Sewage and waste disposal pose serious problems. Although nearly 80% of all households in Amman are connected to city sewer systems, less than 5% of households in other urban areas are connected. Improper disposal of untreated sewage, including dumping it into streams, produces significant water and food pollution annually.²³⁹

Rapid population growth has polarized Amman by primarily concentrating wealthier residents in the west and north and poorer residents in the eastern areas, including downtown Amman.^{240, 241} The lack of usable public spaces, combined with poorly planned growth, contributes to weakened social bonds in the city and a lower quality of life.²⁴²

Inadequate availability of affordable housing means that nearly 15% of all urbanites (16% in Amman) live in informal settlements or slums.²⁴³ Of those who live below the poverty line, 57% live in the three main cities of Amman, Zarqa, and Irbid.²⁴⁴ Urban economic pressures have contributed to rising divorce rates. Limited job opportunities and the high cost of living are

²³⁶ Khadija Darmame and Robert Potter, “Chapter 28: Political Discourses and Public Narratives on Water Supply Issues in Amman, Jordan,” in *Water, Life and Civilisation: Climate, Environment and Society in the Jordan Valley*, eds. Steven Mithen and Emily Black (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 457.

²³⁷ Robert B. Potter et al., “An Introduction to the Urban Geography of Amman, Jordan” (geographical paper no. 182, University of Reading, England, June 2007), 21,

http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/geog/GP182_Amman_RBP_9Aug07.pdf

²³⁸ Robert B. Potter, Khadija Darmame, and Stephen Nortcliff, “Issues of Water Supply and Contemporary Urban Society: The Case of Greater Amman, Jordan,” *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society: Mathematical, Physical, and Engineering Sciences* 368 (November 2010): 5300.

²³⁹ United Nations, “Jordan: Country Profile,” 2002, 65, <http://www.un.org/esa/agenda21/natinfo/wssd/jordan.pdf>

²⁴⁰ Matthew Teller, *Jordan* (London: Rough Guides, 2006), 101–102.

²⁴¹ Robert B. Potter et al., “‘Ever-growing Amman,’ Jordan: Urban Expansion, Social Polarisation and Contemporary Urban Planning Issues,” *Habitat International* 33, no. 1 (January 2009): 84–85, <http://arlt-lectures.de/jordan-amman.pdf>

²⁴² Mohammad al-Asad, “Hostile City,” Center for the Study of Built Environment, 7 October 2011,

<http://www.csbe.org/e-publications-resources/urban-crossroads/hostile-city/>

²⁴³ UN Habitat, “The State of Arab Cities 2012: Challenges of Urban Transition” (Nairobi, Kenya: Habitat Publications, 2012), 3, 26, <http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=3320>

²⁴⁴ UN Habitat, “The State of Arab Cities 2012: Challenges of Urban Transition” (Nairobi, Kenya: Habitat Publications, 2012), 44, <http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=3320>

causing many young people to postpone marriage, which may greatly change the nature of the family and of Jordanian society.²⁴⁵

High unemployment and poverty have increased disaffection in urban centers, particularly in Zarqa, home of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, an al-Qaeda terrorist who was killed by the American military in Iraq in 2006. The city, which has produced most of Jordan's jihadists, has been the site of recent antigovernment clashes and protests.^{246, 247, 248}

Urban Economy

Amman is the political capital and economic center of the nation. More than 80% of all industrial and service activities fall within the boundaries of greater Amman. Most people work in wholesale and retail businesses, which, along with automotive repair and personal and household goods, supply employment for about 22% of the residents. Approximately 13% of the population work in manufacturing and 10% each in education and in public administration and defense.²⁴⁹



© Roshni Rose
Market

Urban unemployment ranges from about 15% in Amman to nearly 35% in Ajloun, a town located 73 km (45 mi) north of the capital. Young people are particularly affected by unemployment. In Amman, for example, youths account for 49% of the unemployed. Nationwide, youth unemployment in the cities is 45% for women and 53% for men.²⁵⁰

Healthcare

Jordan's healthcare system, recognized as one of the most modern in the Middle East, has raised life expectancy to 80 years and lowered infant mortality rates.^{251, 252} The system includes a public sector, a private sector, and donors. Most of the system focuses on curative rather than

²⁴⁵ *Jordan Times*, "Amid Economic Hardships, Jordan's Divorce Rate Rising," MENAFN, 14 August 2008,

<http://www.menafn.com/menafn/1093207961/Amid-economic-hardships-Jordans-divorce-rate-rising>

²⁴⁶ Thomas Hegghammer, "The Struggle Within," *National*, 13 February 2009, <http://www.thenational.ae/arts-culture/film/the-struggle-within#page3>

²⁴⁷ Jack Fairweather, "Jordan Paves Over Radicalism," *Post Global*, *Washington Post*, 18 July 2008,

http://onfaith.washingtonpost.com/postglobal/islamsadvance/2008/07/jordan_paves_over_radicalism.html

²⁴⁸ *Jordan Times*, "Jordan-Zarqa Sit-in Ends in Bloody Clashes," 17 April, 2011,

<http://www.menafn.com/menafn/1093406876/Jordan-Zarqa-sit-in-ends-bloody-clashes>

²⁴⁹ Robert B. Potter et al., "An Introduction to the Urban Geography of Amman, Jordan" (geographical paper no. 182, University of Reading, England, June 2007), 18,

http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/geog/GP182_Amman_RBP_9Aug07.pdf

²⁵⁰ UN Habitat, "The State of Arab Cities 2012: Challenges of Urban Transition" (Nairobi, Kenya: Habitat

Publications, 2012), 45–46, <http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=3320>

²⁵¹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan: People and Society," in *The World Factbook*, 20 June 2012,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

²⁵² Regional Health Systems Observatory-EMRO, World Health Organization, "Health Systems Profile: Jordan," 2006, 10, 36, 54, <http://gis.emro.who.int/HealthSystemObservatory/PDF/Jordan/Full%20Profile.pdf>

preventative care.²⁵³ All Jordanians have access to medical care, many through the public health sector.

Approximately 68% of the population is formally covered by insurance programs, 47% of which come from two public entities: the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Royal Medical Services (RMS).²⁵⁴ Public hospitals, often overcrowded and lacking the most modern equipment, account for 37% of all hospital beds. One-quarter of all doctors are employed by the MOH.²⁵⁵ About 62% of the nation’s doctors are employed in the private sector, which runs 56% of the hospitals in the country. Private healthcare is generally available to the wealthy. Private healthcare centers and hospitals often have better equipment and are less crowded than public hospitals.^{256, 257}



© Cybjorg / flickr.com
Queen Rania comforting patients

Exchange 16: Is there a hospital nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a hospital nearby?	fee mustashfa qaReebeh?
Local:	Yes, in the center of town.	aah, binuS il balad

The RMS provides care for the nation’s military and security forces, including their dependents. Patients from the MOH public sector can be referred to RMS facilities for treatment.²⁵⁸

Exchange 17: Is Dr. Mehmet in?

Soldier:	Is Dr. Mehmet in?	daktooR imHamad mawjood?
Local:	Yes.	aah

Although the general quality of urban medical care is good, it may not always be up to Western standards.^{259, 260} Doctors often speak English.²⁶¹ Ambulances, which are generally unreliable, are

²⁵³ Regional Health Systems Observatory-EMRO, World Health Organization, “Health Systems Profile: Jordan,” 2006, 36, 54, <http://gis.emro.who.int/HealthSystemObservatory/PDF/Jordan/Full%20Profile.pdf>

²⁵⁴ Regional Health Systems Observatory-EMRO, World Health Organization, “Health Systems Profile: Jordan,” 2006, 56, <http://gis.emro.who.int/HealthSystemObservatory/PDF/Jordan/Full%20Profile.pdf>

²⁵⁵ Regional Health Systems Observatory-EMRO, World Health Organization, “Health Systems Profile: Jordan,” 2006, 37, <http://gis.emro.who.int/HealthSystemObservatory/PDF/Jordan/Full%20Profile.pdf>

²⁵⁶ David L. Higgitt, “Urbanization and Environmental Degradation in Jordan,” in *Human Settlement Development*, vol. 1, Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems, 353–54, <http://www.eolss.net/Sample-Chapters/C14/E1-18-02-03.pdf>

²⁵⁷ CultureGrams World Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

²⁵⁸ Regional Health Systems Observatory-EMRO, World Health Organization, “Health Systems Profile: Jordan,” 2006, 38, <http://gis.emro.who.int/HealthSystemObservatory/PDF/Jordan/Full%20Profile.pdf>

²⁵⁹ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan: Country Specific Information,” 1 August 2011, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1149.html#medical

²⁶⁰ Smartraveller, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, “Jordan: Health,” 28 May 2012, <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Jordan>

²⁶¹ Expat Focus, “Jordan: Healthcare and Medical Treatment,” n.d., <http://www.expatsfocus.com/expatriate-jordan-healthcare-medical>

staffed with minimally trained personnel.^{262, 263} In private hospitals, patients must pay in cash as soon as medical services are rendered.²⁶⁴ Medications in both private and public facilities are sometimes in short supply.²⁶⁵

Exchange 18: Do you know what is wrong?

Soldier:	Do you know what is wrong?	ti'Rif shoo SaaR?
Local:	No.	laa

Education

In the Middle East, Jordan is distinguished by its policy of gender equality in schools. The educational standard for both sexes is the same at all levels of education. Despite gender-segregated schools, courses for males and females are identical. Both Muslims and Christians attend the same classes. This has provided Jordan with one of the most highly educated labor forces in the Arab world. Virtually everyone under the age of 24 (99%) can read and write.²⁶⁶ Educational attainment is higher in urban areas. In Amman, for example, more than half of the population has achieved a secondary education or more.²⁶⁷



© Taromeet / flickr.com
School kids in Baqa'a

Public education is free and compulsory through grade 10. Two more years of education are required to obtain a diploma (*tawjihi*). During these two years, students choose from two tracks. The general track includes science, literature, information technology, or Islamic law. The second is a vocational track under which students can study, among other skills, hotel management, plumbing, or carpentry. Many young men, in order to help support their families, drop out before obtaining a diploma, but women are likely to continue through advanced education.²⁶⁸ School days are Sunday through Thursday, although Christian schools have Friday and Sunday off.²⁶⁹

The high cost of private schools limits their availability to wealthier families. Many of the private schools are affiliated with religious groups, including the Catholic Church. Because of a

²⁶² Overseas Security Advisory Council, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan 2012 Crime and Safety Report,” 4 March 2012, <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=10877>
²⁶³ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan: Country Specific Information,” 1 August 2011, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1149.html#medical
²⁶⁴ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan: Country Specific Information,” 1 August 2011, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1149.html#medical
²⁶⁵ Overseas Security Advisory Council, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan 2012 Crime and Safety Report,” 4 March 2012, <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=10877>
²⁶⁶ CultureGrams World Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.
²⁶⁷ UN Habitat, “The State of Arab Cities 2012: Challenges of Urban Transition” (Nairobi, Kenya: Habitat Publications, 2012), 47, <http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=3320>
²⁶⁸ CultureGrams World Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.
²⁶⁹ CultureGrams World Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

reputation for discipline and high student productivity, many Muslim families choose to send their children to Christian schools.²⁷⁰

The public school curriculum is dictated by the government and focuses on sciences over humanities. Both Arabic and English are mandatory in primary school. Some private schools may offer French or German.²⁷¹

Restaurants

Formal Establishments

Urban restaurants serve a wide variety of cuisines, including Chinese food, American fast foods, and other Western dishes.²⁷² Because most Jordanians generally prefer to eat at home, dining out is often reserved for business affairs or family celebrations.²⁷³ Dinners in restaurants often begin after 9 p.m.²⁷⁴ Unlike in private homes, where all foods are served at once, restaurants usually begin with *mezze* or *muqabalat* (appetizers). Typical appetizers are hummus, pureed eggplant (*baba ghanouj*), and a salad made from tomatoes, green onions, fresh mint, and parsley mixed with bulgur wheat and lemon juice (*taboula*).²⁷⁵ Food is normally served on individual plates, although more traditional restaurants serve food on a common platter (*sidr*), as is typically done in Jordanian homes.²⁷⁶ Food may be eaten with the hands, but utensils may be provided. When using cutlery, follow the European tradition of keeping the knife in the right hand and the fork in the left.²⁷⁷



© Zack Zaiium
Cafe in Amman

Exchange 19: Are you still serving breakfast?

