



Introduction to Russian

Lesson 1-25

1-25

Grammar Points

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This Audiobook will take you through the basics of Russian with Basic Bootcamp, All About and Pronunciation lessons.

The 5 Basic Bootcamp lessons each center on a practical, real-life conversation. At the beginning of the lesson, we'll introduce the background of the conversation. Then, you'll hear the conversation two times: One time at natural native speed and one time with English translation. After the conversation, you'll learn carefully selected vocabulary and key grammar concepts. Next, you'll hear the conversation 1 time at natural native speed. Finally, practice what you have learned with the review track. In the review track, a native speaker will say a word or phrase from the dialogue, wait three seconds, and then give you the English translation. Say the word aloud during the pause. Halfway through the review track, the order will be reversed. The English translation will be provided first, followed by a three-second pause, and then the word or phrase from the dialogue. Repeat the words and phrases you hear in the review track aloud to practice pronunciation and reinforce what you have learned.

In the 15 All About lessons, you'll learn all about Russian and Russia. Our native teachers and language experts will explain everything you need to know to get started in Russian, including how to understand the writing system, grammar, pronunciation, background on culture, tradition, society, and more -- all in a fun and educational format!

The 5 Pronunciation lessons take you step-by-step through the most basic skill in any language: How to pronounce words and sentences like a native speaker. You'll go from basic concepts to advanced tips and will soon sound like you've been speaking Russian your whole life.

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Basic Bootcamp

Self Introductions/Basic Greetings

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Formal Russian

Оксана	Здравствуйте. Меня зовут Оксана.
Эрик	Здравствуйте, а меня - Эрик.
Оксана	Очень приятно.
Эрик	Взаимно.

Formal Romanization

Oksana	Zdravstvuite. Menya zovut Oksana.
Erik	Zdravstvuite, a menya - Erik.
Oksana	Ochen' priyatno.
Erik	Vzaimno.

English

Oksana	Hello. My name is Oksana.
Erik	Hello, and I'm Erik.
Oksana	Nice to meet you.
Erik	Likewise.

Informal Russian

Оксана	Привет, я - Оксана.
Эрик	Привет, Оксана, а я - Эрик.
Оксана	Очень приятно.
Эрик	Мне тоже.

Informal Romanization

Oksana	Privet, ya - Oksana.
Erik	Privet, Oksana, a ya - Erik.
Oksana	Ochen' priyatno.

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Erik Mne tozhe.

Informal English

Oksana Hi, I'm Oksana.
 Erik Hi Oksana, I'm Erik.
 Oksana Nice to meet you.
 Erik Nice to meet you, too.

Vocabulary

Russian	Romanization	English
Меня зовут	menya zovut	my name (is)
а	a	and
очень	ochen'	very
приятно	priyatno	nice
взаимно	vzaimno	likewise, mutually
Привет	privet	hi, hello
я	ya	I (I'm)
мне тоже	mne tozhe	me too
Здравствуй	zdrastvuyte	hello

Vocabulary Sample Sentences

<i>Меня зовут Оксана, а Вас? (Menya zovut Oksana, a vas?)</i>	"My name is Oksana, and yours?"
<i>Как его зовут? (Kak ego zovut?)</i>	"What is his name?"
<i>Вас зовут Марина? (Vas zovut Marina?)</i>	"Is your name Marina?"
<i>Как Вас зовут? (Kak vas zovut?)</i>	"What is your name?"
<i>Я люблю кофе, а Вы? (Ya lyublyu kofe, a vy?)</i>	"I like coffee, and you?"
<i>Это Эрик, а это - Оксана. (Eto Erik, a eto - Oksana.)</i>	"This is Erik, and this is Oksana."
<i>Меня зовут Оксана, а Вас? (Menya zovut Oksana, a vas?)</i>	"My name is Oksana, and yours?"
<i>Я очень устал. (Ya ochen' ustal.)</i>	"I'm very tired."

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<i>Сегодня очень холодно. (Segodnya ochen' holodno.)</i>	"It's very cold today."
<i>Я очень люблю кофе. (Ya ochen' lyublyu kofe.)</i>	"I like coffee very much."
<i>Как приятно! (Как priyatno!)</i>	"How nice!"/"What a pleasure!"
<i>Приятно слышать. (Priyatno slyshat'.)</i>	"Nice to hear." (e.g., a compliment)
<i>Приятно познакомиться. (Priyatno poznamomitsya.)</i>	"Nice to meet you."
<i>Приятно познакомиться. - Взаимно. (Priyatno poznamomit'sya. - Vzaimno.)</i>	"Nice to meet you."/"Likewise."
<i>Привет всем! (Privet vsem!)</i>	"Hi, everyone!"
<i>Привет, Эрик. (Privet, Erik.)</i>	"Hi, Erik."
<i>Привет, как дела? (Privet, kak dela?)</i>	"Hi, how are you?"
<i>Я - Оксана.</i>	"I'm Oksana."
<i>Я русская.</i>	"I'm Russian."
<i>Я люблю лето.</i>	"I like summer."
<i>Он тоже русский. (On tozhe russkij.)</i>	"He's Russian, too."
<i>Мне тоже нравится Москва. (Mne tozhe nravitsya Moskva.)</i>	"I like Moscow, too."
<i>Мне тоже. (Mne tozhe.)</i>	"Nice to meet you, too."
<i>Приятно познакомиться. (Priyatno poznamomit'sya.)</i>	"Nice to meet you."
<i>Здравствуйте, Вы откуда? (Zdravstvuite, vy otkuda?)</i>	"Hello, where are you from?"
<i>Здравствуйте, вы - Павел Иванович.</i>	"Hello, are you Pavel Ivanovich?"
<i>Меня зовут Оксана, а Вас? (Menya zovut Oksana, a vas?)</i>	"My name is Oksana, and yours?"
<i>Как его зовут? (Как ego zovut?)</i>	"What is his name?"
<i>Вас зовут Марина? (Vas zovut Marina?)</i>	"Is your name Marina?"
<i>Как Вас зовут? (Как vas zovut?)</i>	"What is your name?"
<i>Я люблю кофе, а Вы? (Ya lyublyu kofe, a vy?)</i>	"I like coffee, and you?"
<i>Это Эрик, а это - Оксана. (Eto Erik, a eto - Oksana.)</i>	"This is Erik, and this is Oksana."
<i>Меня зовут Оксана, а Вас? (Menya zovut Oksana, a vas?)</i>	"My name is Oksana, and yours?"
<i>Я очень устал. (Ya ochen' ustal.)</i>	"I'm very tired."
<i>Сегодня очень холодно. (Segodnya ochen' holodno.)</i>	"It's very cold today."
<i>Я очень люблю кофе. (Ya ochen' lyublyu kofe.)</i>	"I like coffee very much."

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<i>Как приятно! (Как priyatno!)</i>	"How nice!"/"What a pleasure!"
<i>Приятно слышать. (Priyatno slyshat'.)</i>	"Nice to hear." (e.g., a compliment)
<i>Приятно познакомиться. (Priyatno poznakomitsya.)</i>	"Nice to meet you."
<i>Приятно познакомиться. - Взаимно. (Priyatno poznakomit'sya. - Vzaimno.)</i>	"Nice to meet you."/"Likewise."
<i>Привет всем! (Privet vsem!)</i>	"Hi, everyone!"
<i>Привет, Эрик. (Privet, Erik.)</i>	"Hi, Erik."
<i>Привет, как дела? (Privet, kak dela?)</i>	"Hi, how are you?"
<i>Я - Оксана.</i>	"I'm Oksana."
<i>Я русская.</i>	"I'm Russian."
<i>Я люблю лето.</i>	"I like summer."
<i>Он тоже русский. (On tozhe russkij.)</i>	"He's Russian, too."
<i>Мне тоже нравится Москва. (Mne tozhe nravitsya Moskva.)</i>	"I like Moscow, too."
<i>Мне тоже. (Mne tozhe.)</i>	"Nice to meet you, too."
<i>Приятно познакомиться. (Priyatno poznakomit'sya.)</i>	"Nice to meet you."
<i>Здравствуйте, Вы откуда? (Zdravstvuite, vy otkuda?)</i>	"Hello, where are you from?"
<i>Здравствуйте, вы - Павел Иванович.</i>	"Hello, are you Pavel Ivanovich?"

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Basic Bootcamp Lesson Is to Learn Some Common Russian Phrases for Introducing Yourself.

Let's take a look at the first formal dialogue:

Оксана: Здравствуйте. Меня зовут Оксана.

Эрик: Здравствуйте, а меня - Эрик.

Оксана: Очень приятно.

Эрик: Взаимно.

Здравствуйте literally means, "be healthy" or "wish you health." This word lost its original meaning a long time ago, so now you can translate it simply as

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"hello."

Меня зовут is the equivalent of "my name is" in English. Literally, it means, "I'm called" or "they call me." For now, don't worry about the grammar; instead, focus on remembering the phrases.

"А" is a conjunctive word used to join two clauses which are usually opposite in meaning. In English it can be translated as "and" or "but."

For Example:

1. Это чай, а это сок.
Eto chai, a eto sok.
"This is tea, and this is juice."
2. Он дома, а она - нет.
On doma, a ona - net.
"He's at home, but she's not."

Очень means "very" and we can use it with either adjectives or adverbs.

For Example:

1. очень хорошо
ochen' horosho
"very good"
2. очень красивый
ochen' krasivyi
"very beautiful"

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We can also use it on its own as an interjection.

For Example:

1. Вам холодно?
Vam holodno?
"Are you cold?"
2. Очень!
Ochen'!
"Very!"

Приятно is an adverb that means "nice" and "pleasurable." *Очень приятно* and *Приятно познакомиться* are commonly used in introductions and we translate them as "nice to meet you."

Взаимно literally means "likewise" and we use it the same as we do in English.

If you would like to ask someone's name in a formal way, you can say:

Как вас зовут?
Kak vas zovut?
"What is your name?"

This literally means, "How are you called?"

Now, let's take a look at the informal dialogue:

Оксана: Привет, я - Оксана.
Эрик: Привет, Оксана, а я - Эрик.

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Оксана: Очень приятно.

Эрик: Мне тоже.

Привет means "hi." It's much more informal than Здравствуйте, and it's better to avoid this word at first meeting, with elders, or in formal situations. However, it's common to greet each other with Привет! in the nightclubs, at parties, or at other informal gatherings even if you see each other for the first time.

Я means "I" or "I am" in Russian.

For Example:

1. Я Эрик
Ya Erik
"I'm Erik."
2. Я американец
Ya amerikanets
"I'm American."
3. Я голодный
Ya golodnyi
"I'm hungry."

Мне тоже can be translated as "me too," where Мне is just a modification of the pronoun Я, meaning "I." We won't go into the grammar at this point, so just remember that this as an informal response to "Nice to meet you."

However, when you want to use тоже ("too") in the meaning of "I do, too" or "I am, too," you should use the pronoun Я:

For Example:

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1. Я устал
Ya ustal
"I'm tired."
2. Я тоже
Ya tozhe
"Me too." ("I am, too.")

The point worth attention here is that if the other person introduces himself/herself first, saying *Меня зовут...*, you can omit the word *зовут* in your answer:

For Example:

1. Меня зовут Маша.
Menya zovut Masha.
"My name is Masha."
2. А меня - Саша.
A menya - Sasha.
"And my (name is) Sasha."





Basic Bootcamp

Talking Nationality

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Formal Russian

Оксана Здравствуйте. Меня зовут Оксана. Я русская.
Эрик Здравствуйте, я - Эрик. Я американец.

Formal Romanization

Oksana Zdravstvuite. Menya zovut Oksana. Ya russkaya.
Erik Zdravstvuite, ya - Erik. Ya amerikanets.

English

Oksana Hello. My name is Oksana. I'm Russian.
Erik Hello, I'm Erik. I'm American.

Vocabulary

Russian	Romanization	English
здравствуйте	zdravstvuite	hello
меня зовут	menya zovut	my name (is)
русская	russkaya	Russian (nationality)
Я	ya	I (I'm)
американец	amerikanets	American (nationality)

Vocabulary Sample Sentences

<i>Здравствуйте, Вы откуда?</i> (Zdravstvuite, vy otkuda?)	"Hello, where are you from?"
<i>Здравствуйте, Эрик! (Zdravstvuite, Erik!)</i>	"Hello, Erik!"
<i>Его зовут Эрик. (Evo zovut Erik.)</i>	"His name is Erik."
<i>Вас зовут Эрик? (Vas zovut Erik?)</i>	"Is your name Erik?"
<i>Как Вас зовут? (Kak vas zovut?)</i>	"What is your name?"
<i>Вы русский? (Vy russkij?)</i>	"Are you Russian?"

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Моя мама - русская, а папа - украинец. (Моя мама - russkaya, а папа - ukrainets.)

Я учу русский.

Я студент.

Я - Оксана.

Нет, я американец. (Нет, я американец.)

Здравствуйте, Вы откуда? (Zdravstvuite, vy otkuda?)

Здравствуйте, Эрик! (Zdravstvuite, Erik!)

Его зовут Эрик. (Его зовут Эрик.)

Вас зовут Эрик? (Вас зовут Эрик?)

Как Вас зовут? (Как вас зовут?)

Вы русский? (Вы русский?)

Моя мама - русская, а папа - украинец. (Моя мама - russkaya, а папа - ukrainets.)

Я учу русский.

Я студент.

Я - Оксана.

Нет, я американец. (Нет, я американец.)

"My mom is Russian, and my dad is Ukrainian."

"I study Russian."

"I'm a student."

"I'm Oksana."

"No, I'm American."

"Hello, where are you from?"

"Hello, Erik!"

"His name is Erik."

"Is your name Erik?"

"What is your name?"

"Are you Russian?"

"My mom is Russian, and my dad is Ukrainian."

"I study Russian."

"I'm a student."

"I'm Oksana."

"No, I'm American."

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Bootcamp Lesson Is to Teach You How to Talk About Your Ethnicity

Let's take a look at the dialogue again:

Оксана: Здравствуйте. Меня зовут Оксана. Я русская.

Эрик: Здравствуйте, я - Эрик. Я американец.

We start with a self-introduction ("Hello, my name is Oksana"), and then we say our nationality:

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Я русская.

The point that needs special attention here is gender. The phrase "I'm Russian" sounds different for women and men. Let's take a look at the examples with both genders, feminine and masculine:

Feminine

Russian	Romanization	"English"
Я русская.	<i>Ya russkaya.</i>	"I'm Russian."
Я украинка.	<i>Ya ukrainka.</i>	"I'm Ukrainian."
Она американка.	<i>Ona amerikanka.</i>	"She's American."
Она англичанка.	<i>Ona anglichanka.</i>	"She is British."
Вы японка?	<i>Vy yaponka?</i>	"Are you Japanese?"
Вы китаянка?	<i>Vy kitayanka?</i>	"Are you Chinese?"
Моя девушка - французенка.	<i>Moya devushka - frantsuzhenka.</i>	"My girlfriend is French."
Моя девушка - итальянка.	<i>Moya devushka - italiyanka.</i>	"My girlfriend is Italian."

Masculine

Russian	Romanization	"English"
Я русский	<i>Ya russkij</i>	"I'm Russian."
Я украинец	<i>Ya ukrainets.</i>	"I'm Ukrainian."
Он американец	<i>On amerikanets</i>	"He's American."
Он англичанин	<i>On anglichanin</i>	"He's British."
Вы японец?	<i>Vy yaponets?</i>	"Are you Japanese?"
Вы китаец?	<i>Vy kitaets?</i>	"Are you Chinese?"
Мой парень - француз.	<i>Moi paren' - frantsuz.</i>	"My boyfriend is French."
Мой парень - итальянец.	<i>Moj paren' - italianets.</i>	"My boyfriend is Italian."

Another important point is that unlike English, we cannot use Русский ("Russian") as an adverb; therefore, we can never use it in a phrase such as "I speak Russian." It can either be a noun indicating a nationality (Я русский), or serve as an adjective with other nouns:

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For Example:

1. Русский язык
Russkij yazyk
"Russian language"
2. Русская кухня
Russian kuhnya
"Russian cuisine"





Basic Bootcamp

Useful Phrases for Learning Russian

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Formal Russian

Извините, как сказать по-русски _____?
 Извините, я не понял. Повторите, пожалуйста.
 Пожалуйста, говорите медленнее.
 Напишите мне это по-русски, пожалуйста.

Formal Romanization

Izvinite, kak skazat' po-ruski _____?
 Izvinite, ya ne ponyal. Povtorite, pozhaluista.
 Pozhaluista, govorite medlenneye.
 Napishite mne eto po-ruski, pozhaluista.

English

Excuse me, how do you say _____ in Russian?
 I'm sorry, I didn't understand. Say it once again, please.
 Please, speak slower.
 Write this down in Russian for me, please.

Vocabulary

Russian	Romanization	English
извините	izvinite	excuse me, I am sorry, pardon
как	kak	how
сказать	skazat'	to say
я	ya	I (I'm)
по-русски	pa-rooski	(in) Russian
не	ne	not, don't
понял	ponyal	understood
Повторите	povtorite	repeat
Пожалуйста	Pazhalusta	please
говорите	govorite	speak

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медленнее	medlenneye	slower
Напишите	Napishite	write down
мне	Mne	to me, for me
это	Eto	this

Vocabulary Sample Sentences

Ой, извините!	"Oh, I'm sorry!"
Извините, я опоздал.	"I'm sorry, I'm late."
Извините, который час?	"Excuse me, what time is it now?"
Как называется этот фильм? (Как nazyvaetsya etot fil'm?)	"What`s the name of this movie?"
Как это читается? (Как eto chitaetsya?)	"How do you read this?"
Как у тебя дела? (Как u tebya dela?)	"How are you? "
Я не могу Вам этого сказать. (Ya ne mogu vam etogo skazat'.)	"I can't tell you this."
Как Вам сказать... (Как vam skazat'...)	"How should I put it..."
Я - Оксана.	"I'm Oksana."
Я русская.	"I'm Russian."
Я люблю лето.	"I like summer."
Ты говоришь по-русски?	"Do you speak Russian?" (informal)
Я не понимаю по-русски.	"I don't understand Russian."
Они много читают по-русски.	"They read in Russian a lot."
Вам не холодно? (Vam ne holodno?)	"Aren't you cold?"
Он не голодный. (On ne golodnyi.)	"He's not hungry."
Я не русский. (Ya ne russkij.)	"I'm not Russian."
Ты меня понял? (Ту menya ponyal?)	"Did you understand me?"
Я понял, спасибо. (Ya ponyal, spasibo.)	"I understood, thank you."
Повторите это слово, пожалуйста.	"Repeat this word, please."
Повторите, пожалуйста, ваше имя.	"Repeat your name, please."
Ваш билет, пожалуйста.	"Your ticket, please." (formal)
Не говорите ему, что я приходил.	"Don't tell him that I've come."
Повторите медленнее, пожалуйста. (Povtorite medlenneye, pozhaluista.)	"Repeat slower, please."
Давайте пойдём медленнее. (Davaite poidyom medlenneye.)	"Let's go slower."
Напишите мне это слово, пожалуйста. (Napishite mne eto slovo, pozhaluista.)	"Write down this word for me, please."

