

Russian Grammar

Vocabulary, Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives & More

RUSSIAN ALPHABET

There are 33 letters in the Russian alphabet. Two of them, the hard and soft signs, have no sounds of their own, but affect the way the consonant preceding them is pronounced. **Red text indicates stressed vowel.**

А (ah)	Р (err)
Б (bch)	С (ess)
В (veh)	Т (teh)
Г (geh)	У (oo)
Д (dch)	Ф (chf)
Е (yeh)	Х (kha)
Ё (yoh)	Ц (tseh)
Ж (zhe)	Ч (chch)
З (zch)	Ш (shah)
И (ee/long e)	Щ (shchah)
Й (ee kratkoye)	Ъ (tvjordyj znak = hard sign)
К (kch)	Ы (jeryh)
Л (lch)	Ь (mjakhkij znak = soft sign)
М (em)	Э (eh)
Н (nn)	Ю (you)
О (oh)	Я (yah)
П (pch)	

Orthographic Rules

- After **ж, ш, ч, и** use only **а** (never **я**); **у** (never **ю**); **н** (never **м**) after **к, г, х**.
- After **ц** use only **а** (never **я**); **у** (never **ю**); **о** (never **ё**; when stressed, **о** is replaced by **ё**); **н** or **м** may follow **ц**.

CARDINAL NUMBERS

0	нуль	16	шестнадцать
1	один (m) одна (f)	17	семнадцать
	одно (n) один (pl)	18	восемнадцать
2	два (m; n) две (f)	19	девятнадцать
3	три	20	двадцать
4	четыре	30	тридцать
5	пять	40	сорок
6	шесть	50	пятьдесят
7	семь	60	шестьдесят
8	восемь	70	семьдесят
9	девять	80	восемьдесят
10	десять	90	девяносто
11	одиннадцать	100	сто
12	двенадцать	1.000	тысяча
13	тринадцать	1.000.000	миллион
14	четырнадцать	1.000.000.000	миллиард
15	пятнадцать		

One:

- Acts like an **adjective**, agreeing in gender, number and case with its noun, e.g., один стол, *one table*; одна комната, *one room*; одно окно, *one window*.
- The **plural forms**, один, одних, etc., are used: 1) to convey the notion of **only** (sing & pl.); 2) with nouns always occurring in the plural; 3) to convey the notion of **some**.

Two:

- Two forms in the nominative, **masculine/neuter** (два) and **feminine** (две).
- In the nominative case, the noun following is in the **genitive singular** (два человека; две женщины).

CARDINAL NUMBERS

- In all other cases, the noun following is in the **plural** (двум девушкам; о двух девушках).
- The only exception is in the **accusative**:
 - If the noun is inanimate, its form will be the same as the nominative, otherwise the accusative form is the same as the genitive.
 - Adjectives following **two** will be in the plural; agreeing with their nouns in gender and case form: два хороших мальчика; о двух хороших девушках.

Three, Four:

- Have one form (for each case) that encompasses **masculine, feminine and neuter**; in the nominative case, the noun following is in the **genitive singular** (три человека; четыре женщины).
- In all other cases, the noun following is in the **plural** (трем девушкам; о четырех студентах).
- As with **two**, the only exception is in the **accusative**:
- If the noun is inanimate, its form will be the same as the **nominative**.
- Otherwise the accusative form is the same as the **genitive**.
- Adjectives following **two, three and four** will be in the **plural**, agreeing with their nouns in gender and case: двум хорошим девушкам; три больших студента.

Five through Twenty:

- Have one form (for each case) that encompasses **masculine, feminine and neuter**; the noun following is always in the **plural**: пять студентов; у шести девушек, о семи книгах.
- Adjectives following **five through twenty** will be in the **plural**, agreeing with their nouns in gender and case: пять больших студентов; двадцати хорошим девушкам.

Twenty One, etc.:

- Follows the patterns for **one, two, three and four, five and greater**, e.g., twenty one follows the rules for **one**; twenty two through twenty four, the rules for **two, three and four**; twenty five through thirty, the rules for **five and above**.

Collectives:

- оба** (m., n.) and **обе** (f.) = **both**; **двое**, a group of two; **трое**, a group of three; **четверо**, a group of four; **пятеро**, a group of five; **шестеро**, a group of six; **семеро**, a group of seven; **восемьро**, a group of eight; **девятеро**, a group of nine; **десятеро**, a group of ten.

Case	два/две	три
Nominative	два (m/n); две (f.)	три
Genitive	двух	трёх
Dative	двум	трём
Accusative	= nom. or gen.	= nom. or gen.
Instrumental	двумя	тремя
Prepositional	двух	трёх

Case	четыре	оба/обе
Nominative	четыре	оба (m/n); обе (f.)
Genitive	четырёх	обоих
Dative	четырёх	обоим
Accusative	= nom. or gen.	= nom. or gen.
Instrumental	четырьмя	обоими
Prepositional	четырёх	обоих

ORDINAL NUMBERS

- Ordinal numbers function as **adjectives**, agreeing in gender, case and number with their nouns.
- In **compound numbers**, only the last digit takes the form of an ordinal: *twenty first* = двадцать первый; *one thousand three hundred fifty third* = тысяча триста пятьдесят третий.

1st	первый	15th	пятнадцатый
2nd	второй	16th	шестнадцатый
3rd	третий	17th	семнадцатый
4th	четвёртый	18th	восемнадцатый
5th	пятый	19th	девятнадцатый
6th	шестой	20th	двадцатый
7th	седьмой	30th	тридцатый
8th	восьмой	40th	сороковой
9th	девятый	50th	пятидесятый
10th	десятый	60th	шестидесятый
11th	одиннадцатый	70th	семидесятый
12th	двенадцатый	80th	восемидесятый
13th	тринадцатый	90th	девяностый
14th	четырнадцатый	100th	сотый

MONTHS AND DAYS OF THE WEEK

January	январь	July	июль
February	февраль	August	август
March	март	September	сентябрь
April	апрель	October	октябрь
May	май	November	ноябрь
June	июнь	December	декабрь
Sunday	воскресенье	Thursday	четверг
Monday	понедельник	Friday	пятница
Tuesday	вторник	Saturday	суббота
Wednesday	среда		

CAPITALIZATION

- The **first letter** of the first word in a sentence is always capitalized.
- With geographical names, street names, names of buildings, and institutions, only the **descriptive noun or adjective** is capitalized: Петербургская область, *the Petersburg District*; Красная площадь, *Red Square*; Большой театр, *Bolshoi Theater*.
- With the names of cities and countries, the **first letter** of each word is capitalized: Соединенные Штаты, *the United States*; Южно-Сахалинск *Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk*.
- With holidays, historical events, etc., only the **descriptive noun or adjective** is capitalized: Великая Отечественная война, *the Great Patriotic War/WW II*; Новый год, *New Year*.
- Unless they are the first word in a sentence, the following are not capitalized: the personal pronoun **я** (*I*), names of months, and days of the week.

