RU

LANGUAGE COURSE

Russian Grammar 1

12 Chapters

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Generated with Claude

RUSSIAN GRAMMAR 1

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Russian Grammar 1

Chapter 1 · How Russian Works: Cases, Word Order & the Missing Words

🧩 How Russian Works — Как устро́ен ру́сский язы́к

*You have already used a lot of Russian in the Alphabet and Basic courses. This course goes back over it **by rule**, so the pieces fit together. This first chapter is the map: what Russian does differently from English, why its words change their endings, and how to read the examples in the rest of the course. Every Russian word in the course has a stress mark; there is no English respelling except in Chapter 2 (sounds) and in vocabulary lists.*

> THE RULE IN ONE BOX
>
> Russian has **no articles** (no *a* or *the*) and **no present tense of *to be*** (*Он студе́нт*, "He is a student"). Instead of using word order and little words to show who does what to whom, Russian changes the **ending** of the noun, pronoun and adjective. These endings come in six sets called **cases**: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, instrumental and prepositional. The ending tells you the word's job, so the word order can be more flexible than in English.

No articles

Russian has no word for *a* or *the*. The same sentence can mean either, and context (or word order) decides.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	NOTE
Э́то дом.	This is a house / This is the house.	No article to translate.
Я купи́л маши́ну.	I bought a car / I bought the car.	The listener works out which from the situation.
У меня́ есть сестра́.	I have a sister.	Literally: "at me there is a sister".

No present tense of *to be*

In the present, Russian simply leaves out *am, is, are*. The verb **быть** ("to be") appears only in the past and future. Between two nouns a **dash** often stands where the verb would be.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	NOTE
Он студе́нт.	He is a student.	No verb in the present.
Мы до́ма.	We are at home.	*до́ма* is an adverb (“at home”).
Москва́ — столи́ца Росси́и.	Moscow is a capital of Russia.	A dash can mark the missing verb between two nouns.
Вчера́ я был до́ма.	Yesterday I was at home. (a man speaking)	Past: *был, была́, бы́ло, бы́ли*.
Вчера́ я была́ до́ма.	Yesterday I was at home. (a woman speaking)	The past form agrees with the speaker.
За́втра мы бу́дем до́ма.	Tomorrow we will be at home.	Future: *бу́ду, бу́дешь, бу́дет, бу́дем, бу́дете, бу́дут*.

> **Watch out: есть is not “is”**
> The word **есть** does appear in the present, but it means “there is / there exists” and is the usual way to say “have”: **У меня́ есть брат** (“I have a brother”). It is not a general replacement for *is*, so you will not say *Он есть студе́нт*.

Endings do the work: word order and cases

In English, *Mum loves Dima* and *Dima loves Mum* mean different things, and only the order tells you which. In Russian the **ending** shows who loves whom, so the order can change without changing the meaning.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	WHAT SHOWS WHO IS WHO
Ма́ма лю́бит Ди́му.	Mum loves Dima. (Dima is a boy's name.)	*Ди́му* has the object ending *-у*, so Dima is loved.
Ди́му лю́бит ма́ма.	Mum loves Dima. (the same meaning)	The order changed, the endings did not.
Ди́ма лю́бит ма́му.	Dima loves Mum.	Now *ма́му* is the object.

Word order is not *completely* free. The usual order is subject, verb, object, and a speaker moves a word to the front or the end to show what is already known and what is new. This is the way Russian often does the job of *a* and *the*:

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	EFFECT
Кни́га лежи́т на столе́.	The book is lying on the table.	The book is already known, so it comes first.
На столе́ лежи́т кни́га.	On the table there is a book.	New information comes last.

The six cases at a glance

A **case** is a set of endings that shows a noun's job in the sentence. Russian has six. Dictionaries list them in this order; the course teaches them in a different order, easiest first (prepositional, accusative, genitive, dative, instrumental). The highlighted part is the ending that changed; here the noun is **сестра́** ("sister").

CASE	RUSSIAN NAME	QUESTIONS	MAIN JOBS	EXAMPLE
Nominative	**именительный**	кто? что?	the subject; the dictionary form	**Сестра́ чита́ет.** The sister reads.

CASE	RUSSIAN NAME	QUESTIONS	MAIN JOBS	EXAMPLE
Genitive	**роди́тельный**	кого́? чего́?	“of”; absence; quantity	**У меня́ нет сестры́.** I have no sister.
Dative	**да́тельный**	кому́? чему́?	“to”, “for”; age; feelings	**Я даю́ кни́гу сестре́.** I give the book to my sister.
Accusative	**вини́тельный**	кого́? что?	direct object; direction	**Я ви́жу сестру́.** I see my sister.
Instrumental	**твори́тельный**	кем? чем?	“with”, “by means of”; roles	**Я иду́ с сестро́й.** I am walking with my sister.
Prepositional	**предло́жный**	о ком? о чём?	place; “about”; always after a preposition	**Я говорю́ о сестре́.** I am talking about my sister.