Soldier:	Are you still serving breakfast?	ba'adkun 'ambit-admoo ifTooR?
Local:	Yes.	aah

²⁷⁰ CultureGrams World Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

²⁷¹ CultureGrams World Edition, “Jordan,” 2012.

²⁷² Directrooms, “Amman Travel Guide: Eating Out,” n.d., <http://directrooms.com/jordan/travel-guides/amman/eating-out.htm>

²⁷³ Kenneth Betts, “Jordan: Prosperous Entertaining (Part 2),” Executive Planet, 29 June 2012, <http://executiveplanet.com/index.php?title=Jordan>

²⁷⁴ Allo’Expat, “Jordan Dining: Dining in Jordan Guide,” 19 May 2006, http://www.alloexpat.com/jordan_expats_forum/jordan-dining-dining-in-jordan-guide-t2933.html

²⁷⁵ Amal Daraiseh and Adel Iskandar, “Jordanians,” in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life*, vol. 3, eds. Timothy L. Gall and Jeneen Hobby (Detroit, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 440.

²⁷⁶ Safaritheglobe, “Jordan: Food, Dining and Drinks,” August 2011, http://www.safaritheglobe.com/food_jordan.aspx

²⁷⁷ Safaritheglobe, “Jordan: Food, Dining and Drinks,” August 2011, http://www.safaritheglobe.com/food_jordan.aspx

Exchange 20: Do you have a dessert?

Soldier:	Do you have a dessert?	'indak taHlaayeh?
Local:	Yes, we have baklava.	ay, 'inaa be-laawa

When paying the bill, it is customary to tip between 10% and 15% unless the service charge has already been included.²⁷⁸

Exchange 21: Put this all in one bill please.

Soldier:	Put this all in one bill please.	i'mool ma'Roof HuT-haa kulhaa 'afaatoora waHde
Local:	Sure.	tikRam

Exchange 22: Can I have my total bill, please?

Soldier:	Can I have my total bill, please?	mumkin itjiblee il faatoora kaamleh, min faDlak?
Local:	Yes, of course.	akeed, min i'yoonee

Most restaurants have restrooms, the majority of which are likely to have Western-style toilets. In smaller traditional establishments, toilets are likely to be squat toilets. Few restrooms have toilet paper; it is wise to carry your own although tissues are sometimes available for a small fee. To avoid the toilets overflowing, paper should be thrown in the basket.^{279, 280}

Exchange 23: Where is your restroom?

Soldier:	Where is your restroom?	wayn Hamaamkum?
Local:	That room to your left, over there.	il ooDa ilee 'ashmaalak, hoonaak

Vendors and Informal Restaurants

Shwarma stands offer carryout food. These stands sell marinated meat cooked on an upright skewer; the meat is sliced off and wrapped in unleavened bread with vegetables and a yogurt sauce. *Shwarma* stands, which often sell water and soft drinks, open before noon and close late in the evenings.^{281, 282}

²⁷⁸ Vayama, "Jordanian Etiquette Tips," 2012, <http://www.vayama.com/etiquette/jordan/>

²⁷⁹ Anthony Ham and Paul Greenway, *Lonely Planet: Jordan* (Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet Publications, 2003), 57.

²⁸⁰ ElizabethinJordan, "Hamamat Fil Urdun: Bathrooms in Jordan," 12 July 2011, <http://elizabethinJordan.wordpress.com/2011/07/12/bathrooms/>

²⁸¹ Allo' Expat, "Jordan Dining: Dining in Jordan Guide," 19 May 2006, http://www.alloexpat.com/jordan_espato_forum/jordan-dining-dining-in-jordan-guide-t2933.html

Exchange 24: May I have a glass of water?

Soldier:	May I have a glass of water?	mumkin itjiblee kubaayit maayeh?
Local:	Yes, right away.	HaaDiR, 'ala Raasee

Exchange 25: I'd like some hot soup.

Soldier:	I'd like some hot soup.	bidee shooRaba SuKhneh
Local:	Sure.	tikRam

Other informal restaurants and fast food venues are available. Many sell local food items. Some sell hamburgers, pizza, or fried chicken. They are typically open throughout the afternoons.²⁸³

Exchange 26: I would like tea, please.

Soldier:	I would like tea, please.	bidee shaay i'mal ma'Roof
Local:	Sure.	tikRam

Marketplace and Street Vendors

Urban areas have a variety of shopping alternatives, from conventional department stores to traditional souks, or marketplaces. The Gold Souk in Amman is recognized as one of the best in the country. This mazelike cluster of shops and stalls offers products such as gold jewelry, spices, and perfumes.²⁸⁴



© Jeff Werner
Coffee vendor in street

Exchange 27: Is the bazaar nearby?

Soldier:	Is the bazaar nearby?	is sooq qaReeb min hon?
Local:	Yes, over there on the right.	aah, hoonak 'aalyameen

²⁸² Michael Slackman, "Wrapped in a Pita, A Taste Jordanians Can't Resist," *New York Times*, 28 December 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/29/world/middleeast/29shawarma.html>

²⁸³ Allo' Expat, "Jordan Dining: Dining in Jordan Guide," 19 May 2006, http://www.alloexpat.com/jordan_expats_forum/jordan-dining-dining-in-jordan-guide-t2933.html

²⁸⁴ Planners Travel and Tourism, "About Jordan: Shopping," 2009, <http://www.plannerstravel.com/PT/Web/WebContent.aspx?id=10>

Exchange 28: May I examine this close up?

Soldier:	May I examine this close up?	ba-daR afHaS-haa 'an aReeb?
Local:	Sure.	akeed

Almost anything can be purchased in souks, including rugs, brass and copperware, and traditional arts-and-crafts items. The quality of goods varies from region to region, but the selection is similar. Vendors expect buyers to haggle to get a better price, but if prices are clearly marked, bargaining is not appropriate.²⁸⁵

Exchange 29: Do you have any more of these?

Soldier:	Do you have any more of these?	fee ma'ak min haThol kamaan?
Local:	No.	laa

Exchange 30: Do you sell mosaic?

Soldier:	Do you sell mosaic?	bitbee' fusayfusaa?
Local:	Yes.	aah

The two most Western-style malls in Amman are Mecca Mall and Carrefour. Both have hundreds of stores, movie theaters, restaurants, and bakeries. They are not the cheapest shopping areas in the city, but they are safe and convenient. Most stores open around 10 a.m. and close around 2 p.m. for lunch. Stores reopen between 4 and 5 p.m. and remain open late.²⁸⁶

Exchange 31: Can I buy a rug with this much money?

Soldier:	Can I buy a rug with this much money?	mumkin ashtaRee ibsaaT behal maSaaRee?
Local:	No.	laa

²⁸⁵ Planners Travel and Tourism, “About Jordan: Shopping,” 2009, <http://www.plannerstravel.com/PT/Web/WebContent.aspx?id=10>

²⁸⁶ Trips to Jordan and Beyond, “Shopping in Amman Jordan: Malls, Crafts, Gold and Antiques,” 2012, <http://www.trips-to-jordan.com/shopping-in-amman-jordan.html>

Exchange 32: How much longer will you be here?

Soldier:	How much longer will you be here?	adaysh RaaH itDal hoonaak?
Local:	Three more hours.	lathalaath saa'aat kamaan

Money and ATMs

The national currency is the dinar (JD). Prices are sometimes given in piastre or *qirsh* (100 piastre or *qirsh* equals one dinar). Since prices are often quoted without a unit, it is necessary to determine if the price is being quoted in piastre or dinars.²⁸⁷ Exchanging money is easy and can be done at banks or authorized money changers. Older U.S. notes are sometimes refused; use newer bills.²⁸⁸ Credit cards are widely accepted at more expensive hotels and restaurants as well as at larger souvenir shops. ATMs are widely available, but access in smaller towns may be limited.²⁸⁹



© Wayan Vota
ATM in Amman

Exchange 33: Can you give me change for this?

Soldier:	Can you give me change for this?	tiqdaR tuSRiflee yaahaa?
Local:	No.	laa

Exchange 34: Do you accept US currency?

Soldier:	Do you accept US currency?	taaKhud 'umleh amReekeeyeh?
Local:	No we only accept Jordanian.	laa, bas naaKhud 'imleh oRduneeyeh

Transportation

Jordan’s public transportation system, which is neither reliable nor comprehensive, primarily serves those who have no other transportation options. Most cities have buses and all have taxis.

²⁸⁷ Lonely Planet, “Jordan Practical Information: Money and Costs,” 2012, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/practical-information/money-costs>

²⁸⁸ Lonely Planet, “Jordan Practical Information: Money and Costs,” 2012, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/practical-information/money-costs>

²⁸⁹ Lonely Planet, “Jordan Practical Information: Money and Costs,” 2012, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/practical-information/money-costs>

Only 30% of Amman residents rely on public transportation, and only 16% of the city population regularly uses the public buses.^{290, 291, 292}

Cars

Roads in and near major cities are generally in good repair, but Jordan has a high rate of traffic accidents.²⁹³ Drivers often use unsafe practices, including aggressive driving, failure to use turn signals, and crowding other drivers. Driving in the capital is particularly hazardous during the summer months when tourists expand the number of people in the city. Roads can also be dangerous during the rainy season from December through March. Even in urban areas, livestock wandering along the highways can pose driving risks. Unmarked speed bumps are additional hazards.²⁹⁴ In accidents involving pedestrians, drivers are always considered at fault and can be imprisoned or face heavy fines. In any injury accident, drivers may be held in jail until fault is determined and financial restitution made.²⁹⁵



© Dosio Dosev / flickr.com
Taxi

Exchange 35: Where can I rent a car?

Soldier:	Where can I rent a car?	min wayn ba-daR asta-jeR sayaaRa?
Local:	Downtown.	min nuS il balad

Exchange 36: Which road leads to the airport?

Soldier:	Which road leads to the airport?	ay TaRee bitwadee 'aalmaTaaR?
Local:	The road heading east.	iT TaRee il shaR-eeeyh

²⁹⁰ UN Habitat, “The State of Arab Cities 2012: Challenges of Urban Transition” (Nairobi, Kenya: Habitat Publications, 2012), 60, <http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=3320>

²⁹¹ Anna Naddoush, “Public Transportation in Jordan: Mental Makeover,” 27 February 2011, <http://ananaddoush.net/2011/02/27/public-transportation-in-jordan-mental-makeover/>

²⁹² Robert B. Potter et al., “An Introduction to the Urban Geography of Amman, Jordan” (geographical paper no. 182, University of Reading, England, June 2007), 19, http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/geog/GP182_Amman_RBP_9Aug07.pdf

²⁹³ Overseas Security Advisory Council, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan 2012 Crime and Safety Report,” 4 March 2012, <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=10877>

²⁹⁴ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan: Country Specific Information,” 1 August 2011, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1149.html#traffic_safety

²⁹⁵ Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, “Travel Report: Jordan,” 29 June 2012, http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/report_rapport-eng.asp?id=144000

Taxis

There are two types of taxis operating in Jordan. The private yellow taxis are metered and are readily available in the cities. A cheaper option is the white *servis* or communal taxis, which travel along specific routes.²⁹⁶ Women should avoid traveling alone by taxi and should always ride in the back seat. There have been reports of taxi drivers assaulting female passengers.^{297, 298}

Exchange 37: Where can I get a cab?

