

*Compiled by  
J. L. I. Fennell*

外语系



俄国文学

*The Penguin*

# **RUSSIAN**

*Course*

# **ABB**

*Complete course for beginners*

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# THE PENGUIN RUSSIAN COURSE

外文书库

A COMPLETE COURSE FOR  
BEGINNERS

*Compiled by J. L. I. Fennell*

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## INTRODUCTION

THE Penguin Russian Grammar is based on N. F. Potapova's Elementary Russian Course, published by the Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow. Much of the excellent textual material found in Mme Potapova's grammar has been used in this book, but the explanations of grammatical rules and the exercises have been radically revised, and in most cases rewritten, to suit the abbreviated dimensions of this book.

Each lesson begins with a vocabulary, the semantic difficulties of certain words being explained in notes at the end of the vocabulary. The main bulk of each lesson is taken up with grammatical rules and their explanations. These are followed by one or more passages of Russian designed as far as possible to illustrate the rules explained in the lessons. Finally there is a series of exercises, the key to which is found at the end of the book.

After the lessons there is a section containing grammatical tables – declensions and conjugations – which will be of use to the student for reference purposes. This is followed by the key to the exercises, a Russian-English vocabulary containing all the words in the lessons, and an English-Russian vocabulary containing all the words in the English-Russian exercises.

The student is advised first of all to learn by heart the vocabulary of the lesson; then carefully to work through the rules. He should then read the Russian passages several times until he can translate them into English without difficulty. After this the exercise should be attempted; the results should be checked with the key. It may be found useful to work through the exercises several times, at first referring when in doubt to the grammar and the vocabulary, later – to the key. Only when the student feels that he has mastered the exercises and can translate

the sentences into Russian without difficulty, should he go on to the next lesson. It is much better to go slowly and thoroughly at first and to try to master the basic principles of the language than to hurry in the hope of quickly acquiring the ability to talk fluently.

One final word. Russian is not a difficult language. The grammar is simple and straightforward; Russian words are pronounced more or less as they are written; and word-order presents few difficulties. But it is easy for a beginner at first to become depressed by the number of words he has to learn by heart. Also he may well be worried at a later stage by the recurrent feeling that he has forgotten what he learned three or four lessons earlier. After about ten lessons, however, he should find that the words become increasingly easy to memorize, that most of what he has already learned has, by dint of repetition, remained in his head and that there are no insuperable difficulties in his path.

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#### NOTE TO THE REVISED REPRINT OF 1965

I would like to thank the many people who have made suggestions and pointed out inaccuracies and misprints in the earlier editions, especially Miss Enid A. Marshall, of Ladybank, Fife, Scotland.

Oxford 1965

J. L. I. F.

★

*Russian Alphabet*

## PRINTED

## WRITTEN

APPROXIMATE  
PRONUNCIATION

А а

А а

*a* in 'father'

Б б

Б б

*b* in 'book'

В в

В в

*v* in 'vote'

Г г

Г г

*g* in 'good'

Д д

Д д

*d* in 'day'

Е е

Е е

*ye* in 'yes'

Е ё

Е ё

*yo* in 'yonder'

Ж ж

Ж ж

*s* in 'pleasure'

З з

З з

*z* in 'zone'*s* in 'please'

И и

И и

*ee* in 'meet'

Й й

Й й

*y* in 'boy'

К к

К к

*k* in 'kind'

Л л

Л л

*l* (see p. xviii)

М м

М м

*m* in 'man'

Н н

Н н

*n* in 'note'

О о

О о

*o* in 'pot'



П п	<i>П п</i>	<i>p</i> in 'pen'
Р р	<i>Р р</i>	<i>r</i> (see p. xviii)
С с	<i>С с</i>	<i>s</i> in 'speak'
Т т	<i>Т т П т</i>	<i>t</i> in 'too'
У у	<i>У у</i>	<i>oo</i> in 'fool'
Ф ф	<i>Ф ф</i>	<i>f</i> in 'fire'
Х х	<i>Х х</i>	<i>kh</i> (see p. xix)
Ц ц	<i>Ц ц</i>	<i>tz</i> in 'quartz' (see p. xix)
Ч ч	<i>Ч ч</i>	<i>ch</i> in 'chair'
Ш ш	<i>Ш ш</i>	<i>sh</i> in 'short'
Щ щ	<i>Щ щ</i>	<i>shch</i> (see p. xx)
Ъ ъ	<i>ъ</i>	(see p. xxii)
Ы ы	<i>ы</i>	(see p. xvi)
Ь ь	<i>ь</i>	(see pp. xxi, xxii)
Э э	<i>Э э</i>	<i>e</i> in 'men'
Ю ю	<i>Ю ю</i>	<i>u</i> in 'university'
Я я	<i>Я я</i>	<i>ya</i> in 'yard'

## HOW TO WRITE RUSSIAN

There is very little difficulty in writing Russian. At first the student should practise writing individual letters separately. They need not be so florid as the examples given above and below; several letters, indeed, can be modified to suit the student's hand.