GENDER

- There are three **grammatical genders** in Russian: masculine, feminine and neuter.
- When referring to people, the grammatical gender usually follows the biological sex.
- All other nouns are assigned gender based on their **endings in the nominative singular**.

CASE SYSTEM

- Russian has six cases, singular and plural.
- nominative:** subject, predicate
- genitive:** possession; with prepositions and verbs; absence of something
- dative:** indirect object; with prepositions and verbs
- accusative:** direct object; with prepositions
- instrumental:** expresses means or agent; with prepositions and verbs
- prepositional:** with prepositions

ANIMATE VS. INANIMATE

- Russian grammar distinguishes between *animate* (referring to people and animals) and *inanimate* nouns, pronouns, numbers and adjectives.
- The **genitive = accusative** for masculine, animate nouns.

NUMBER

- Russian distinguishes between singular and plural in nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and numbers.

WORD ORDER

- Word order in English is fixed; in Russian it is not. This does **not** mean, however, that words may be flung together haphazardly.
- Some **general** rules of thumb are:
 - Simple sentences normally obey the **same** word order as in English: **subject-verb-object/ complement**.
 - Моя мама работает инженером в Харькове. *My mother works as an engineer in Khar'kov.*
 - Вчера я читал стихи Пушкина. *Yesterday I read some of Pushkin's poetry.*
- If the subject and object cannot be distinguished from one another, the meaning is understood to be: **subject-verb-object**.
Белое одеяло покрывает красное.
The white blanket covers the red one.

Articles

- Russian lacks articles.
- Word order can be utilized to the same end:
Стакан на столе.
The glass is on the table.
На столе стакан.
On the table is a glass.

NOUNS AND THEIR DECLENSIONS

First Declension

- Consists of both *masculine* and *neuter* nouns.
- The **masculine** nouns are those whose nominative singular forms ending in a "hard" consonant (стол, table), a "soft" consonant, i.e., a consonant followed by the letter **ь** (учитель, teacher), or **й** (бой, battle).
- The **neuter** nouns are those whose nominative singular forms end in **-о** (ведро, bucket), **-е** (поле, field), or **ё** (ружьё, gun).
- The declensional patterns for the **masculine** nouns of the **first declension**:

Singular

N.	стол	учитель	бой
G.	стола	учителя	боя
D.	столу	учителю	бою
A.	стол (= N.)	учителя (= G.)	бой (= N.)
I.	столом	учителем	боем
P.	столе	учителе	о бое; в бою

Plural

N.	столы	учителя	бои
G.	столов	учителей	боев

NOUNS AND THEIR DECLENSIONS

D.	столам	учителям	боям
A.	столы (= N.)	учителей (= G.)	бои (= N.)
I.	столами	учителями	боями
P.	столах	учителях	боях

- The declensional patterns for the *neuter* nouns of the First Declension:

Singular

N.	ведро	поле	ружьё
G.	ведра	поля	ружья
D.	ведру	полю	ружьё
A.	ведро (= N.)	поле (= N.)	ружьё (= N.)
I.	ведром	полем	ружьём
P.	ведре	поле	ружьё

Plural

N.	ведра	поля	ружья
G.	ведер	полей	ружей
D.	ведрам	полям	ружьям
A.	ведра (= N.)	поля (= N.)	ружья (= N.)
I.	ведрами	полями	ружьями
P.	ведрах	полях	ружьях

Second Declension

- Consists of *feminine* gender nouns whose nominative singular ending is either **-а** (рука, hand), **-я** (баня, bath house), or **-ия** (линия, line).
- The declensional patterns for *second declension* nouns:

Singular

N.	рука	баня	линия
G.	руки	бани	линии
D.	руке	бане	линии
A.	руку	баню	линию
I.	рукой	баней	линией
P.	руке	бане	линии

Plural

N.	руки	бани	линии
G.	рук	бань	линий
D.	рукам	баням	линиям
A.	руки (= N.)	бани (= N.)	линии (= N.)
I.	руками	банями	линиями
P.	руках	банях	линиях

- Second declension also contains nouns that objectively refer to **male** individuals.
- When paired with adjectives, the adjectival endings should reflect the *biological sex* of the individual: старый дедушка, old grandfather, мой хороший дядя, my good uncle.
- Other nouns may refer to either male or female individuals, e.g. умница, a clever person.

Third Declension

- Consists of *feminine* gender nouns whose nominative singular endings are a "soft" consonant, i.e., a consonant followed by the letter **ь** (степь, steppe; тень, shade); or **ж + ь** (рожь, rye), **ч + ь** (ночь, night), **ш + ь** (мышь, mouse), **щ + ь** (вещь, thing).
- The declensional patterns for *third declension* nouns:

Singular

N.	тень	ночь	вещь
G.	тени	ночи	вещи
D.	тени	ночи	вещи
A.	тень (= N.)	ночь (= N.)	вещь (= N.)
I.	тенью	ночью	вещью
P.	тени	ночи	вещи

Plural

N.	тени	ночи	вещи
G.	теней	ночей	вещей
D.	теням	ночам	вещам
A.	тени (= N.)	ночи (= N.)	вещи (= N.)
I.	тенями	ночами	вещами
P.	тенях	ночах	вещах

Odds & Ends:

- A number of nouns do not fit into the above declensions.
- A small group of *neuter* nouns ending in **-мя** include: время, time; имя, name. Their declensional pattern is:

NOUNS AND THEIR DECLENSIONS

Singular

N.	время	имя
G.	времени	имени
D.	времени	имени
A.	время (= N.)	имя (= N.)
I.	временем	именем
P.	времени	имени

Plural

N.	времена	имена
G.	времен	имён
D.	временам	именам
A.	времена (= N.)	имена (= N.)
I.	временами	именами
P.	временах	именах

- A second group of nouns, primarily neuter, have been borrowed from other languages and are *not declined*: кино, movie theater; пальто, overcoat; метро, the Metro or subway; радио, radio; такси, taxi; виски, whiskey; кофе, coffee is masculine.
- A third group of nouns, representing various declensional patterns, have plural forms only. Some examples are: духи, perfume; обои, wallpaper; очки, eyeglasses: genitive in **-ов/-ев**; чернила, ink; ворота, gates: a "zero" genitive, i.e., no ending; ножницы, scissors; щи, cabbage soup: genitive in **-ей**.

