

Saudi women to vote for first time

24th August, 2015



Saudi Arabian women have been registering to vote for the first time in their history. Women will be able to vote in the city council elections later this year. They now have a 21-day period to register. The Saudi Gazette newspaper said the first woman to register was Safinaz Abu Al-Shamat. She said she wanted to

be, "the first woman to arrive at the center" and the first woman to register. She also said it was a national duty to take part in elections. Another woman to register early was Jamal Al-Saadi. She told reporters that: "The participation of Saudi women in the municipal elections as voters and candidates was a dream for us. We are just at the beginning of the road."

Letting women vote was one of the plans of King Abdullah, who died earlier this year. The Saudi government said giving women the vote was an important step. It added that it was, "a significant milestone in progress". As well as being able to vote, many women also want to run for office and take up government positions. At least 70 women want to run for office, and more than 80 have registered as campaign managers. One of the women who wants to be a candidate in the December elections is 36-year-old Haifa al-Hababi. She said she would campaign with a message for change. She said that: "Change is life. The government has given us this tool and I intend to use it."

Sources: *Sky.com / Independent.co.uk / HuffingtonPost*

Writing

Everyone should be able to vote from the age of 16. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

registering / vote / first time / history / council / elections / newspaper / duty / road / plans / government / significant / progress / office / campaign / managers / message

True / False

- Saudi women are registering to vote in national elections. T / F
- The women have three weeks in which to register to vote. T / F
- A lady called Jamal was the first woman to register. T / F
- A woman said voting was a dream for her. T / F
- Giving women the vote was the idea of King Abdullah. T / F
- Fewer than 70 women want to run for office. T / F
- Around 800 women have registered to be campaign managers. T / F
- A lady called Haifa wants to change a message. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. registering | a. passed away |
| 2. period | b. get to |
| 3. arrive | c. jobs |
| 4. duty | d. start |
| 5. beginning | e. time |
| 6. died | f. serious |
| 7. significant | g. push |
| 8. positions | h. signing up |
| 9. campaign | i. plan |
| 10. intend | j. responsibility |

Discussion – Student A

- Why is voting so important?
- Who would you vote for?
- Would you be a good person to vote for? Why?
- What government position would you like?
- If you were leader of your country, what would you change?
- Would you like to be a candidate in an election?
- Why do some people decide not to vote?
- What questions would you like to ask female voters in Saudi?

Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Saudi Arabian women have been | a. of the road |
| 2. the first time | b. council elections |
| 3. vote in the city | c. managers |
| 4. it was a national | d. for change |
| 5. We are just at the beginning | e. duty to take part |
| 6. an important | f. us this tool |
| 7. women also want to run | g. registering to vote |
| 8. campaign | h. for office |
| 9. campaign with a message | i. in their history |
| 10. The government has given | j. step |

Discussion – Student B

- How important is voting?
- When did women get the vote in your country?
- How does voting change things?
- Would you like to vote for a leader of the world?
- Do people understand all the issues when they vote?
- Is it better to vote online or at a voting centre?
- From what age should people be allowed to vote?
- Who are better leaders – women or men? Why?

Spelling

- women have been neriggirste to vote
- the city council nceeislto
- a 21-day dreiop
- it was a oaitlna duty
- The ntaitripioacp of Saudi women
- voters and cdsentadia
- an ntoatrpmi step
- a fiaiingcnst milestone
- take up government issnoitpo
- magicapn managers
- a amseegs for change
- I eidnnt to use it

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. b	4. j	5. d
6. a	7. f	8. c	9. g	10. i

Role Play

Role A – Jobs

You think jobs is the biggest issue in an election. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so important with their issues. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): the environment, education or health care.

Role B – Environment

You think the environment is the biggest issue in an election. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so important with their issues. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): jobs, education or health care.

Role C – Education

You think education is the biggest issue in an election. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so important with their issues. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): the environment, jobs or health care.

Role D – Health care

You think health care is the biggest issue in an election. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so important with their issues. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): the environment, education or jobs.

Speaking – Issues

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important issues in an election at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| • jobs | • health care |
| • environment | • pensions |
| • defence | • immigration |
| • policing | • education |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.