One noun in all six cases

Two nouns are shown with the ending highlighted. The singular is shown here; the plural comes in the chapters that follow.

CASE	СТУДЕ́НТ (A MALE STUDENT)	СТУДЕ́НТКА (A FEMALE STUDENT)
Nominative	**студе́нт**	**студе́нтка**
Genitive	**студе́нта**	**студе́нтки**
Dative	**студе́нту**	**студе́нтке**
Accusative	**студе́нта**	**студе́нтку**
Instrumental	**студе́нтом**	**студе́нткой**

CASE	СТУДЕ́НТ (A MALE STUDENT)	СТУДЕ́НТКА (A FEMALE STUDENT)
Prepositional	**студе́нте**	**студе́нтке**

Watch out: one ending, several cases

The same ending can belong to different cases, so the ending alone is not enough. **студе´нта** is both genitive and accusative; **студе´нтке** is both dative and prepositional (*Я дал кни´гу студе´нтке*, “I gave the book to the student”; *Я говорю´ о студе´нтке*, “I am talking about the student”). What settles it is the **verb** or the **preposition** that comes with the word. That is why this course teaches the cases together with the prepositions and verbs that take them.

What changes and what does not

WORD TYPE	CHANGES BY CASE?	EXAMPLE
nouns	yes	**брат, бра́та, бра́ту, бра́том, бра́те**
pronouns	yes	**я, меня́, мне, мной**
adjectives (they agree with the noun)	yes	Grammar 2
numerals	some do	Grammar 2
verbs	no: they change by person, tense and aspect	**я чита́ю, ты чита́ешь** (Grammar 3)
adverbs, conjunctions	no	**до́ма, хорошо́, и, но**
prepositions	no, but each one demands a case	see below
a few borrowed nouns	no	**ко́фе, такси́, метро́**

Prepositions choose the case

Each preposition is followed by a particular case. The first five below take just one; a few, such as *в* and *на*, take two depending on whether they mean “where” or “where to” (Chapters 5 and 6).

PREPOSITION	CASE	EXAMPLE
без (without)	genitive	**без са́хара** (without sugar)
к (to, towards)	dative	**к бра́ту** (to my brother)
о (about)	prepositional	**о бра́те** (about my brother)
с (with)	instrumental	**с бра́том** (with my brother)
в (in, where)	prepositional	**в до́ме** (in the house)

Where you have met cases already

The Basic courses taught many case forms inside situations. The table shows where, so you can look back at the dialogs when a chapter here covers the same forms by rule.

WHERE	WHAT IT USED
Russian Basic Conversation 3, Chapter 1 (Buying Clothes)	accusative plural
Russian Basic Conversation 3, Chapter 3 (Post, Bank & Bills)	dative pronouns
Russian Basic Conversation 3, Chapter 4 (Finding a Home)	genitive plural, quantity words
Russian Basic Conversation 3, Chapter 5 (Work & Careers)	instrumental of occupation
Russian Basic Conversation 3, Chapter 6 (At Work)	**с** + instrumental
Russian Basic Conversation 4, Chapter 1 (Health & Fitness)	genitive of absence and quantity

How this course writes its examples

WHAT YOU SEE	WHAT IT MEANS
до́ма	A stress mark (an acute accent) on every word of two or more syllables. The mark is part of the course, not the normal spelling.
мо́ре but **лес**	Words with one vowel never carry a mark, because the stress cannot fall anywhere else.
ёлка, нашёл	The letter *ё* is always stressed, so it needs no extra mark. This course writes *ё* wherever it belongs.
a **coloured** ending	The part of the word that changed to show its case.
(English in brackets) or a second line	The meaning of the example.

Words in this chapter

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
студе́нт	stoo-DYEHNT	student (male)
студе́нтка	stoo-DYEHNT-kah	student (female)
брат	BRAHT	brother
сестра́	see-STRAH	sister
друг	DROOK	friend
ма́ма	MAH-mah	mum
кни́га	KNEE-gah	book
дом	DOHM	house
до́ма	DOH-mah	at home
врач	VRAHCH	doctor

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
университе́т	oo-nee-veer-see-TYEHT	university
столи́ца	stah-LEE-tsah	capital city

🗣️ In Use — Применя́ем

Read the exchanges aloud. Notice that none of them needs is in the present.

① Who is this?

A:

Кто э́то?

Who is this?

B:

Э́то мой брат. Он студе́нт.

This is my brother. He is a student.

A:

А э́то кто?

And who is this?

B:

Э́то моя́ сестра́. Она́ врач.