PRONOUNS

Personal Pronouns

	Singular (I, me)	Plural (we, us)	Singular (you)	Plural (you)
N.	я	мы	ты	вы
G.	меня	нас	тебя	вас
D.	мне	нам	тебе	вам
A.	меня	нас	тебя	вас
I.	мной (мною)	нами	тобой	вами
P.	обо мне	о нас	о тебе	о вас
	Singular (he)	Plural (she)		
N.	он	она		
G.	его; у него	её; у неё		
D.	ему; к нему	ей; к ней		
A.	его; на него	её; на неё		
I.	им; с ним	ей; с ней		
P.	о нём	о ней		
	Singular (it)	Plural (they)		
N.	оно	они		
G.	его; у него	их; у них		
D.	ему; к нему	им; к ним		
A.	его; на него	их; на них		
I.	им; с ним	ими; с ними		
P.	о нём	о них		

- Note: When third person pronouns are the **object of a preposition**, it is added to the beginning of the form: Он даёт ей книгу, He gives her a book. vs. У неё книга, She has a book.

Possessive Pronouns

- Possessive pronouns agree in gender, number and case with the nouns they qualify.

My, mine

	masc.; neut.	fem.	plural
N.	мой; моё	моя	мои
G.	моего	моей	моих
D.	моему	моей	моим
A.	=N./G.	мою	=N./G.
I.	моим	моей	моими
P.	о моём	о моей	о моих

Your, yours (sing.)

	masc.; neut.	fem.	plural
N.	твой; твоё	твоя	твои
G.	твоего	твоей	твоих
D.	твоему	твоей	твоим
A.	=N./G.	твою	=N./G.
I.	твоим	твоей	твоими
P.	о твоём	о твоей	о твоих

PRONOUNS

Our, ours

	masc.; neut.	fem.	plural
N.	наш; наше	наша	наши
G.	нашего	нашей	наших
D.	нашему	нашей	нашим
A.	=N./G.	нашу	=N./G.
I.	нашим	нашей	нашими
P.	о нашем	о нашей	о наших

Your, yours (pl.)

	masc.; neut.	fem.	plural
N.	ваш; ваше	ваша	ваши
G.	вашего	вашей	ваших
D.	вашему	вашей	вашим
A.	=N./G.	вашу	=N./G.
I.	вашим	вашей	вашими
P.	о вашем	о вашей	о ваших

- The possessive pronouns **его, his/his; её, hers; and их, their, theirs** do NOT change forms. They are the same for all cases, both singular and plural.

Reflexive Pronoun: себя

- This reflexive pronoun, meaning *oneself* (all genders, sing./pl.), has the following forms: genitive = **себя**; dative = **себе**; accusative = **себя**; instrumental = **собой** (собою); prepositional = **о себе**.

The Pronoun: свой

- This pronoun, meaning *one's or one's own*, refers back to the **subject** of the sentence or clause.
- Свой** follows the declensional pattern of **мой, my, mine; and твой, your, yours**.
- Note the difference between using **свой** and the regular possessive pronouns:
 - Алёша увидел **своего** брата. Alyosha caught sight of *his (own)* brother.
 - Алёша увидел **его** брата. Alyosha caught sight of *his (i.e., someone else's)* brother.

Demonstrative Pronouns

- Demonstrative pronouns **agree** in gender, number and case with the nouns they qualify.
- The two **most frequently** used demonstrative pronouns are: **этот, эта, это, эти, this, these**; and **тот, та, то, те, that, those**.

Singular

	masc.; neuter		fem.
N.	этот; это	тот; то	эта; та
G.	этого	того	этой; той
D.	этому	тому	этой; той
A.	=N./G.; это	=N./G.; то	эту; ту
I.	этим	тем	этой; той
P.	об этом	о том	об этой; о той

Plural

N.	эти; те
G.	этих; тех
D.	этим; тем
A.	= N./G.
I.	этими; теми
P.	об этих; о тех

Interrogative and Relative Pronouns

- Interrogative pronouns are used to **ask** a question.
- Relative pronouns are used to **connect** clauses within a sentence. Their functions differ but their grammatical forms are the same.
- These pronouns include: **кто, who; что, what; какой, what sort of; который, which; чей, whose; and сколько, how much, how many**.
- For example: Кто был на вечеринке? *Who was at the party?* vs. Я знаю, кто был на вечеринке, *I know who was at the party.*

Singular Plural

	Singular	Plural
N.	кто	кто
G.	кого	кого
D.	кому	кому
A.	кого	кого
I.	кем	кем
P.	о ком	о ком

PRONOUNS

- The declensional patterns of **какой** and **который** follow those of regular adjectives (see **Adjectives**).
- Чей**, etc., has a full declensional pattern.
- Сколько** is declined like a plural adjective.

Singular

N.	чей	чья	чьё
G.	чьего	чьей	чьего
D.	чьему	чьей	чьему
A.	=N./G.	чью	чьё
I.	чьим	чьей	чьим
P.	о чьём	о чьей	о чьём

Plural

N.	чьих	сколько
G.	чьих	скольких
D.	чьим	скольким
A.	=N./G.	скольких
I.	чьими	сколькими
P.	о чьих	скольких

Definitive/Determinative

Pronouns

- This group of pronouns includes: **сам, сама, само, сами, myself, yourself**, etc. (declined like **этот**); **самый, самая, самое, самые, the same, the very, the most; весь, вся, всё, все, all**.