Soldier:	Where can I get a cab?	wayn ba-daR alaa-ee taaksee?
Local:	Over there.	hoonaak

Exchange 38: Can you take me there?

Soldier:	Can you take me there?	feek itwaSilnee lahoonaak?
Local:	Yes, I can.	aah, akeed

Buses

The most popular forms of transport in Jordan are minibuses and public buses.²⁹⁹ Minibuses stop running at midday on Friday and rarely run in the evenings.³⁰⁰ The large blue-and-white buses are operated by the JETT company and run selected routes between major cities. Buses to smaller towns are often minibuses that leave only when full; service on these routes may be infrequent.³⁰¹ Unrelated males and females may sit next to each other on buses.³⁰²



© zz77 / flickr.com
Bus in Aqaba

²⁹⁶ Expat Focus, “Jordan: Driving and Public Transport,” n.d., <http://www.expatsfocus.com/expatriate-jordan-driving-transport>

²⁹⁷ Smartraveller, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, “Jordan: Health,” 28 May 2012, <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Jordan>

²⁹⁸ Overseas Security Advisory Council, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan 2012 Crime and Safety Report,” 4 March 2012, <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=10877>

²⁹⁹ Lonely Planet, “Jordan” Getting There and Around,” 2012, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/transport/getting-around>

³⁰⁰ Ruth’s Jordan Jubilee, “Travel Inside Jordan: Buses, Service Taxis, Car Rental, Driving, Hitch Hiking,” n.d., <http://www.jordanjubilee.com/genjord/hardfact4-travel.htm>

³⁰¹ Expat Focus, “Jordan: Driving and Public Transport,” n.d., <http://www.expatsfocus.com/expatriate-jordan-driving-transport>

³⁰² Lonely Planet, “Jordan: Getting There and Around,” 2012, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/transport/getting-around>

Exchange 39: Will the bus be here soon?

Soldier:	Will the bus be here soon?	il baaS RaH yooSal ba'd ishway?
Local:	Yes.	aah

Air and Rail

Jordan’s only domestic air route connects the cities of Amman and Aqaba.³⁰³ With the exception of a passenger link between Amman and Damascus, there is no railway service.³⁰⁴ But travel on this line appears to have been suspended with no announced date for reopening.³⁰⁵

Exchange 40: Is there a train station nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a train station nearby?	fee maHaTet qiTaaR aReebah?
Local:	Yes.	aah

Street Crime and Solicitations

Crime

The crime rate in Jordan is low. Petty crimes, such as pickpocketing and purse snatching, are the most common forms directed against foreign nationals. Petty crimes are especially problematic in the downtown areas and in wealthier sections of the capital.^{306, 307, 308} More serious crimes of sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, and rape occur, but in much smaller numbers. Women should avoid taxis and avoid traveling to unfamiliar areas at night, especially when traveling



© Richard White
Mounted police, Petra

³⁰³ HotelTravel, “Jordan Transportation,” n.d., <http://www.hoteltravel.com/jordan/guides/transport.htm>

³⁰⁴ Ruth’s Jordan Jubilee, “Travel Inside Jordan: Buses, Service Taxis, Car Rental, Driving, Hitch Hiking,” n.d., <http://www.jordanjubilee.com/genjord/hardfact4-travel.htm>

³⁰⁵ Seat61, “London to Amman, Petra and Jordan . . .” n.d., <http://www.seat61.com/Jordan.htm>

³⁰⁶ Smartraveller, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, “Jordan: Health,” 28 May 2012, <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Jordan>

³⁰⁷ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan: Country Specific Information,” 1 August 2011, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1149.html#crime

³⁰⁸ Overseas Security Advisory Council, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan 2012 Crime and Safety Report,” 4 March 2012, <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=10877>

alone.³⁰⁹ Crimes involving credit cards are increasingly common. Travelers should be cautious when using ATM machines and keep all cards clearly in sight when making purchases.^{310, 311}

Unemployment and rising prices have fueled recent demonstrations. Although mostly peaceful, some have escalated into violence. It is advisable to stay away from demonstrations and large gatherings of people, especially near mosques on Fridays.³¹² The threat of tribal violence is significant. For example, tribal violence resulted in a shutdown of the southern city of Ma'an. According to notices issued by the U.S. Embassy in Jordan, motorists are sometimes attacked and key highways closed. Protests and violence are recurrent on university campuses and along Jordan's East Bank.³¹³

Beggars

Jordan's government has an active campaign to rid the streets of beggars. According to a government study, 95% of beggars were less needy than they claimed. As many as 40% had pensions, were getting money from the national aid fund, or had second income sources. Some are members of organized criminal gangs. In 2008, for example, nearly 20% of beggars caught by police were exploited children from the Hussien Palestinian refugee camp. The number of beggars increases significantly during the month of Ramadan, when people tend to be more charitable. Begging is a crime in Jordan, and the government advises that people should politely refuse to give money to beggars or hawkers.^{314, 315}



© craigfinlay / flickr.com
Beggar and child

Exchange 41: Give me money

Local:	Give me money	a'Teenee maSaaRee
Soldier:	I don't have any.	maa ma'ee maSaaRee abadan

³⁰⁹ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan: Country Specific Information," 1 August 2011, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1149.html#crime

³¹⁰ Smartraveller, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "Jordan: Health," 28 May 2012, <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Jordan>

³¹¹ Overseas Security Advisory Council, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan 2012 Crime and Safety Report," 4 March 2012, <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=10877>

³¹² Overseas Security Advisory Council, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan 2012 Crime and Safety Report," 4 March 2012, <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=10877>

³¹³ Overseas Security Advisory Council, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan 2012 Crime and Safety Report," 4 March 2012, <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=10877>

³¹⁴ Suha Maayeh, "'Profitable' Begging Proves Hard to Stamp Out," National, 30 August 2008, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/profitable-begging-proves-hard-to-stamp-out>

³¹⁵ Kuwait News Agency, "Beggars a Worrying Phenomenon in Jordan," 14 June 2003, <http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=1353597&language=en>

Chapter 4 Assessment

1. About 80% of Jordanians live in urban centers.
TRUE
Jordan is a largely urban nation with 80% of the population living in cities. The nation's three largest cities, Amman, Zarqa, and Irbid, are home to 70% of all Jordanians.
2. Most urban households outside Amman are connected to public sewer systems.
FALSE
Although nearly 80% of all households in Amman are connected to city sewer systems, less than 5% of households in other urban areas are connected.
3. Jordan's healthcare system is one of the weakest in the Middle East.
FALSE
Jordan's healthcare system, recognized as one of the most modern in the Middle East, has raised life expectancy to 80 years and lowered infant mortality rates.
4. Jordan's public transportation infrastructure is underdeveloped.
TRUE
Jordan's public transportation system is neither reliable nor comprehensive.
5. The crime rate in Jordan is generally low.
TRUE
The general crime rate in Jordan is low. Petty crimes, which include pickpocketing and purse snatching, are the most common types of crime directed against foreign nationals.

CHAPTER 5: RURAL LIFE

Introduction

Although Jordan was once predominantly rural, today only about 21% of Jordanians live in rural areas.³¹⁶ Poverty is widespread, and 19% of rural dwellers are classified as poor. Several conditions account for the high levels of rural poverty, including arid conditions, which make it difficult for people to grow enough food to feed themselves. The small size of the average farm and the high number of sharecroppers compound the problem. Pay in sectors outside agriculture is low. Other contributing factors include the larger sizes of rural families and higher rates of illiteracy among adults.³¹⁷



© About Qudimat
Rural Jordan

Among the most well-known rural people are the desert-dwelling Bedouin. Today, the Bedouin struggle to maintain their traditionally nomadic way of life. Even though some have settled near populated areas or tourist centers such as Wadi Rum and Petra, their traditional ways are a national reminder of a lifestyle that was common not long ago.^{318, 319}

Land Distribution

Traditionally, land was community property belonging to tribes rather than to individuals.³²⁰ Before 1930, most land in Jordan was controlled by tribes; under a system known as *musha'a*, village elders redistributed land for individual use.³²¹ This system began to change following the end of World War I. With the breakup of the Ottoman Empire, the region became an emirate under British mandate. The new government set about reorganizing its lands, defining village boundaries, and identifying the limits of state lands. To accomplish this, the newly established Department of Lands and Survey (DLS) began surveying, mapping, and registering land. Out of the process



© Charles Roffey
Ostrich farm

³¹⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan: People and Society," in *The World Factbook*, 17 July 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

³¹⁷ International Fund for Agricultural Development, "Enabling the Rural Poor to Overcome Poverty in Jordan," n.d., 1–2, <http://www.ifad.org/operations/projects/regions/pn/factsheets/jo.pdf>

³¹⁸ UNESCO Amman, "Intangible Cultural Heritage of Jordan: The Cultural Space of the Bedu in Petra and Wadi Rum," 27 September 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhqtI9bEJuw>

³¹⁹ Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "The People of Jordan: The Bedouins," n.d., <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/people1.html>

³²⁰ Nadia Forni, "Land Tenure Policies in the Near East" (paper, Economic and Social Development Department of the Food and Agriculture Organization, n.d.), <http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/Y8999T/y8999t0f.htm>

³²¹ Jared E. Hazleton, "Land Reform in Jordan: The East Ghor Canal Project," *Middle Eastern Studies* 15, no. 2 (May 1979): 258.

came a series of new laws including the Land Settlement Law, which gave title of lands to registered individual landholders.^{322, 323}

Both customary and formal land tenure systems operate in Jordan, leading to occasional conflict and confusion over land ownership. Land in Jordan may be owned by individuals or by groups. Ownership has four classifications: privately owned (*mulk*), communal land held by tribes (*musha'a*), religious land (*waqf*), and state-owned public lands (*miri*). The government or state owns all uncultivated or undeveloped land in the nation.^{324, 325} All land transactions must be processed through and registered by the DLS.³²⁶

Exchange 42: Do you own this land?

Soldier:	Do you own this land?	haay il aRD laa ilak?
Local:	No.	laa

A major land reform initiative began in 1959 when the government developed the East Ghor Canal Project in the Jordan Valley.³²⁷ Before land reform took place, a 1960 survey showed that land ownership was concentrated in the hands of a few. Following the introduction of a major land reform, the average size of farms decreased to about 3 hectares (7 acres) and the number of owners increased.^{328, 329} Although reforms created more landholders, they did not increase the number of owner-operated farms. Sharecroppers still cultivate much of the farmland.^{330, 331}

³²² Husam Jamil Madanat, “Land Tenure in Jordan,” *Land Tenure Journal*, no. 1 (2010): 144,

<http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/land-tenure-journal/index.php/LTJ/article/view/12/6>

³²³ Jared E. Hazleton, “Land Reform in Jordan: The East Ghor Canal Project,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 15, no. 2 (May 1979): 258.

³²⁴ USAID, “Land Tenure and Property Rights Regional Report, Volume 2.5: Near East Asia and North Africa,” 2007, 15,

http://www.tetrachard.com/ard/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&task=download&id=32&Itemid=59&lang=us

³²⁵ Nadia Forni, “Land Tenure Policies in the Near East” (paper, Economic and Social Development Department of the Food and Agriculture Organization, n.d.), <http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/Y8999T/y8999t0f.htm>

³²⁶ Husam Jamil Madanat, “Land Tenure in Jordan,” *Land Tenure Journal*, no. 1 (2010): 154,

<http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/land-tenure-journal/index.php/LTJ/article/view/12/6>

³²⁷ Jared E. Hazleton, “Land Reform in Jordan: The East Canal Ghor Project,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 15, no. 2 (May 1979): 258.