This is my sister. She is a doctor.

② Where, and what about?

A:

Где ты?

Where are you?

B:

Я до́ма. Я чита́ю кни́гу.

I am at home. I am reading a book.

A:

О чём э́та кни́га?

What is the book about?

B:

О Росси́и.

About Russia.

③ Yesterday

A:

Где ты был вчера́?

Where were you yesterday?

B:

Я был в университе́те. А ты?

I was at the university. And you?

A:

Я была́ до́ма.

I was at home. (a woman speaking)

📋 Quick Reference — Резюме́

TOPIC	SUMMARY
articles	none: context and word order show “a” or “the”
present of *to be*	left out; a dash can stand between two nouns; past *был, была́, бы́ло, бы́ли*; future *бу́ду, бу́дешь* …
есть	“there is”; the usual way to say “have” (*У меня́ есть* …)
word order	usually subject, verb, object; endings let it change; new information tends to come last
cases	six: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, instrumental, prepositional
what changes	nouns, pronouns, adjectives, most numerals
what does not	verbs (they conjugate), adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions
prepositions	each takes one case, or two with different meanings
same ending, different cases	the verb or preposition decides (*студе́нта*: genitive or accusative)
stress	marked on every word of two or more syllables; *ё* is always stressed

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Упражне́ния

Say or write the answer first, then click to check.

1. In *Ма́ма лю́бит Ди́му*, which word is the subject, and how do you know?

▼ Show answer

Ма´ма: it has no object ending and is the dictionary form (nominative). *Ди´му* has the object ending *-у* (accusative).

2. Translate *Он врач*. Why is there no verb?

▼ Show answer

"He is a doctor." Russian leaves out the present tense of *to be*.

3. Say "I was at home" (a man speaking, then a woman speaking).

▼ Show answer

Я был до´ма. / Я была´ до´ма.

4. Say "Tomorrow I will be at home."

▼ Show answer

За´втра я бу´ду до´ма.

5. Which case is *ру´чкой* in *Я пишу´ ру´чкой* ("I write with a pen")?

▼ Show answer

Instrumental: it shows the means ("with a pen"), and the ending *-ой* is an instrumental ending.

6. Which case follows *о* in *Я говорю´ о бра´те*?

▼ Show answer

Prepositional (*бра´те*, with the ending *-е*).

7. What does *У меня´ есть сестра´* mean, and why is *есть* used?

▼ Show answer

"I have a sister." (literally "at me there is a sister"). *Есть* means "there is" and is the usual way to say "have".

8. Why can you not tell the case of *студе́нта* from the ending alone?

▼ Show answer

The same ending is used for the genitive and the accusative of this noun. The verb or preposition shows which.

9. How does Russian show “a book” as opposed to “the book”?

▼ Show answer

It has no articles. Context and word order show it (*Кни́га лежи́т на столе́* against *На столе́ лежи́т кни́га*).

10. Match each question to a case: *кому́?*, *о чём?*, *кем?*

▼ Show answer

кому́? = dative; *о чём?* = prepositional; *кем?* = instrumental.

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-16): that Russian has six cases (nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, instrumental, prepositional); that the nominative marks the subject, the accusative the direct object and motion, the dative the indirect object, the instrumental means and accompaniment, and the prepositional location; that the nominative is not used after prepositions; that the accusative of inanimate nouns looks like the nominative; and that at least one grammar table lists no definiteness distinction (which fits the absence of articles) (sources: mezzoguild.com: the six cases, gw2ru.com: six cases explained, en.wikibooks.org: Russian cases, russianenthusiast.com: introduction to the cases, from search results only, the pages themselves were not read in full).
Not checked, from general knowledge: the absence of the present tense of *to be* and the dash; *есть* for “have”; the claim that word order often shows what is known and what is new (*Кни́га лежи́т на столе́* against *На столе́ лежи́т кни́га*); the declension of *студе́нт*, *студе́нтка* and *сестра́*; the prepositions and the cases they take; every stress mark; the example sentences and dialogs, which were written for this course; the list of earlier chapters, which comes from the recap tables of Russian Basic Conversation 3 and 4. No dictionary or grammar book was consulted. Check a Russian dictionary or a native speaker before relying on them.

Coming up in Chapter 2: Sounds and Spelling Rules. Stress and vowel reduction; voiced and voiceless consonants; hard and soft; the signs ъ and ь; and the spelling rules that explain many “irregular” endings.