Negative Pronouns

- These pronouns are created by adding the prefix **ни-** to the interrogative pronouns: **кто, что, какой, and чей**.
- Никто, no one, nobody; ничто, nothing; никакой, no; and ничей, no one's, nobody's** are **invariably followed by the negative particle не**.
- Some examples are: **Никто** мне не пишет. *No one writes to me. Он ничем не интересуется. He is not interested in anything.*
- When negative pronouns are the **object** of a preposition, the prefix **ни-** is separated from the pronoun and the preposition inserted between them: По пятницам он **ни с кем не** говорит. *On Fridays he does not speak with anyone.*
- English does not tolerate double negatives; in Russian they are obligatory.

Indefinite Pronouns

- Russian indefinite pronouns reflect varying degrees of indefiniteness.
- некто, a certain person, someone; and нечто, something**, are only used in the **nominative and nominative/accusative**.
- Некий, a certain; and некоторый, some**, may be used with any of the cases.
- Two degrees of indefiniteness may be expressed with the particles **-то** and **-нибудь/-либо**, when used with the interrogative pronouns **кто, что, какой, and чей**.
 - The nominative singular masculine forms are:
 - кто-то, кто-нибудь, кто-либо, somebody**
 - что-то, что-нибудь, что-либо, something**
 - какой-то, какой-нибудь, какой-либо, some**
 - чей-то, чей-нибудь, чей-либо, somebody's**
- While **-то** and **-нибудь / -либо** may all be rendered as *some* in English, there is a subtle but critical difference conveyed in the Russian: **-то** refers to someone or something that exists but which remains unspecified; **-нибудь / -либо** refer to people or things whose existence is uncertain: Кто-нибудь звонил мне вчера? *Did somebody (anybody?) call me yesterday?* Да, кто-то звонил. *Yes, someone (but, for the moment, an unspecified someone) called.*
- The particle **-нибудь** may be found in both the colloquial and literary languages vs. **-либо**, which is primarily found in the literary language.

PREPOSITIONS

- A single preposition (having different meanings) may govern more than one case.
- Some important prepositions, the case(s) they require, their more common meanings, and examples of their usage are:

Genitive

от, from, away from (cf. **к** + dat.)
отойти **от** берега, *step away from the shore*

из, out of, from (cf. **в** + acc.)
выйти **из** здания, *go out of the building*

до, to, up to, until
до пятницы, *until Friday*

с, from, down from (cf. **на** + acc.)
упасть **с** крыши, *fall off the roof*

ради, for the sake of
ради детей, *for the children's sake*

без, without
без помощи, *without help*

для, for
подарок **для** бабушки, *a present for grandma*
у, at, near; in the house of;

она живёт **у** брата, *she lives at her brother's;*
expression of possession;
у меня книга, *I have a book*

Dative

к, towards, up to (cf. **от** + gen.)
подойти **к** стене, *walk up to the wall*
по, along, in accordance with;
идти **по** тропинке, *to walk along the path;*
recurrence (with "time" words)
по, четвергам, on Thursdays

Accusative

в, to (w/ verbs of motion) (cf. **из** + gen.)
идти **в** музей, *to go to the museum*
на, to (w/ motion verbs)
идти **на** площадь, *go to the square*
(events, open places) (cf. **с** + gen.)
идти **на** вечеринку, *go to a party*
за, for (in return for; on behalf of)
благодарить **за** помощь, *to thank for help*
через, across
перейти **через** улицу, *go across the street*

Instrumental

с, with
с наслаждением, *with delight*
над, above
над моей головой, *above my head*
между, between
строго **между** нами, *strictly between us*
за, behind, beyond
за столом, *behind the table*
перед, in front of
перед домом, *in front of the house*
под, under, beneath
под кроватью, *under the bed*

Prepositional

в, in, at
в подвале, *in the basement*
на, on, at
на заводе, *at the plant*
о/об/обо, about
о детях, *about the children; об* этом, *about this;*
обо мне, *about me*
при, in the presence of
при директоре, *in the director's presence*
при, during the time of
при царях, *during the time of the tsars*

ARTICLES

- Russian does not have articles. See **Word Order**, Page 2.

ADJECTIVES

Red text indicates a stressed vowel!

- The Russian adjective agrees with its noun, pronoun or number in gender, number and case.
- The majority of adjectives belong to a single declensional pattern with two basic variations:
 - The "hard" (i.e., adjectives whose stem ends in a hard consonant).
 - The "soft" (i.e., adjectives whose stem ends in a soft or palatalized consonant).
- Two adjectives, **новый**, *new* and **синий**, *dark blue* are, respectively, examples of "hard" and "soft" adjectives:

Singular			
N.	новый	новая	новое
G.	нового	новой	нового
D.	новому	новой	новому
A.	=N./G.	новую	новое
I.	новым	новой	новым
P.	новом	новой	новом
Plural			
N.	новые		
G.	новых		
D.	новым	<i>Stress for this adjectival pattern is on the stem.</i>	
A.	=N./G.		
I.	новыми		
P.	новых		

- Adjectives such as **строгий**, *strict*; **свежий**, *fresh*; **горький**, *bitter*; **горячий**, *hot*; **хороший**, *good*; **общий**, *common/general* also belong to the "hard" adjectives (cf. Orthographic Rules). Stress for this adjectival pattern is always on the stem.
- A variant of the "hard stem" adjectives are those in which the stress falls on the adjectival ending, e.g., stressed **-ой**, as in **седой**, *gray*.

Singular			
N.	синий	синяя	синее
G.	синего	синей	синего
D.	синему	синей	синему
A.	= N./G.	синюю	синее
I.	синим	синей	синим
P.	синем	синей	синем
Plural			
N.	синие		
G.	синих		
D.	синим	<i>Stress for this adjectival pattern is always on the stem.</i>	
A.	= N./G.		
I.	синими		
P.	синих		

Short Form of the Adjective

- Qualitative or descriptive adjectives have two different forms in Russian:
 - Long form** adjectives agree in gender, number and case with their nouns.
 - Short form** adjectives, which agree only in gender and number, are restricted to the predicate in the nominative singular or plural.
- Some examples:
 - интересный** *interesting*
 - Это **интересная** статья. *This is an interesting article.* (predicate)
 - Я читал **интересную** статью. *I read an interesting article.* (direct object)
 - Эта статья **интересна**. *This article is interesting.* (predicate)
- In general, the short form denotes a relative quality (time, place, etc.) vs. the long form which expresses a more general or absolute quality. Этот костюм ему **велик**. *This suit is too big for him.* Она для **молода**. *She is too young for him.*