³²⁸ Jared E. Hazleton, “Land Reform in Jordan: The East Ghor Canal Project,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 15, no. 2 (May 1979): 264–66.

³²⁹ Kim C. Hjort, Jamed Zakaria, and Falah I. Salah, “An Introduction to Jordan’s Agriculture Sector and Agricultural Policies” (report, WTO Accession Unit, May 1998), 4, http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACN066.pdf

³³⁰ Jared E. Hazleton, “Land Reform in Jordan: The East Ghor Canal Project,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 15, no. 2 (May 1979): 267.

³³¹ Mauro Van Aken et al., “Historical Trajectory of a River Basin in the Middle East: The Lower Jordan River Basin (in Jordan),” International Water Management Institute, n.d., 76–77, http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/assessment/files_new/research_projects/River_Basin_Development_and_Management/JORDAN_REPORT_partA%5B1%5D.pdf

Economy

Deserts constitute roughly 80% of Jordan's land, making Jordan the third most water-insecure nation in the world.^{332, 333, 334} Desertification caused by poor water infrastructure, lack of rain, and poor farming practices threatens to take over vital agricultural lands.³³⁵ Partly as a result of water issues, the economic significance of agriculture has diminished. The sector employs less than 3% of the nation's workforce and accounts for only 4.5% of GDP (gross domestic product).³³⁶ Two-thirds of hired agricultural workers come from outside Jordan.³³⁷



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Tomato seller

Nearly 80% of all crops are grown in the rain-fed sections of the country; the main crops are wheat and barley. In the Jordan Valley, where much of the land is irrigated, citrus and other fruits along with vegetables such as potatoes, tomatoes, and cucumbers are main products. Livestock is mostly sheep and goats, although there are some cattle, camels, horses, and poultry.^{338, 339, 340}

Nonagricultural incomes are an important revenue source, accounting for about 51% of rural Jordanian incomes.³⁴¹ The nation's poor derive 20% of their pay from nonfarm sources, while

³³² Government of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Geography," n.d.,

http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/geo_env1.html

³³³ Hana Namrouqa, "Jordan Facing Water Security Risk: Report," *Jordan Times*, 23 March 2011,

<http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/?p=2198>

³³⁴ Husam Jamil Madanat, "Land Tenure in Jordan," *Land Tenure Journal*, no. 1 (2010): 146,

<http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/land-tenure-journal/index.php/LTJ/article/view/12/6>

³³⁵ International Fund for Agricultural Development, "On the Frontline: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," 2007,

<http://www.ifad.org/media/video/desert/jordan.rm>

³³⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 17 July 2012,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

³³⁷ Mauro Van Aken et al., "Historical Trajectory of a River Basin in the Middle East: The Lower Jordan River Basin (in Jordan)," International Water Management Institute, n.d., 108,

http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/assessment/files_new/research_projects/River_Basin_Development_and_Management/JORDAN_REPORT_partA%5B1%5D.pdf

³³⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Jordan: Economy," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/306128/Jordan/214116/Agriculture>

³³⁹ Department of Statistics, Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, "Agriculture: List of Tables," 2007,

http://www.dos.gov.jo/agr/agr_e/index.htm

³⁴⁰ International Fund for Agricultural Development, "On the Frontline: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," 2007,

<http://www.ifad.org/media/video/desert/jordan.rm>

³⁴¹ Richard H. Adams, Jr., "Nonfarm Income, Inequality and Poverty in Rural Egypt and Jordan" (policy research

working paper WPS 2572, World Bank, 31 March 2001), 14, 31, http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2001/04/13/000094946_01040505331568/additioanal/129529323_20041118130639.pdf

the rich derive 55%.³⁴² Most nonfarm workers are employed by the government or the private sector, or work as unskilled labor in areas such as construction.^{343, 344}

Exchange 43: Where do you work?

Soldier:	Where do you work?	wayn ibtishtaghil?
Local:	I am a farmer.	anaa muzaaRi'

Exchange 44: Are you the only person in your family who has a job?

Soldier:	Are you the only person in your family who has a job?	inta bas ilee 'indoo shughul ib'eeltak? Are you the only person in your family who has a job?
Local:	No.	laa

Unemployment is higher in rural areas, especially among women.³⁴⁵ Jordan’s overall labor force participation rate is only 26%, partially because approximately 40% of the population is younger than 16. Other factors, including cultural notions of acceptable employment vis-à-vis age, gender, and social status, help account for the low participation.³⁴⁶ Rural and urban men are equally likely to be involved in the workforce (65% vs. 67%). The same is true for rural and urban women (15% vs. 17%), but as these numbers reflect, women’s participation in the workforce is far below that of men.³⁴⁷

Transportation

Although cars can easily be rented from a number of international agencies, authorities strongly advise against driving outside the capital at night because of risks posed by poor lighting, unmarked construction areas, wandering livestock, and drivers who fail to use their headlights.³⁴⁸

³⁴² Abdel-Nabi Fardous et al., “Harnessing Salty Water to Enhance Sustainable Livelihoods of the Rural Poor in Four Countries in West Asia and North Africa: Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Tunisia” (Jordan national report, National Center for Agricultur [sic] Research and Technology Transfere [sic], August 2004), 21, http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/assessment/files_new/research_projects/ICBA%20NationalReport_Jordan.pdf

³⁴³ Richard H. Adams, Jr., “Nonfarm Income, Inequality and Poverty in Rural Egypt and Jordan” (policy research working paper WPS 2572, World Bank, 31 March 2001), 14, 31, http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2001/04/13/000094946_01040505331568/additional/129529323_20041118130639.pdf

³⁴⁴ Åge A. Tiltne et al., “Strengthening Social Statistics and Monitoring Living Conditions in Jordan,” n.d., 130, 133, <http://www.fao.no/ais/middeast/jordan/sss/Chapter%204%20-%20Labour%20force.pdf>

³⁴⁵ Åge A. Tiltne et al., “Strengthening Social Statistics and Monitoring Living Conditions in Jordan,” n.d., 174–75, <http://www.fao.no/ais/middeast/jordan/sss/Chapter%204%20-%20Labour%20force.pdf>

³⁴⁶ Åge A. Tiltne et al., “Strengthening Social Statistics and Monitoring Living Conditions in Jordan,” n.d., 110, <http://www.fao.no/ais/middeast/jordan/sss/Chapter%204%20-%20Labour%20force.pdf>

³⁴⁷ Åge A. Tiltne et al., “Strengthening Social Statistics and Monitoring Living Conditions in Jordan,” n.d., 111, <http://www.fao.no/ais/middeast/jordan/sss/Chapter%204%20-%20Labour%20force.pdf>

³⁴⁸ Overseas Security Advisory Council, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan 2012 Crime and Safety Report,” 4 March 2012, <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=10877>

Roads outside major cities are undeveloped. Knowledgeable mechanics as well as car parts can be in short supply.³⁴⁹ Drivers should carry an international driver’s license, although if their native driver’s license is valid, it is not usually necessary.³⁵⁰

Exchange 45: Is there a good auto mechanic nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a good auto mechanic nearby?	fee meekaaneekee ikwayes aReeb?
Local:	Yes.	aah

Public transportation in rural areas is less reliable than in cities. Buses have no set schedules, often stop running around 5 p.m., and can be slow.³⁵¹ One domestic flight links the capital of Amman to Aqaba. There is no domestic train service.³⁵² For visits to some of the major tourist destinations such as Petra and Wadi Rum, one may hire a taxi although there is sometimes a minimum requirement of three days.³⁵³



© Gunther Flaig
Rural road

Exchange 46: Is there a gas station nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a gas station nearby?	fee maHaTet banzeen aReebbeh?
Local:	Yes.	aah

Healthcare

Access to primary care facilities is good, but services are often basic.^{354, 355} Access to sophisticated care is less available.^{356, 357} Most of the available healthcare facilities in rural areas

³⁴⁹ Lonely Planet, “Jordan: Getting There and Around,” 2012, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/transport/getting-around>

³⁵⁰ Lonely Planet, “Jordan: Getting There and Around,” 2012, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/transport/getting-around>

³⁵¹ Peace Corps Wiki, “Living Conditions and Volunteer Lifestyles in Jordan,” 1 May 2012, http://www.peacecorpswiki.org/Living_conditions_and_volunteer_lifestyles_in_Jordan

³⁵² Lonely Planet, “Jordan: Getting There and Around,” 2012, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/transport/getting-around>

³⁵³ Lonely Planet, “Jordan: Getting There and Around,” 2012, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/transport/getting-around>

³⁵⁴ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan: Country Specific Information,” 1 August 2011, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1149.html#medical

³⁵⁵ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, “Jordan: Health,” 28 May 2012, <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Jordan>

are public facilities.³⁵⁸ A newly developed telemedicine system now links patients in the remote areas of the northeast with specialists at the Prince Hamzah Hospital in Amman.^{359, 360} Another program allows women to use cell phones to text health questions and receive answers from doctors. The program is particularly helpful for Bedouin women who often lack easy access to healthcare facilities and who are prevented from seeking medical assistance without their husband’s permission.³⁶¹

Exchange 47: Is there a medical clinic nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a medical clinic nearby?	fee mustawSaf qaReeb?
Local:	Yes, over there.	aah, hoonaaak

Exchange 48: My arm is broken, can you help me?

Soldier:	My arm is broken, can you help me?	eedee maksooRa, tiqdaR itsaa'idnee?
Local:	Yes, I can help you.	aah, biqdaR asaa'dak

Jordan’s focus has been on providing primary care for its citizens, especially in rural areas. Primary healthcare facilities are of three types: village centers, primary health centers, and comprehensive health centers. Village facilities, open 3–4 hours a day, are generally staffed by a nurse and visited by a doctor two or three times a week. Primary health centers, open 6 days a week from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., usually have more than one nurse, a doctor, laboratory facilities for routine diagnostic services, basic dental care facilities, and some capacity for emergency care. Ambulances are available. Comprehensive health centers have a larger nursing staff, which often includes a midwife, laboratory technician, and pharmacist; they also have dental and emergency, X-ray, and ambulance services. Specialists visit several times a week. These centers provide emergency care outside their regular hours (8 a.m.–3 p.m. 6 days a week).^{362, 363}

³⁵⁶ Regional Health Systems Observatory, World Health Organization, “Health Systems Profile: Jordan,” 2006, 44, <http://gis.emro.who.int/HealthSystemObservatory/PDF/Jordan/Full%20Profile.pdf>

³⁵⁷ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, “Jordan: Health,” 28 May 2012, <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Jordan>

³⁵⁸ Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “Media and Communications: Health and Social Development,” n.d., <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/jib/factsheets/health.shtml>

³⁵⁹ Ellis Pharma Ltd., “Key Healthcare Developments in Jordan,” 5 August 2011, <http://www.ellispharma.com/news/2011/08/key-healthcare-developments-jordan/>

³⁶⁰ Cisco, “Jordan Healthcare Initiative,” 2012, http://csr.cisco.com/cdnorigin/media/documents/JHI-Executive-Brief_129745734749643396.pdf

³⁶¹ Jenara Nerenberg, “Jordanian Health Program Connects Bedouin Mothers with MDs via Text,” Fast Company, 18 February 2011, <http://www.fastcompany.com/1729007/jordans-mobile-health-pilot-connects-bedouin-mothers-with-doctors#ehealth>

³⁶² Fadia Hasna et al., “Quality of Primary Nursing Care for Bedouin in Jordan,” *International Journal of Nursing Practice* 16 (2010): 565–66, <http://www.philadelphia.edu.jo/research-portal/uploads/14094.pdf>

³⁶³ Gillian Lewando Hundt et al., “The Provision of Accessible, Acceptable Health Care in Rural Remote Areas and the Right to Health: Bedouin in the North East Region of Jordan,” *Social Science and Medicine* 74 (2012): 39, <http://www.philadelphia.edu.jo/research-portal/uploads/26523.pdf>

Education

Basic education in Jordan comprises grades 1–10 and is compulsory and free for all citizens. At the end of 10th grade, students may opt to go on to a secondary education school for 2 years. Secondary students follow one of two tracks. Track one is a comprehensive educational path leading to a diploma (*tawjihi*) for students who pass the general secondary exam. Track two is an applied educational path for vocational training.³⁶⁴ The nation has 5 public universities, 12 private universities, and 1 public 4-year university.³⁶⁵



© Aslan Media
High school boys

Jordan is strongly committed to educating all its citizens. The government has built at least one school in every village and town with at least 10 or more school-aged children.³⁶⁶ Although rural children are generally older when they enter school, they enroll in basic education in nearly the same proportions (99%) as urban children.³⁶⁷ Rural children tend to stay in basic school longer than their urban counterparts, most likely because they start school later. For girls, rural schools are seen as safer havens than urban schools, which partially accounts for higher female enrollments in rural areas.³⁶⁸ Even though rural children stay in basic education longer, they are less likely to go on to complete secondary education. Therefore, rural populations have lower educational attainment.^{369, 370}

Exchange 49: Is there a school nearby?