🔊 Sounds & Spelling Rules — Зву́ки и орфогра́фия

Russian Alphabet 1 and Russian Alphabet 2 taught you the letters. This chapter explains what the letters do ***to each other****: how stress changes a vowel, how a consonant can be hard or soft, why a written д can sound like m, and which letter combinations Russian refuses to write. These few rules explain a great many of the "irregular" endings in Chapters 3 to 10 (why the plural of кни́га is кни́ги, not кни́гы), so it is worth learning them once. This is the only chapter in the course with an English respelling, and it is a rough guide rather than a precise phonetic code.*

How to read the respellings: **ah** as in *father* **eh** as in *bed* **ee** as in *see*

oh as in *no* (without the glide) **oo** as in *food* **ih** like the *i* in *bit*, with the tongue pulled back (*ы*)

kh as the *ch* in Scottish *loch* **zh** as the *s* in *measure* **y** a quick *y* glide after a consonant: *nyah* (soft)

' a soft consonant at the end (*BRAHT'*) **CAPITALS** the stressed syllable

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

Stress is free and moves (*окно́*, but *о́кна*), and a vowel changes when it is **unstressed**: *о* sounds like *а*, and *е* or *я* sound like *и*. Consonants are **hard or soft**, and the vowel after them (and the sign *ь*) shows which. **Voiced** consonants (*б, в, г, д, ж, з*) become **voiceless** (*п, ф, к, т, ш, с*) at the end of a word and before a voiceless consonant. Finally, seven letters, **г, к, х, ж, ч, ш, щ**, are never followed by *ы* (write *и*), and **ж, ч, ш, щ** are never followed by *я* or *ю* (write *а* or *у*).

Stress is free, and it moves

Russian stress can fall on any syllable, and it often **moves** when a word changes its ending. Stress also changes **meaning** for a few word pairs. The course writes a stress mark on every word of two or more syllables, so use it every time you meet a new word.

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	NOTE
окно́	ahk-NOH	window	stress on the ending
о́кна	OHK-nah	windows	the stress moves to the front
го́род	GOH-raht	city	
города́	gah-rah-DAH	cities	stress moves to the ending
за́мок	ZAH-mahk	castle	same spelling, different stress
замо́к	zah-MOHK	lock	
му́ка	MOO-kah	torment	same spelling, different stress
мука́	moo-KAH	flour	

Watch out: ё is always stressed

The letter **ё** is always the stressed vowel, so it never carries another mark. In ordinary printing *ё* is often written as plain *е* (*все* for *всё*), so a real *ё* is easy to miss. This course always writes it.

Vowel reduction: unstressed vowels

In an **unstressed** syllable a vowel is weaker and changes colour. The change is strongest in the syllable **just before the stress** and at the start of a word.

LETTER	STRESSED	UNSTRESSED	EXAMPLE	SAY IT
о	oh	a weak *ah*	**молоко́** (milk)	mah-lah-KOH
а	ah	a weak *ah*	**вода́** (water)	vah-DAH
е	yeh	a weak *ee*	**весна́** (spring)	vees-NAH
я	yah	a weak *ee*	**язы́к** (language, tongue)	yee-ZIHK
о in the first syllable	oh	*ah*	**хорошо́** (good, well)	khah-rah-SHOH

LETTER	STRESSED	UNSTRESSED	EXAMPLE	SAY IT
е before the stress	yeh	*ee*	**сестра́** (sister)	see-STRAH

> **Watch out: the spelling does not change**
>
> Although *о* is said like *а* when it is unstressed, you still **write** the letter the word needs: *молоко́*, *вода́*. A good habit when you are unsure of a spelling is to **move the stress** by changing the word and listen to the clear vowel: *го́род* becomes *города́*, where the first *о* is said clearly.

Hard and soft vowels and consonants

The ten vowel letters form **five pairs**. The first letter of a pair is *hard*; the second is *soft*. After a consonant, a soft vowel letter makes that consonant **soft**, which sounds like a quick *y* added to it.

HARD	SOFT	EXAMPLE PAIR	SAY IT
а	я	**рад** (glad) / **ряд** (row)	RAHT / RYAHT
э	е	**э́то** (this) / **лес** (forest)	EH-tah / LYEHS
о	ё	**нос** (nose) / **нёс** (carried)	NOHS / NYOHS
у	ю	**лук** (onion) / **люк** (hatch)	LOOK / LYOOK
ы	и	**был** (was) / **бил** (hit)	BIHL / BEEL

Most consonants have a hard and a soft form: *н, т, д, л, с, з, р, м, п, б, в, ф* and, in their own way, *к, г, х*. Three consonants are **always hard** (*ж, ш, ц*) and three are **always soft** (*ч, щ, й*), whatever vowel follows them. At the start of a word, or after a vowel, the soft vowels *я, е, ё, ю* also add a *y* sound of their own (*я́ма*, YAH-mah, “pit”).

The signs ь and ъ

Neither letter has a sound of its own.