Joining the letters together is not difficult and is often similar to English, especially when the letters are familiar

(e.g. *урок, скоро, адрес*). It must, however, be borne in mind that some letters (Л, М and Я) begin with a small hook which is preserved if joined to a preceding letter:

*мама, ммм, дядя*

It is not necessary to join every letter together in a word. Often, in fact, it is difficult, or even impossible — О, for instance, cannot be joined to Л, М or Я if they follow it.

Some letters can be written in different ways:

Д is written either *đ* or *g*

Т is written either *m* or *τ*

For clarity's sake a line is often put over *m̄* and under *u* (but *not* under *u<sub>z</sub>*); this helps to avoid confusion especially when these letters are in close proximity with *u* and *n*

The following examples should be studied and copied out:

Дом. Мост. Вот дом.

Там мост, дом.

Страна. Брат. Работа. Зал. План.

Фраза. Дом и двор. Съезд.

Тудок. Урок. Буква. Булгала. Карта

Вот буква «эн». Вот буква «ха».

Я пою. Он едет домой.

Мой брат даёт урок. Объявление.

Здесь моя мать и мой дядя.

Москва — столица СССР.

Самолёт летит высоко и быстро.

Вот наш журнал.

Товарищ, Шуркин — наш рабочий.

## PRONUNCIATION

The following notes are intended merely as a rough guide for the beginner, and are of most use when the student is able to relate them to sounds as pronounced by a native Russian (on radio or gramophone at least).

### I. Vowels

**a** The Russian **a** is pronounced like the 'a' in 'father' or 'car', but is a slightly shorter sound:

там	'there'
как	'how'

**o** has approximately the same sound as the English 'o' in 'port', 'morning'. The lips, however, should be rounded and protruded:

тот	'that'
вот	'here is'

**y** is pronounced like the English 'oo' in 'fool'. Again the lips should be rounded and protruded:

суп	'soup'
тут	'here'

**э** is like the 'e' in 'let', 'men', but the tongue is not raised so high and the mouth should be more open:

это	'this'
-----	--------

Note that **э** generally occurs at the beginning of a word or is preceded by a vowel; it is most frequently found in words of foreign origin (эпо́ха 'epoch', аэродро́м 'aerodrome').

**и** is similar to 'ee' in 'see', but slightly shorter in length:

пик	'peak'
-----	--------

**я, е, ё, ю** are what are known as iotized soft vowels — in other words, they are prefixed in pronunciation by

the equivalent of an English 'y'. They are pronounced as follows:

- я like 'ya' in 'yard' – Ялта 'Yalta'
- е like 'ye' in 'yes' – ест 'he eats'
- ё like 'yo' in 'yonder' – даёт 'he gives'
- ю like 'u' in 'university' – юмор 'humour'

Note that и is also what is called a soft vowel. It is, however only iotized (that is, pronounced with a 'y' sound before it) when it occurs initially in the declension of the personal pronoun он 'he': их (*gen. pl.*); им (*dat. pl. or instr. sing.*); ими (*instr. pl.*).

**ы** The nearest equivalent to **ы** in English is the 'i' in 'it', 'ill', or 'sin'. To pronounce it, the tongue is drawn back as far as possible and not allowed to go forwards or raised as high as in producing the vowel и.

ТЫ	'thou'
МЫ	'we'
ВЫ	'you'
СЫН	'son'

**й** The sound **й** is close to the English 'y' in 'toy', 'bay'. It is only found *after* a vowel and is used to form a diphthong. Thus:

- а + й: ай like 'y' in 'sky' – май 'May'
- о + й: ой like 'oy' in 'boy' – мой 'my'

There are, however, slight differences from the equivalent English sounds:

(a) The first element of the diphthong (the vowels а, е, у, etc.) is shorter in Russian than in English.

(b) In pronouncing the й the back of the tongue is brought closer to the roof of the mouth than in the pronunciation of the 'y' in 'boy', 'bay', etc.

The only vowels whose sound is not appreciably altered when followed by й are и and ы. In other words, there is little or no difference between the pronunciation of и and ы and that of ий and ый (both of which are the standard adjectival endings in Russian).

Note that the combination vowel + й (уй, ей, ёй, юй, etc.) is *only one syllable*, whereas the combination vowel + vowel (оо, аи, ое, ая, etc.) is *two syllables*.