Soldier:	Is there a school nearby?	fee madRaseh qaReebah min hon?
Local:	Yes.	aah

³⁶⁴ Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “Media and Communications: Education, Labor and Vocational Training,” n.d., <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/jib/factsheets/education.shtml>

³⁶⁵ Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “Media and Communications: Education, Labor and Vocational Training,” n.d., <http://www.jordanembassyus.org/new/jib/factsheets/education.shtml>

³⁶⁶ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, King Hussein Government, “Education in Jordan: A Commitment to Excellence,” n.d., <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/resources3.html>

³⁶⁷ Åge A. Tiltnes et al., “Strengthening Social Statistics and Monitoring Living Conditions in Jordan,” n.d., 73–74, <http://www.faf.no/ais/middeast/jordan/sss/Chapter%203%20-%20Education.pdf>

³⁶⁸ Åge A. Tiltnes et al., “Strengthening Social Statistics and Monitoring Living Conditions in Jordan,” n.d., 73, 75, <http://www.faf.no/ais/middeast/jordan/sss/Chapter%203%20-%20Education.pdf>

³⁶⁹ UN Habitat, “The State of Arab Cities 2012: Challenges of Urban Transition” (Nairobi, Kenya: Habitat Publications, 2012), 46–47, <http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=3320>

³⁷⁰ Åge A. Tiltnes et al., “Strengthening Social Statistics and Monitoring Living Conditions in Jordan,” n.d., 98, <http://www.faf.no/ais/middeast/jordan/sss/Chapter%203%20-%20Education.pdf>

Exchange 50: Do your children go to school?

Soldier:	Do your children go to school?	wulaadak beeRooHoo 'aalmaDRaseh?
Local:	Yes.	aah

Village Life

Jordan is divided into 12 governorates, which are further subdivided into 93 municipalities.³⁷¹ Jordan’s strong central government permits only weak local governance. Municipal councils and mayors have relatively little power, and the central government is free to intervene on all matters at the local level. A Minister of Municipal Affairs may, at the discretion of the Municipal Director General, be appointed to work with local mayors, thereby becoming responsible for day-to-day affairs of the local government. This can leave local boards with little actual power. Local budgets must be approved by the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and Environment.^{372, 373, 374}



© Jason Jones
Village

Exchange 51: Do you know this area very well?

Soldier:	Do you know this area very well?	biti'Rif hal manT-a ikwayes?
Local:	Yes.	aah

Exchange 52: Does your elder live here?

Soldier:	Does your elder live here?	il muKhtaaR 'aayesh hon?
Local:	Yes.	aah

Mayors, heads of municipal councils, and one council member are elected by local voters to 4-year terms. Women are allocated 20% of all seats. Voter turnout is generally higher in rural areas, where it reached 65% in the 2007 elections.^{375, 376} The actual purpose of local governments

³⁷¹ United Cities and Local Governments, “The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan,” n.d., I, http://www.cities-localgovernments.org/gold/Upload/country_profile/Jordan.pdf

³⁷² UN Development Programme, Program on Governance in the Arab Region, “Local Government: Jordan,” n.d., <http://www.undp-pogar.org/countries/theme.aspx?t=6&cid=7>

³⁷³ Abdel-Mahdi Massadeh, “A Comparison of Jordanian Governorate Councils and Local Government Councils: Constitutional Perspectives and Legal Implications,” *Arab Law Quarterly* 7, no. 2 (1992): 106.

³⁷⁴ United Cities and Local Governments, “The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan,” n.d., III, http://www.cities-localgovernments.org/gold/Upload/country_profile/Jordan.pdf

³⁷⁵ UN Development Programme, Program on Governance in the Arab Region, “Local Government: Jordan,” n.d., <http://www.undp-pogar.org/countries/theme.aspx?t=6&cid=7>

is unclear; virtually everything is connected to the central government, which is represented by a governor appointed by the Ministry of Interior. Local governments have no budgetary power or tax-and-spend authority. Any municipal activities must be approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Local mayors are not independent, and their roles are undefined.³⁷⁷

Exchange 53: Can you take me to your elder?

Soldier:	Can you take me to your elder?	mumkin taaKhudnee la 'ind il muKhtaaR?
Local:	Yes.	aah

Exchange 54: Respected elder, we need your help / advice / opinion.

Soldier:	Respected elder, we need your help / advice / opinion.	yaa HaDRet il muKhtaaR, bidnaa imsaa'idtak / naSeeHtak / Raa-yak
Local:	Yes.	aah

Different Regions and Ways of Life

Most Jordanians have their origins in the desert-dwelling Bedouin tribes, whose exact numbers are unknown. The tribal structure of Arab society is clearly visible in the culture and traditions of the Bedouin, who are famous for their hospitality. The clan is the center of Bedouin social life, and each family has its own tent. A collection of families (*hayy*) constitutes a clan (*qawm*). Clans make up a tribe (*qabila*).³⁷⁸
³⁷⁹ Most of the Bedouin population is now settled, although 5–10% remain nomadic.³⁸⁰ The majority of Bedouins live in the desert regions extending east from the Desert Highway. But the largest concentrations are near Wadi Rum and Petra, where many of the Bedouin depend on tourism for a living.^{381, 382, 383}



© dominiqueb / flickr.com
 Sheep herder

³⁷⁶ Abdel-Mahdi Massadeh, “A Comparison of Jordanian Governorate Councils and Local Government Councils: Constitutional Perspectives and Legal Implications,” *Arab Law Quarterly* 7, no. 2 (1992): 110.

³⁷⁷ United Cities and Local Governments, “The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan,” n.d., III–IV, http://www.cities-localgovernments.org/gold/Upload/country_profile/Jordan.pdf

³⁷⁸ Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “The People of Jordan: The Bedouins,” n.d., <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/people1.html>

³⁷⁹ Christian Cummins (Narrator), “Moving with the Times: Bedouin in Jordan,” 12 February 2012, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_JSYRVkSlzg

³⁸⁰ Fadia Hasna et al., “Quality of Primary Nursing Care for Bedouin in Jordan,” *International Journal of Nursing Practice* 16 (2010): 565, <http://www.philadelphia.edu.jo/research-portal/uploads/14094.pdf>

³⁸¹ Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “The People of Jordan: The Bedouins,” n.d., <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/people1.html>

³⁸² Terhaal, “Bedouin Culture in Jordan,” 2012, <http://www.terhaal.com/jordan-desert-bedouin-culture>

³⁸³ Christian Cummins (Narrator), “Moving with the Times: Bedouin in Jordan,” 12 February 2012, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_JSYRVkSlzg

The true pastoral nomads camp in traditional black goat-hair tents (*beit al sha'ar*) in a single location for several months before moving on to graze their livestock.³⁸⁴ Struggling to maintain their traditional way of life, many Bedouins reject government-provided services such as education and health clinics.^{385, 386} But they have made some concessions to modern life, including using pickup trucks to help move their animals long distances and kerosene stoves for cooking.^{387, 388} Bedouins maintain traditions that revolve around camel breeding, weaving with hand tools, coffee making, medicine, clothing, and oral histories and stories.³⁸⁹

The government, which recognizes the unique Bedouin contributions to Jordan and its culture, has done much to support and protect Bedouin heritage and traditions. The government relies on Bedouin “desert forces” to patrol 82% of Jordan’s land area on camel. These forces protect Bedouin communities and guard against illegal border crossings and drug smuggling.^{390, 391, 392}

Border Crossings and Checkpoints

Police perform random road and security checks throughout the country, especially on roads heading toward popular tourist destinations. Drivers must stop and present identification papers at these checkpoints.^{393, 394}

Exchange 55: Where is the nearest checkpoint?

Soldier:	Where is the nearest checkpoint?	wayn aqRab Haajiz taftesh?
Local:	It’s two kilometers.	ba'd ithnayn keelo

³⁸⁴ Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “The People of Jordan: The Bedouins,” n.d., <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/people1.html>

³⁸⁵ Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “The People of Jordan: The Bedouins,” n.d., <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/people1.html>

³⁸⁶ Christian Cummins (Narrator), “Moving with the Times: Bedouin in Jordan,” 12 February 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSYRVkSlzg>

³⁸⁷ Christian Cummins (Narrator), “Moving with the Times: Bedouin in Jordan,” 12 February 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSYRVkSlzg>

³⁸⁸ Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “The People of Jordan: The Bedouins,” n.d., <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/people1.html>

³⁸⁹ UNESCO Amman, “Intangible Cultural Heritage of Jordan: The Cultural Space of the Bedu in Petra and Wadi Rum,” 27 September 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhqtI9bEJuw>

³⁹⁰ Al Jazeera, “Jordan’s Bedouin ‘Desert Forces’ on Patrol,” 15 October 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6teJ4ixoMXg>

³⁹¹ Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “The People of Jordan: The Bedouins,” n.d., <http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/people1.html>

³⁹² UNESCO Amman, “Intangible Cultural Heritage of Jordan: The Cultural Space of the Bedu in Petra and Wadi Rum,” 27 September 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhqtI9bEJuw>

³⁹³ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government, “Jordan: Health,” 28 May 2012, <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Jordan>

³⁹⁴ Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, “Jordan: Country Specific Information,” 1 August 2011, http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1149.html#traffic_safety

Exchange 56: Is this all the ID you have?

Soldier:	Is this all the ID you have?	haay kel il awRaaq ilee ma'ak?
Local:	Yes.	aah

Border crossings, particularly between Jordan and the West Bank, can be closed at any time. Travelers should check with authorities to determine whether crossing points are open.³⁹⁵ There are three crossing points between Jordan and Israel: the Allenby/King Hussein Bridge near Amman, the Sheikh Hussein crossing in the north, and the Wadi Araba Crossing in the south. Visas are not available at the King Hussein crossing and must be arranged before crossing into the country. Private vehicles and tour buses are prohibited from crossing the border.^{396, 397}



© Josh Yellin
Israel/Jordan border

Exchange 57: Are you carrying any guns?

Soldier:	Are you carrying any guns?	fee ma'ak ay islaaH?
Local:	No.	laa

Exchange 58: Please get out of the car.