SIGN	JOB	EXAMPLE	SAY IT
ь (soft sign)	makes the consonant before it soft	**брат** (brother) / **брать** (to take)	BRAHT / BRAHT′
ь	makes the consonant soft at the end of a word	**у́гол** (corner) / **у́голь** (coal)	OO-gahl / OO-gahl′
ь	separates a consonant from a soft vowel, so the vowel keeps its *y*	**семья́** (family)	seem-YAH
ъ (hard sign)	separates a prefix from a soft vowel; rare	**подъе́зд** (entrance, of a block)	pahd-YEHST
ъ	same job	**объе́кт** (object, site)	ahb-YEHKT

Voiced and voiceless consonants

Many consonants come in **pairs** that differ only in whether the vocal cords vibrate: voiced *б* and voiceless *п*, for example.

VOICED	VOICELESS	EXAMPLE PAIR	SAY IT
б	**п**	**бил** (hit) / **пил** (drank)	BEEL / PEEL
в	**ф**	**ва́та** (cotton wool) / **фата́** (veil)	VAH-tah / fah-TAH
г	**к**	**гора́** (mountain) / **кора́** (bark)	gah-RAH / kah-RAH
д	**т**	**дом** (house) / **том** (volume)	DOHM / TOHM
ж	**ш**	**жар** (heat) / **шар** (ball)	ZHAHR / SHAHR
з	**с**	**коза́** (goat) / **коса́** (braid, scythe)	kah-ZAH / kah-SAH

The consonants *л, м, н, р, й* are always voiced, and *х, ц, ч, щ* are always voiceless. They have no partner.

Two things that voicing does

At the end of a word, a voiced consonant is said as its voiceless partner, but the **spelling stays voiced**. **Inside a word**, the last consonant of a group sets the voicing for the whole group.

WRITTEN	SAID	SAY IT	ENGLISH	WHAT HAPPENS
друг	droot	DROOK	friend	final *г* is said *к*
год	goht	GOHT	year	final *д* is said *т*
хлеб	khlyehp	KHLYEHP	bread	final *б* is said *п*
глаз	glahs	GLAHS	eye	final *з* is said *с*
вокза́л		vahg-ZAHL	station	*к* before voiced *з* is said *г*
ло́жка		LOHSH-kah	spoon	*ж* before voiceless *к* is said *ш*
авто́бус		ahf-TOH-boos	bus	*в* before voiceless *т* is said *ф*

> **Watch out: how to know the written letter**
>
> You cannot always tell from the sound whether a word ends in *г* or *к*, or in *д* or *т*. **Change the word** so the consonant is no longer last, and the true letter appears: *друг* becomes *дру´га* (DROO-gah), and *год* becomes *го´да* (GOH-dah). This is exactly the trick you will use with the genitive in Chapter 7.

Spellings that do not match the sound

A few spellings look different from what is said. Learn these as set cases.

SPELLING	SAID	SAY IT	ENGLISH
что	*чт* as *шт*	SHTOH	what
коне́чно	*чн* as *шн*	kah-NYEHSH-nah	of course
-ого, -его (as in **его́**)	*г* said as *в*	yee-VOH	his, him

SPELLING	SAID	SAY IT	ENGLISH
сего́дня	*г* said as *в*	see-VOH-dnyah	today
-ться, -тся (as in **учи́ться**)	one *ts* sound	oo-CHEET-tsah	to study
здра́вствуйте	first *в* silent	ZDRAHST-voo-yteh	hello (formal)
со́лнце	*л* silent	SOHN-tseh	sun
се́рдце	*д* silent	SYEHR-tseh	heart

The spelling rules

Russian does not write certain letters after certain consonants. These rules explain many endings that seem to break the pattern, and they are the main reason Chapters 3 to 10 have so few true exceptions.

RULE	NEVER WRITTEN	WRITE INSTEAD	EXAMPLE
After **г, к, х, ж, ч, ш, щ**	**ы**	**и**	**кни́ги** (books), **ру́ки** (hands), **ножи́** (knives), **хоро́шие друзья́** (good friends)
After **ж, ч, ш, щ**	**я, ю**	**а, у**	**слы́шат** (they hear), **пишу́** (I write)
After **ж, ч, ш, щ**, in an ending that is **unstressed**	**о**	**е**	**с му́жем** (with the husband) but **с ножо́м** (with a knife); **хоро́шее ме́сто** but **большо́е ме́сто**
After **ц**, in an ending	**и**	**ы**	**пти́цы** (birds); roots usually keep **и** (**цирк**)

Watch out: the third rule only applies to unstressed endings

Compare **с му́жем** and **с ножо́м**. Both endings are the instrumental, but the stress is on the stem in *му́жем* (so the unstressed ending is spelled *-ем*) and on the ending in *ножо́м* (so the stressed *о* stays). The same letter after *ц* follows the pattern in endings (*се́рдце, се́рдцем*), but the

rule for *ц* is described differently in different sources, so check a word you are unsure of in a dictionary.