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Напишите мне письмо, пожалуйста. (<i>Napishite mne pis'mo, pozhaluista.</i>)	"Write me a letter, please."
Напишите мне свой адрес, пожалуйста. (<i>Napishishe mne svoi adres, pozhaluista.</i>)	"Write down your address for me, please."
Ой, извините!	"Oh, I'm sorry!"
Извините, я опоздал.	"I'm sorry, I'm late."
Извините, который час?	"Excuse me, what time is it now?"
Как называется этот фильм? (<i>Kak nazyvaetsya etot fil'm?</i>)	"What`s the name of this movie?"
Как это читается? (<i>Kak eto chitaetsya?</i>)	"How do you read this?"
Как у тебя дела? (<i>Kak u tebya dela?</i>)	"How are you? "
Я не могу Вам этого сказать. (<i>Ya ne mogu vam etogo skazat'.</i>)	"I can't tell you this."
Как Вам сказать... (<i>Kak vam skazat'...</i>)	"How should I put it..."
Я - Оксана.	"I'm Oksana."
Я русская.	"I'm Russian."
Я люблю лето.	"I like summer."
Ты говоришь по-русски?	"Do you speak Russian?" (informal)
Я не понимаю по-русски.	"I don't understand Russian."
Они много читают по-русски.	"They read in Russian a lot."
Вам не холодно? (<i>Vam ne holodno?</i>)	"Aren't you cold?"
Он не голодный. (<i>On ne golodnyi.</i>)	"He's not hungry."
Я не русский. (<i>Ya ne russkij.</i>)	"I'm not Russian."
Ты меня понял? (<i>Tu menya ponyal?</i>)	"Did you understand me?"
Я понял, спасибо. (<i>Ya ponyal, spasibo.</i>)	"I understood, thank you."
Повторите это слово, пожалуйста.	"Repeat this word, please."
Повторите, пожалуйста, ваше имя.	"Repeat your name, please."
Ваш билет, пожалуйста.	"Your ticket, please." (formal)
Не говорите ему, что я приходил.	"Don't tell him that I've come."
Повторите медленнее, пожалуйста. (<i>Povtorite medlenneye, pozhaluista.</i>)	"Repeat slower, please."
Давайте пойдём медленнее. (<i>Davaite roidyom medlenneye.</i>)	"Let's go slower."
Напишите мне это слово, пожалуйста. (<i>Napishite mne eto slovo, pozhaluista.</i>)	"Write down this word for me, please."
Напишите мне письмо, пожалуйста. (<i>Napishite mne pis'mo, pozhaluista.</i>)	"Write me a letter, please."
Напишите мне свой адрес, пожалуйста. (<i>Napishishe mne svoi</i>	"Write down your address for me, please."

adres, pozhaluista.)

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Bootcamp Lesson is Using Russian Phrases to Learn More Russian

Извините, как сказать по-русски _____ ?

The first word in this sentence means "excuse me" and has the same usage as in English when used in questions. However, if we use it in an interrogative sentence, the meaning of Извините will change to "I'm sorry":

For Example:

1. Извините, который час?
Izvinite, kotoryi chas?
"Excuse me, what time is it now?"
2. Извините, я вас не заметил.
Izvinite, ya vas ne zametil.
"I'm sorry, I didn't notice you."

Как сказать literally means "how to say." We can translate по-русски as "in Russian," and it refers to the language in our case, although the function word по- doesn't mean the English "in." По indicates the way in which something is done. So literally, we can translate По-русски as "in a Russian way."

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You can use *по* to build other expressions, such as:

1. по-моему
po-moyemu
"in my way"/"in my opinion"
2. по-деревенски
po-derevenski
"countryside-like"
3. по-дружески
po-druzheski
"in a friendly way"

Look at the second sentence:

Извините, я не понял. Повторите, пожалуйста.



Pay special attention to the verb *Понял*. We use this word in the past tense in masculine gender. If the speaker is a woman, she should say *поняла* (поняла), and the whole sentence will sound as:

Извините, я не поняла.
Izvinite, ya ne ponyala.
"I'm sorry, I didn't understand."

We use the verb *Повторите* ("repeat") in an imperative mood, and without "please" in the end, your request might sound rather rude.

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Пожалуйста has the same usage as the English "please," and we use it with both requests and offers:

1. Один кофе, пожалуйста.
Odin kofe, pozhaluista.
"One coffee, please."
2. Ваш кофе, пожалуйста.
Vash kofe, pozhaluista.
"Your coffee, please."

We write the third sentence, **Пожалуйста, говорите медленнее**, in the imperative mood.

Говорите means, "speak" and is said as a command. It will be very useful to remember this word together with the sentence:

Вы говорите по-английски?
Vy govovite po-anglijski?
"Do you speak English?"

Медленнее means "slower." If you have difficulty understanding your companion, you can simply say:

Медленнее, пожалуйста.
Medlenneye, pozhaluista.
"Slower, please."

We say the last sentence **Напишите мне это по-русски, пожалуйста** in the imperative mood also. Напишите means "write" or "write down." Мне is the

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modification of the pronoun Я ("I"), and literally means "to me" or "for me." You can use it with other verbs.

For Example:

1. Скажите мне.
Skazhite mne.
"Tell me."
2. Покажите мне.
Pokazhite mne.
"Show me."
3. Позвоните мне.
Pozvonite mne.
"Call me."

Это means "this," and in our case it indicates the thing that you want your companion to write down. We can also translate it as "this is" and use it in different sentences.

For Example:

1. Это книга.
Eto kniga.
"This is a book."
2. Это мой друг - Иван.
Eto moi drug-Ivan.
"This is my friend Ivan."
3. Кто это?
Kto Eto?
"Who is this?"

You can omit По-русски ("in Russian") if you and your companion both know that the thing you need should be written in Russian.

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Basic Bootcamp

Numbers 1 to 100 in Russian

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Formal Russian

один, два, три, четыре, пять, шесть, семь, восемь, девять, десять

одиннадцать, двенадцать, тринадцать, четырнадцать, пятнадцать, шестнадцать, семнадцать, восемнадцать, девятнадцать

двадцать, тридцать, сорок, пятьдесят, шестьдесят, семьдесят, восемьдесят, девяносто, сто

Formal Romanization

odin, dva, tree, chetyre, pyat', shest', sem', vosem', devyat', desyat'.

odinatsat', dvenatsat', treenatsat', chetyrnatsat', pyatnatsat', shestnatsat', semnatsat', vosemnatsat', devyatnatsat', dvatsat'

dvadtsat', treedtsat', sorok, pyat'desyat', shest'desyat', sem'desyat, vosem'desyat, devyanosto, sto

English

one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten

eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen

twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety, one hundred

Vocabulary

Russian	Romanization	English
ноль	nol'	zero (0)
один	odin	one (1) (masculine)
два	dva	two (2) (masculine, neuter)

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три	tri	three (3)
четыре	chetyre	four (4)
пять	pyat'	five (5)
шесть	shest'	six (6)
семь	sem'	seven (7)
восемь	vosem'	eight (8)
девять	devyat'	nine (9)
десять	desyat'	ten (10)
одиннадцать	adinadtsat'	eleven (11)
двенадцать	dvenatsat'	twelve (12)
тринадцать	treenatsat'	thirteen (13)
четырнадцать	chetyrnatsat'	fourteen (14)
пятнадцать	pyatnatsat'	fifteen (15)
шестнадцать	shestnatsat'	sixteen (16)
семнадцать	semnatsat'	seventeen (17)
восемнадцать	vosemnatsat'	eighteen (18)
девятнадцать	devyatnatsat'	nineteen (19)
двадцать	dvadtsat'	twenty (20)
тридцать	tritsat'	thirty (30)
сорок	sorak	forty (40)
пятьдесят	piat'desiat	fifty (50)
шестьдесят	shest'desiat	sixty (60)
семьдесят	sem'desiat	seventy (70)
восемьдесят	vosiem'desiat	eighty (80)
девяносто	devianosto	ninety (90)
сто	sto	one hundred (100)

Vocabulary Sample Sentences

- Один кофе, пожалуйста. (*Odin kofe, pozhaluista.*) "One coffee, please."
- Два билета до Москвы, пожалуйста. (*Dva bileta do Moskvy, pozhaluista.*) "Two tickets to Moscow, please."
- Я хочу купить эти три сувенира. (*Ya hochu kupit' eti tree suvenira.*) "I want to buy these three souvenirs."
- Я буду в Москве четыре дня. (*Ya budu v Moskve chetyre dnya.*) "I'll stay in Moscow for four days."
- Он провел в аэропорту пять часов. (*On provel v aeroportu pyat' chasov.*) "He spent five hours in the airport."

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<i>Осталось шесть минут до начала концерта. (Ostalos' shest' minut do nachala kontsert.)</i>	"There are six minutes left 'til the beginning of the concert."
<i>Он прожил в Москве семь лет. (On prozhil v Moskve sem' le.)</i>	"He lived in Moscow for seven years."
<i>Билет в кино стоит восемь долларов. (Bilet v kino stoit vosem' dollarov.)</i>	"The ticket to a movie theater costs eight dollars."
<i>Он был в России девять раз. (On byl v Rossii devyat' raz.)</i>	"He's been to Russia nine times."
<i>Зачем ей десять ручек? (Zachem ei desyat' ruchek?)</i>	"Why does she need ten pens?"
<i>Давай встретимся в одиннадцать часов. (Davaj vstretimsya v odinatsat' chasov.)</i>	"Let's meet at eleven o'clock."
<i>Ресторан закрывается в двенадцать часов. (Restoran zakryvaetsya v dvenatsat' chasov.)</i>	"The restaurant is closing at twelve o'clock."
<i>Он не любит число тринадцать.</i>	"He doesn't like the number thirteen."
<i>В этом доме четырнадцать этажей.</i>	"There are fourteen stories in this building."
<i>Я была в Америке в пятнадцать лет.</i>	"I went to America when I was fifteen."
<i>Поезд отправляется в шестнадцать ноль ноль.</i>	"The train departs at sixteen hundred hours."
<i>Двадцать долларов: сколько это в рублях?</i>	"Twenty dollars: how much is it in rubles?"
<i>Сегодня плюс тридцать градусов.</i>	"It's thirty degrees Celsius above zero today."
<i>Билет в театр стоит сорок долларов.</i>	"The ticket to the theater costs forty dollars."
<i>Они женаты пятьдесят лет.</i>	"They've been married for fifty years."
<i>Он ехал шестьдесят километров в час. (On ehal shest'desyat kilometrov v chas.)</i>	"He was driving sixty kilometers per hour."
<i>Он проехал семьдесят километров на велосипеде. (On proyehal sem'desyat kilometrov na velosipede.)</i>	"He rode seventy kilometers by bike."
<i>Моей бабушке восемьдесят лет. (Moei babushke vosem'desyat let.)</i>	"My grandmother is eighty years old."
<i>Он умер в девяносто лет. (On umer v devyanosto let.)</i>	"He died at the age of ninety."
<i>Он прожил сто лет. (On prozhil sto let.)</i>	"He has lived one hundred years."

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<i>Я обязательно приду, сто процентов!</i> (<i>Ya obyazatel'no pridu, sto protsentov!</i>)	"I will definitely come, one hundred percent."
<i>Один кофе, пожалуйста. (Odin kofe, pozhaluista.)</i>	"One coffee, please."
<i>Два билета до Москвы, пожалуйста. (Dva bileta do Moskvy, pozhaluista.)</i>	"Two tickets to Moscow, please."
<i>Я хочу купить эти три сувенира. (Ya hochu kupit' eti tree suvenira.)</i>	"I want to buy these three souvenirs."
<i>Я буду в Москве четыре дня. (Ya budu v Moskve chetyre dnya.)</i>	"I'll stay in Moscow for four days."
<i>Он провел в аэропорту пять часов. (On provel v aeroportu pyat' chasov.)</i>	"He spent five hours in the airport."
<i>Осталось шесть минут до начала концерта. (Ostalos' shest' minut do nachala kontsert.)</i>	"There are six minutes left 'til the beginning of the concert."
<i>Он прожил в Москве семь лет. (On prozhil v Moskve sem' le.)</i>	"He lived in Moscow for seven years."
<i>Билет в кино стоит восемь долларов. (Bilet v kino stoit vosem' dollarov.)</i>	"The ticket to a movie theater costs eight dollars."
<i>Он был в России девять раз. (On byl v Rossii devyat' raz.)</i>	"He's been to Russia nine times."
<i>Зачем ей десять ручек? (Zachem ei desyat' ruchek?)</i>	"Why does she need ten pens?"
<i>Давай встретимся в одиннадцать часов. (Davaj vstretimsya v odinatsat' chasov.)</i>	"Let's meet at eleven o'clock."
<i>Ресторан закрывается в двенадцать часов. (Restoran zakryvaetsya v dvenatsat' chasov.)</i>	"The restaurant is closing at twelve o'clock."
<i>Он не любит число тринадцать.</i>	"He doesn't like the number thirteen."
<i>В этом доме четырнадцать этажей.</i>	"There are fourteen stories in this building."
<i>Я была в Америке в пятнадцать лет.</i>	"I went to America when I was fifteen."
<i>Поезд отправляется в шестнадцать ноль ноль.</i>	"The train departs at sixteen hundred hours."
<i>Двадцать долларов: сколько это в рублях?</i>	"Twenty dollars: how much is it in rubles?"
<i>Сегодня плюс тридцать градусов.</i>	"It's thirty degrees Celsius above zero today."
<i>Билет в театр стоит сорок долларов.</i>	"The ticket to the theater costs forty dollars."

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<i>Они женаты пятьдесят лет.</i>	"They've been married for fifty years."
<i>Он ехал шестьдесят километров в час. (On ehal shest'desyat kilometrov v chas.)</i>	"He was driving sixty kilometers per hour."
<i>Он проехал семьдесят километров на велосипеде. (On proyehal sem'desyat kilometrov na velosipede.)</i>	"He rode seventy kilometers by bike."
<i>Моей бабушке восемьдесят лет. (Moei babushke vosem'desyat let.)</i>	"My grandmother is eighty years old."
<i>Он умер в девяносто лет. (On umer v devyanosto let.)</i>	"He died at the age of ninety."
<i>Он прожил сто лет. (On prozhil sto let.)</i>	"He has lived one hundred years."
<i>Я обязательно приду, сто процентов! (Ya obyazatel'no pridu, sto protsentov!)</i>	"I will definitely come, one hundred percent."

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Russian Numerals

From the point of view of the word order, Russian numerals have the same usage as in English: the number comes first followed by a noun (the thing you are counting).

For Example:

1. один билет
odin bilet
"one ticket"
2. три человека
tree cheloveka
"three people"
3. сорок лет
sorok let
"forty years"

Numbers from One to Ten

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The things that need special consideration when using Russian numerals are:

1. number (singular or plural)
2. gender (masculine, feminine, or neutral)
3. case (nominative, genitive, dative accusative, instrumental, or prepositional)

BUT the good news is that except for **один** and **два** ("one" and "two"), Russian cardinal numbers only change by cases and do not have gender. Also, **Один** ("one") doesn't have number for the obvious reason.

So, let's take a look at the numeral **один** ("one"):

Construction	Russian	Romanization	"English"
Feminine Singular Nominative	одна девушка	<i>odna devushka</i>	"one girl"
Masculine Singular Nominative	один билет	<i>odin bilet</i>	"one ticket"
Neuter Singular Nominative	одно пиво	<i>odno pivo</i>	"one beer"

As we can see, it agrees with the related noun by gender, number, and case.

Now, number "two," or **два**:

Construction	Russian	Romanization	"English"
Feminine Plural Nominative	две девушки	<i>dve devushki</i>	"two girls"
Masculine Plural Nominative	два билета	<i>dva bileta</i>	"two tickets"
Neuter Plural Nominative	два пива	<i>dva piva</i>	"two beers"

After the numeral **два**, each numeral has only a single form.

For Example:

1. три девушки/мальчика

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- tree devushki/mal'chika*
 "three girls/boys"
 - четыре девушки/мальчика
chetyre devushki/mal'chika
 "four girls/boys"

The numbers пять ("five") through двадцать ("twenty") require their related nouns in the genitive plural forms.

For Example:

1. пять девушек/мальчиков
pyat' devushek/mal'chikov
 "five girls/boys"
2. восемь девушек/мальчиков
vosem' devushek/mal'chikov
 "eight girls/boys"
3. десять девушек/мальчиков
desyat' devushek/mal'chikov
 "ten girls/boys"

Numbers from Eleven to Twenty

As you might have already noticed, we form the numbers eleven to nineteen simply by dropping the soft sign and adding надцать to the numbers one to nine. The only small exceptions will be:

*changing "a" to "e" in the number два to form двенадцать

*dropping the "e" in четыре to form четырнадцать

As we mentioned before, the numbers пять ("five") through двадцать ("twenty") require their related nouns in the genitive plural forms.

Here are some more examples:

Russian	Romanization	"English"
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двенадцать лет	<i>dvenatsat' let</i>	"twelve years"
четырнадцать километров	<i>chetyrnatsat' kilometrov</i>	"fourteen kilometers"
семнадцать раз	<i>semnatsat' raz</i>	"seventeen times"
двадцать человек	<i>dvatsat' chelovek</i>	"twenty people"

The Multiples of Ten

We form the numbers "twenty" and "thirty" by putting together два ("two") and дцать (tsat'), три ("three"), and дцать.

For Example

1. Двадцать
dvatsat'
"twenty"
2. Тридцать
treetsat'
"thirty"

We form the numbers "fifty," "sixty," "seventy," and "eighty" by adding *desyat* to "five," "six," "seven," and "eight."

Russian	Romanization	English
пятьдесят	<i>pyat'desyat</i>	"fifty"
шестьдесят	<i>shest'desyat</i>	"sixty"
семьдесят	<i>sem'desyat</i>	"seventy"
восемьдесят	<i>vosem'desyat</i>	"eighty"

It will be easy for you to remember, because десят is "ten" (десять) without a soft sign. So basically, you take numbers five to eight and add "ten" (*desyat*).

