**كانَ**

Like ليسَ , كانَ is a very important verb. It functions much the same way. Use كانَ to make a “was” or “were” statement by putting it in the same place you would put ليسَ . It will conjugate the same way (i.e. the long vowel alif will drop out of the middle for “I” “you” or “we”):

أنا طالبة. I am a student.

لستُ طالبة. I am not a student

كنتُ طالبة. I was a student.

IMPORTANT! The object of both كان and ليس if it is indefinite, will take an اً ending (this ending cannot be attached to ة but will be attached to any other letter. This is just a spelling and pronunciation convention and does not affect the meaning. Look at the following examples:

أنا طالب --> كنتُ طالباً

هو طبيب --> ليسَ طبيباً

As you know, we don’t use a verb for “is, am, are” in the present. So the statement below means…

الملابس جاهزة

Right - “The clothes are ready.”

But, without a verb, how do we put this in the future? How did we put a “to be” in the past? We used the past tense of كانَ. Here again, we use كانَ, but we have to put it in the future. Look at the future conjugations of كانَ. These should not look unusual:

أنا سأكون

أنتَ ستكون

أنتِ ستكونين

هو سيكون

هي ستكون

نحن سنكون