🗣️ In Use — Применя́ем

Read the exchanges aloud, and notice where the sounds and spellings differ.

① Castle or lock?

A:

Как сказа́ть: «за́мок» и́ли «замо́к»?

How do I say it: “zamok” with the stress first, or last?

B:

За́мок — э́то дворе́ц, а замо́к — для две́ри.

За́мок is a castle, and *замо́к* is for a door.

② How is it spelled?

A:

Как пи́шется «друг»?

How is “друг” spelled?

B:

Д-р-у-г.

D-r-u-g.

A:

Но ты говори́шь «друк».

But you say “друк”.

B:

Да, на конце́ сло́ва «г» звучи́т как «к».

Yes, at the end of a word “г” sounds like “к”.

③ A spelling rule

A:

Почему́ «кни́ги», а не «кни́гы»?

Why “кни́ги” and not “кни́гы”?

B:

По́сле «г» нельзя́ писа́ть «ы». Пи́шем «и».

After “г” you cannot write “ы”. We write “и”.

📋 Quick Reference — Резюме́

TOPIC	SUMMARY
stress	free and mobile (*окно́*, *о́кна*); changes meaning in some pairs (*за́мок*, *замо́к*); *ё* is always stressed
vowel reduction	unstressed *о, а* sound like a weak *а*; unstressed *е, я* sound like *и*; the spelling does not change
hard and soft	pairs *а-я, э-е, о-ё, у-ю, ы-и*; always hard *ж, ш, ц*; always soft *ч, щ, й*
signs	*ь* softens or separates; *ъ* separates a prefix (rare)
voicing	*б в г д ж з* become *п ф к т ш с* at the end of a word and before a voiceless consonant; the spelling stays
not as written	*что* (shtoh), *-ого* (-ovo), *-ться* (-tsa), silent letters in *здра́вствуйте, со́лнце*
rule 1	after *г, к, х, ж, ч, ш, щ* write *и*, not *ы*
rule 2	after *ж, ч, ш, щ* write *а, у*, not *я, ю*
rule 3	after *ж, ч, ш, щ* an unstressed ending has *е*, not *о*
after ц	*ы* in endings (*пти́цы*), *и* in most roots; check unsure words

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Упражне́ния

Say or write the answer first, then click to check.

1. Say *молоко́* aloud with the real vowel sounds. Why does the first *о* sound like *а*?

▼ Show answer

mah-lah-KOH. The first two *о*'s are unstressed, so they are said like a weak *а*; only the stressed last *о* is a clear *oh*.

2. Why is *кни´гы* wrong, and what is the correct plural of *кни´га*?

▼ Show answer

Russian never writes *ы* after *г*. The plural is *кни´ги*.

3. How is *друг* said, and how can you check its real final letter?

▼ Show answer

DROOK (final *г* is said *к*). Change the word so the letter is not last: *дру´га* (DROO-gah) shows *г*.

4. What is the difference in sound between *рад* and *ряд*?

▼ Show answer

RAHT and RYAHT. The soft vowel *я* makes the *р* soft (a *y* glide).

5. What does *ь* do in *брать* (compared with *брат*)?

▼ Show answer

It makes the final *т* soft: BRAHT' against BRAHT.

6. Why is it *с му´жем* but *с ножо´м*?

▼ Show answer

After *ж*, an unstressed ending is spelled *е* (the stress is on *му´-*), but a stressed ending keeps *о* (the stress is on *-жо´м*).

7. Write the plural of *ру´ка* (hand) and *нож* (knife).

▼ Show answer

ру´ки (after *к*, *и*) and *ножи´* (after *ж*, *и*).

8. Why is the "they" form of *слы´шать* spelled *слы´шат* and not *слы´шят*?

▼ Show answer

After *ш* Russian does not write *я* or *ю*; it writes *а* or *у*.

9. Say *вокза́л*. Which letter changes its sound?

▼ Show answer

vahg-ZAHL. The *к* is said as *г* because the next consonant, *з*, is voiced.

10. How do *за́мок* and *замо́к* differ?

▼ Show answer

Only in stress: *за́мок* (ZAH-mahk) is a castle, *замо́к* (zah-MOHK) is a lock.