Some exceptions just need blind memorizing:

1. **сорок**
sorok
"forty"
2. **Девяносто**
devyanosto

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"ninety"
 - Сто
sto
 "one hundred"

Other Compound Numbers

We form these numbers in the same way we form the English numerals:

Placing numbers from one to nine after twenty, thirty, forty, fifty...ninety.

For Example:

1. Двадцать четыре этажа
dvatsat' chetyre etazha
 "twenty-four stories"
2. Сорок пять минут
sorok pyat' minut
 "forty-five minutes"
3. Восемьдесят шесть процентов
vosem'desyat shest' protsentov
 "eighty-six percent"

Grammar Wrap-up

In short, for nominative (and inanimate accusative) nouns, use the following rule to select the proper form of the noun:

"one" --- nominative

"two," "three," "four" --- genitive singular

"five" and more --- genitive plural



Basic Bootcamp

Numbers Larger Than 100 in Russian

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Formal Russian

сто, двести, триста, четыреста, пятьсот, шестьсот, семьсот,
восемьсот, девятьсот

тысяча, две тысячи, три тысячи, четыре тысячи, пять тысяч, шесть
тысяч, семь тысяч, восемь тысяч, девять тысяч

десять тысяч, двадцать тысяч, тридцать тысяч, сорок тысяч,
пятьдесят тысяч, шестьдесят тысяч, семьдесят тысяч, восемьдесят
тысяч, девяносто тысяч, сто тысяч

миллион

Formal Romanization

sto, dvesti, treesta, chetyresta, pyat'sot, shest'sot, sem'sot, vosem'sot,
devyat'sot

tysyacha, dve tysyachi, tri tysyachi, chetyre tysyachi, pyat' tysyach,
shest' tysyach, sem' tysyach, vosem' tysyach, devyat' tysyach

desyach tysyach, dvadsat' tysyach, treetsat' tysyach, sorok tysyach,
pyat'desyat tysyach, shest'desyat tysyach, sem'desyat tysyach,
vosem'desyat tysyach, devyanosto tysyach, sto tysyach

million

English

100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, 700, 800, 900

1,000, 2,000, 3,000, 4,000, 5,000, 6,000, 7,000, 8,000, 9,000

10,000, 20,000, 30,000, 40,000, 50,000, 60,000, 70,000, 80,000, 90,000,
100,000

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1,000,000

Vocabulary

Russian	Romanization	English
сто	sto	one hundred (100)
двести	dvesti	two hundred (200)
триста	treesta	three hundred (300)
четыреста	chetyresta	four hundred (400)
пятьсот	pyat'sot	five hundred (500)
шестьсот	shest'sot	six hundred (600)
семьсот	sem'sot	seven hundred (700)
восемьсот	vosem'sot	eight hundred (800)
девятьсот	devyat'sot	nine hundred (900)
тысяча	tysyacha	thousand (1,000)
две тысячи	dve tysyachi	two thousand (2,000)
три тысячи	tree tysyachi	three thousand (3,000)
четыре тысячи	chetyre tysyachi	four thousand (4,000)
пять тысяч	pyat' tysyach	five thousand (5,000)
шесть тысяч	shest' tysyach	six thousand (6,000)
семь тысяч	sem' tysyach	seven thousand (7,000)
восемь тысяч	vosem' tysyach	eight thousand (8,000)
девять тысяч	devyat' tysyach	nine thousand (9,000)
десять тысяч	desyat' tysyach	ten thousand (10,000)
двадцать тысяч	dvatsat' tysyach	twenty thousand (20,000)
тридцать тысяч	treetsat' tysyach	thirty thousand (30,000)
сорок тысяч	sorok tysyach	forty thousand (40,000)
пятьдесят тысяч	pyat'desyat tysyach	fifty thousand (50,000)
шестьдесят тысяч	shest'desyat tysyach	sixty thousand (60,000)
семьдесят тысяч	sem'desyat tysyach	seventy thousand (70,000)
восемьдесят тысяч	vosem'desyat tysyach	eighty thousand (80,000)
девяносто тысяч	devyanosto tysyach	ninety thousand (90,000)
сто тысяч	sto tysyach	one hundred thousand (100,000)
миллион	million	million (1,000,000)

Vocabulary Sample Sentences

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<i>Он прожил сто лет. (On prozhil sto let.)</i>	"He has lived one hundred years."
<i>Я обязательно приду, сто процентов! (Ya obyazatel'no pridu, sto protsentov!)</i>	"I will definitely come, one hundred percent."
<i>Двести рублей: это много? (Dvesti rublei: eto mnogo?)</i>	"Two hundred rubles, is it a lot?"
<i>Этому городу триста лет. (Eтому gorodu treesta let.)</i>	"This city is three hundred years old."
<i>Он одолжил мне четыреста рублей. (On odolzhil mne chetyresta rublei.)</i>	"He lent four hundred rubles to me."
<i>В нашей компании работают пятьсот человек. (V nashei kompanii rabotayut pyat'sot chelovek.)</i>	"There are five hundred employees working in our company."
<i>Поменяйте мне шестьсот долларов, пожалуйста. (Pomenyaite mne shest'sot dollarov, pozhaluista.)</i>	"Please change six hundred dollars (into rubles) for me."
<i>Расстояние между Москвой и Санкт-Петербургом - семьсот километров.</i>	"The distance between Moscow and St. Petersburg is seven hundred kilometers."
<i>Я потратил восемьсот долларов за один день. (Ya potratil vosem'sot dollarov za odin den'.)</i>	"I spent eight hundred dollars in one day."
<i>Москве почти девятьсот лет. (Moskve pochti devyat'sot let.)</i>	"Moscow is almost nine hundred years old."
<i>Я нашёл тысячу рублей! (Ya nashol tisyachu rublei!)</i>	"I found one thousand rubles!"
<i>В этом городе десять тысяч жителей. (V etom gorode desyat' tisyach zhitelei.)</i>	"There are ten thousand citizens in this city."
<i>За NN проголосовали двадцать тысяч человек. (Za NN progolosovali dvatsat' tisyach chelovek.)</i>	"Twenty thousand people voted for NN."
<i>Эту программу смотрят тридцать тысяч человек. (Etu programmu smotryat treetsat' tisyach chelovek.)</i>	"Thirty thousand people watch this program."
<i>Он купил квартиру за сорок тысяч долларов. (On kupil kvartiru za sorok tisyach dollarov.)</i>	"He bought an apartment for forty thousand dollars."
<i>На стадионе собралось пятьдесят тысяч человек. (Na stadione sobralos' tisyach chelovek.)</i>	"Fifty thousand people gathered in the stadium."

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pyat'desyat tisyach chelovek.)

Он продал дом за триста тысяч долларов. (On prodal dom za trista tisyach dollarov.)

"He sold the house for three hundred thousand dollars."

У него на счету - сто тысяч евро. (U nego na sshetu - sto tisyach evro.)

"He's got one hundred thousand euros in his account."

Он выиграл миллион рублей. (On vyigral million rublei.)

"He won one million dollars."

Он прожил сто лет. (On prozhil sto let.)

"He has lived one hundred years."

Я обязательно приду, сто процентов! (Ya obyazatel'no pridu, sto protsentov!)

"I will definitely come, one hundred percent."

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"I found one thousand rubles!"

В этом городе десять тысяч жителей. (V etom gorode desyat' tisyach zhitelei.)

"There are ten thousand citizens in this city."

За NN проголосовали двадцать тысяч человек. (Za NN progolosovali dvatsat' tisyach chelovek.)

"Twenty thousand people voted for NN."

Эту программу смотрят тридцать тысяч человек. (Etu programmu

"Thirty thousand people watch this program."

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Он продал дом за триста тысяч долларов. (On prodal dom za trista tisyach dollarov.)

У него на счету - сто тысяч евро. (U nego na sshetu - sto tisyach evro.)

Он выиграл миллион рублей. (On vyigral million rublei.)

"He bought an apartment for forty thousand dollars."

"Fifty thousand people gathered in the stadium."

"He sold the house for three hundred thousand dollars."

"He's got one hundred thousand euros in his account."

"He won one million dollars."

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson Is How to Learn Numbers Larger than 100 in Russian

The easiest way to remember large Russian numbers is to understand their structure first. In the previous Bootcamp lesson, we covered the numbers from one to one hundred. As you can remember, the most important thing was to memorize the numerals from one to ten, and then build larger numbers by modifying endings, adding or dropping some parts, etc. There are exceptions among the common rules, but in general, Russian numerals have a strong logical system according to which the numerals are built.

100

Let's take a look at the number "one hundred," (сто). It will be our main tool in building numbers from two hundred to nine hundred. Сто will be the new ending to the numbers we've already learned (one to nine), although you will have to learn its modifications:

сто
две-сти
три-ста
четыре-ста

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пять-сот
шесть-сот
семь-сот
восемь-сот
девять-сот

Yes, the endings -сти, -ста, and -сот all mean one hundred, but they differ according to the first number. But the good thing is, the first part doesn't change except for два, which changes into две.

1,000

Here things are even easier than with hundreds. The only thing worth paying attention to is that тысяча ("1,000") is of feminine gender; therefore, the numbers "one" and "two" (один, два), plus the тысяча itself, changes according to the rules of this gender.

For Example:

1. одна тысяча
odna tysyacha
"one thousand" (you can omit *odna* meaning "one")
2. две тысячи
dve tysyachi
"two thousand"

The other numbers don't change, but тысяча still has to be changed according to its gender:

три тыся чи
четыре тыся чи
пять тысяч
шесть тысяч
семь тысяч
восемь тысяч
девять тысяч

10,000+

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Can't be any easier. Just take the multiples of ten and one hundred that we've already learned (ten, twenty..., one hundred, two hundred..., nine hundred) and add тысяч, which is the same as тысяча (just used in an accusative case, feminine gender, and plural number).

The dessert for this lesson: "**a million.**"

Sounds the same as in English, just put the stress on the last syllable instead of the first!



All About

Five Reasons Why You Should Learn Russian

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Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is the History of the Russian Language

Russian belongs to the family of Indo-European languages and is one of three living members of the East Slavic languages, the others being Belarusian and Ukrainian, which were formed by the 10th century.

Up to the 14th century, in the period known as Kievan Rus, ancestors of the modern Russians spoke dialects of the Old Slavic language, related to those of other East Slavs.

What followed was the Moscow period, which lasted until about the 17th Century. During this time, the main dialect was based in Moscow. Words from Western European languages such as Polish and German began to commonly be used and became part of the language.

Interestingly, in addition to 'outside' words becoming embroiled in the Muscovite dialect, it was also a time when native words and phrases began to appear, which replaced the Western European borrowings despite them being firmly rooted in the spoken language.

The 18th and 19th centuries saw great changes to the language with the aim of modernizing it, and at the same time giving it more of its own identity. Words from the Old Slavonic were almost redesigned with different pronunciations to reflect the post-Renaissance European period.

A lot of academic and intellectual vocabulary was used from languages such as Dutch, French, German, and even Latin. So by learning Russian, you get a sense of history, and the better you know it, the more familiarities you'll pick up from other languages too.

During this time (18th-19th centuries), French particularly became an increasingly prominent influence to Russian with many French words entering the Russian language. The nobles spoke French fluently and even wrote their letters

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in French. Perhaps surprisingly, some people even spoke it better than Russian. You can see this today in Tolstoy's books. In the famous book "War and Peace," Tolstoy wrote most of the letters in French. It was even common to have French nannies who taught French to children from their early childhood.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and the end of the Iron Curtain era, the language went through further changes. Many foreign words entered the language, especially from English. These were words linked with technology that most of us are accustomed to today such as "chat" (чат), "notebook" (ноутбук), and "driver" (драйвер). It didn't stop just with technology though. Vocabulary from leisure activities also became popular, such as "pub" (паб), "fitness centre" (фитнес центр), and "night club" (найт клуб). Words also came into the work environment and business, for example, "reception" (ресепшен), "presentation" (презентация), "manager" (менеджер), and "holding" (холдинг).

The way of life changed significantly as it became more Western-like, and as an inevitable consequence, the language changed too. These changes were not gradual or progressive as in history, but almost instantaneous. Many people (especially the elderly) were annoyed by these changes because within a very short space of time, they couldn't understand some vocabulary used on TV and in newspapers.

Many complained that people were not speaking Russian correctly anymore. Those working in the media, such as television and radio, were not obliged to speak what was once considered 'correctly' any longer. If they had spoken like that during the Soviet time, they'd have lost their job. Also, rules have become much more flexible and some things that were considered incorrect before have become acceptable. A good example of this is the word кофе ("coffee"). Usually words that end in -e are neuter in Russian (for example, моё полотенце - "my towel"). However, кофе has always been considered as an exception and is masculine: мой кофе ("my coffee"). Nowadays, моё кофе has become acceptable, along with мой кофе, even though many people still think it's wrong and "bad Russian."

About Russia

Russia is the largest country in the world with a population of over 140 million people. It spans eleven time zones and contains the largest forest reserves in the world as well as a quarter of the earth's fresh water within its lakes.

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The Top Five Reasons for Learning Russian

1. **Romance:** Lots of people learn Russian because they either have or want a Russian partner.
2. **Business:** Since the former Soviet Union opened its borders to foreigners, many businessmen travel to Russia and particularly the Ukraine.
3. **Travel and tourism:** Russia has always attracted tourists by its historical past and culture. Russian theatre, and in particular, ballet, are famous all over the world.
4. **"Exotic":** Even though it's considered challenging because it has a different alphabet, the Russian writing system makes it perhaps easier to learn than some other languages such as Arabic and Japanese.
5. **Extremely popular:** According to estimations, between 144 and 160 million people speak Russian as their first language. It's the eighth most spoken language in the world, before Japanese, German, French, and Italian. Still, people speak Russian natively in all former Soviet republics, some of which are part of the EU now such as Latvia. In Eastern Ukraine, for example, people speak Russian rather than Ukrainian.





All About
Russian Grammar Is Easy!

2

Grammar Points

2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Basic Russian Grammar

Welcome to our explanation of Basic Russian Grammar! Here we are going to look at just a few examples concerning Russian grammar. It's obviously a vast subject with volumes written about it. The objective is to illustrate that some aspects of it are easier than English and some are more difficult.

Okay, we know what you're probably thinking. Nightmares of being at school with grammar rules that you're being taught while trying to learn a foreign language, when they didn't even teach you these rules in English, right? Grammar is boring, right?

We'll begin by looking at some easy examples and move forward from there. Something we will definitely be avoiding is lengthy and complicated explanations that are never ending and let's face it, boring. No, we never venture down this path. In fact, those kinds of paths are permanently fenced off as they should be! This will be fun and most importantly, you'll learn and remember.

Let's begin with examining **tenses**.

Tenses

What is tense?

A grammatical tense is a temporal linguistic quality expressing the time at, during, or over which a state or action occurs. The times expressed are mainly past, present, and future though each can have its own sub-divisions such as recent past or distant past. If you speak English natively, you may not be aware how many tenses are used. Let's quickly look at the future tense to see variations. You have the sentence "I eat" in the present tense. For the future tense, you can use "I will eat," or depending on the situation, "I am going to eat." This illustrates the subtleties of future tense differences.

Interestingly, we cannot always translate tenses from one language to another. In fact, some languages have no tenses at all!

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So let's take a quick look at the present and past tenses and how we can apply them to Russian.

The Present

In English, you use a different tense in the present depending on whether it's an action that happens regularly or it's happening now.

For Example:

1. "She writes letters every day."
2. "She's writing a letter now."

In Russian, you use just one tense in the present, no matter whether the action happens regularly or is happening now.

For Example:

1. Она пишет письма каждый день.
"She writes letters every day."
2. Она пишет письмо.
"She's writing a letter."

The Past

The past form of regular verbs in English end in -ed. You have to learn irregular verbs individually. In English, there are many irregular verbs. Here are a few examples:

1. break - broke
2. buy - bought
3. cut - cut
4. have - had
5. fly - flew
6. speak - spoke

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That really is only a few. Though you can see how the past tense words do not comply to any rules, they are all individual, which makes them irregular.

Guess what? In Russian, there are hardly any irregular verbs in the past tense!

1. If the subject is masculine, the ending is -л:
Он видел фильм.
"He saw the film."
2. If the subject is feminine, the ending is -ла:
Она видела фильм.
"She saw the film."
3. If the subject is neuter, the ending is -ло:
Письмо было на столе.
"The letter was on the table."
4. If the subject is plural, the ending is -ли:
Они видели фильм.
"They saw the film."

This works for almost ALL Russian verbs! Now, let's discuss **articles** in English.

Articles

What is an article?

An article is a word that combines with a noun to indicate the type of reference being made by the noun. A noun is a word used to identify any of a class of people, places, or things (known as a common noun), or to name a particular one of these (known as a proper noun). The articles in the English language are "the," "a," and "an." In short, it is what you're referring to (e.g., "the cat").

In Russian, **there are no articles!**

Now let's look at an important verb in any language, and that is the verb "to be." In English, you have three forms of this verb.

Present tense: "am," "is," and "are."

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1. "I am tall."
2. "He is a doctor."
3. "They are hungry."

In Russian, you should not use the verb "to be" in the present tense, so you don't have to worry about it at all.

1. Я высокий.
"I am tall."
2. Он врач.
"He is a doctor."
3. Они голодные.
"They are hungry."

Making Questions

In English, you need a different auxiliary depending on the tense, and you change the word order.

For Example:

1. I often go there. - "Do you often go there?"
2. I went to school yesterday. - "Did you go to school yesterday?"

In Russian, you just change your intonation. Nothing else changes.

For Example:

1. Он часто ходит туда. - Он часто ходит туда?
"He often goes there." - "Does he often go there?"

Making Negatives

In English, again, you need an auxiliary and "not."



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For Example:

1. "I like apples." - "I don't like apples."
2. "He's asleep." - "He isn't asleep."

In Russian, you just put не ("not") in front of the verb in any tense.

For Example:

1. Я люблю яблоки.
"I like apples."
Я не люблю яблоки.
"I don't like apples."
2. Он спит.
"He's asleep."
Он не спит.
"He isn't asleep."

Gender

Nouns don't have genders in English. You may be familiar with the fact that with other languages, like French and Italian, they do. In French, you don't know the gender of a noun unless you memorize it, and even advanced French speakers often make mistakes.

In Russian, this issue doesn't exist! You can tell the gender just by looking at the ending of the word.

Masculine nouns usually end in a consonant.

For Example:

1. Стол ("table")
2. дом (house)

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Feminine nouns usually end in -а or -я.

For Example:

1. ручка ("a pen")
2. Мария ("Mary")

Neuter nouns usually end in -о or -е.