Soldier:	Please get out of the car.	inzil min is seeyaaRa law samaHt
Local:	OK.	maashee

The civil war in Syria has made the Syria-Jordan border unstable.^{398, 399} Crossing into Jordan from Saudi Arabia is nearly impossible for anyone who is not a Jordanian resident. Travel to Iraq has been suspended.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁵ Smartraveller, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, “Jordan: Health,” 28 May 2012, <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Jordan>

³⁹⁶ VisitJordan, “Border Crossings,” 2010, <http://www.visitjordan.com/default.aspx?tabid=105>

³⁹⁷ Lonely Planet, “Jordan: Getting There and Away,” 2012, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/transport/getting-there-away#>

³⁹⁸ Barbara Starr, “Tense Times on Jordan’s Border with Syria,” CNN, 18 May 2012, <http://security.blogs.cnn.com/2012/05/18/tense-times-on-jordans-border-with-syria/>

³⁹⁹ Al Jazeera, “Syria Rebels Seize Key Border Crossings, 20 July 2012, <http://en-maktoob.news.yahoo.com/syria-rebels-seize-key-border-crossings-092343798.html>

Exchange 59: Show us the car registration.

Soldier:	Show us the car registration.	faRjeena RuKhaS is seeyaaRa
Local:	Right away.	HaaDiR

Landmines

Jordan signed the Mine Ban Treaty and ratified it in 1998; it was made part of Jordanian domestic law in 2008. The country last reportedly used antipersonnel mines in 1978 but destroyed its entire stockpile of the devices in 2003.⁴⁰¹ Jordan became the first country in the Middle East to declare itself free of landmines. Approximately 300,000 mines were cleared from an area along the border with Syria, the Jordan Valley, and Wadi Araba. According to the United Nations, there is no risk of mines in the country.^{402, 403}



© Luigi Guarino
Jordan Valley

Exchange 60: Is this area mined?

Soldier:	Is this area mined?	haay il manTiq a imlaghameh?
Local:	No.	laa

⁴⁰⁰ Lonely Planet, “Jordan: Getting There and Away,” 2012, <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/transport/getting-there-away#213927>

⁴⁰¹ Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, “Jordan,” 31 October 2011, http://www.the-monitor.org/custom/index.php/region_profiles/print_profile/502

⁴⁰² UN Development Programme, “Jordan First Arab Country Free of Landmines,” 24 April 2012, <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/articles/2012/04/24/jordan-to-become-first-arab-country-free-of-landmines.html>

⁴⁰³ Menafn, “Jordan First Mideast Country to Be Free of Minefields,” *Jordan Times*, 25 April 2012, <http://www.menafn.com/menafn/1093507144/Jordan-first-Mideast-country-to-be-free-of-minefields>

Chapter 5 Assessment

1. Nearly 19% of rural Jordanians are classified as poor.
TRUE
Poverty is more widespread in the nation's rural areas, where one in five persons are classified as poor.
2. The government owns all the land in Jordan.
FALSE
Land ownership is classified into four categories: privately owned land (*mulk*), communal land held by tribes (*musha'a*), religious land (*waqf*), and public lands owned by the state (*miri*). The government or state owns all uncultivated or undeveloped land in the nation.
3. Local mayors are appointed by the central government.
FALSE
Mayors, heads of municipal councils, and one council member are elected by local voters to 4-year terms.
4. The largest concentrations of Bedouins are near Wadi Rum and Petra.
TRUE
The largest concentrations of Bedouins are in the areas of Wadi Rum and Petra, where many Bedouins depend on tourism for a living.
5. Landmines in Jordan remain a significant concern.
FALSE
Jordan is the first country in the Middle East to declare itself free of landmines. According to the United Nations, there is no risk of mines in the country.

CHAPTER 6: FAMILY LIFE

Introduction

The family is the center of social life in Jordan. It is a source of support, identity, and obligation for all members. Virtually everyone is expected to marry and have children to carry on the family lineage. Among Muslims, marriage is a legal contract signifying the rights and responsibilities of both husband and wife. Marriage is designed to provide the family's foundation.^{404, 405} Marriage joins families rather than individuals.⁴⁰⁶ The importance of continuing the family line and the centrality of family is signified in many ways. But perhaps the strongest evidence is the inclination toward marriage between cousins. Long a tradition among tribal groups in Jordan, today up to half of all marriages occur between family members.^{407, 408} For the most part, families are strongly patriarchal with clear gender roles. Men are the head of the family and are responsible for the welfare of its members. Women, subordinate to men, are the primary caretakers of the home and family. Although modern life and strides in gender equality have sometimes challenged these traditional roles, they remain largely intact.^{409, 410}



© Mohd Khawaja
Family photo

Typical Household and Family Structure

The demands of modern society have caused a number of changes in the typical family structure in Jordan.⁴¹¹ Today most



© Mohd Khawaja
Family

⁴⁰⁴ Julie M. Peteet, "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, ed. Helen Chapin Metz (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1991), <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/jotoc.html>

⁴⁰⁵ Ruqaiyyah Waris Maqsood, "Weddings," BBC Religions, 9 August 2009, http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/ritesrituals/weddings_1.shtml

⁴⁰⁶ Valentine M. Moghadam, "Patriarchy in Transition: Women and the Changing Family in the Middle East," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 35, no. 2 (Spring 2004): 147, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/20245627/Moghadam-Patriarchy-in-Transition-Women-and-the-Changing-Family-in-the-Middle-East>

⁴⁰⁷ Rania Salem, "Trends and Differentials in Jordanian Marriage Behavior: Marriage Timing, Spousal Characteristics, Household Structure and Matrimonial Expenditures" (working paper no. 668, Economic Research Forum, Harvard University, April 2012), 5, <http://www.erf.org.eg/CMS/uploads/pdf/668.pdf>

⁴⁰⁸ Hanan A. Hamamy et al., "Consanguinity and Genetic Disorders: Profile from Jordan," *Saudi Medical Journal* 28, no. 7 (2007): 1015, http://www.ncd.org.jo/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=132&tmpl=component&format=raw&Itemid=79

⁴⁰⁹ Julie M. Peteet, "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment," in *Jordan: A Country Study*, ed. Helen Chapin Metz (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1991), <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/jotoc.html>

⁴¹⁰ Faisal M. Khwaleh, "Gender Differences in Academic Performance Among Undergraduates at the University of Jordan: Are They Real or Stereotyping?" *College Student Journal* (1 September 2011), <http://www.readperiodicals.com/201109/2493376621.html>

⁴¹¹ Rania Salem, "Trends and Differentials in Jordanian Marriage Behavior: Marriage Timing, Spousal Characteristics, Household Structure and Matrimonial Expenditures" (working paper no. 688, Economic Research Forum, Harvard University, April 2012), 2, <http://www.erf.org.eg/CMS/uploads/pdf/668.pdf>

families are nuclear, although there are still a significant number of extended families.^{412, 413, 414} Most households are headed by men although 11–13% of households are headed by women.^{415, 416} Official estimates of the average size of urban and rural households are 5.0 and 5.4, respectively. More than a third of urban households (40.8%) and nearly one-half (47.1%) of rural households have six or more members.⁴¹⁷

Exchange 61: How many people live in this house?

Soldier:	How many people live in this house?	kam waaHid 'aayesh behal bayt?
Local:	Six.	sita

Exchange 62: Are these people part of your family?

Soldier:	Are these people part of your family?	haThola in naas min 'eeltak ?
Local:	No.	laa

The Status of Women

The status of women has improved in recent years, but the nation’s Personal Status Laws limit parity among men and women.⁴¹⁸ Families, like the rest of Jordanian society, are typically patriarchal with men as undisputed family heads. Men are responsible for maintaining the family’s honor and providing for it financially.^{419, 420} Fathers are legally considered the sole legal guardians of children, although women may have physical custody until children reach

⁴¹² Margaret W. Pettygrove, “Obstacles to Women’s Political Empowerment in Jordan: Family, Islam, and Patriarchal Gender Roles” (independent study project, SIT Jordan, 11 May 2006), 9,

http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1362&context=isp_collection

⁴¹³ Rania Salem, “Trends and Differentials in Jordanian Marriage Behavior: Marriage Timing, Spousal Characteristics, Household Structure and Matrimonial Expenditures” (working paper no. 688, Economic Research Forum, Harvard University, April 2012), 6, <http://www.erf.org.eg/CMS/uploads/pdf/668.pdf>

⁴¹⁴ UNICEF, “Children in Jordan: Situation Analysis 2006/2007,” 2007, 35, http://www.unicef.org/sitan/files/SITAN_Jordan_Eng.pdf

⁴¹⁵ UNICEF, “Children in Jordan: Situation Analysis 2006/2007,” 2007, 34, http://www.unicef.org/sitan/files/SITAN_Jordan_Eng.pdf

⁴¹⁶ Department of Statistics, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2009,” May 2010, 15, http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb_pop/sdb_pop_e/pop_2009.pdf

⁴¹⁷ Department of Statistics, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, “Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2009,” May 2010, 15, http://www.dos.gov.jo/sdb_pop/sdb_pop_e/pop_2009.pdf

⁴¹⁸ Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), “Jordan: Discriminatory Family Code,” 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/jordan>

⁴¹⁹ Ruth Caswell, “Marriage Customs in Arab Society,” Jordan Jubilee, 2003, <http://www.jordanjubilee.com/meetfolk/marriage.htm>

⁴²⁰ UNICEF, “Children in Jordan: Situation Analysis 2006/2007,” 2007, 36, http://www.unicef.org/sitan/files/SITAN_Jordan_Eng.pdf

puberty.⁴²¹ The role of a woman is to obey her husband, perform domestic chores, and care for her children.^{422, 423}

Issues related to marriage, family, and children are managed by the nation's religious courts. The nation's Personal Status Law for Jordan's Muslims specifies that all women under the age of 40, regardless of marital status, are considered minors who must be under the care of a male relative.^{424, 425} Women are commonly the victims of domestic violence, and spousal rape is not considered a crime.⁴²⁶



© melenama / flickr.com
Women

Status of Elders, Adolescents, and Children

Although sons are preferred over daughters, children are highly valued in Jordanian culture. Sons are often more spoiled than girls who have generally grown up with an earlier and greater sense of independence.⁴²⁷ Most children grow up in warm family environments, transitioning smoothly through the stages of childhood and adolescence into adulthood.⁴²⁸ Children reach adulthood at age 18, when they can get a driver's license, vote, and buy tobacco and alcohol. But young people are expected to act as adults around the age of 15 or 16.⁴²⁹

Many families believe strongly in gender segregation, which results in different socialization patterns for children. Young girls help with domestic chores, have less freedom regarding activities outside the home, and have less freedom of movement. Boys, on the other hand, are taught to be tough and manly, discouraged from emotional displays, subject to more corporal punishment, and pressured to work at an earlier age than their sisters.⁴³⁰

⁴²¹ Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), "Jordan: Discriminatory Family Code," 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/jordan>

⁴²² Ruth Caswell, "Marriage Customs in Arab Society," Jordan Jubilee, 2003, <http://www.jordanjubilee.com/meetfolk/marriage.htm>

⁴²³ UNICEF, "Children in Jordan: Situation Analysis 2006/2007," 2007, 36, http://www.unicef.org/sitan/files/SITAN_Jordan_Eng.pdf

⁴²⁴ Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), "Jordan: Discriminatory Family Code," 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/jordan>

⁴²⁵ Rana Hussein, "Jordan," in *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Progress Amid Resistance*, eds. Sanja Kelly and Julia Breslin (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), 8, http://old.freedomhouse.org/uploads/special_report/section/256.pdf

⁴²⁶ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Jordan," in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2011*, n.d., <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?dliid=186431>

⁴²⁷ Amal Daraisch and Adel Iskandar, "Jordanians: Rites of Passage," in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life*, eds. Timothy L. Gall and Janeen Hobby (Detroit, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 439.