Comparative Degree of the Adjective

- The comparative degree of Russian adjectives has two forms: simple and compound.
 - The **simple form** has two basic variations: the suffix **-ее (-ей)** and the suffix **-е**. A majority of adjectives add **-ее (-ей)** to the adjectival stem:

ADJECTIVES

- | positive | degree | comparative | degree |
|----------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| слабый | <i>weak</i> | слабее (слабей) | <i>weaker</i> |
| новый | <i>new</i> | новее (новей) | <i>newer</i> |
| старый | <i>old</i> | старее (старей) | <i>older</i> |
| темный | <i>dark</i> | темнее (темней) | <i>darker</i> |
| сильный | <i>strong</i> | сильнее (сильней) | <i>stronger</i> |
- The stress in the simple comparative form of adjectives containing three or more syllables normally stays on the stem: **интереснее** (**интересней**), *more interesting*; **счастливее** (**счастливей**), *happier*.
 - Adjectives whose stems end in **д, г, к, ст, т, х** undergo a consonant mutation, then add the comparative suffix **-е**. **Д** and **г** become **ж**; **к** becomes **ч**; **ст** becomes **щ**; **т** becomes **ч**; **х** becomes **ш**.

positive	degree	comparative	degree
молодой	<i>young</i>	моложе	<i>younger</i>
твёрдый	<i>hard</i>	твёрже	<i>harder</i>
дорогой	<i>dear</i>	дороже	<i>dearer</i>
мягкий	<i>soft</i>	мягче	<i>softer</i>
чистый	<i>clean</i>	чище	<i>cleaner</i>
богатый	<i>rich</i>	богаче	<i>richer</i>
глухой	<i>deaf</i>	глуше	<i>deafier</i>

- The comparative forms of three frequently used adjectives **маленький**, *small*; **хороший**, *good*; and **плохой**, *bad*; deviate from the standard pattern:

positive	degree	comparative	degree
маленький	<i>small</i>	меньше	<i>smaller</i>
хороший	<i>good</i>	лучше	<i>better</i>
плохой	<i>bad</i>	хуже	<i>worse</i>

- The **compound comparative form** is: **более**, *more* (or **меньше**, *less*) + the positive form of the adjective, e.g., **более интересный**, *more interesting*. The comparative form of virtually any adjective may be constructed this way.
- There are two ways of expressing **comparison**: using the conjunction **чем**, *than*, followed by the nominative form of the noun or pronoun being compared; the genitive form of the noun or pronoun being compared.
Анна **симпатичнее**, чем Володя. *Anna is nicer than Volodya.*
Анна **симпатичнее** Володи. *Anna is nicer than Volodya.*

Superlative Degree of the Adjective

- The **superlative degree** of the adjective has both simple and compound forms.
 - The **simple form** adds the suffix **-ейший/-аиший** to the stem of the adjective: **новейший** магазин, *the newest store*; **новейшая** книга, *the newest/latest book*; **глубочайшие** реки, *the deepest rivers*.
 - The **compound form** of the superlative, **самый**, *the most* + the positive form of the adjective, is the more frequently used: Мы стояли на **самом низком** месте в мире. *We stood at the lowest point on earth.*
- Another way to express the superlative involves the **comparative degree** of the adjective, followed by **всех**, *than anyone* or **всего**, *than anything*: Они тогда были бедными, но Петров **беднее** всех. *At that time everyone was poor but Petrov was the poorest of all (poorer than anyone).* **Больше** всего я хочу жить в Калифорнии. *Most of all (more than anything) I want to live in California.*

Adjectival (Substantivized) Nouns

- Some adjectives function as **nouns**; while they decline like adjectives, they do **not** agree in gender/number/case with any nouns or pronouns in the sentence and may be modified by adjectives.
 - Examples include: **столовая**, *dining room*; **больной**, *больная* or **больные**, *an ill person(s)/patient(s)*; **мороженое**, *ice cream*; **животное**, *animal*.

ADVERBS

- Temporal Adverbs**, time of day, etc., are derived from the instrumental singular forms of many nouns: **вечером**, *in the evening*; **днём**, *in the afternoon*; **ночью**, *at night*; **утром**, *in the morning*; **летом**, *in the summer*; **зимой**, *in the winter*.
- Other time-related adverbs** are: **часто**, *often*; **всегда**, *always*; **редко**, *seldom*; **долго**, *a long time*; **теперь**, *now*; **сейчас**, *right now*; **рано**, *early*; **поздно**, *late*; **потом**, *then or later*; **иногда**, *sometimes*; **никогда**, *never*; **обычно**, *usually*; **сегодня**, *today*; **вчера**, *yesterday*; **завтра**, *tomorrow*.

Adverbs of Location/Destination

Location	Destination (w/ motion)
где, <i>where?</i>	куда, <i>where?</i>
тут, здесь, <i>here</i>	сюда, <i>here</i>
дома, <i>at home</i>	домой, <i>home/homeward</i>
внизу, <i>below</i>	вниз, <i>below, downward</i>
нигде, <i>nowhere</i>	никуда, <i>nowhere</i>
где-то, <i>somewhere</i>	куда-то, <i>somewhere</i>
где-нибудь, <i>somewhere</i>	куда-нибудь, <i>somewhere</i>
наверху, <i>above</i>	наверх, <i>upwards</i>

Location from (w/ motion)

откуда, <i>from where?</i>	
отсюда, <i>from here</i>	
снизу, <i>from below</i>	
ниоткуда, <i>from nowhere</i>	
откуда-то, <i>from somewhere</i>	
откуда-нибудь, <i>from somewhere</i>	
сверху, <i>from above</i>	

Adverbs of Means or Manner

- Probably the largest group of such adverbs *looks like* (but is syntactically different from) the neuter, nominative singular form of the short form of the adjective: **чётко**, *distinctly*; **хорошо**, *well*; **правильно**, *correctly*; **ясно**, *clearly*; **прямо**, *directly*.
- The adverbial form of adjectives ending in **-ский** is created by dropping the adjectival ending: **исторически** (cf. **исторический**), *historically*; **дружески** (cf. **дружеский**), *friendly*; **грамматически** (cf. **грамматический**), *grammatically*.
- Russian employs an adverb in certain situations where English employs an adjective.
 - Two important examples are:
 - In so-called **impersonal constructions** which express physical or emotional states, e.g., Мне (dative + the adverb) **жарко**. *I am hot.* Мне его **жалко**. *I feel sorry for him.* Ему **жутко**. *He is scared.*
 - Descriptions of environmental, atmospheric conditions**: Сегодня **холодно**, а завтра будет **теплее** (comparative form of the adverb). *It's cold today but it will be warmer tomorrow.*

Adverbs of Degree

- Some examples of adverbs of degree are: **много**, *a lot*; **мало**, *little*; **очень**, *very*; **совсем**, *quite*; **слишком**, *too much*; **достаточно**, *sufficiently*; **особенно**, *especially*.