For Example:

1. Письмо ("a letter")
2. солнце ("the Sun")

Word Order

We don't often think about how important the order of words is. English is rather strict in that. To make sense, we have to structure sentences in a particular way. Word order in Russian is much more flexible than in English and often many combinations are acceptable. For example, to say "I love you," you can say Я тебя люблю or Я люблю тебя. However, changing the word order slightly changes the emphasis in the sentence and makes it sound more formal, informal, or poetic.

The Cases

We generally consider cases one of the most difficult aspects of Russian grammar. There are no cases in English but you can meet them in Latin or German. So, what is a case? It's a grammatical term we use to indicate a change in the ending of a noun, adjective, or pronoun. The choice of the case depends on the grammatical function of the words in the sentence. As all nouns, pronouns, and adjectives have different endings in different cases, you have to memorize lots of endings as well as to learn when to use each case! This certainly sounds scary, but if you learn the cases progressively (as we do in our Russianpod101 beginner lessons), it makes it so much easier as you're dealing with manageable chunks. Here's some advice to help you learn the cases.



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1. Don't try to learn all the six cases at the same time. You'll immediately get confused and it'll take a long time before you manage to use them correctly, so altogether it will be counterproductive.
2. Don't learn the endings of the adjectives at the same time as the endings of the nouns. Try to get used to the nouns first.
3. Don't learn the plural form for each case at the same time as the singular form. Wait to be at ease with the singular form first.

There. This was a brief helicopter view of how we apply some grammar to Russian. As you can see, it wasn't so bad at all and some of it is simpler than it is in English. Of course, some is more difficult too, but with RussianPod101, we understand this and design your learning accordingly so you won't even notice. We really hope this quick glimpse has helped and has given you the tools and motivation to learn more and more Russian.



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Five Tips To Avoid Common Mistakes

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Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Tips to Help Russian Students Overcome Common Errors

Tip 1: Learn Your Cases

There are no cases in English. That means that nouns and adjectives always stay the same no matter what their function and position in the sentence is. It's different in Russian. The endings of nouns and adjectives change depending on their function.

Certainly, that complicates things a lot. Often, beginner students, especially the ones learning "by ear," choose to speak without using any cases, and they just don't change noun and adjective endings when they speak. Of course, it's possible for a native speaker to understand someone who speaks like this but...

1. It can be irritating because you are slaughtering their language
2. It can be totally confusing!

2 When you listen to someone speak, you tend to pay attention to key words rather than the whole sentence. That's a natural habit because we need to start somewhere, and hooking onto familiar words is easier than trying to decipher an entire sentence. Especially during a live conversation, you need to try to communicate immediately. It isn't like in a classroom where you can write everything down and look things up in a dictionary.

Correct case endings give speakers clues about what we are saying. For example, in Russian you say У меня есть кошка ("I have a cat"). In this sentence, кошка doesn't change. However, if you want to say "I don't have a cat," the sentence will sound like У меня нет кошки: the noun changes after нет.

If you say У меня нет кошка, a native speaker will certainly be confused as it isn't clear whether you HAVE a cat or DON'T have a cat. The first part of the sentence tells them you don't, and the second part tells them you do! Or maybe you didn't mean "a cat" at all, but some strange masculine noun (кошк) or neuter

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noun (кошко)?

Кошко sounds very much like окошко ("a window"), so maybe you actually don't have a window? As you can see, there's a lot of room for confusion.

Once you've learned to speak incorrectly, it's extremely difficult to change your habits! So take our advice, try to use the cases from the very beginning, it will avoid you many problems later!

Tip 2: Watch Your Word Stress!

Like in English, word stress is extremely important. In Russian, you don't say all the syllables of the word with the same strength, but accentuate one syllable. You pronounce this syllable much louder than you do the others. If you don't stress the right syllable, it can lead to confusion, and native speakers will have difficulty understanding you. Unfortunately, unlike in Italian or French, there are no rules to help you stress a word correctly. It's just something you have to learn for each word. Sometimes even native speakers are not sure how to stress a word correctly.

This doesn't make things easy for learners but don't let this put you off; it's very common to stress the wrong syllable. Practice makes perfect! Anyway, it doesn't so much affect understanding, but the issue is that sometimes changing the stress changes the meaning of the word! The word писать is a good example. With the stress on the last syllable, it means, "to write," but when the first syllable is stressed, it means "to pee!" So you can see how potentially embarrassing changing the stress can be!

Tip 3: Don't Repeat the Verb in the Question

In English, you say:

1. "I work as a doctor."
2. "You work as a doctor."

In the present tense, the verb doesn't change regardless of whether the subject is the first person ("I") or the second person ("you").

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In Russian, you use a different verb ending for "I" and "you" in the present.

For Example:

1. "I work." (Я работаю)
2. "You work." (Ты работаешь)

It is very common for English speakers to forget about it, as in English the verb doesn't change. Also, they hear the ending -ешь in the question and tend to reply using ешь.

For Example:

1. Где ты работаешь?
Я работаешь в банке, when it should be, Я работаю в банке.

Again, start out getting used to this and it'll save you a lot of confusion later on.

Tip 4: Watch Your Gender

In English, the past tense is the same, no matter if the subject is a man, a woman, or a number of people.

For Example:

1. He finished writing the letter.
2. She finished writing the letter.
3. They finished writing the letter.

In Russian, the ending of the verb in the past tense changes depending on the gender and the plurality.

For Example:



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1. Он закончил писать письмо.
"He finished writing the letter."
2. Она закончила писать письмо.
"She finished writing the letter."
3. Они закончили писать письмо.
"They finished writing the letter."

If the subject is я or ты, use the ending -л if the pronoun refers to a man, and -ла if it refers to a woman.

For Example:

1. Я была в Москве в прошлом году.
"I was in Moscow last year." ("I" is a woman)
2. Ты уже был в Италии?
"Have you been to Italy yet?" ("You" is a man)

This can be confusing for non-native speakers. If they are male and their teacher or the person they speak most often to is female, or vice versa, they can start using the wrong form in the past. For example, a man can say Я ходила в магазин just because he has heard it a lot and gets accustomed to it, whereas he actually should say Я ходил в магазин.

Oddly enough, even little Russian boys sometimes make this mistake if they stay most of the time with females.

Tip 5: Don't Try to Translate "It"

In English, you use the pronoun "it" to replace a noun referring to a thing rather than a person.

For Example:

1. "This is my favorite book. It's very interesting."

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In Russian, the pronoun "it" doesn't exist. We replace "it" with "he" or "she," depending on their gender. That means, for example, that when you speak, you have to remember that книга ("a book") is feminine, and that you should refer to it as она ("she").

For Example:

1. Это моя любимая книга. Она очень интересная.
"This is my favorite book. It's very interesting."

English speakers sometimes tend to forget this and look for the Russian word for "it." "It is" is sometimes translated as это in Russian.

For Example:

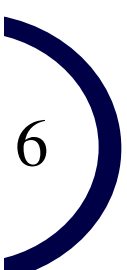
1. "It's a dog."
(Это собака.)

However, это means "this is" rather than "it." So, as you can see, it's wrong to use это to replace a noun. For example, when you are asked:

1. Тебе нравится ЭТОТ фильм?
"Do you like this movie?"

you should reply Да, он мне нравится and NOT Да, это мне нравится.

Make a note of these RussianPod101 tips and it'll really save you a lot of time and effort as you learn Russian. Because we understand learning, we do all the hard work and provide you with the most useful and effective information to help you achieve success.





All About Confusing Pairs

4

Grammar Points

2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Five Russian Pairs of Words That May Be Confusing

Imagine that for each English word there was a direct and perfect translation into Russian. How much easier would that make it to learn Russian!

Unfortunately, not only is it not like that, but quite often an English word can be translated by a dozen Russian words and vice versa. When we translate two (or more) Russian words by the same word in English, it creates confusion. We tend to remember just one translation and stick to it, or we don't understand the difference in meaning because in English it's just one word!

In this RussianPod101 lesson, we'll give you five pairs of words that non-native speakers most often confuse and give you some tips how to use them correctly.

1. В versus на

When you are a beginner, we teach you that, в means "in" or "at," and that на means "on." What could be easier right? However, later you will realize that it doesn't really work this way. You'll hear someone say, Я был на почте ("I was at the post office"), and you'll start wondering why they are saying "on the post office." The person didn't climb on top of the post office, did they?

The thing is that на does mean "on top of," but it's just one of its meanings. It can also mean "in," "at," "to"...exactly like в! Even those who speak Russian fluently often make mistakes when it comes to the choice between в and на.

Unfortunately, the only way to use the prepositions correctly is to learn which nouns we use with в and which ones we use with на.

The choice of the preposition depends on the noun that goes after it. Most nouns take в, so it's probably safer to use в when in doubt. Here's a non-exhaustive list of the nouns that take на:

Russian Preposition	"English"
----------------------------	------------------

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На работе	"at work"
На улице	"in the street"
На заводе (на фабрике)	"at the factory"
На почте	"at the post office"
На пляже	"on the beach"
На встрече (на собрании)	"at the meeting"
На уроке	"at the lesson" / "in class"
На юге / севере / востоке / западе	"in the south" / "north" / "east" / "west"
На самолёте / на поезде / на машине и т. д.	"by plane" / "train" / "car," etc.
На море	"by the sea"
На острове	"on an island"
На каникулах	"on (school) holidays" / "on vacation"
На чердаке	"at the attic" [but, в подвале means "in the cellar"]
На (банковском) счету	"on a bank account"
На (первом) курсе	"in (one's first) year" [of university, college]
На факультете	"in a faculty"
На (этой, прошлой) неделе	"this" / "last week"
На выходных	"at the weekend"
На балконе	"on the balcony"

2. Ходить versus идти

If you already know some Russian, you might have noticed how confusing words of motion can be! There are at least twenty different verbs that are all translated as "to go" in English! Of course, we won't discuss all of them here, but instead just concentrate on a pair that beginners find particularly confusing, as we use it a lot in the present tense: **ходить** and **идти**.

They both mean "to go," but if your friend asks you Ты ходишь в бассейн? he doesn't mean the same thing as if he were to ask Ты идёшь в бассейн?

We use **Ходить** when the action is **repeated** (you go somewhere regularly).

For Example:

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1. Я часто хожу в кино.
"I often go to the movies."

We use Идти, on the other hand, for **a singular action** (you go somewhere once).

For Example:

1. Сегодня я иду в кино.
"Today I'm going to the movies."

So if we go back to our example, when your friend asks you Ты ходишь в бассейн? he means "Do you go to the swimming pool?" (regularly). And when he asks Ты идёшь в бассейн? he means "Are you going to the swimming pool?" (now or in the near future).

3. Направо versus справа

In English, we translate these two words as "right," which often leads to Russian students not knowing which they should use.

For Example:

1. Поверни направо!
"Turn right!"
2. Магазин справа.
"The store is on your right."

We use направо to talk about the **direction of movement**. We often use it after the verbs поворачивать ("to turn"), идти ("to go"), and other verbs of motion.

For Example:



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1. На перекрёстке поверните направо.
"Turn right at the crossroads."
2. Иди направо.
"Go to the right."

We use справа to talk about **motionless objects**. After справа, we often use от + the genitive case.

For Example:

1. Гостиница находится справа от почты.
"The hotel is to the right of the post office."

These rules also work for налево and слева ("left").

4. Остановиться versus перестать

Russian learners often confuse these two verbs because they both mean "to stop" in English. However, they are not interchangeable.

Остановиться means to **"stop while you're walking, riding a bicycle, driving a car, etc."**

For Example:

1. Сергей остановился перед домом.
"Sergey stopped in front of the house."
2. Поезд остановился на маленькой станции.
"The train stopped at a little station."

Перестать means to **"stop doing something"** (other than walking, riding etc.).



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For Example:

1. Перестаньте шуметь!
"Stop making noise!"
2. Снег перестал.
"The snow has stopped."
3. Дети перестали разговаривать и посмотрели на него.
"The children stopped talking and looked at him."

5. Положить versus поставить

As both verbs mean "to put," it's quite difficult for a learner to distinguish between them.

Положить means "to put something **horizontally**."

For Example:

1. Положи книгу на стол.
"Put the book on the table."
2. Куда ты положил хлеб?
"Where did you put bread?"

Поставить means "to put something **vertically**," usually on a hard surface.

For Example:

1. Куда ты поставил бутылку?
"Where did you put the bottle?"
2. Поставь книгу на полку.
"Put the book on the shelf."



All About

Five Phrases That Will Take You A Long Way

5

Grammar Points | 2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Five Phrases That Will Take You a Long Way

When you start learning Russian, there are words that you just can't miss and will hear all the time, words such as *здравствуйте* ("hello"), *до свидания* ("good-bye"), or *спасибо* ("thank you"). However, native speakers commonly use many Russian words and phrases in everyday situations, but they are not necessarily the first thing you learn as they mainly belong to 'spoken Russian.' In this lesson, we'll introduce five phrases that will take you a long way and help you sound natural when you speak Russian.

1. Счастливо ***shchastliva*** **"Good-bye"**

You probably know *до свидания*, which is a formal way to say "good-bye," as well as *пока*, which is informal. However, *до свидания* might sometimes sound a bit too formal, and *пока* a bit too informal in certain situations. That's why *счастливо* is often a good option.

It comes from the word "happy" (*счастливый*) and literally means, "a wish of happiness" to the person you are saying goodbye to. You usually use it with people you know rather than strangers, however, it sounds more polite than *пока*. For example, if you address someone as *вы* rather than *ты*, you wouldn't normally say *пока*, but it's perfectly fine to say *счастливо*.

Please note that we pronounce the first sound in *счастливо* like the sound [щ] and not [сч].

2. Вы не подскажете... ***Vy ne patskazhete...*** **"Could you tell me..."**

The first word for "Excuse me" that students usually learn is *извините*, and of

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course there is nothing wrong with using it if you ask for directions or any other information. However, using *вы не подскажете* will certainly make you sound more natural and polite at the same time. We use it with *извините*.

For Example:

1. Извините, вы не подскажете, где улица Маяковского?
"Excuse me, could you tell me where Mayakovsky street is?"

Or with Russian equivalents of sir, madam, etc., you say:

1. Девушка, вы не подскажете, автобус уже ушёл?
"Excuse me (addressing a young girl), could you tell me if the bus has already left?"

3. Ничего страшного

Nichevo strashnova

"No worries"/"No problem"

We rarely teach this expression to beginners despite it being extremely useful. Think how often you say "no problem" in English and you'll understand why. Often, Russian learners tend to use their own literal translation of "no problem" (*нет проблем*), which isn't usually used in the same context as in English.

Ничего страшного literally means "nothing scary," and we can use it in a variety of situations, such as to accept an apology or to reassure someone.

For Example:

1. Someone pushes you in the metro and then apologizes. You can reply *Ничего страшного*.
2. A friend calls you and says he can't meet you today. You can reply *Ничего страшного*.
3. A child failed an exam. You can reply *Ничего страшного, сдашь в следующий раз!*
"No worries, you'll pass next time!"

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4. Будьте здоровы!

But'te zdarovy

"Bless you!"

When someone sneezes, some Russian people might consider it impolite if you don't say anything, so *будь здоров* is a good phrase to know. You will certainly impress your Russian friends if you use this phrase in front of them, especially if you get the gender right! I know what you're thinking - "Gender?! Not again?! Can't these Russians just keep it simple? You can't even say 'Bless you' without thinking of genders and other grammar stuff?"

Well, to use this phrase correctly, you need to keep the following in mind:

1. Whether you address the person who sneezed formally or informally (use *вы* or *ты* with them)
2. If you address them formally (use *вы*), you should say *будьте здоровы*
3. If you address them informally (use *ты*), you should say *будь здоров* when speaking to a man, and *будь здорова* when speaking to a woman

Summary of, Будьте здоровы

1. Formal: *Будьте здоровы (but'te zdarovy)*
2. Informal (addressing a man): *Будь здоров (but' zdarof)*
3. Informal (addressing a woman): *Будь здорова (but' zdarova)*

And finally, the Russian word you just can't do without:

5. Хорошо

harasho

"Good," "Okay," "Well"

This is probably the most common word in spoken Russian! Native speakers use it all the time, which makes it difficult for learners to grasp its exact meaning.

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Even though it comes from хороший ("good"), it most often means "okay," "fine" rather than "great." If your teacher says хорошо after you've finished an exercise, don't rush to thank them! Usually they just mean "Okay, we can move on now," rather than to praise you. However, очень хорошо ("very good") is usually a compliment.

You often use хорошо when you agree to do something.

For Example:

1. Купи молока, пожалуйста. - Хорошо.
"Buy some milk, please. - Okay."

As you can see, we use these common phrases in English, and indeed any language. It keeps the language 'oiled' as it's focused on what people say to each other every day, rather than some dry academic writing that nobody actually speaks. This really summarizes learning with RussianPod101. We know that any language needs to be learned correctly, but we also know that languages are 'alive' and spoken by everyday people in everyday situations and this is just as important to learn.





All About

Five Words Your Teacher Will Never Teach You

6

Grammar Points

2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Five Words Your Teacher Will Never Teach You

Just like any other language, Russian has different registers: formal, neutral, informal, and slang. Your textbook will normally teach you formal or neutral Russian. We consider Russian slang (called мат) unprintable and many people, even among the young, would find it extremely offensive if you used it in front of them. We consider Мат generally more offensive than most swear words you commonly use in English, and you should bear this in mind if you decide to show off your knowledge of colloquial Russian! Of course, we are not going to teach you any мат, but if you learn some from well, or rather ill-meaning friends, or from a slang dictionary, we would not advise you to use it unless you are absolutely sure your Russian friends find it acceptable!

Even though you probably won't need any Russian slang during your trip to Russia, you'll probably still want to sound informal rather than formal in some situations. Using informal language usually, perhaps surprisingly, asks for much more skill and practice than using formal language, and is often a dangerous activity for a non-native speaker. It is subject to lots of rules that you won't find in any textbook and can only learn by hearing people speak. If you don't know when and how to use informal language, at best you'll make native speakers laugh and at worst, you'll offend them.

In this lesson, we're going to cover five words that you are unlikely ever to see in a textbook. They are not considered rude; however, you only should use them with people you know well, as they belong to informal, "spoken" Russian.

Before we start, here's a little tip: you may remember that the word order in Russian is more flexible than in English. However, you may not know that the more unusual and flexible you make the word order, the less formal you sound. So, to sound informal in Russian, you can just use "unusual" word order. For example, to ask, "What's your name?" you would normally say Как тебя зовут? However, saying Тебя как зовут? sounds less "rigid" and therefore, informal. Putting the object in front of the sentence will often do the trick.

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For Example:

1. Яблоки купил?
"Have you bought the apples?" (instead of Ты купил яблоки?)

When it comes to questions, you can put the question word after the subject to make it sound less formal.