## 2. Consonants

**б** resembles the English 'b' in 'boy'. At the end of a word it sounds like the 'p' in 'lip':

банк	'bank'
хлеб	'bread'

**в** is pronounced like the English 'v' in 'voice', except that the upper teeth are pressed against the back of the lower lip, and not the front:

вот	'here is'
Волга	'the Volga'

At the end of a word or before a voiceless consonant (к, п, с, т, ф, х, ц, ч, ш, and щ) **в** is pronounced like the 'f' in 'father':

Киев	'Kiev'
всё	'everything'
завтрак	'breakfast'

**г** is pronounced like the 'g' in 'good'. At the end of a word it sounds like the 'k' in 'cook':

год	'year'
друг	'friend'

**д** is like the English 'd'; the tongue, however, is brought against the back of the upper teeth with the tip pointing downwards. At the end of a word **д** sounds like an English 't':

да	'yes'
сад	'garden'

**ж** is pronounced approximately like the English 's' in 'vision', 'pleasure'. However, the Russian sound is considerably harder: the position of the tongue is lower – i.e. further away from the palate:

жук	'beetle'
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**з** is like the 'z' in 'zero':

зуб 'tooth'

**к** is like the 'k' in 'kind':

как 'how'

**л** The Russian **л** resembles the English 'l' in 'full', 'table', but is somewhat harder. To pronounce it properly the back of the tongue should be kept low, away from the roof of the mouth, and the tip of the tongue brought up against the back upper teeth:

слово 'word'  
футбол 'football'

**м** is like the English 'm':

мак 'poppy'

**н** is like an English 'n', but to pronounce it the front of the tongue must be placed against the back of the upper teeth with its tip pointing downwards (cf. **д** and **т**). The tip of the tongue should not be raised as in pronouncing the English 'n':

но 'but'

**п** resembles the English 'p' in 'please', 'pin':

пакт 'pact'

**р** For the Russian **р** there is no corresponding English sound. It resembles somewhat the rolled 'r' of Scotland and Northern England. It is formed by the vibration of the tip of the tongue against the front of the palate. It is a distinct trilled sound:

рот 'mouth'  
рак 'crab'  
вор 'thief'

**с** is like the 's' in 'soon', 'yes':

мост 'bridge'

**т** is like the English 't', except that the tongue is brought against the back of the upper teeth with the tip pointing downwards:

тут 'here'  
танк 'tank'

**ф** closely resembles the 'f' in 'farm':

факт 'fact'

**х** This sound has no counterpart in English. It resembles the Scottish 'ch' in 'loch' and the German 'ch' in 'Buch', 'hoch'. It is articulated almost in the same way as **к**, except that at the moment of pronunciation the tongue does not touch the roof of the mouth, only coming close to it and leaving a passage for the outgoing breath:

холм 'hill'

**ц** sounds like a combination of 't' and 's' as in 'lots':

отец 'father'  
цыган 'gipsy'

Note: (a) After **ц** both **и** and **ы** are pronounced like **ы**; **и** is written after **ц** mostly in words of foreign origin:

цифра 'figure'  
цирк 'circus'

(b) When **ц** is followed by **е**, the combination is pronounced as **цэ**:

центр 'centre'

**ч** is pronounced like 'ch' in 'chair':

чай 'tea'

Note that in the word **что** 'what', **ч** is pronounced as 'sh'.



**ш** is pronounced approximately like the English 'sh' in 'short', but it is harder; the position of the tongue is lower:

**шаг** 'stride'

**щ** The nearest English equivalent is the 'shch' in 'fresh cheese':

**щи** 'cabbage soup'

Note: (a) **ж** and **ш** are never followed by the letters **э** or **ы**, but always by **е** or **и**. After **ж** and **ш**, **е** is pronounced like **э** and **и** like **ы** (**инженёр** 'engineer', **машина** 'machine'). **ч** and **щ** are never followed by **ы** but instead by **и**.

(b) **ж**, **ч**, **ш**, and **щ** are never followed by **я** and **ю** but instead by **а** or **у**.

### 3. Syllables and Word Stress

In words of more than one syllable only one syllable is stressed. The stress in Russian is more emphatic than in English. The stressed syllable, as compared with the unstressed, is articulated with much greater force and is therefore lengthened. Hence the pronunciation of vowels is affected by stress:

(a) Vowels on which the stress falls are pronounced clearly and distinctly, and more time is required to pronounce them.

(b) Unstressed vowels are fainter and less drawn out. Less time is spent on their pronunciation.

Note that **ë** is always stressed, no matter what its position in the word.

Of all the vowels, **о** is the most affected by its position in the word:

(a) When it occurs in an unstressed syllable immediately before the stressed syllable, it is pronounced like a faint Russian **а**:

Москва́	'Moscow'	вода́	'water'
она́	'she'	фонтáн	'fountain'
оно́	'it'	доска́	'board'