⁴²⁸ UNICEF, "Children in Jordan: Situation Analysis 2006/2007," 2007, 36, 87, http://www.unicef.org/sitan/files/SITAN_Jordan_Eng.pdf

⁴²⁹ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

⁴³⁰ UNICEF, "Children in Jordan: Situation Analysis 2006/2007," 2007, 36, http://www.unicef.org/sitan/files/SITAN_Jordan_Eng.pdf

Islamic families attach great value to the family and hold elders in high esteem. Elderly parents are respected and hold relatively high status within the family.⁴³¹ In Islamic tradition, serving one's parents is an honor and a duty, second only to prayer.⁴³²⁴³³ Jordan's elderly, who account for about 5% of the population, are mainly supported and cared for by their family members.^{434, 435}



© zz77 / flickr.com
Elderly man

Married Life, Divorce, and Birth

Marriage

According to Islamic marriage law, all Jordanian Muslims are required to marry. Although men may marry a woman of any religion, Muslim women may only marry a Muslim or a man who agrees to convert.⁴³⁶ The legal age for marriage is 18 although, under certain circumstances, younger people are permitted to marry.⁴³⁷ The consent of a guardian is required before a female below the age of 18 can marry. All marriages must be recorded in special registries with the proper authorities.^{438, 439} The state does not recognize civil marriages.⁴⁴⁰ Polygamy is legal. Men may have up to four wives at one time, but few practice the custom. About 6% of households include



© Charles Roffey
Bedouin Couple

⁴³¹ Sangeeta Dhama and Aziz Sheikh, "The Muslim Family," *Western Journal of Medicine* 173, no. 5 (November 2000): 352, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1071164/>

⁴³² IslamiCity, "Understanding Islam and the Muslims: How Do Muslims Treat the Elderly?" 2012, <http://www.islamicity.com/education/understandingislamandmuslims/default.asp?ContentLocation=/Education/UnderstandingIslamAndMuslims&CurrentPageID=28&Top=&Bottom=&Right=&Left=&SideBarWidth=&RightWidth=&LeftWidth=&SideBarLocation=&Style=&CatID=&Destination=/Education/UnderstandingIslamAndMuslims/28.asp>

⁴³³ G. Hafez, K. Bagchi, and R. Mahaini, "Caring for the Elderly: A Report on the Status of Care for the Elderly in the Eastern Mediterranean Region," *Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal* 6, no. 4 (July 2000): 640–41.

⁴³⁴ Sawsan M. Mahasneh, "Survey of the Health of the Elderly in Jordan," *Medical Journal of Islamic Academy of Sciences* 13, no. 1 (2000): 41–42, 46, <http://www.medicaljournal-ias.org/Belgelerim/Belge/MajaliUYIEJSXHQV82275.pdf>

⁴³⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, "Jordan," in *The World Factbook*, 31 July 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>

⁴³⁶ Rana Hussein, "Jordan," in *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Progress Amid Resistance*, eds. Sanja Kelly and Julia Breslin (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), 8, http://old.freedomhouse.org/uploads/special_report/section/256.pdf

⁴³⁷ Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), "Jordan: Discriminatory Family Code," 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/jordan>

⁴³⁸ Gabriel Sawma, "Islamic Jordanian Divorce in USA," International Law Blog, 29 September 2011, <http://gabrielawma.blogspot.com/2011/09/islamic-jordanian-divorce-in-usa.html>

⁴³⁹ Embassy of the United States, Amman, Jordan, "Jordan Fact Sheet: Marriage in Jordan," n.d., http://jordan.usembassy.gov/acs_fact_sheet-.html

⁴⁴⁰ Elisabeth Roy Trudel, "Religious Law Chafes Christians and Muslims Alike," WeNews, 6 February 2009, <http://womensnews.org/story/religion/090206/religious-law-chafes-christians-and-muslims-alike>

two wives, 1% include three wives, and .03% include four wives. The majority, 93%, of households have a single wife.^{441, 442, 443}

Exchange 63: Are you married?

Soldier:	Are you married?	mitjawiz?
Local:	Yes.	ay

Exchange 64: Is this your wife?

Soldier:	Is this your wife?	haaThee maRtak?
Local:	Yes.	ay

Many marriages in Jordan are arranged and often occur between cousins. Between a third and a half of all marriages are with blood relatives, most involving paternal cousins.^{444, 445} It is rare that a couple is forced to wed; individuals have the right to refuse to marry.⁴⁴⁶

Outside the capital of Amman, dating is uncommon. One-on-one dating takes place only after people have attained a certain amount of financial stability; dating also carries the expectation that marriage will result. Marriage is seen as a means of maintaining families and social cohesion. Because living together outside marriage is regarded as unacceptable, unmarried people often live with their parents.⁴⁴⁷

The expectation that people must be financially stable has increased the age of marriage in Jordan. Today men tend to marry in their 30s and women marry in their mid-20s. Parents sometimes help with the costs of weddings. But young men often save for 5 years or more before

⁴⁴¹ Rana Hussein, "Jordan," in *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Progress Amid Resistance*, eds. Sanja Kelly and Julia Breslin (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), 9,

http://old.freedomhouse.org/uploads/special_report/section/256.pdf

⁴⁴² CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

⁴⁴³ Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), "Jordan: Discriminatory Family Code," 2012,

<http://genderindex.org/country/jordan>

⁴⁴⁴ Rania Salem, "Trends and Differentials in Jordanian Marriage Behavior: Marriage Timing, Spousal Characteristics, Household Structure and Matrimonial Expenditures" (working paper no. 668, Economic Research Forum, Harvard University, April 2012), 5, <http://www.erf.org.eg/CMS/uploads/pdf/668.pdf>

⁴⁴⁵ Hanan A. Hamamy et al., "Consanguinity and Genetic Disorders: Profile from Jordan," *Saudi Medical Journal* 28, no. 7 (2007): 1015,

http://www.ncd.org.jo/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=132&tmpl=component&format=raw&Itemid=79

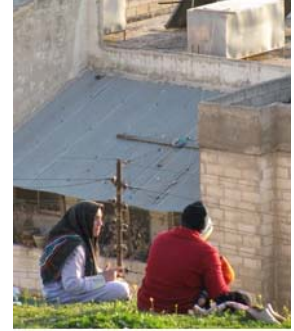
⁴⁴⁶ Amal Daraiseh and Adel Iskandar, "Jordanians: Rites of Passage," in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life*, eds. Timothy L. Gall and Janeen Hobby (Detroit, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 439.

⁴⁴⁷ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

marrying. Prospective grooms are expected to pay a bride-price (*mahr*) to the bride's family.^{448, 449}

Divorce

Although society disapproves of divorce, about 20% of marriages end in divorce.^{450, 451} The Jordanian Constitution establishes religious courts to handle issues pertaining marriage, divorce, custody, and inheritance. There are separate religious courts for Christians and Muslims.⁴⁵² According to Islamic law, a husband may, for any reason, divorce his wife by pronouncing three times that the marriage is over. The pronouncement can be made orally, by phone, or sent via text message in the presence of two male witnesses or one male and two female witnesses, all of whom must be Muslims. Following a divorce without legal reason, known as *talaq*, women may keep their dowry but must wait 3 months for the divorce to be final. In the case of *talaq*, neither a judicial pronouncement nor the presence of the wife is necessary.^{453, 454, 455}



© Luigi Guarino
Couple in Jordan

Women also have the right to seek a divorce under different rules. Wives may seek a judicial divorce if the husband has abandoned, neglected, or not provided for his family, or if he is impotent, in jail for a prolonged period, or ruled to be insane. Women must go to a religious court to obtain a divorce, and the process may take many years to conclude.^{456, 457} A woman may also obtain a type of divorce known as a *khula*, in which she simply states her desire not to live with her husband and agrees to give up her *mahr* and all rights to future support.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁴⁸ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

⁴⁴⁹ Amal Daraiseh and Adel Iskandar, "Jordanians: Rites of Passage," in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life*, eds. Timothy L. Gall and Janeen Hobby (Detroit, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 438.

⁴⁵⁰ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

⁴⁵¹ UN Statistics Division, "Demographic Yearbook," 2010,
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2008.htm>

⁴⁵² Gabriel Sawma, "Islamic Jordanian Divorce in USA," International Law Blog, 29 September 2011,
<http://gabrielsawma.blogspot.com/2011/09/islamic-jordanian-divorce-in-usa.html>

⁴⁵³ Gabriel Sawma, "Islamic Jordanian Divorce in USA," International Law Blog, 29 September 2011,
<http://gabrielsawma.blogspot.com/2011/09/islamic-jordanian-divorce-in-usa.html>

⁴⁵⁴ Emory University, School of Law, "Jordan, Hashemite Kingdom of," n.d.,
<http://www.law.emory.edu/ifl/legal/jordan.htm>

⁴⁵⁵ Rana Hussein, "Jordan," in *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Progress Amid Resistance*, eds. Sanja Kelly and Julia Breslin (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), 10,
http://old.freedomhouse.org/uploads/special_report/section/256.pdf

⁴⁵⁶ Gabriel Sawma, "Islamic Jordanian Divorce in USA," International Law Blog, 29 September 2011,
<http://gabrielsawma.blogspot.com/2011/09/islamic-jordanian-divorce-in-usa.html>

⁴⁵⁷ Emory University, School of Law, "Jordan, Hashemite Kingdom of," n.d.,
<http://www.law.emory.edu/ifl/legal/jordan.htm>

⁴⁵⁸ Rana Hussein, "Jordan," in *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Progress Amid Resistance*, eds. Sanja Kelly and Julia Breslin (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), 10–11,
http://old.freedomhouse.org/uploads/special_report/section/256.pdf

Christian divorces are governed by Christian religious laws. The family status law for divorce is dictated by the Greek Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, or other Christian denominations, depending on the faith of the individuals.⁴⁵⁹

Birth

The birth of a child is generally cause for celebration and joy among Jordanians, who typically have large families.⁴⁶⁰ Most parents show a strong preference for boys.⁴⁶¹ Between 25% and 33% of all births are unplanned—a result of lack of information about or a reluctance to use family planning methods.^{462, 463} Since most births take place in healthcare facilities, both maternal and infant mortality rates are much lower than in previous years.⁴⁶⁴ All births, except those occurring outside marriage, must be registered within 30 days in order for children to have access to essential services.^{465, 466}



© Mohd Khawaja
Baby girl in Jordan

Exchange 65: Are these your children?

Soldier:	Are these your children?	haThol wulaadak?
Local:	Yes.	ay

Family Social Events

Weddings

A wedding is one of the most important celebrations in an individual’s life. Weddings are very expensive, with guests often numbering more than 200.⁴⁶⁷ Muslims weddings involve the signing of a marriage contract in front of family members and a religious official. Once the *katb al kitab* ceremony had been completed, the couple is considered officially married. Couples are not

⁴⁵⁹ Jeremy D. Morley, “Jordan: Family Law,” International Family Law, n.d., <http://www.international-divorce.com/ca-jordan.htm>
⁴⁶⁰ UNICEF, “Children in Jordan: Situation Analysis 2006/2007,” 2007, 49, http://www.unicef.org/sitan/files/SITAN_Jordan_Eng.pdf
⁴⁶¹ Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), “Jordan: Son Bias,” 2012, <http://genderindex.org/country/jordan>
⁴⁶² Menafn, “Jordan: ‘Lack of Modern Family Planning Leads to Many Ill-Timed Births,’” *Jordan Times*, 28 May 2012, <http://www.menafn.com/menafn/1093517755/jordan-lack-of-modern-family-planning-leads-to-man>
⁴⁶³ Department of Statistics, Jordan, and ORC Macro, “2002 Jordan Population and Family Health Survey: Key Findings,” 2003, 7, <http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pdf/sr111/sr111.pdf>
⁴⁶⁴ UNICEF, “Children in Jordan: Situation Analysis 2006/2007,” 2007, 48, 50–52, http://www.unicef.org/sitan/files/SITAN_Jordan_Eng.pdf
⁴⁶⁵ UN Statistics Division, “Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System in Jordan,” n.d., <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/vitalstatkb/Attachment95.aspx>
⁴⁶⁶ UNICEF, “Children in Jordan: Situation Analysis 2006/2007,” 2007, 97–98, http://www.unicef.org/sitan/files/SITAN_Jordan_Eng.pdf
⁴⁶⁷ Amal Daraiseh and Adel Iskandar, “Jordanians: Rites of Passage,” in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life*, eds. Timothy L. Gall and Janeen Hobby (Detroit, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 438.

allowed to live together, however, until after a public celebration of the wedding, which often takes place in a wedding hall or at a 4- or 5-star hotel.^{468, 469}

Wedding receptions are generally segregated by sex, but less-traditional Muslim families may host a mixed reception. The *dabkah*, or traditional line dance, performed by the groom and male members of his wedding party, is a feature of many Muslim receptions. Brides also dance as the other women sing and dance around her. In some ceremonies, the bride sits atop a platform while female members of the family place gold jewelry on her. Before the groom arrives, women put on conservative clothing in keeping with Islamic requirements of modesty. When the groom arrives, the new couple performs a dance together. The bride puts on a white cape before the couple departs. Family members follow the couple in cars to the hotel where the newlyweds will spend their first night together.⁴⁷⁰



© Hannah Schafer
Wedding in Amman

Exchange 66: Congratulations on your wedding!