VERBS

Tense

- Russian has three tenses: **past**, **present** and **future**.
- Only imperfective verbs (see **Aspect**) have present tense forms.
- Perfective aspect verbs have only past and future forms.

Aspect

- Aspect (вид)**, is the core concept underlying the Russian verbal system. There are two aspects, the **imperfective aspect** (**несовершенный вид**) and the **perfective aspect** (**совершенный вид**).

VERBS

The majority of Russian verbs occur in pairs: one imperfective and one perfective form. Some examples are: **читать/прочитать**, to read; **строить/построить**, to build; **видеть/увидеть**, to see.

The **perfective aspect** overtly signals the speaker's or writer's view that the action is a whole/total event.

The **imperfective aspect** only conveys a relationship between the subject of the verb and the verb itself.

For example: Вчера я **написал** (perfective) письмо. Yesterday I wrote (and finished or not, I view the action as ended) a letter. vs. Вчера я **писал** (imperfective) письмо. Yesterday I wrote a letter. (I may or may not have finished it).

Perfective verbs include those which address: the beginning of an action: **засмеяться**, to start laughing; the end of an action: **кончить**, to finish; completed action: **прочитать**, to read (and be finished).

Imperfective aspect verbs include those which express continued, ongoing or repeated actions or states of being: **сидеть**, to sit; **ходить**, to go; **быть**, to be.

The Infinitive

This is the "to" form of the verb: **есть**, to eat; **пить**, to drink; **утонуть**, to drown; **бояться**, to be afraid; **заниматься**, to study, occupy oneself; **весть**, to lead; **печь**, to bake. The infinitive marker is either **-ть** or **-и** or **-чь**.

RUSSIAN'S TWO MAIN CONJUGATIONS

Present Tense of Imperfective Verbs/Future Tense of Perfective Verbs

There are two primary conjugations in Russian, differentiated by their **present tense endings**.

First conjugation is characterized by "е/ё" in the non-first person endings of the present (or future for perfective aspect verbs) tense.

Second conjugation verbs are characterized by "и" in the non-first person endings of the present (or future for perfective aspect verbs) tense.

While the present tense endings are consistent, the verbal stem (the portion to which the ending are added) may undergo varying degrees of change. For the first conjugation these include:

A consonant appears and/or a vowel disappears: **жить**, to live becomes **жив-** + ending; **жить**, to squeeze becomes **жм-** + ending.

The consonant, along with the root itself may change: **лечь**, to lie down presents the form **ляг-** / **ляж-** + ending.

A vowel appears in the root: **звать**, to call becomes **зов-** + ending.

The so-called **-овать** verbs, e.g. **советовать**, to advise: present tense stem drops the **-ов** and inserts an **у** + ending (**совет-у-ю**).

Some examples of the **present/future tense forms** of the first conjugation are:

Infinitive	1 st sing.	2 nd sing.	3 rd sing.
читать	читаю	читаешь	читает
жить	живу	живёшь	живёт
нести	несу	несёшь	несёт
прочесть	прочту	прочтёшь	прочтёт
класть	кладу	кладёшь	кладёт
лечь	лягу	ляжешь	ляжет
звать	зову	зовёшь	зовёт
советовать	советую	советуешь	советует

VERBS

Infinitive	1 st pl.	2 nd pl.	3 rd pl.
читать	читаем	читаете	читают
жить	живём	живёте	живут
нести	несём	несёте	несут
прочесть	прочтём	прочтёте	прочтут
класть	кладём	кладёте	кладут
лечь	ляжем	ляжете	лягут
звать	зовём	зовёте	зовут
советовать	советуем	советуете	советуют

Second conjugation verbs also present a number of different variations in their present/future tense forms. Some of them include:

The **addition of personal endings** to the consonantal stem: **говорить**, to speak, say; **звонить**, to call, ring.

The **mutation of the infinitive stem** in the first person singular, retention of the infinitive stem in all other present/future forms: **плавать** (see below), (т- - ч-), to row; **тормозить** (see below), (з- - ж-), to brake.

The **insertion of a letter to the stem** in the first person singular, retention of the infinitive stem in all other present/future forms: **любить** (see below), (б- - бл-), to love; **поступить** (see below), (п- - пл-), to behave.

A group of verbs ending in **-ать** preceded by **ж, ч, ш, or щ**: **жужжать**, to buzz; **молчать**, to be silent; **слышать**, to hear; **трещать**, to crackle. All other **-ать** verbs are 1st conjugation.

Some examples of the **present/future tense forms** of the first conjugation are:

Infinitive	1 st sing.	2 nd sing.	3 rd sing.
говорить	гов ^о рю	гов ^о ришь	гов ^о рит
тормозить	тор ^м ожу	тор ^м озишь	тор ^м озит
любить	люб ^ю	люб ^и шь	люб ^и т
видеть	ви ^{жу}	ви ^{ди} шь	ви ^{ди} т
услышать	услы ^{шу}	услы ^{ши} шь	услы ^{ши} т
молчать	молч ^у	молч ^и шь	молч ^и т

Infinitive	1 st pl.	2 nd pl.	3 rd pl.
говорить	гов ^о рим	гов ^о рите	гов ^о рят
тормозить	тор ^м озим	тор ^м озите	тор ^м озят
любить	люб ^{им}	люб ^и те	люб ^я т
видеть	ви ^{дим}	ви ^{ди} те	ви ^д ят
услышать	услы ^{шим}	услы ^{ши} те	услы ^{шат}
молчать	молч ^{им}	молч ^и те	молч ^{ат}

Past Tense

Red text indicates a stressed vowel.

The past tense is marked for **gender** and **number** only. Three of the most common patterns of forming the past tense are:

Verbs ending in **-ть** drop the ending and add: **-л** for masculine singular, **-ла** for feminine singular, **-ло** for neuter singular; **-ли** for plural, all genders.