Not Yet Verified

Checked (two web searches on 2026-11-16): that unstressed *а* and *о* merge, with the strongest reduction in the syllable just before the stress and at the start of a word; that word-final voiced consonants are said voiceless while the spelling stays voiced (*го́род* ends in a sound like *т*); that in a consonant group the last consonant sets the voicing (with *в* able to be changed but not to change others); that *ы* is written as *и* after *г, к, х, ж, ч, ш, щ*; that *я, ю* are written *а, у* after *ж, ч, ш, щ*; and that unstressed *о* is written *е* after *ж, ч, ш, щ* in noun and adjective endings (sources: en.wikipedia.org: vowel reduction in Russian, utexas.edu: pronunciation rules and voicing, en.wikipedia.org: Russian spelling rules, russian.cornell.edu: spelling and endings, byu.edu: word endings and spelling, from search results only, the pages themselves were not read in full).
Not settled: what happens after *ц*. The sources I saw describe it differently (one says *ы* can follow *ц*, another says *и* is written, and they differ on the unstressed *о* rule), so the *ц* row in the table is from my general knowledge and should be checked.
Not checked, from general knowledge: the functions of *ь* and *ъ* (the search found no clear source), the five hard and soft vowel pairs and the always-hard and always-soft consonants, the examples and minimal pairs, the "spellings that do not match the sound" list, the mobile-stress and stress-meaning examples (*окно́*, *за́мок*, *му́ка*), every stress mark and respelling (the respellings are rough, and the reduced vowels cannot be shown exactly in English letters). No dictionary or pronunciation source was consulted. Check a Russian dictionary or a native speaker before relying on them.

Coming up in Chapter 3: Gender and the Nominative. The three genders and how the ending shows them; masculine and feminine nouns in *-ь*; nouns that do not change (*ко́фе,*

такси́); and animate against inanimate nouns.

🚻 Gender & the Nominative — Род и именительный падеж

*Every Russian noun has a **gender**: masculine, feminine or neuter. You cannot skip it, because it decides the ending of the noun in every case and the form of the words that go with it (мой, моя́, моё; был, была́, бы́ло). The good news is that the **last letter** of the dictionary form tells you the gender of most nouns, with a short list of exceptions. This chapter teaches that rule, the exceptions, and the nominative case, which is the form you find in a dictionary.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

Masculine: ends in a consonant, *-й* or *-ь* (*стол, музе́й, день*). **Feminine:** ends in *-а* or *-я*, or in *-ь* (*кни́га, неде́ля, дверь*). **Neuter:** ends in *-о* or *-е* (*окно́, мо́ре*). Nouns in **-ь** can be either masculine or feminine, so learn each one with its gender. A noun that names a **male person** is masculine even if it ends in *-а* or *-я* (*па́па, дя́дя*).

The three genders

GENDER	ENDING	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH	REPLACE WITH
Masculine	a hard consonant	**стол**, **дом**	table, house	**он** (he, it)
Masculine	*-й*	**музе́й**, **чай**	museum, tea	**он**
Masculine	-ь (some)	**день**, **слова́рь**	day, dictionary	**он**
Feminine	*-а*	**кни́га**, **маши́на**	book, car	**она́** (she, it)
Feminine	*-я*	**неде́ля**, **семья́**	week, family	**она́**
Feminine	-ь (many)	**дверь**, **тетра́дь**	door, exercise book	**она́**
Neuter	*-о*	**окно́**, **сло́во**	window, word	**оно́** (it)

GENDER	ENDING	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH	REPLACE WITH
Neuter	*-e*	**мо́ре**, **зда́ние**	sea, building	**оно́**

Words that stand for things use *он, она́, оно́* by gender, not *it*: **Где стол? Он там.** (“Where is the table? It is there.”) **Где кни́га? Она́ там.** (“Where is the book? It is there.”)

Gender shows in the words around the noun

Words that describe or point to a noun, and the past tense of a verb, copy its gender.

	MASCULINE	FEMININE	NEUTER
my	**мой стол**	**моя́ кни́га**	**моё окно́**
your (*ты*)	**твой стол**	**твоя́ кни́га**	**твоё окно́**
this	**э́тот стол**	**э́та кни́га**	**э́то окно́**
was	**стол был здесь**	**кни́га была́ здесь**	**окно́ бы́ло здесь**

Nouns in -ь: masculine or feminine?

A soft sign at the end does not tell you the gender by itself. A few patterns help, but the safest course is to learn each noun with its gender.

MASCULINE	FEMININE
день day, **слова́рь** dictionary, **учи́тель** teacher, **портфе́ль** briefcase, **янва́рь** January, **апре́ль** April	**дверь** door, **тетра́дь** exercise book, **ночь** night, **мышь** mouse, **пло́щадь** square, **соль** salt, **жизнь** life

Useful patterns, with exceptions: nouns that end in **-жь, -чь, -шь, -щь** (*ночь, мышь*) and in **-сть** (*пло́щадь* is an exception; *ра́дость*, “joy”, follows it) are usually feminine; nouns that name **people who do something** in **-тель** and the months in **-рь, -ль** are masculine.