Soldier:	Congratulations on your wedding!	mabRook zawaajak!
Local:	We are honored you could attend.	itshaRafnaa biHDooRak

Exchange 67: I wish you both happiness.

Soldier:	I wish you both happiness.	batmanaalkum is sa'aadeh
Local:	We are honored.	itshaRafnaa

Christians often hold a religious wedding ceremony attended by family and friends. The ceremony can be held at the home of the parents, at a wedding hall, or in a hotel.⁴⁷¹

Funerals

According to Islamic custom, burials take place shortly after death but not at night. Family members wash the deceased's body, which is then covered with a white cloth known as a *kaffan*. The body is transported to the mosque so that people may pray for the deceased at prayer time. Male family members then carry the body to the place of burial, offering a final prayer. Although Christians may wait longer than Muslims, they also prefer to bury their dead quickly. Bodies are dressed in formal attire and placed in a coffin.⁴⁷²

⁴⁶⁸ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

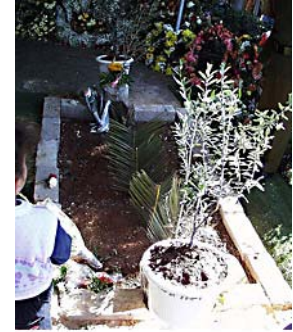
⁴⁶⁹ Arabia Weddings, "12 Facts About Wedding Planning in Jordan," n.d., <http://arabiaweddings.wordpress.com/2012/01/28/12-facts-about-wedding-planning-in-jordan/>

⁴⁷⁰ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

⁴⁷¹ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

⁴⁷² CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

Among Muslims, family and friends visit to offer condolences during a 3-day wake or condolence period known as an *aza*. Male and female visitors sit in separate rooms drinking black unsweetened Arabic coffee (*qahwah saadah*). The duration of the wake tends to be shorter in urban areas. Visiting guests are given food that is eaten in remembrance of the deceased. For 40 days following the death, the *aza* is repeated every Monday and Thursday at the home of the deceased. Contrary to the Islamic tradition of wearing white during mourning, Jordanians wear black.^{473, 474, 475}



© Nir Nussbaum
Gravesite, Amman

On the anniversary of the death, family members often visit the grave, accompanied by a religious figure who offers a prayer. Graves are also visited on major religious holidays.⁴⁷⁶

Exchange 68: I would like to give my condolences to you and your family.

Soldier:	I would like to give my condolences to you and your family.	bidee a-dem ta'aazeeye laa ilak wil 'eeltak
Local:	Thank you.	shukRan

Exchange 69: Please be strong.

Soldier:	Please be strong.	shidoo Heelkum
Local:	We will try.	RaHinjaRib

Rituals Following the Birth of a Child

Upon the birth of a child, families hold a *sebu'a'a*, or 7-day open house. Neighbors and relatives drop by with small gifts. In rural areas, the ceremony is accompanied by the slaughter of a sheep, which is cooked and served to guests. Christians often serve a spiced rice pudding with nuts and candied anise seeds (*moghli*). Female members of the family may hold a separate party for the mother. Muslim fathers whisper the Islamic call to prayer (*adhan*) into the baby's ear. Although Protestants may wait longer before holding the ritual, Christian children are normally baptized shortly after birth.⁴⁷⁷



© John Thomas
Child near Petra

⁴⁷³ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

⁴⁷⁴ Countries and Their Cultures, "Jordanians: Rites of Passage," 2012, <http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Japan-to-Mali/Jordanians.html>

⁴⁷⁵ Amal Daraiseh and Adel Iskandar, "Jordanians: Rites of Passage," in *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life*, eds. Timothy L. Gall and Janeen Hobby (Detroit, MI: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009), 438.

⁴⁷⁶ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

⁴⁷⁷ CultureGrams Online Edition, "Jordan," 2012.

Naming Conventions

Arabic naming conventions differ from Western conventions. There are regional, religious, and national variations. But the typical name in Jordan involves three parts: *ism* (given name), *nasab* (father's name), and the *nisba* (family name).^{478, 479} Personal names may be a single name (such as Ahmed) or a compound name (such as Abd al-Aziz). The father's name is preceded by *bin* (son of) or *bint* (daughter of). Family names often begin with *al*, but it is also common to write the family name without the prefix. Family names often signal a place name and can indicate family origins, such as tribal affiliation. Using these conventions, a male might be named Fadi bin Khaled al Tal, while his sister might be named Noor bint Khaled al Tal.^{480, 481} Women usually keep their names after marriage. Children take the name of the father.⁴⁸² Naming conventions are changing, and another common form for the names above are Fadi Khaled al-Tal or Fadi al-Tal. His sister could be Noor Khaled al-Tal or Noor al-Tal.⁴⁸³ Arab names can have a variety of spellings because of the difficulties of Romanizing the Arabic script.⁴⁸⁴ For example, Muhammad has at least a dozen variations, while Said has around 14 common spellings.⁴⁸⁵



© Peter Tittenberger
Young girl

Titles, or *kunya*, are often used as honorific forms of address. *Haram*, *hurma*, or *hurmat* in front of a name mean “wife of.” Therefore, *hurmat* Khaled means “wife of Khaled.” Other common *kunya* are *abu* (father of) and *umm* (mother of). For example, *abu* Ali and *umm* Ali mean “father of Ali” and “mother of Ali,” respectively.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁷⁸ General Secretariat, United Kingdom, “A Guide to Names and Naming Practices,” March 2006, 33–34, https://www.fbiic.gov/public/2008/nov/Naming_practice_guide_UK_2006.pdf

⁴⁷⁹ Beth Notzon and Gayle Nesom, “The Arabic Naming System,” *Science Editor* 28, no. 1 (January–February 2005): 20–21, <http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/files/scienceeditor/v28n1p020-021.pdf>

⁴⁸⁰ General Secretariat, United Kingdom, “A Guide to Names and Naming Practices,” March 2006, 33–34, https://www.fbiic.gov/public/2008/nov/Naming_practice_guide_UK_2006.pdf

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⁴⁸³ Angela Adams, “Law Enforcement Guide to International Names,” Regional Organized Crime Information Center, 2010, 6, <http://info.publicintelligence.net/ROCICInternationalNames.pdf>

⁴⁸⁴ Mohammad Ayman Khabbaz, “It’s All in a Name: Middle Eastern Names,” John Cooke Fraud Report, 1995, <http://www.johncooke.com/name/mideastern.htm>

⁴⁸⁵ General Secretariat, United Kingdom, “A Guide to Names and Naming Practices,” March 2006, 36, https://www.fbiic.gov/public/2008/nov/Naming_practice_guide_UK_2006.pdf

⁴⁸⁶ General Secretariat, United Kingdom, “A Guide to Names and Naming Practices,” March 2006, 34, https://www.fbiic.gov/public/2008/nov/Naming_practice_guide_UK_2006.pdf

Chapter 6 Assessment

1. The extended family remains the most typical family structure in Jordan.
FALSE
Today, most families are nuclear, although there are still a significant number of extended families.
2. Issues related to marriage and family are managed by religious courts.
TRUE
Issues related to marriage, family, and children are managed by the nation's religious courts.
3. People under the age of 18 cannot legally marry under any circumstances.
FALSE
The legal age for marriage is 18 although, under certain circumstances, younger people are permitted to marry. The consent of a guardian is required before a female under the age of 18 can marry.
4. Marriages between cousins are uncommon in modern Jordan.
FALSE
Many marriages in Jordan are arranged and often occur between cousins. Between a third and a half of all marriages are with blood relatives, most involving paternal cousins.
5. Jordan's divorce rate is around 20%.
TRUE
Although society disapproves of divorce, about 20% of marriages end in divorce.

FINAL ASSESSMENT

1. Jordan's longest border is with Syria, its neighbor to the north.
TRUE / FALSE
2. The Dead Sea has shrunk in the last half century.
TRUE / FALSE
3. Jordan has no state-owned media outlets.
TRUE / FALSE
4. Palestinians make up the majority of the population in Jordan.
TRUE / FALSE
5. Jordan has a parliament with elected and appointed officials.
TRUE / FALSE
6. Jordan's Muslim population is roughly an even split between Shi'ites and Sunnis.
TRUE / FALSE
7. Jordan's monarchs claim descent from the Prophet Muhammad.
TRUE / FALSE
8. Eid al-Adha commemorates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son to God.
TRUE / FALSE
9. Eastern Christians and Protestants celebrate Christmas on the same day.
TRUE / FALSE
10. All students in public schools must participate in Islamic education.
TRUE / FALSE
11. It is common to refer to people using only their last name.
TRUE / FALSE
12. If worn at an angle, the *'aqal*, which holds the *kuffiyah* on the head, signifies that a man is married.
TRUE / FALSE
13. The red-and-white checked *kuffiyah* is typically worn by Jordanian men.
TRUE / FALSE
14. Women in Jordan face discrimination in a several areas.
TRUE / FALSE

15. Close friends of the same sex commonly greet each other with kisses, beginning on the right cheek.
TRUE / FALSE
16. Public schools in Jordan are segregated by gender, while private schools are differentiated by religion.
TRUE / FALSE
17. Taxis are generally a safe option for everyone.
TRUE / FALSE
18. The influx of refugees has contributed to an increase in Jordan's urban population.
TRUE / FALSE
19. There is little threat from tribal violence in Jordan.
TRUE / FALSE
20. Water is available only one or two days a week in some cities.
TRUE / FALSE
21. Sharecropping is rare in Jordan.
TRUE / FALSE
22. Approximately half of all rural incomes come from sources other than agriculture.
TRUE / FALSE
23. To improve healthcare access, the government has instituted a telemedicine program for some remote areas.
TRUE / FALSE
24. Most of the Bedouin continue to live a nomadic lifestyle.
TRUE / FALSE
25. Rural children generally stay in basic school longer than their urban counterparts.
TRUE / FALSE
26. *Kunya* are honorific forms of address.
TRUE / FALSE
27. Jordanian women normally take their husband's last name when they marry.
TRUE / FALSE
28. Muslim families usually hold an *aza*, or wake, for the deceased that lasts at least 7 days.
TRUE / FALSE
29. Muslim couples are not considered legally married until a public wedding ceremony is held.
TRUE / FALSE
30. Jordan does not recognize civil marriages.
TRUE / FALSE

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