Verbs (including prefixed forms) ending in **-сти** and **-зти** (present stems not ending in **б, д, г**, e.g. **нести**, **везти**, form the past tense by:

masculine singular: drop the **-ти** or **-зи**; stress on the root, e.g. **нёс**, **вёз** (the same rule holds for any prefixed forms of these verbs, e.g., **принести**, **отвезти**)

feminine, neuter singular; plural: drop the **-ти** or **-зи**, add **-ла**, **-ло** or **-ли**

Verbs ending in **-чь**: drop the infinitive marker; bare consonant ending (e.g., **лечь**, past tense = **лёг**; same consonant as in 1st person singular) for masculine; others, add **-ла** or **-ли** (**легла**, **легло**, **легли**)

Future Tense

The future tense forms of perfective verbs follow one or the other conjugational patterns outlined above.

The future tense form of imperfective verbs is a **compound form**. It is created by: the future form of the verb **быть**, to be; plus the infinitive of the verb.

VERBS

The forms of **быть** are marked for person and number: **буду**, I will be; **будешь**, you will be, etc.

Some examples are: **Завтра он будет писать** письмо. Tomorrow he will write a letter. **Мы будем исполнять** свои обязанности. We will fulfill our obligations.

Reflexive Verbs

Reflexive verbs are those whose **infinitive ends in -ся**.

Most of these verbs fall into one of three categories: 1) the action "reflects" back on the subject, e.g., **бриться**, to shave oneself; **одеваться**, to dress oneself; 2) the action is mutual or reciprocal, e.g., **видеться**, to see one another; **познакомиться**, to make one another's acquaintance; 3) a "passive-like" expression, e.g., **дом строится**, the house is being built.

Verbs of Motion

Verbs of motion are an extremely important category in Russian.

They describe various types of **coming and going**: running, walking, swimming, carrying, etc.

There are 12+ (non-prefixed) verbs in this category.

Verbs of motion come in **threes**: two imperfective forms (**determinate** and **indeterminate**) and one perfective form.

The verbs of motion include:

	Ind. Imperf.	Det. Imperf.	Perfective
to go,			
to walk	ходить	идти	пойти
to go			
by vehicle	ездить	ехать	поехать
to run	бегать	бежать	побежать
to carry	носить	нести	понести
to carry			
by vehicle	возить	везти	повезти
to fly	летать	лететь	полететь
to swim	плавать	плыть	поплыть

The perfective form functions like other perfective verbs.

The **determinate imperfective** describes a **single activity at a single time, along a single path**.

The **indeterminate imperfective** reflects the **opposite: repetitive or recurring activity** that may or may not occur on a given path.

A set of examples is:

Ваня уже **пошёл** в школу. Vanya already went to school. (Perfective)

Ваня **идёт** в школу. Vanya is going to school. (Determinate Imperfective)

Ваня **ходит** в школу (пять дней в неделю). Vanya goes to school (five days a week). (Indeterminate Imperfective)

Participles

Participles combine the features of verbs and adjectives, acting as a **verbal adjective**.

There are four participial forms in Russian: **present active**, **present passive**; **past active**, **past passive**.

Participles agree in gender, number and case with the noun or pronoun to which they refer.

They are primarily used in **literature and scientific writing**.

Present Active Participle

In the **first conjugation**, construct this form by: taking the 3rd person plural form of the verb, dropping the ending, adding either **-ущ-** or **-ющ-**, plus the appropriate adjectival ending.

The stress in the 3rd person plural form carries over to the participial forms.

Some examples are:

Infinitive		3 rd plural
работать	to work	рабо ^т а-ют
писать	to write	пиш ^у -ут
звать	to call	зов ^у -т

VERBS

Pres. Active Participle

работать	раб ^о ющий, -ая, -ое	working
писать	пиш ^у щий, -ая, -ое	writing
звать	зов ^у щий, -ая, -ое	calling

• Second conjugation verbs construct the present active participle in similar manner, using the suffixes **-ащ-** or **-ющ-**.

Infinitive 3rd plural

говорить	to speak, say	говор ^{ят}
любить	to love	люб ^{ят}
молчать	to be quiet	молч ^{ат}

Pres. Active Participle

говорять	говор ^я щий, -ая, -ое	speaking
любить	люб ^я щий, -ая, -ое	loving
молчать	молч ^я щий, -ая, -ое	being silent

Note: Reflexive verbs add **-ся** after the adjectival endings—regardless of whether the preceding letter is a consonant or vowel.

Infinitive 3rd plural

идти	to go	ид ^{ут}
есть	to eat	ед ^{ят}
заниматься	to study	заним ^{аются}

Pres. Active Participle

идти	ид ^{ущ} ий, -ая, -ое	going
есть	ед ^{ущ} ий, -ая, -ое	eating
заниматься	заним ^{ающ} ийся, -аяся, -еся	studying

Present Passive Participle

• First conjugation transitive verbs construct this very literary form by:

- Taking the 1st person plural form of the verb plus the appropriate adjectival ending.

- The stress in the 1st person plural form carries over to this participial form:

Infinitive	1 st plural	
посылать	to send	посыл ^{ем}
исполнять	to fulfill	исполн ^{ем}

Pres. Passive Participle

посылать	посыл ^{им} ый, -ая, -ое	being sent
исполнять	исполн ^{им} ый, -ая, -ое	being fulfilled

• Second conjugation verbs construct the present passive participle along the same lines, using the suffix **-им-**.