For Example:

1. Он где работает?
"Where does he work?" (instead of Где он работает?)

So here are the five words you will probably never see in a Russian language textbook:

1. Жрать (*zhrat'*) **"to eat" (informal, e.g., "to wolf"/" to gorge"/" to stuff")**

You may already know the words есть and кушать, which both mean "to eat" (кушать might sound more formal than есть for some people). Жрать also means "to eat," but this word conveys the idea of eating too quickly, too much, or eating unsuitable things.

For Example:

1. Он жрёт всё, что находит.
"He wolfs down everything he finds."
2. Хватит жрать!
"Stop stuffing yourself!"

You can use this in a jovial way with people you know well, though bear in mind that some people might not like it if you use this word in front of them.

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2. Тю-тю (*tyu-tyu*) "gone," "lost"

This funny word, which is very easy to remember and use, will certainly impress your Russian friends! Technically speaking, it isn't a verb, but we can translate it into English as "gone" or "lost." You just put it directly after the thing that is supposed to be lost.

For Example:

1. Он вернулся, а кошелёк тю-тю.
"He came back but the wallet was already gone."
2. Все его денежки тю-тю!
"He lost all his money!"

3. Однокашник (*adnokashnik*) "a classmate," "a schoolmate"

This word is the informal version of одноклассник. Одноклассник comes from the words один ("one," "the same"), and класс ("grade"), and literally means "a person from the same grade." The word однокашник also comes from один, but contains the word каша, which means "porridge!" In Old Russian, каша used to mean a meal that is eaten with others, so однокашник was a person you shared meals with. However, now it's just an informal word for "classmate."

For Example:

1. Это Славка, мой однокашник.
"This is Slavka, my classmate."

4. Тормозить (*tarmozit'*) "to react too slowly"

Тормозить usually means "to brake."

For Example:

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Машина тормозит.
"The car is braking."

However, in spoken Russian, we use this word in a lighthearted way to tell someone that they are reacting or acting too slowly.

For Example:

1. Отвечай, не тормози!
"Wake up and answer!"
2. Я сегодня торможу, потому что очень устал.
"I'm slow today because I'm very tired."

5. Прикалываться (*prikalyvat'sya*) "to joke," "to play"

You might know the word шутить ("to joke"). Прикалываться is its informal version, and we use it much more commonly, especially among young people.

For Example:

1. Я просто прикалываюсь.
"I'm just playing."
2. Хватит прикалываться, скажи серьёзно!
"Stop joking, speak seriously!"

The adjective, прикольный that has the same root as прикалываться, which means "funny" or "cool."

For Example:

1. Прикольный чувак
"a cool dude"

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These five phrases are just part of the RussianPod101 jigsaw of learning; you'll not find this information in any textbook yet it's arguably just as important as formal terms. Learning any language isn't just about knowing what to say and when to say it, or how certain terms translate into your language. It's also about knowing how native speakers use their own language in their everyday lives.





All About

How Much Can You Remember?

7

Grammar Points

2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is a Russian Language Quiz: How Much Can You Remember?

1. Which language did many Russian nobles speak in the 18th and 19th centuries?

Answer: French

Some French words in Russian are пляж ("beach"), этаж ("floor"), and бюро ("office").

During this time, French became an increasingly prominent influence to Russian with many French words entering the Russian language. The nobles not only spoke French fluently, but even wrote their letters in French. Perhaps surprisingly, some people even spoke it better than Russian. You can see this today in Tolstoy's books. Most of the letters in the famous book "War and Peace," are written in French. It was even common to have French nannies who taught French to children from their early childhood.

2. Cases in Russian affect which parts of speech?

- 1. Only verbs**
- 2. Only nouns**
- 3. Nouns, adjectives, and pronouns**

Answer: 3

A case is a grammatical term used to indicate a change in the ending of a noun, adjective, or pronoun. The choice of the case depends on the grammatical function of the words in the sentence. As all nouns, pronouns, and adjectives have different endings in different cases, you have to memorize lots of endings as well as to learn when to use each case! However, if you learn the cases

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progressively (like we do in our Russianpod101 beginner lessons), it makes it so much easier as you're dealing with manageable chunks.

3. To make a question in Russian, what do you change in the sentence?

1. **The word order**
2. **The intonation**
3. **The case**

Answer: 2

In English, to make a question you need a different auxiliary depending on the tense, and you change the word order. In Russian, you just change your intonation-nothing else changes.

4. In Russian, what parts of speech are there none of?

1. **articles**
2. **prepositions**
3. **adverbs**

Answer: 1

An article is a word that combines with a noun to indicate the type of reference being made by the noun. The articles in the English language are, "the," "a," and "an." In short, it is what you're referring to (e.g., the cat). In Russian, there are no articles!

5. Счастливо means...

1. **"Hello"**
2. **"Goodbye"**
3. **"Sorry"**

Answer: 2

До свидания, is a formal way to say "goodbye," as well as пока, which is informal. However, до свидания might sometimes sound a bit too formal, and пока a bit too informal in certain situations. That's why счастливо is often a good option. It comes from the word happy (счастливый), and literally means "a wish of happiness" to the person you are saying goodbye to. You usually use it with people you know rather than strangers; however, it sounds more polite than пока. For example, if you address someone as вы rather than ты, you wouldn't normally say пока, but it's perfectly fine to say счастливо. Please note that we pronounce the first sound in счастливо like the sound [щ] and not [сч].

6. When you say Мой сын ходит в школу, you mean that your son...

1. **goes to school regularly**
2. **is going to school now**

Answer: 1

You use Ходить when the action is repeated (you go somewhere regularly).

For Example:

1. Я часто хожу в кино.
"I often go to the movies."

You use Идти, on the other hand, for a singular action (you go somewhere once).

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For Example:

1. Сегодня я иду в кино.
"Today I'm going to the movies."

7. Which of the following verbs is the most informal?

1. **Есть**
2. **кушать**
3. **жрать**

Answer: 3

The words *есть* and *кушать* both mean "to eat." (*кушать* might sound more formal than *есть* for some people). *Жрать* also means "to eat," but this word conveys the idea of eating too quickly, too much, or eating unsuitable things!

For Example:

1. Он жрёт всё, что находит
"He wolfs down everything he finds."
2. Хватит жрать!
"Stop stuffing yourself!"

You can use this word in a jovial way with people you know well, though bear in mind that some people might not like it if you use this word in front of them.





All About

Russian History In A Nutshell

8

Grammar Points

2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Russian History

The ancestors of the Russians were the **Slavic tribes**. In the mid ninth century, the Vikings founded the first East Slavic dynasty. The first East Slavic state, Kievan Rus' (Киевская русь), adopted Christianity from the Byzantine Empire in 988.

Kievan Rus' consisted of a number of small states, each of which a "prince" (князь) ruled. The princes were all involved in a power struggle, and civil wars were very common. As a result, Kievan Rus' succumbed to Mongol invaders in the 1230s and didn't manage to overthrow the Mongol control until the late fifteenth century.

In the fifteenth century, the grand princes of Moscow went on gathering Russian lands to increase the population and wealth under their rule. The most successful of these was **Ivan III**, who laid the foundations for a Russian national state.

The development of the Tsar's autocratic powers reached a peak during the reign of **Ivan IV ("Ivan the Terrible")**. He strengthened the position of the monarch to unprecedented levels as he ruthlessly subordinated the nobles to his will, exiling or even executing many at the slightest provocation. Built on his orders was the famous St. Basil's Cathedral that adorns Red Square in Moscow. Legend says that after the cathedral had been constructed, Ivan the Terrible ordered to have the project's author to be made blind so that he could never build anything as beautiful as St. Basil's Cathedral again.

Another important figure in Russian history was **Peter the Great** who ruled at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Peter played a major role in bringing his country into the European State System. He reorganized his government on the

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latest Western models. He also insisted that noble people should wear European-style clothes and shave off their beards, or reform, which most nobles disapproved of. In 1703, Peter the Great founded Sankt-Petersburg, which was to become Russia's new capital.

Nearly forty years were to pass before a comparably ambitious ruler appeared on the Russian throne. **Catherine II (the Great)** was a German princess who married the German heir to the Russian crown. Finding him incompetent, Catherine tacitly consented to his murder and thus ascended to the throne. After a number of successful wars, Catherine managed to expand Russian borders. Mainly directed at oppressing lord's serfs, her internal politics triggered a major rebellion (ruthlessly suppressed). We also knew Catherine for her countless love affairs.

The beginning of the nineteenth century was marked by Napoleon's campaign who invaded Russia in 1812. The campaign turned out to be a catastrophe for Napoleon. Forced to retreat, French troops were unprepared for fighting in the cold Russian weather.

In 1861, Russia abolished serfdom, but the terms of abolition were so unfavorable to peasants that its revolutionary tensions actually increased.

The last Russian tsar, **Nicholas II**, came to power at the very end of the nineteenth century. His reign saw Imperial Russia go from being one of the foremost great powers of the world to an economic and military disaster. Under his reign, Russia entered the First World War, which contributed to general discontent and resulted in his abdication in 1917. Shortly after that, the Bolsheviks executed Nicholas II and all his family, including his thirteen-year-old son Aleksey.

A provisional government formed after Nicholas II abdicated, but it was unable to solve the deepening economic crisis, which led to the events that we know as the October Revolution. The Bolsheviks, led by **Vladimir Lenin** (real name: Ulyanov), seized the power and civil war broke out.

Lenin's death in 1924 resulted in a power struggle. Eventually, **Joseph Stalin** (real name: Djougachvili) managed to get rid of all his political rivals and came to power. Incidentally, his assumed name (Stalin) comes from the Russian word сталь ("steel"): strong as steel. Stalin's time saw tens of thousands of Soviet citizens face arrest, deportation, and execution. Denunciation was very common,

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and because they would be arrested for no reason at all, people lived in constant fear. At the same time, Stalin managed to create a personality similar to a cult leader both for himself and Lenin, and so people who grieved his death likened it to the death of a family member.

In many ways, even though this period of Russian history can be considered as tragic, Stalin's economic policy based on heavy industrialization had remarkable results that revived the Soviet economy.

In June 1941, German troops swept across the Soviet border. The German army seized Ukraine, laid a siege of Leningrad (now Sankt Petersburg), and threatened to capture Moscow but were thrown off in a successful counterattack. In 1942-1943, the Soviet Union managed to reverse the situation by defeating Germany in Stalingrad and Kursk. By the end of 1944, the front had moved beyond the Soviet frontiers into Eastern Europe, and Soviet forces drove into eastern Germany capturing Berlin in May 1945.

After Stalin's death in 1953, **Nikita Khrushchev** came to power. At a speech to the closed session of the Twentieth Communist Party Congress, Khrushchev shocked his listeners by denouncing Stalin's dictatorial rule and attacked the crimes committed by Stalin's closest associates and thus initiated "The Thaw" (Оттепель): a complex shift in political, cultural, and economic life in the Soviet Union. That included some openness and contact with other nations and more tolerance towards criticism.

Throughout his years of leadership, Khrushchev attempted to carry out a number of reforms, not many of which were successful. For example, after a visit to the USA, Khrushchev insisted on creating massive plantations of corn in the USSR without taking into account the climatic differences between Russia and the southern states of the USA.

Eventually, accused of "hasty decisions and actions divorced with reality," people voted Khrushchev out of office. He's the only Soviet leader who didn't stay in office until his death, except for Gorbachev whose leadership ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

After Khrushchev retired, **Leonid Brezhnev** came to power. This period was commonly known as Застой ("the period of stagnation"). Surprisingly, many Russians recall this time with nostalgia, as it was a time of great political and economic stability.



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In the years following Breznev's death, several leaders succeeded at the head of the Communist Party, but none of them stayed long because of poor health, and eventually, **Mikhail Gorbachev** came to power and proposed a vast program of reform. He initiated his new policy of перестройка ("reconstruction") and гласность ("freedom of speech"). Largely hailed abroad, he sought to improve relationships with the West. However, the Russian people appreciated him less in his own country where his economic policy brought the country close to disaster. There were severe shortages of basic food supplies (sugar, meat, dairy products), so people queued for food outside shops for days, and "food rations cards" (талоны) were introduced.

The unstable economic situation coupled with the freedom of expression resulted in the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. **Boris Yeltsin** was elected the first President of Russia and his government started wide-ranging reforms. They abolished price controls and privatization began. Liberalization of prices resulted in hyperinflation. For example, a loaf of bread that cost twenty kopecks (0.2 rubles) in 1989 cost two thousand rubles in 1996! Of course, the salaries and pensions didn't follow and consequently, a large part of the Russian population plunged into poverty.

As part of the privatization process, many enterprises were sold at incredibly low prices to groups of individuals with inside connections in the government and the mafia. Many others were simply closed and people working there lost their jobs. The early and mid 1990s saw extreme lawlessness, rise of criminal gangs, and violent crime.

On December 31, 1999, President Yeltsin resigned, handing the post to the recently appointed Prime Minister, **Vladimir Putin**. Western nations have criticized many reforms made during the Putin presidency as un-democratic; however, Putin's leadership resulted in a return of order and stability, and this progress won him widespread popularity in Russia, which resulted in his re-election in 2004.

In 2008, the Russian people elected **Dmitry Medvedev** President of Russia, while Putin became Prime Minister. People often joke that Putin is still the "real" president of Russia and controls everything, but of course, no one knows if there is any truth in it.



All About

Five Russian Movies You Must Watch

9

Grammar Points | 2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Five Russian Movies You Must Watch

Watching movies is an amazing tool to help you learn a language. Obviously, it's best to try to get authentic Russian movies rather than, for example, Hollywood versions dubbed in Russian. This will help gain an insight into the culture (of the time the movie was set) and history, and in covering all of this, you get "real" language. Of course, you can also switch subtitles on and off too! Above all, movies can be fun and relaxing and you can watch them again, and again.

These films are in chronological order (not of the date when they were made but the period they cover).

1. "Cruel Romance" (Жестокий Романс) (1984)

This movie was adapted from a theatre play written by a famous Russian playwright, Alexander Ostrovsky, and is a work of one of the best Soviet film directors, Eldar Ryazanov. It takes us back to the nineteenth century to a provincial town at the banks of the Volga.

The main character, Larissa, seems to have everything: youth, beauty, intelligence, and talent. The only thing she doesn't have is a dowry, which is common among noble young girls at that time; the time when the merchant-class are quickly building fortunes while many nobles are ruined. As a result, she's surrounded by admiring men but no one wants to marry her. Staying unmarried is an unthinkable prospect at that time so she accepts a marriage proposal from Karandyshev, an ambitious post office clerk, even though she despises him. The man Larissa had always loved, Paratov, had been away, hence her agreeing to marry Karandyshev. Paratov eventually returns home to the same town and he explains how he is totally devoted to her. This changes everything. She believes Paratov's promises that he loves her and will give up everything for her. Larissa leaves her fiancé at a party where their engagement was supposed to be celebrated and joins Paratov's party on his boat. They spend the night together and the following morning he confesses that he's engaged to a wealthy heiress and cannot marry Larissa! Paratov's friends, rich merchants invited to the party

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on the boat, understand how difficult Larissa's situation is and are trying to take advantage of it. One of them asks her to be his mistress and offers to "keep" her. Larissa realizes that no one really cares about her and she's considered as an object rather than a person. When Karandyshev arrives at the boat and threatens to kill her, she provokes him and hurts his pride even further by saying that "if she's just an object, she's too expensive for him." Karandyshev shoots Larissa and she thanks him before she dies for releasing her from her predicament.

This film gives a good portrait of the merchant-class in Russia when it was at its peak, and denounces their cynicism, lack of morals, and greed. It's also interesting for its beautiful, Russian tsygan-style songs accompanied by guitar. In short, it's a very "Russian" movie that you absolutely must see!

2. "Twelve Chairs" (Двенадцать Стульев) (1971)

This brilliant comedy, adapted from a novel with the same name, takes us back to the turbulent time just after the Russian Revolution. There are several screen versions of the novel, but the best one was probably the one by Leonid Gayday, a Soviet film director specializing in comedies.

A former nobleman and now a modest clerk in a Soviet organization, Ippolit Vorobyandinov, finds out that his mother-in-law had hidden all their family treasures in a chair to conceal them from the Bolsheviks. The problem is that the chair was part of a set of twelve other identical chairs and he has no idea what happened to the furniture! At the very beginning, treasure-hunting Vorobyandinov meets an adventurous young man, Ostap Bender, who takes total control of the operation. As the search for chairs proves more and more difficult, Bender and Vorobyandinov meet a number of strange characters and get into hilarious situations. Getting every new chair is an adventure; Bender even has to get married to get hold of one of them, but of course, the treasure is in the last one...or maybe there's no treasure at all? You'll need to watch the film to find out. Many phrases from the film, most of which belong to unforgettable Ostap Bender, achieved cult status.

3. "Tomorrow was the War" (Завтра Была Война) (1987)

This drama was adapted from a book by Boris Vasilyev and takes us to the tragic time just before the Second World War crossed the Soviet borders. A group of teenagers from a provincial Russian town has normal teenage worries: their

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changing bodies, first love, school...however, soon they are faced with a tragedy that will totally change their vision of the world. It's the time of repressions when anyone could be arrested, exiled, or executed for no reason at all, and that's what happens to the father of one of them. Immediately, a schoolteacher starts persecuting the girl, insisting that she publicly condemns her father and eventually, she is driven to commit suicide. At her funeral, the school headmaster delivers a speech that will cost him his job and his membership in the communist party: "It isn't only a bullet or a knife that kills. A word can kill too..."

In spite of reflecting a particularly dark page of Russian history, the movie carries a very positive message showing that courage, honesty, and friendship can help people survive even at the most difficult of times.

4. "The Irony of Fate, or Enjoy Your Bath!" (Ирония судьбы, или с лёгким паром!) (1975)

Traditionally broadcasted in Russia on New Year's Eve, this comedy is fondly viewed by Russians every year. The key to the plot is the uniformity of the Brezhnev era, public architecture, and unimaginative multistory apartment buildings that can, in fact, be found in every city and town across the former Soviet Union.

Following their annual tradition, a group of friends meets at a *banya* ("traditional public bath") in Moscow to celebrate New Year's Eve and all of them get very drunk. After the bath, one of the friends, Pavlik, has to catch a plane to Leningrad while another of the group, Zhenya, is supposed to go home to celebrate New Year's Eve with his fiancée. Both Zhenya and Pavlik pass out, and the others cannot remember which of their unconscious friends is supposed to catch the plane to Leningrad; eventually, they mistakenly decide that it is Zhenya and put him on the flight instead of Pavlik!