• The stress normally falls on the **-им-** suffix:

Infinitive	1 st plural	
говорить	to speak, say	говор ^{им}
любить	to love	люб ^{им}
видеть	to see	вид ^{ят}

Pres. Passive Participle

говорить	говор ^{им} ый, -ая, -ое	being spoken
любить	люб ^{им} ый, -ая, -ое	being loved
видеть	вид ^{им} ый, -ая, -ое	being seen

• Some verbs, such as **нести**, to carry; **вести**, to lead; and **давать**, to give, differ in their formation of the present passive participle:

Infinitive	1 st plural	
нести	to carry	нес ^{ем}
вести	to lead	вед ^{ём}
давать	to give	да ^{ём}

Pres. Passive Participle

нести	нес ^{им} ый, -ая, -ое	being carried
вести	вед ^{им} ый, -ая, -ое	being led
давать	да ^{ем} ый, -ая, -ое	being given

Past Active Participle

• First conjugation and second conjugation verbs construct this form by:

- Taking the infinitive/past tense (typically, but not always the same as the infinitive) stem and adding **-ив-** if the stem ends in a vowel, **-ив-** if the stem ends in a consonant:

Infinitive	Past Tense	
услышать	to hear	услыш ^а -л
прочитать	to read	прочит ^а -л
принести	to carry	прин ^ё -с

Past Active Participle

услышать	услыш ^{ав} -ший, -ая, -ее	who heard
прочитать	прочит ^{ав} -ший, -ая, -ее	who read
принести	прин ^ё -вший, -ая, -ее	who carried

VERBS

Past Passive Participle

• First and second conjugation transitive verbs construct this form by:

- Taking the infinitive/past tense (typically, but not always the same as the infinitive) stem and adding **-ив-** (sometimes **-т**) if the stem ends in a vowel, **-енн-** / **-ённ-** if the stem ends in a consonant.

- There are also a number of consonant changes in this form, e.g., т - ч; ст - ш; з - ж:

Infinitive	Past Tense	
выслушать	to listen to	выслуш ^а -л
прочитать	to read	прочит ^а -л
принести	to carry	прин ^ё -с

Past Active Participle

выслушать	выслуш ^{ав} -ный, -ая, -ое	which was listened to
прочитать	прочит ^{ав} -ный, -ая, -ое	which was read
принести	принес ^{ен} -ный, -ая, -ое	which was carried

• Past Passive Participles are frequently utilized in their short form (see **Short Form Adjectives**): закрытые двери, closed doors; vs. двери закрыты, the doors are closed.

Verbal Adverbs (Деепричастия)

• Verbal adverbs are verbs functioning as adverbs.
• Just like adverbs, they answer questions such as when? where? how?, etc. (cf. **Adverbs**).
• Unlike adverbs, however, they may have objects.

Verbal Adverbs from Imperfective Verbs

• The action expressed by this verbal adverb occurs at the same time as that of the main verb in the sentence. (Сидя в кресле, он читал; *Sitting in the armchair, he read.*)

• The verbal adverb is constructed in the following manner: 3rd person plural form of the verb, drop the ending, adding either **-а-** or **-я-**. The stress in the 3rd person plural form carries over to the verbal adverb form. Verbal adverbs of reflexive verbs end in **-сь**:

Infinitive	3 rd Pl.	
читать	to read	чит ^а -ют
говорить	to speak, say	говор ^{ят}
слушать	to listen	слуш ^а -ют
заниматься	to study	заним ^{аются}

Verbal Adverb: Imperf.

чит ^я	чита ^я	reading
говор ^я	говор ^я	speaking
слуш ^а	слуш ^а	listening
заним ^я	заним ^я -сь	studying

Verbal Adverbs from Perfective Verbs

• The action expressed by this verbal adverb precedes that of the main verb in the sentence. (Увидев тигра, он закричал; *On seeing the tiger he screamed.*)

• It is constructed along the same lines as the past active participle, instead adding **-в(ив)** after vowels and **-ш** after consonants.

• Verbal adverbs of reflexive verbs end in **-сь**.

Infinitive	Past Tense	
услышать	to hear	услыш ^а -л
прочитать	to read	прочит ^а -л
принести	to carry	прин ^ё -с
познакомиться	make the acquaintance	познаком ^и -лся

Verbal Adverb: Perf.

услыш ^{ав}	услыш ^{ав} -в	(after) hearing
прочит ^{ав}	прочит ^{ав} -в	(after) reading
принес ^{ив}	принес ^{ив}	(after) carrying
познаком ^{ив}	познаком ^{ив} -вши-сь	(after) making the acquaintance

Imperative Mood

• The imperative of a verb expresses a command: go, eat, jump, sit.
• Russian imperatives are either 2nd person singular: бери, take; иди, go; смотри, look; or plural: берите, take; идите, go; смотрите, look.
• The plural is also used when addressing the polite Вы, you.

VERBS

• The stress in the imperative form is based on where the stress falls on the 1st person singular for the present or future (for perfective verbs) form:

- If the 1st person singular stem (form to which personal endings are added) ends in a consonant and if the stress is on the ending, the imperative will be: **-и** singular, **-ите** plural: говорить говор^ю = говор^и (s.) говор^{ите} (pl.); смотреть смотр^ю = смотр^и (s.) смотр^{ите} (pl.)

- If the 1st person stem ends in a vowel, the imperative will be: **-й**, **-йте**: читать чит^{аю} = чит^{ай} (s.) чит^{айте} (pl.); открывать, to open: открыв^{аю} = открыв^{ай} (s.) открыв^{айте} (pl.)

- If the 1st person singular stem ends in a consonant and if the stress is on the stem, the imperative will be: **-ь**, **-ьте**. An example: встать, to get up, встан^у = встан^ь (s.) встан^{ьте} (pl.)

- Reflexive verbs obey the same rules as above, adding **-ся** when preceded by a consonant and **-сь** when preceded by a vowel: e.g. учиться, to study: уч^{усь} = уч^{ись} (s.) уч^{итесь} (pl.)

Conditional / Subjunctive Mood

• In Russian, the conditional and subjunctive have the same form.
• This mood may be used to express that a given action may take place under a given set of circumstances.
• Such expressions utilize **бы**, would; and **если бы**, if.
• The verb is always in the past tense form, regardless of the actual time referred to: Мы бы поехали в город, если бы было время. *We would have gone (also: would go) to town if there were (also: would be) time.*
• A second, important use: in subordinate clauses after verbs of wishing or desiring. Such subordinate clauses begin with the word **чтобы**.
• The verb in the clause is always in the past tense, regardless of actual time indicated. Мама хочет, чтобы сын приходил к ней каждый день. *Mother wants her son to visit her every day.*

CREDITS

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NOTE TO STUDENTS

This **QuickStudy**® guide is an outline of the major topics taught in Russian courses. Keep it handy as a quick reference source in the classroom, while doing homework, and as a memory refresher when reviewing prior to exams. Due to its condensed format, use it as a Russian guide, but not as a replacement for assigned class work. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the publisher. ©2002-2006 BAR CHARTS INC. Boca Raton, FL 1006

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