Zhenya wakes up in Leningrad airport, believing he is still in Moscow. It turns out that in Leningrad there is a street with the same name (3rd Builders' street), with a building at his address which looks exactly like Zhenya's! The key fits in the door of the apartment with the same number. Inside, even the furniture and layout of the apartment is nearly identical to that of Zhenya's apartment. Zhenya is too drunk to notice the differences, and goes to sleep.

Later, the real tenant, Nadya, arrives home to find the strange man sleeping in

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her bed. To make matters worse, Nadya's fiancé, Ippolit, arrives before Nadya can convince Zhenya to get up and leave. Ippolit becomes furious, refuses to believe Zhenya's and Nadya's explanations, and so leaves. Zhenya desperately tries to get back to Moscow and Nadya herself wants to get rid of him as soon as possible anyway, but there are no flights to Moscow until the next morning. Thus, the two are forced to spend New Year's Eve together. At first, they continue to treat each other with animosity, but gradually they fall in love.

The movie is filled with comedic moments, lots of interruptions such as unexpected guests, and ringing of the phone, while at the same time there is a love story continuing to develop. In the morning, Zhenya and Nadya feel that everything that has happened to them was an illusion, it couldn't have been real-life, real love. And so they make a difficult decision to part. With a heavy heart, Zhenya returns to Moscow. Meanwhile, Nadya reconsiders everything and deciding that she might have let her chance at happiness slip away, takes a plane to Moscow following Zhenya, easily finding him in Moscow, since their addresses are the same.

The film, funny and sad at the same time as many Soviet comedies are, will give you a good insight of what life was like in the Soviet Union during the Brezhnev Era and especially the way Russians celebrated (and still celebrate) holidays. The comedy is also worth seeing for its beautiful soundtrack.

5. "Brother" (Брат) (1997)

Many critics considered Брат as the first Post-soviet film to accurately portray Russian life after the fall of Communism, life where violence and crime have become an everyday occurrence.

The film begins when Danila Bagrov travels to St. Petersburg to seek out his older brother Viktor, who his mother is confident will help him make a living. His brother Viktor, who is actually an accomplished hit man, offers him one of his jobs. Danila completes the job successfully, but a gang who was supposed to eliminate his brother follows him. He manages to escape with the help of Svetlana, a married woman who is being abused by her husband, and begins an affair with her. At the same time, he befriends several people and gets into more trouble with mafia. Eventually, a gang leader, Krugly, manages to get hold of Viktor and gets him to call his brother and tell him to come home immediately. However, Danila ends up killing most of Krugly's men along with Krugly himself.

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Danila realizes that his own brother has turned him in, yet forgives him and tells him to move back to his hometown. In an attempt to rescue Sveta, he stumbles upon her husband whom he shoots and injures. Yet Sveta refuses to leave with Danila and stays with her husband. After saying good-bye to his friends, Danila leaves the city.

These five movies are very varied and each portray Russian life in different eras. As well as having a glimpse of what living in these times was like, they are entertaining, and definitely very Russian. Not only will this help your Russian, but knowing these movies themselves will certainly create a great impression as you meet Russians! You'll only learn like this from RussianPod101.com!



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All About Modern Russian Society

10

Grammar Points | 2

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Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Modern Russian Society

In this lesson, we are going to look at Russian society, how it got to where it is today, and how culture reflects it.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, life changed for everybody. The changes happened extremely quickly given that they were essentially life changing. For the older generation very much set in what they had been used to all their life, these changes were particularly difficult to cope with. On one hand, suddenly Western values flooded deep into every aspect of Russian life, yet the result is that certain elements of what it is to be Russian have remained.

Religion

The dominant religion in Russia is Orthodox Christianity. Over seventy percent of the population consider themselves as Russian Orthodox Christians, which is about one hundred million people. Despite this, only a minority of these attend church regularly. For most, they reduce their religious activities to baptizing their children at the nearest church and other than that, for a funeral.

In an Orthodox church, the service is always in Old Russian. Russians can understand the gist of it, although it can be very difficult to comprehend totally. A significant difference between a Russian church and a regular Western church is that there are no seats. One must stay standing, often for many hours. Some people do however, kneel during a service and others bow. In the congregation, men must remove any headgear as their heads must be uncovered at all times. Women must cover their hair and wear long skirts, certainly not trousers. It's recommended to respect this dress code even if you are just a visitor.

Interestingly, when Russian Orthodox Christians cross themselves, they do so from right to left, whereas other Christians usually cross from left to right.

Education

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For many Russians, education is highly important and always taken extremely seriously. Many, even those on the poverty line, will save on food and clothes and use the little money they have to pay for private tuition for their children.

They enroll the majority of children aged from three years old in kindergarten. After the end of Communism, the number of kindergartens fell drastically so now there are far more children than places available. The result is extremely long waiting lists and many register their children the moment they are born!

Education for primary and secondary schools is free in Russia, together lasting eleven years. In the Soviet Union, it used to be ten years. Children attend primary school from the age of six and most of them are already able to read at this point. During primary school, children have the same teacher for all subjects. From the age of ten, they then go to secondary school where they have different teachers for every subject.

School hours and breaks differ to what one may be used to in the West. Primary school hours usually start in the morning and end in the afternoon. Children have quick snacks in between classes and do so until the end of school. There is no meal-break whatsoever as it is expected that the child's meal is given at home after school. Also, the school week is five or even six days a week.

3 Many Western children, at some point in their school years, have a choice as to what subjects they may wish to study, whereas in Russia there is no choice; everybody follows the same curriculum. Russian schools use a five-point system for grading. It ranges from "2," which is considered as "unacceptable," up to "5," which is "excellent." The lowest score, "1," representing a total fail, is very rarely used.

After completing nine years of schooling, children do eventually have a choice. Either they can end their education, completing the final two years at the school where they have been studying, or they can transfer to a training-type school that specializes in an area of choice. Traditionally, these specialist centers were divided into two categories: the less regarded "PTUs" and the superior "Technicums." During the last decade, such establishments have been renamed as a "college."

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Universities traditionally had their own admission exams and take little or no account of a student's school record. Then in 2003, the Ministry of Education launched the "Unified State Examination" (USE). Many Universities fought this state proposal arguing that their institutions needed their own entrance exams in order to survive. Despite this opposition, the USE was introduced in 2007 and is now used in all Russian Universities. A small number of the most prestigious Universities are still allowed to conduct their own exams alongside the USE system.

Medical Care

Healthcare in the Soviet Union used to be free and even since its collapse is still available from the state for all those that need it. However, lack of funding for many years has led to the emergence of many private medical establishments, particularly since the late 90s. The result is that these private practices have inevitably been able to attract the best and most qualified doctors and staff.

Family

Property in Russia is very expensive regardless of whether it's to buy or rent. Therefore, it's very common for children to live with their parents until they marry and even afterwards. There is an expectation that one looks after your parents as they become older and need help if they cannot care for themselves. However, the advantage of this is that grandparents can and do spend a lot of time bringing up their grandchildren while the children's parents go to work.

Traditionally, couples in Russia did not live together before marriage. Part of the reason, as well as culture, was that divorce was (and still is) easy and inexpensive. However, more recently, as part of adopting Western values, many Russian couples do now live together without being married.

Clothes

Clothes and fashion are extremely important in Russia, especially for women. It's most unusual for them not to wear any make up at all, even first thing in the morning! Compared to the West, Russian women and girls dress in sexier clothes. I know an American who was really shocked as he thought there were prostitutes everywhere he looked, until he realized this was not the case and it was just the normal dress code for Russian females!

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Wearing fur is very common and accepted during Russian winters, the given excuse is attributed to the extreme cold.

These five aspects of Russian life illustrate the changing culture since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Some parts of life remain firmly rooted in Russian history although Western values clearly influence life today. As usual with RussianPod101.com, you don't only learn the Russian language you also learn everything about the country, its history, and culture, because that is embedded in every language so it's just as important.





All About

Eating Habits in Russia

11

Grammar Points

2

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Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Eating Habits in Russia.

In this RussianPod101 lesson, we are going to look at eating habits in Russia and describe how things have changed since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Naturally, we're going to give you a sample recipe too so you can eat like a Russian!

Eating habits in Russia have drastically changed in the last twenty years. In the Soviet time, most food was produced within the Soviet Union itself and very little food was imported from elsewhere. It can be difficult to imagine for someone who has never experienced it. In addition, there was also quite little contact with foreign countries, and as a result, Russian cuisine (and cuisine of former Soviet Republics) was the only thing people knew. Even pizza, that had become an "international" dish long ago, only became well-known in Russia in the nineties, not to mention Chinese or Japanese food that was completely unfamiliar to most people in the former Soviet Union.

2 After the fall of the Soviet Union in the nineties, they opened the borders. A lot of foreign food was imported (Boris Yeltsin's government even encouraged foreign food import rather than local produce). At the same time, many people started going abroad and discovered foreign food. The first McDonald's restaurant opened in Moscow in 1990 and people were traveling from all over the Moscow region to visit it, as it was something totally new and exciting. Asian, French, and Italian restaurants started appearing everywhere. Consequently, modern Russian cuisine is an interesting mixture of traditional Russian cuisine with a strong foreign influence.

Russian traditional cuisine is very rich. You should put off your trip to Russia if you are trying to lose weight! Butter, meat, dairy products, eggs, and cereal are commonly used. As for vegetables, potatoes, cabbage, beetroots, and cucumbers are very common and are an integral part of many typical Russian dishes.

Most people have three meals: breakfast, an afternoon meal, and an evening

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meal. Usually, people take the afternoon meal later than in most western countries, at two or three PM. The evening meal is also quite late as most people don't finish work until seven or eight PM (sometimes later) and they often face a long journey home before they can eat. In the Soviet Union, a typical breakfast used to consist of porridge (boiled cereal: oats, barley, rice, wheat, or other cereal). Cereal and the way it's eaten in the West have also become popular recently. They consider porridge itself an ideal food for children and it's still quite common today even though many kids hate it! Now people usually have a coffee (or more common, tea) and a small sandwich (бутерброд, from the German word "bread and butter"). However, this name is misleading, as a typical Russian sandwich usually consists of bread and a sliced cheese or sausage. There are two types of bread commonly eaten in Russia, wheat bread (белый хлеб, literally "white bread") and rye bread (чёрный хлеб, literally "black bread").

A typical afternoon meal used to consist of three dishes: a "soup" (первое, the first dish), a "main dish" (второе, the second dish), and a "dessert" (третье, the third dish). Nowadays, not many people have soup for each meal, though soups are still a very important part of Russian cuisine. Most common Russian soups include *borshch* (борщ - "beetroot soup"), *shchi* (щи - "cabbage soup"), *okroshka* (окрошка - "cold vegetable soup"), "mushroom soup" (грибной суп), and "chicken soup" (куриный суп). Many people commonly add sour cream to their soup.

3 Examples of typical main dishes are *pel'meni* (пельмени - type of "meat ravioli," a typical Tatar dish that became extremely popular in the Soviet Union), *kotlety* (котлеты - "balls made of minced meat mixed with bread that had been soaked in milk"), or *kholodets* (холодец - "jellied chopped pieces of pork or veal with some spices"). The most typical accompaniment for meat dishes is potatoes, either boiled or fried. Some non-meat dishes include *blini* (блины - "pancakes"), *olad'i* (оладьи - "thick, small pancakes"), and *vareniki* (вареники - "Ukrainian dumplings with different fillings"). It's very common to have tea with some cake, cookies, or chocolates as a dessert.

An evening meal usually includes a main dish or soup, but not both. Russian salads are very different from Western salads. If you order a salad in a Russian restaurant and expect to see some lettuce and vegetables on your plate, then you'd better think again! Most typical Russian salads include boiled vegetables (potatoes, beetroots), meat, pickles, boiled eggs..., and no lettuce. Most common dressings are mayonnaise, sour cream, and oil, and most common spices are dill

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and parsley. Some examples of typical salads are *Olivye salad* (салат Оливье - "boiled potatoes and carrots, meat, pickled cucumbers, boiled eggs, green peas, and mayonnaise." Most people don't put olives in it despite what its name seems to suggest); *vinegret* (винегрет - "boiled beetroots, potatoes, pickled cucumbers, and oil"); *seld' pod shuboy* (сельдь под шубой - "herring under a fur coat"; salted herring under a "coat" of boiled beets and other vegetables). Russian salads are not usually considered part of everyday cuisine as their preparation is extremely time-consuming, but are usually made for parties or festivities.

Of course, there's no "exact" recipe for the typical Russian dishes we mentioned above. Each family uses their own recipe, and often they vary enormously; just few basic ingredients stay the same.

Let's take *shchi* ("cabbage soup") as an example. Russians have been eating this dish for many centuries and you can see it mentioned in many Russian sayings and proverbs. Some recipes use fresh cabbage, and some use pickled cabbage. Some contain meat while others don't. We'll share a recipe of *shchi* with mushrooms with you, which is just one of the many ways to cook *shchi*.

Shchi

Ingredients:

3 or 4 average potatoes

300 g fresh cabbage

250 g mushrooms (you can use any mushrooms)

1 average onion

1 carrot

2 tablespoons of tomato paste

1 large bay leaf (or more to taste)

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Seasoning

Cooking Method:

Wash the vegetables. Peel the potatoes, and then cut them into cubes. Chop the cabbage, peel and chop the onion, grate the carrot, and chop the mushrooms.

Put two and a half to three liters of water into a stewpot, salt it, and bring to a boil. Add the potatoes, bring to a boil again, then lower the heat and simmer for ten to fifteen minutes. At the same time, fry the chopped onion in a frying pan with a little oil until it's golden brown. Add the carrots and fry until soft, add salt to taste, and then set aside in a separate dish. In that same frying pan, fry the mushrooms, add a little seasoning to taste, and then add the mushrooms to the onions and carrots previously set aside. Now put the cabbage in the frying pan and gently fry with a little pepper, add the bay leaf and some water from the stewpot until the cabbage becomes soft. At this point, add the onions, carrots, and the mushrooms to the cabbage as well as the tomato paste. Mix everything and cook for two-three minutes.

5 Add the mixture to the stewpot with the potatoes and cook for about five minutes. Add more seasoning according to taste and remove from the heat and cover. Leave covered for at least an hour before serving. If you want to feel "Russian," you can add some sour cream onto your plate.

As previously mentioned, there are many variations of this recipe according to region as well as family traditions so feel free to experiment!

Here we have briefly looked at food in Russia, how it has changed since the end of the Soviet Union and yet in many ways, how it hasn't. The *shchi* recipe is a great example of a simple, versatile, and typically Russian dish. Learn Russian with RussianPod101 and you'll learn all things Russian!



All About

Important Dates in Russia

12

Grammar Points

2

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Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Important Dates in Russia.

In this lesson, we're going to look at significant dates in the Russian calendar, what they are, how they compare to a calendar you may be used to, and why these dates are important for Russians. Apart from being interesting, it's great to know as it'll be useful for when traveling to Russia, and also it'll really impress your Russian friends if you can give them good wishes on days that are important for them.

Holidays are an important part of any culture. While some of them are the same in many countries, others are totally different or are celebrated in a different way. Did you know for example that March 8 is a very special day for your Russian girlfriend or wife, and she can be really upset if you ignore it? That December 25 is just an ordinary day in Russia and people go to work like any other day? In today's podcast, we'll tell you everything you need to know about Russian holidays and why it'll be good for you to know about them.

Новый год ("New Year's")

Новый год ("New Year's") is the first on the calendar and by far the most popular holiday in Russia. As religion was frowned upon in the Soviet Union, Russians did not officially celebrate holidays that had a religious connotation, like Christmas. So many Christmas traditions, like decorating the Christmas tree and gifts from Santa Claus for children, have been "transferred" to the New Year celebration. We call the Russian Santa "Father Frost" (Дед Мороз). He's always accompanied by a young girl called *Snegurochka* (from Russian снег meaning "snow"), his granddaughter.

It's unimaginable for Russians to go to bed early on New Year's Eve! People usually celebrate New Year's with their friends and family. Traditionally they cook an abundant meal with lots of different kinds of salads, small sandwiches, and a main dish (most often a roasted chicken). Of course, they also drink a lot of alcohol, especially champagne and vodka. It's common to drink a toast for the passing year several minutes before midnight to "say good-bye" to it. At

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midnight, everyone drinks their first glass of champagne and finally starts eating. They usually celebrate until three or four AM and sometimes later. It's usually very quiet on the New Year's Day as everyone's asleep!

Рождество ("Christmas")

Рождество ("Christmas") became an official public holiday again in 1992. You might not know that Russian Christmas is not celebrated on December 25, but two weeks later, on January 7. This difference is due to the fact that the Russian Orthodox Church still follows the Julian calendar while the Russian state had switched to the Gregorian calendar. Now Christmas in Russia is not as widely celebrated as New Year's. Many believers go to church on that day to attend the night service.

Международный Женский День ("International Women's Day")

The next important Russian holiday is the "International Women's Day" (Международный Женский День). It's celebrated on March 8. Even though it's called "international," it isn't celebrated much outside Russia and other former Soviet Republics. Men need to remember to buy some flowers or a gift for their partner on this day, but it's also very common to buy flowers or chocolates for female friends, colleagues, or teachers. If you send an e-card to your Russian female friends on that day, it'll be highly appreciated! Children usually make little gifts at school to offer their mothers on that day.

День Защитника Отечества ("Defender fo the Fatherland Day")

There also exists the equivalent of the International Women's Day for men. It's celebrated on the February 23 and is called "Defender of the Fatherland Day" (День Защитника Отечества). Officially, it honors people who are serving or have served in the armed forces, but it's common to give a gift to your partner or father on that day regardless whether they have any connection with the Army.

Пасха ("Easter")

"Easter" (Пасха) ends a long period of fasting for believers. On that day, Russians traditionally eat eggs that have been painted by hand or dyed by boiling them with onionskins. Other traditional dishes include кулич (*kulich* - "a tall round cake with raisins and sugar glazing"), and пасха (*paskha* - "a dish made of sweet



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cottage cheese and raisins").

День Весны и Труда ("Spring and Labor Day")

The first of May is a public holiday in Russia, like in many other countries. It's called "Spring and Labor Day" (День Весны и Труда). In the Soviet time, a military parade would usually take place on that day, but now many people just use this extra free day for gardening.

День Победы ("Victory Day")

Another important holiday is "Victory Day" (День Победы), the day that commemorates the victory over Nazi Germany. Contrary to most European countries where it's celebrated on May 8, it's May 9 in Russia. Russians consider Victory Day as one of its most important dates. It commemorates those who died in the second World War and pays tribute to survivors and veterans. Russians lay flowers and wreaths on wartime graves and memorials. Annually organized, there is a huge military parade in Moscow on Red Square and in all major cities. Orchestras and bands play wartime music in the streets of many cities and towns.

New Holidays in Russia

Several holidays are relatively new in Russia.

Russia Day (June 12) was established in 1994 and **Unity Day (November 4)** was first celebrated in 2005. Many people think that the latter was introduced to replace the October Revolution Day, which was celebrated on November 7 and used to be the only public holiday in fall.

After the fall of Communism in the nineties, Russians adopted some Western holidays like **Valentine's Day and Halloween** and they became quite popular, particularly among the young. In 2009, Russians turned Red Square in Moscow into an enormous ice rink to celebrate Valentine's Day. People who skated on the rink got a badge with a number at the entrance and thus were able to write and receive anonymous love notes. Many famous Russian singers and bands took part in the show.

So as you can see, some dates are very similar whichever country you're in; for



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example, most people celebrate the New Year. However, we've also covered why some dates are very specific to Russia, their origins, and why you need to know about them. When your Russian girlfriend or wife are very touched and think even more of you for making them feel extra special on March 8, you can secretly thank RussianPod101.com!





All About

Five Tips On How To Behave In Russia

13

Grammar Points

2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Cultural Differences Between Russia and Some Western Countries.

The saying "When in Rome do as the Romans do" has its equivalent in Russian: В чужой монастырь со своим уставом не ходят (literally, "Don't enter another monastery with your own rules"). Things that we consider appropriate in one culture we might perceive as rude in another and vice versa. Table manners in Japan are not exactly the same as in the USA for example! If you go to a foreign country, knowing about these differences is almost as important as speaking the language, so this is what this lesson is going to cover.

Cultural differences between Russia and, for example, the USA are much slighter than, for example, between the USA and some Arabic countries, so people often tend to overlook them. However, these differences do exist and it's good to know about them. In this podcast, we will give you five tips on what is good and bad manners in Russia.

1. Be Gallant

The first advice is for men. Being chivalrous isn't considered "sexist" in Russia! If you are accompanied by a woman and don't open and hold the door for her to let her in, you are being rude. It's also considered polite to get out of the car and open the car door for your female companion. If a woman you know is carrying a heavy bag, you should offer to help her. If you ask a woman out, she'll normally expect you to pay the bill.

2. Be Prepared for Invasion of Your Personal Space

Unfortunately, Russians need less personal space than Westerners do, which is often a source of discomfort for foreigners in Russia. When people stand or sit very close to you on the bus or on the metro, they are not being deliberately offensive; it's just a cultural thing. If you take up more than one seat on the bus, other passengers will probably be annoyed and tell you to move. Russians also consider putting your bag on the seat next to you to be rude unless the bus is

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virtually empty.

While we are on the subject of public transport, you should know that it's considered polite to give your seat to elderly people, women with small children, and pregnant women. If you fail to give your seat, other passengers might angrily tell you to do so.

If you are standing in a line, you should keep close to the person in front of you. If you leave too much space in between, people will think you are not part of the line, ignore you, and just walk ahead taking what was your position in the line.

3. Give Gifts

Russians probably spend more money on gifts than they spend for themselves! We use gifts to show gratitude, respect, or affection. If you are planning to stay with some friends in Russia, you should buy a small gift for everyone in the family.

It's particularly rude to arrive at a birthday party without a gift. A bottle of wine won't do the trick!

It's common to buy a small present (for example a box of chocolates) for your teacher at the end of the course, or other people you feel grateful to: a doctor who operated on you or a neighbor who had been watering your plants.

4. Don't Expect People to Be Polite on the Phone

Imagine that you met a gorgeous Russian girl and by stroke of luck, she gave you her phone number! You dial it but it's Katya's mother who picks up the phone...you ask politely if Katya is at home, and the reply is нет. Naturally, you are expecting her to ask if you'd like to leave a message, but all you get is an unpleasant silence that seems to last for ages...

You need to know that it isn't common in Russia to ask if you want to leave a message. You could come across a very polite person who would, but such people are rare. Conclusion: if you want to leave a message, you should say so.

Generally, Russians on the phone sound abrupt and even rude. Don't take it

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personally, it isn't because you are a foreigner, it's just the way they are!

5. Keep Your Feet on the Floor

It's considered very rude to put your feet on the table or generally up. This posture, which we perceive as relaxed in the USA, you should avoid when you are in Russia. You shouldn't rock on your chair either.

These five points will put you in good stead not only when you visit Russia but also with Russian friends, not to mention when you call your Katya and want to leave a message! These are very important, and not just as casual points; they are a very significant part of Russian culture reflected in people's behavior in public and when interacting with each other. Yet again, RussianPod101.com is delivering a total and complete Russian experience for you.



All About
Russian Superstitions

14

Grammar Points | 2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Superstitions in Russia.

Probably every culture has its superstitions. These range from widely known sayings that have lasted through generations, to lesser-known folklore known within smaller communities and families. In this lesson, we're going to look at well-known Russian superstitions that will be very useful for you to know as part of your Russian learning.

Do you get worried if a black cat crosses your path or if your hotel room number is thirteen? The answer is probably not. Well, many Russians do! If you haven't visited Russia yet, you might be surprised to learn that superstition in Russia plays a much greater role than in the West. Even young, highly educated Russian people sometimes believe most weird things, and even if they don't believe them, they still pay lip service to them. Superstitions are so deeply imbedded in Russian culture that ignoring them can be considered bad manners, so if you don't want to commit a social blunder, you should be at the very least, aware of them. In this podcast, we'll give you some insight into this dark woolly part of Russian culture.

Here are well some well-known superstitions:

1. If a Russian friend invites you to their house, one of the worst things you can do is start whistling! It's believed that if someone whistles in a house, the host will lose all his money!
2. If you give a wallet as a gift, you should put a coin inside, this will attract other coins and so the new owner of the wallet will be financially lucky!
3. If you buy a knife as a gift for your Russian friend, ask them to give you a coin in exchange. A knife, which is associated with violence, shouldn't be "offered" but only "sold."

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4. If you give a wallet as a gift, you should put a coin inside, this will attract other coins and so the new owner of the wallet will be financially lucky!

5. Russians take black cats very seriously. If a black cat crosses the road in front of your car, it isn't uncommon to turn around and take another route to your destination, or if it's impossible, stop and wait for another car to pass. In this case, of course, it's the driver of the other car that will have bad luck! However, cats can bring good luck too. If you move to a new house, bring a cat with you (if you don't have one, borrow one). It's believed lucky if a cat crosses the threshold of a new house before everyone else does.

6. If you go out and realize you forgot something at home, it's better not to go back there. However, if you have no choice, you should look in the mirror before leaving again, which will stop you from having bad luck.

7. There are quite a few superstitions about mirrors. We consider breaking a mirror very bad, it means there will be a death in the household (others say seven years of bad luck). When someone dies in a family, all mirrors in the house are covered with sheets or curtains until after the funeral. There are several explanations of this custom, but the most common is that the soul of the deceased can get lost in the mirror and will stay in the house forever instead of departing.

8. There are a number of superstitions about dropping things. Like in some Western countries, they consider spilling salt bad luck, and you should throw some over your shoulder if it happens. If you drop a knife, you'll have a male guest, if you drop a spoon, a female guest. Surprisingly, if you break a dish or a glass, they believe it will bring happiness, and sometimes people break glasses deliberately at weddings!

9. Naturally, many superstitions have something to do with weddings. If you have a Russian fiancée, don't suggest getting married in May! It's believed that if you get married in May, you'll be unhappy for the rest of your life (all because both words, май ("May") and the Russian verb маяться ("to suffer," "to have problems") sound quite similar.

10. Like in some Western countries, the groom shouldn't see the bride's dress

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before the wedding.

11. It's also considered bad to get married in a leap year...and not only get married! All bad things that happen during a leap year Russians explain away by the fact that leap years are generally unlucky.

12. Students have their own superstitions, most of them about exams. For example, when a student is leaving for an exam, you should wish them Ни пуха, ни пера (literally, "neither fluff, nor feather"), and they must reply К чёрту! ("go to the devil!"). It's very important not to reply "thank you" instead of "go to the devil," or you are bound to fail. Students also sometimes ask their parents or friends to say bad things about them (ругать) while they are taking the exam. They believe it will bring luck in exams!

13. Generally, you should think twice before saying that something good will happen. Russians believe that being too optimistic about the future can make the luck go away. If you were thoughtless enough to utter something optimistic, you should at least make up for it by knocking on wood or pretending to spit three times over your left shoulder (you can say тьфу-тьфу не сглазить at the same time, this is bound to impress your Russian friends!).

14. And finally, my favorite superstition (some foreigners I know actually adopted it after their visit to Russia): if someone is going on a trip, just before they leave, everyone in the house should sit down for a while. Putting aside the belief that it's supposed to bring luck, all the preparations for a trip can be quite stressful. Sitting down for a moment helps everyone relax and it's a way to say good-bye to each other in a calmer, stress free environment.

Some of the superstitions here will be familiar to you and some perhaps new. Make a note of them, especially ones that may affect an upcoming visit to Russia where you'll be visiting people. They will not only appreciate your adherence to their way of thinking, but it's good to respect other people's customs and traditions. You'll learn all about Russia with RussianPod101.com.



All About

All About Russia Quiz

15

Grammar Points | 2

Grammar Points

**The Focus of this Lesson is Testing Your Knowledge about Russia.
Russian Culture Quiz (based on All About lessons 8 - 14)**

1. What did Peter the Great want Russian nobles to do?

- a. To have a shower every day
- b. To shave their beards off
- c. To speak French fluently

Answer: B

Peter the Great ruled at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Peter played a major role in bringing his country into the European State System. He reorganized his government on the latest Western models. He also insisted that noble people should wear European-style clothes and **shave off their beards**, reforms, which most nobles disapproved of.

2. What did Khrushchev want to grow in Russia?

- a. Bananas
- b. Eggplants
- c. Corn

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Answer: C

Throughout his years of leadership, Khrushchev attempted to carry out a number of reforms, not many of which were successful. For example, after a visit to the USA, Khrushchev insisted on the creating of massive plantations of **corn** in the USSR without taking into account the climatic differences between Russia and the southern states of the USA.

3. What film have Russians been fondly watching at New Year's Eve for more than thirty years?

- a. The Irony of Fate, or Enjoy Your Bath!
- b. Twelve Chairs
- c. Brother

Answer: A

"The Irony of Fate, or Enjoy Your Bath!" (Ирония судьбы, или С лёгким паром!) is a comedy where after a group of friends celebrate New Year's Eve, one of them mistakenly ends up in a stranger's apartment in Leningrad, whereas he should have been in his own apartment in Moscow! After many incidences involving a jealous boyfriend, unexpected visitors, and lack of public transport seeing as it's New Year's Eve, he spends the night with a woman, talking and getting to know each other. They fall in love, split up, and get back together again.

The movie is funny and sad at the same time, and like many Soviet comedies, will give you a good insight of what life was like in the Soviet Union during the Brezhnev Era and especially the way Russians celebrated (and still celebrate) holidays. The comedy is also worth seeing for its beautiful soundtrack.

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4. In a Russian Orthodox Church, female worshippers must cover...

- a. Their faces
- b. Their hair
- c. Their hands

Answer: B

In an Orthodox church, the service is always in Old Russian. There are no seats in Orthodox churches and one must stay standing. In the congregation, men must remove any headgear as their heads must be uncovered at all times. For women, they must **cover their hair** and wear long skirts, certainly not trousers.

5. In Russian cuisine, one of the most popular ingredients is...

- a. Cabbage
- b. Green beans
- c. Lettuce

Answer: A

Cabbage is part of many traditional Russian soups (like *shchi*, *borshch*) as well as main dishes. Pickled cabbage is also very popular.

6. Okroshka is...



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- a. A cold soup
- b. A hot soup
- c. A salad

Answer: A

Okroshka is a **cold vegetable soup** made of raw vegetables, boiled potatoes and eggs, meat, and *kvass*. *Kvass* is a traditional Russian bread drink, a mildly alcoholic beverage made from fermented black or rye bread. They dice the ingredients and then mix them with *kvass* just before eating.

7. The eighth of March is...

- a. The day when Russians celebrate the end of the Second World War
- b. A new holiday introduced to replace a Soviet holiday
- c. The day when women receive lots of gifts

Answer: C

International Women's Day (Международный Женский День) is celebrated on **March 8th**. Even though it's called "international," it isn't celebrated much outside Russia and other former Soviet Republics. It's the day when men need to remember to buy some flowers or a gift for their partner, but it's also very common to buy flowers or chocolates for female friends, colleagues, or teachers. If you send an e-card to your Russian female friends on that day, it'll be highly appreciated! Children usually make little gifts at school to offer their mothers on that day.

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8. Russians celebrate Russian Christmas...

- a. In December
- b. In January
- c. In February

Answer: B

Christmas (Рождество) became an official public holiday again in 1992. You might not know that Russian Christmas is not celebrated on December 25, but two weeks later, on the **7th of January**. This difference is due to the fact that the Russian Orthodox Church still follows the Julian calendar while the Russian state had switched to the Gregorian calendar. Now Christmas in Russia is not as widely celebrated as New Year's. Many believers go to church on that day to attend the night service.

9. In Russia, if a man opens and holds the door to let his female companion in, it's considered:

- a. Good manners
- b. Sexist
- c. Stupid

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Answer: A

Being chivalrous isn't considered "sexist" in Russia! If you are accompanied by a woman and don't open and hold the door for her to let her in, you are being rude. It's also considered polite to get out of the car and open the car door for your female companion. If a woman you know is carrying a heavy bag, you should offer to help her. If you ask a woman out, she'll normally expect you to pay the bill.

10. If you whistle in someone's house, according to a Russian superstition:

- a. The host will have a lot of luck.
- b. The host will lose all his money.
- c. The host will die.

Answer: B

If a Russian friend invites you to their house, one of the worst things you can do is start whistling! It's believed that if someone whistles in a house, the host **will lose all his money!**



Pronunciation

General Overview

1

Grammar Points

2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is a General Overview of Russian Pronunciation

Russian pronunciation isn't as difficult for an English speaker compared to, for example, French pronunciation. Many French sounds simply don't exist in English, which isn't the case for Russian. The set of Russian sounds is very similar to the set of Italian (and to a lesser degree, Spanish) sounds. That's why Italian speakers often have very good pronunciation in Russian and vice versa.

As far as Russian pronunciation is concerned, the main challenges are:

1. Some sounds don't exist in English, for example, the vowel -ы.
2. Some sounds are similar to English sounds but we pronounce them slightly different, for example, the English "-l" sounds softer than Russian -л.
3. Some sounds change depending on the word stress and the position of a letter in the word, for example, we pronounce -о almost like -а when not stressed.
4. There are clusters of consonants that you don't normally meet in English, for example, the word *встречать* ("to meet") begins with four consonants!
5. Words are generally longer than in English, and therefore, more difficult to pronounce.

Having outlined these points, we'll now put your mind at rest by explaining what makes Russian pronunciation easier than pronunciation in many other languages!

Speaking of Russian pronunciation is impossible without mentioning the Russian writing system. Many people hesitate whether to learn Russian because it uses a different (Cyrillic) alphabet. However, any person who has already started learning Russian will tell you that the alphabet is certainly NOT the most difficult thing as far as Russian is concerned. Each letter corresponds to just one sound, and if you know the thirty-three Russian letters and a few basic pronunciation rules, you'll know how to pronounce any word written in Russian. Not too many languages can boast that! There are hardly any exceptions. If you think about it,

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English is much more difficult in this aspect because you basically have to "memorize" how to pronounce each word! For example, think of words "head" and "meat." They have the same vowel combination in them, but we do not pronounce them in the same way. This simply doesn't happen in Russian; everything stays the same.

Let's summarize here why Russian pronunciation is easy:

1. Each letter generally corresponds to only one sound. Look at the English words "cat" and "rice." They have the same letter -c in them, but in the first example, we pronounce it like [k] and in the second case, we pronounce it like [s]. In Russian, we always pronounce -c like [s].
2. There are no vowel combinations, like "-oo" in "book," or "-ea" in "lead." There is one letter for each sound, and this letter always symbolizes the sound.
3. No slight intonation differences change the meaning of the word, as in Mandarin, for example. There are no 'short' and 'long' vowel sounds as in English.

Let's have a closer look at Russian sounds. As we've already mentioned, there are thirty-three letters in the Russian alphabet, but only thirty-one correspond to actual sounds. The others are so-called мягкий знак and твёрдый знак ("soft sign" and "hard sign"). These two characters don't have a sound of their own but we use them to show how pronunciation of other sounds in the word should be modified.

Here's the Russian alphabet with Latin equivalents of letters and some examples in Russian. Please, note that some English sounds could be similar to Russian sounds, but still are not exactly the same, and some sounds simply don't exist in English, so the Latin equivalents just give you some idea of how to pronounce them, but not the exact pronunciation. Listen to the podcast for exact pronunciation of the sounds.

Russian Alphabet

Russian Letter	Pronunciation	Russian Example	"English"
A a	[a] in "father"	да	"yes"

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Б б	[b]	быть	"to be"
В в	[v]	ваш	"your"
Г г	[g] in "good"	год	"a year"
Д д	[d]	дом	"a house"
Е е	[ye]	есть	"to eat"
Ё ё	[yo]	ёлка	"Christmas tree"
Ж ж	[zh] like the last consonant sound in "pleasure"	жить	"to live"
З з	[z]	зима	"winter"
И и	[ee]	или	"or"
Й й	[y] in "boy"	мой	"my"
К к	[k]	кто	"who"
Л л	[l]	лето	"summer"
М м	[m]	мама	"mom"
Н н	[n]	нет	"no"
О о	[o]	он	"he"
П п	[p]	привет	"hi"
Р р	[r] rolled	ручка	"a pen"
С с	[s]	собака	"a dog"
Т т	[t]	телефон	"a telephone"
У у	[oo]	ухо	"an ear"
Ф ф	[f]	фильм	"a movie"
Х х	[h]	хороший	"good"
Ц ц	[ts]	цена	"a price"
Ч ч	[ch]	чай	"tea"
Ш ш	[sh]	шапка	"a hat"
Щ щ	Soft [sh]	щи	"cabbage soup"
Ъ ъ	Hard sign	подъезд	"an entrance"
Ы ы	hard -i that sounds a bit like [i] in milk	вы	"you"
Ь ь	Soft sign	ель	"a fir tree"
Э э	[e] in "met"	это	"this"
Ю ю	[yu]	любить	"to love"
Я я	[ya]	яблоко	"an apple"



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Do keep this at hand as you start out with your Russian, then always keep it close by, as it's an excellent reference tool. Using this in conjunction with RussianPod101 tools, you'll be on your way to speaking Russian in no time!





Pronunciation

Vowels

2

Grammar Points

2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Russian Vowels

Welcome to the lesson on Russian vowels. You will see that apart from few exceptions, the sounds are always constant. The real trick here is to try to isolate the sound given in the English example. So, when it's mentioned that a sound is like the [a] in the word "father," think of how the -a sounds in *this* word specifically as that's the key to understanding the sound. We pronounce the -a in the word "ball" different from the same letter in "father." Master this and you are well on the road to success!

There are ten vowels in Russian: six "ordinary" vowels and four "diphthongs."

Ordinary Vowels (-а, -у, -и, -о, -ы, and -э)

-а

We pronounce -а much like [a] in "father."

For Example:

1. Мама ("mom")
2. наш ("our")
3. пара ("pair")

-у

We pronounce -у like [oo] in "book" or [u] in "rude."

For Example:

1. Дуб ("oak")
2. шуба ("a fur coat")

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-И

We pronounce -И like [ee] in "green."

For Example:

1. Или ("or")
2. лиса ("a fox").

-О

-o is special because we pronounce it differently depending whether it's stressed or not. When stressed, we pronounce the -o like the vowel sound in "bought."

For Example:

1. Дом ("house")
2. пол ("floor")

When not stressed, we pronounce the -o almost like [a], and in the Moscow region, it actually becomes [a].

For Example:

1. Молоко ("milk")
2. корова ("cow")

-Ы

-Ы is a difficult sound for most learners, as it exists neither in English nor in most European languages. It sounds a bit like [И] in "milk," but not exactly. It's similar to [и] but the sound is produced much deeper inside the throat and the tongue is curled up around its middle with the front down.



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For Example:

1. Мы ("we")
2. ты ("you")
3. рыба ("fish")

Don't give up if you can't produce it immediately! Remember that practice makes perfect! Here's an interesting fact: no words in Russian begin with -ы!

-Э

We pronounce -Э like [ea] in "head."

For Example:

1. Это ("this")
2. эра ("era")

This vowel is probably the least common of all Russian vowels as few words contain it.

Diphthong Vowels (-е, -ё, -ю, and -я)

We call them diphthongs because they actually represent two sounds and not one. For example, -е is actually [йэ], -ё is [йо], -ю is [йу], and -я is [йа].

It's important to know that we do not pronounce these diphthongs the same at the beginning of the word and after a consonant.

- At the beginning of the word or after another vowel, you can hear the [й] part clearly.

For Example:

4

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1. Ель ("a fir-tree")
2. ёж ("a hedgehog")
3. я ("I")

- After a consonant, they modify the consonant that precedes them (soften it), but you don't hear [й] anymore.

For Example:

1. Нет ("no")
2. мёд ("honey")
3. бюро ("office")

Let's take them one by one.

-e

We pronounce -e like [ye] in "yes" at the beginning of the word or after another vowel.

For Example:

1. Елена ("Elena")
2. его ("his")
3. есть ("to eat")
4. большое (the neuter form of "big")

It's pronounced [e] after a consonant and modifies the consonant.

For Example:

1. Хлеб ("bread") - [l] becomes soft
2. день ("day") - [d] becomes soft

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When -e is not stressed, we pronounce it somewhere in between [e] and [и].

For Example:

1. Телефон ("telephone")
2. тетрадь ("notebook")

-Ё

When -Ё is at the beginning of the word, or after another vowel, we pronounce -Ё like [yo] in "yoke."

For Example:

1. Ёлка ("a Christmas tree")
2. ёж ("hedgehog")

After a consonant, it sounds like [o] and softens the consonant.

For Example:

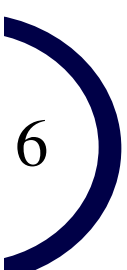
1. Мёд ("honey")
2. лёд ("ice")
3. тётя ("aunt")

In Russian printed text, you will hardly ever see the two points above -e. It's common to use the -e sign for both -e and -ё, which isn't very convenient for learners!

-Я

-Я at the beginning of the word is like [ya] in "yak."

For Example:



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1. Яблоко ("apple")
2. яд ("poison")

After a consonant, it sounds like [a] and softens the consonant.

For Example:

1. Мяч ("a ball")
2. пять ("five")

-Ю

-Ю is very much like [u] in "cute" at the beginning of the word.

For Example:

1. Юла ("a top," the revolving toy)
2. юмор ("humor")

After a consonant, it sounds like [y] and modifies the consonant.

For Example:

1. Тюльпан ("a tulip")
2. бюро ("an office")

And this summarizes our lesson of Russian vowels on RussianPod101.com. Do check out the other lessons to give you a complete and thorough understanding of Russian pronunciation.





Pronunciation

Russian Consonants

3

Grammar Points

2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Russian Consonants

In this lesson, we will look at the Russian consonants and how wonderfully consistent they are. Each letter has a specific sound regardless of its position in a word and it always sounds the same, with very few exceptions. Learn these and you are a very long way into mastering Russian pronunciation.

There are twenty-one consonants and two signs (the soft sign and the hard sign) in Russian.

Russian Consonants -М, -Н, -В, -З, -Г, -С, -Ф, -Ч, and -Ж

Let's begin with the sounds that have their exact equivalents in English. These are: -М, -Н, -В, -З, -Г, -С, -Ф, -Ч, and -Ж.

I. -М

We pronounce -М like [m] in "May."

For Example:

1. Мой ("my")
2. мама ("Mom")

II. -Н

We pronounce -Н like [n] in "no" (even though it looks like an -h!).

For Example:

1. Наташа ("Natasha")
2. нет ("no")

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III. -В

We pronounce -В like [v] in "victory" (and unfortunately, it looks like a -b).

For Example:

1. Вера ("faith")
2. ванна ("a bath")

IV. -З

We pronounce -З (which looks like the number three) like [z] in "zoo."

For Example:

1. Зебра ("a zebra")
2. звать ("to call")

V. -Г

We pronounce -Г like [g] in "go."

For Example:

1. Год ("year")
2. глаз ("eye")

VI. -С

We pronounce -С like [s] in "son."

For Example:

1. Сын ("son")
2. соль ("salt")

Note: It is never pronounced [k]!



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VII. -Ф

We pronounce -Ф like [f] in "fun."

For Example:

1. Фонарь ("a street light")
2. фары ("headlights")

VIII. -Ч

-Ч, which looks like the number four on a digital clock, is pronounced like [ch] in "chair."

For Example:

1. Человек ("a person")
2. четыре ("four")

IX. -Ж

-Ж can't really be transcribed by an English letter, but the sound does exist in English. It's the [s] sound in words like "measure" and "pleasure." As there is no English symbol for this sound, we usually represent it as -zh.

For Example:

1. Живот ("a stomach")
2. жарко ("hot")

Russian Consonants -б, -д, -т, -п, -к, -р, -л, -х, -ш, and -щ

Let's now have a look at consonants that are similar to English consonants yet are a bit different. These are: -б, -д, -т, -п, -к, -р, -л, -х, -ш, and -щ.

-Б, -д, -т, -п, and -к are similar to English sounds. However, in English when you pronounce these consonants, you'll feel the air forced out of your mouth if you

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put your hand in front of your lips as you say them. In Russian, you need to be able to say these letters but hardly feel any breath on your hand so you're altogether saying them much more softly (like in French or Italian). Keeping this in mind, let's have a close look at these five consonants.

I. -Б

Б is very much like the English "-B" (except for the difference we've mentioned above).

For Example:

1. Большой ("big")
2. бар ("a bar")

II. -Д

-Д is like "-D."

For Example:

1. Дом ("a house")
2. вода ("water")

III. -Т

-Т is like "-T."

For Example:

1. Торт ("a cake")
2. тело ("body")

IV. -П

-П is like "-p."

For Example:



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1. Папа ("dad")
2. пирог ("a pie")

V. -К

-К is like "-k."

For Example:

1. Кошка ("a cat")
2. компьютер ("a computer")

VI. -Р

-Р looks like English "-p" but sounds similar to English "-r," which can initially be confusing for learners. Russians roll their -r's the way Spanish and Italians do.

For Example:

1. Река ("a river")
2. рот ("a mouth")

VII. -Л

-Л is very similar to English "-L," but is not quite so soft. For example, compare the English word "look" and the Russian word лук ("onions"). You'll probably hear that Russian -л sounds 'harder.'

For Example:

1. Лошадь ("a horse")
2. луна ("the moon")

VIII. -Х

-Х sounds similar to an English "-h" but is a bit stronger (more air is expelled). It's also a little guttural similar to the [ch] spoken by a Scottish person saying the

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word, "Loch."

For Example:

1. Хлеб ("bread")
2. муха ("a fly")

IX. -Ш and -Щ

It's often difficult to hear the difference between -ш and -щ for a non-native Russian speaker. They both sound like the English [sh] in "she," however, -ш sounds a bit harder than [sh] and -щ is softer.

Listen and compare:

1. Ша - ща
2. Шу - щу
3. Ше - ще

For Example:

1. Шапка ("a hat")
2. шея ("a neck")
3. щи ("cabbage soup")
4. щётка ("a brush")

Russian Consonant Ц

This letter is pronounced [ts] and the sound doesn't really exist in English, except for in "pizza" (another sound that Russian shares with Italian!). So think of "pizza," and practice Russian -Ц.

For Example:

1. Царь ("a tsar")
2. месяц ("a month")

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цена ("price")

Russian Consonant -Й

In modern Russian, -й is considered to be a consonant, though there has always been some ambiguity about it. It's actually used to create diphthongs in Russian (like -ой and -ай), and it sounds like [y] in "boy" or "clay."

For Example:

1. Мой ("my")
2. чай ("tea")
3. клей ("glue")

-ь (soft sign) and -ъ (hard sign)

Technically speaking, these are neither vowels nor consonants, they are just signs that we use to show when we modify the pronunciation of other letters.

The soft sign (-ь) shows that the consonant that precedes it must be softened. Listen carefully to these pairs of words and try to repeat them.

1. ел - ель
2. мат - мать
3. смешит - смешить
4. ген - тень
5. сер - серь

We use the hard sign (-ъ) to separate a consonant and a vowel that creates a "pause" between them. For example, the word въехать without -ъ we would pronounce [вехать]. Подъезд would become подезд. The hard sign isn't very common in Russian.

That rounds up all of the Russian consonants. As you can see, they aren't that scary after all. The key here is not just trying to memorize it as a long list. Try reading Russian words too. These different methods of learning will help instill

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recognition and sound familiarity. Stay with RussianPod101.com for all your Russian learning needs.





Pronunciation

Basic Russian Pronunciation Rules

4

Grammar Points

2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Basic Pronunciation Rules in Russian.

Now that we have introduced all the Russian sounds to you, we'll go on to give you some basic rules about Russian pronunciation.

1. Word Stress

Word stress is extremely important, exactly like in English. In Russian, we don't say all the syllables of the word with the same strength, but accentuate one syllable. We pronounce this syllable much louder than we do the others. We usually pronounce the stressed vowel clearer and longer than we do the others. If you don't stress the right syllable, it can lead to confusion and native speakers will have difficulty understanding you. Unfortunately, there are no rules to help you stress a word correctly. It's just something you have to learn for each word, but it's something you pick up along the way.

Sometimes, the word stress can totally change the meaning of the word.

For Example:

1. Замок with the stress on the first syllable is "a castle," and замо́к with the stress on the last syllable is "a lock."

2. Changing Vowels

We pronounce some Russian vowels differently when not stressed. If -o isn't stressed, we pronounce it almost like [a]. The word молоко is a good example. The stress is on the last -o, so we actually say [malako].

For Example:

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1. Собака ("a dog") - the first -o is not stressed, so we say [sabaka].
2. Дорога ("a road") - the stress is on the second syllable, so we pronounce the word [daroga].

Another example is -e. When not stressed, we pronounce it somewhere between [e] and [и]. For example, when we hear the word телефон, we can't tell if we pronounce the first -e as [e] or [и].

For Example:

1. Деревня ("a village") - the first syllable isn't stressed, so we pronounce it between [e] and [и]. The second syllable we stress, so we pronounce the vowel [e].
2. Зелёный ("green") - the stress is on -ё, so we pronounce the first -e between [e] and [и].

3. Soft Consonants

Some vowels in Russian change the consonant that precedes them. These vowels are -e, -ё, -и, -ю, and -я. The consonants that precede these vowels are "softened." Listen carefully to these syllables to hear how the consonant changes.

1. /бэ/ - /бе/
2. /тэ/ - /тё/
3. /лэ/ - /ли/
4. /лэ/ - /лю/
5. /мэ/ - /мя/

Now listen to the words and try to pronounce them.

1. Тётя ("aunt")
2. дядя ("uncle")
3. люди ("people")
4. мясо ("meat")
5. петь ("to sing")

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- липа ("a lime tree")
- бюро ("an office")

4. Voiced and Unvoiced Consonants

We divide Russian consonants into two groups: voiced and unvoiced. As their name shows, for voiced consonants you use your voice, while for the others you don't.

The voiced consonants are: -б, -в, -г, -д, -ж, -з, -р, -л, -м, and -н.

The unvoiced consonants are: -к, -п, -с, -т, -ф, -х, -ц, -ч, -ш, and -щ.

Twelve of voiced and unvoiced consonants form pairs (the position of your lips and your tongue is the same for both sounds; the only difference is that you use voice for voiced consonants). Listen and compare.

1. -б - -п
2. -в - -ф
3. -г - -к
4. -д - -т
5. -ж - -ш
6. -з - -с

We pronounce the voiced consonants from the list (-б, -в, -г, -д, -ж, -з) differently at the end of a word and before unvoiced consonants. Actually, they become their unvoiced pairs! Let's take the word снег ("snow") as an example. It ends in -г, which is voiced. So it isn't pronounced [g], but [k].

Once again, when -б, -в, -г, -д, -ж, and -з are at the end of the word:

1. [б] becomes [п]
2. [в] becomes [ф]
3. [г] becomes [к]
4. [д] becomes [т]
5. [ж] becomes [ш]
6. [з] becomes [с]

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For Example:

1. Готов [gatof]
2. лоб [lop]
3. бег [bek]
4. год [got]
5. падеж [padesh]
6. глаз [glas]

When one of these six voiced consonants precedes an unvoiced consonant, the same thing happens, even if the consonants are not part of the same word! For example, we pronounce В понедельник ("on Monday") as [fpanedel'nik] and NOT [vpanedel'nik], because a voiced consonant (-в) precedes an unvoiced consonant (-п).

5. Exceptions

Luckily, there are very few exceptions as far as Russian pronunciation is concerned, and if you know the rules, you'll be able to pronounce almost every word in Russian correctly when you see it in writing! The few exceptions we'll tell you about just confirm the rule.

1. In some words that contain -его or -ого, we pronounce-г as [в].

For Example:

Russian	"English"	Pronunciation
Е <u>г</u> о	"his"	[yev]
с <u>е</u> годня	"today"	[sevodnya]
ка <u>к</u> о <u>г</u> о	"which" in the genitive case	[kakov]

2. Some words contain consonants that are not pronounced. Usually these are words with lots of consonants together.

For Example:

Russian	"English"	Pronunciation
---------	-----------	---------------

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Здравствуйте	"hello"	[zdrastvuyte] the first в isn't pronounced
Солнце	"the sun"	[sontse] the л isn't pronounced

These five tips about Russian pronunciation, along with the previous lessons about Russian sounds, really give you everything you need on the road to perfect Russian pronunciation. At RussianPod101.com we understand what it takes to learn a different language and take a varied approach so not only do you learn, you have fun along the way and pick up those all-important cultural tips.





Pronunciation

Russian Pronunciation Quiz

5

Grammar Points

2

Grammar Points

The Focus of This Lesson is Testing How Much You Know about Russian Pronunciation.

This quiz will help you review what you have learned about Russian pronunciation and see how much you can remember!

1. The word stress in Russian is...

- a. Always on the last syllable
- b. Always on the syllable before the last
- c. Changes depending on the word

Answer: C

Unfortunately, there are no rules to help you stress a word correctly. It's just something you have to learn for each word but it's something you pick up along the way. Sometimes, the word stress can totally change the meaning of the word so it's imperative to get it right.

2. How many vowels are there in Russian?

- a. Six
- b. Ten

c. Twelve

Answer: B

There are ten vowels in Russian: six "ordinary" vowels and four diphthongs.

3. The letter that looks like the English "-P" is pronounced...

- a. Like English "-p" but softer
- b. Like English "-r" but you roll it
- c. Like English "-l" but harder

Answer: B

Russians roll their -r's the way Spanish and Italians do.

4. The letter that looks like a mirror reflection of -R is pronounced...

- a. [r]
- b. [p]
- c. [ya]

Answer: C

-Я at the beginning of the word is like [ya] in "yak."

5. The letter that looks like English "-c" is pronounced...

- a. [s]
- b. [k]
- c. sometimes [s] and sometimes [k]

Answer: A

We pronounce -C like [s] in "son." We never pronounced it as [k]!

6. The vowel -o is always pronounced the same in Russian.

- a. True
- b. False

Answer: False

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-O is special because we pronounce it differently depending whether it's stressed or not. When stressed, we pronounce the -O like the vowel sound in "bought."

For Example:

1. Ноль ("zero")
2. дочь ("daughter")

When not stressed, we pronounce the -O almost like [a] and in Moscow region it actually becomes -a.

For Example:

1. Ворона ("crow")
2. лосось ("salmon")

7. In printed texts in Russian, vowels -ë and -e look exactly the same.

- a. True
- b. False

Answer: True

In Russian printed text, you will hardly ever see the two points above -e. It's common to use the -e sign for both -e and -ë..., which isn't very convenient for learners!



8. At the end of the word, Russian consonant -б...

- a. Is pronounced [б]
- b. Is pronounced [п]
- c. Is not pronounced

Answer: B

The voiced consonants from the list (-б, -в, -г, -д, -ж, -з) are pronounced differently at the end of a word. Actually, they become their unvoiced pairs! The unvoiced pair of Russian -б is -п.

For Example:

1. We pronounce зуб ("a tooth") as [zup].

9. The soft sign...

- a. Modifies the consonant before it
- b. Modifies the consonant after it
- c. Doesn't make any difference in pronunciation

Answer: A

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The soft sign (-ь) shows that the consonant that precedes it must be softened.

10. The letter -г...

- a. Is always pronounced [г]
- b. Is sometimes pronounced [в]
- c. Is sometimes pronounced [ж]

Answer: B

In words that contain -его or -ого, we often pronounce -г as [в].

For Example:

Russian	"English"	Pronunciation
Е <u>г</u> о	"his"	[yev]
с <u>е</u> годня	"today"	[sevodnya]
ка <u>к</u> о <u>г</u> о	"which" in the genitive case	[kakov]

Thank You

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