Watch out: the gender of a person overrides the ending

A noun that names a **male person** is masculine even if it ends in *-а* or *-я*: **па́па, дя́дя, де́душка, мужчи́на, Ми́ша**. Words and verbs agree in the masculine: **Мой па́па был до́ма.** The reverse also holds: **мать** (mother) and **дочь** (daughter) end in *-ь* but are feminine because they name women.

Neuter nouns in -мя

A small group of neuter nouns ends in **-мя**. Two you already know: **вре́мя** (time) and **и́мя** (first name). They look feminine, but they are neuter: **Моё и́мя**, **Вре́мя бы́ло**. They change in an unusual way, which you will meet in Chapter 7.

Nouns that do not change

Many words borrowed from other languages end in a vowel and **never change their ending**. They have a gender only for the words around them.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	GENDER	EXAMPLE
кино́	cinema, film	neuter	**Кино́ бы́ло интере́сное.**
пальто́	coat	neuter	**Моё пальто́ там.**
метро́	metro	neuter	**Метро́ бы́ло закры́то.**
такси́	taxi	neuter	**Такси́ бы́ло здесь.**
кафе́	cafe	neuter	**Кафе́ бы́ло откры́то.**
ра́дио	radio	neuter	**Моё ра́дио там.**
ко́фе	coffee	masculine in standard use	**Мой ко́фе горя́чий.**

Watch out: кофе is the odd one

> Most borrowed nouns of this kind are neuter, but **ко´фе** is **masculine** in standard use (**мой чёрный ко´фе**). In everyday speech you will also hear it treated as neuter. This chapter uses the masculine form, and the sources I found disagree about borrowed nouns, so check the others in a dictionary.

Animate and inanimate nouns

Russian sorts nouns into **animate** (people and animals) and **inanimate** (everything else, plants included). The nominative looks the same for both, so the distinction does not show yet. It matters in the accusative (Chapter 6), so learn to spot it now. The question word shows it: *кто?* (“who?”) for animate nouns, *что?* (“what?”) for inanimate ones.

ANIMATE (КТО?)	INANIMATE (ЧТО?)
студе́нт student, **врач** doctor, **брат** brother	**стол** table, **дом** house, **слова́рь** dictionary
же́нщина woman, **сестра́** sister, **соба́ка** dog, **ко́шка** cat	**кни́га** book, **маши́на** car, **ла́мпа** lamp
живо́тное animal	**окно́** window, **мо́ре** sea, **расте́ние** plant

What the nominative does

The **nominative** is the dictionary form. It answers *кто?* and *что?*, and it has four main uses.

USE	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
the subject of a sentence	**Студе́нт чита́ет. Окно́ откры́то.**	The student reads. The window is open.
naming and pointing	**Э́то мой брат. Э́то такси́.**	This is my brother. This is a taxi.
after the dash, with no verb	**Москва́ — столи́ца. Мой брат — врач.**	Moscow is a capital. My brother is a doctor.
in lists, signs and titles	**Кни́ги. Метро́. Апте́ка.**	Books. Metro. Pharmacy.

Professions: masculine words for women

Many professions have a masculine word only. A woman can use it about herself: **Моя́ ма́ма — врач.** Some professions have a separate feminine word, usually formed with *-ка*, *-ница* or *-иса*.

MAN	WOMAN	ENGLISH
студе́нт	**студе́нтка**	student
учи́тель	**учи́тельница**	teacher
актёр	**актри́са**	actor
врач	*(врач)*	doctor: the masculine word is normal for a woman too
инжене́р	*(инжене́р)*	engineer: the masculine word is normal for a woman too

Words in this chapter

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
стол	STOHL	table
музе́й	moo-ZYEH-ee	museum
день	DYEHN'	day
кни́га	KNEE-gah	book
неде́ля	nee-DYEH-lyah	week
дверь	DVYEHR'	door
окно́	ahk-NOH	window
мо́ре	MOH-ryeh	sea
зда́ние	ZDAH-nee-yeh	building

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
па́па	PAH-pah	dad
де́душка	DYEH-doosh-kah	grandfather
вре́мя	VRYEH-myah	time

🗣️ In Use — Применя´ем

Read the exchanges aloud, and notice that the words next to each noun match its gender.

① Whose is it?

A:

Э´то твой слова´рь?

Is this your dictionary?

B:

Да, э´то мой слова´рь. А э´то моя´ тетра´дь, а э´то моё письмо´.

Yes, this is my dictionary. And this is my exercise book, and this is my letter.

② Where is it?

A:

Где моё пальто´?

Where is my coat?

B:

Оно´ в маши´не.

It is in the car.

A:

А моя´ су´мка?

And my bag?

B:

Она´ то´же там.

It is there too.

③ Yesterday

A:

Где был твой па´па вчера´?

Where was your dad yesterday?

B:

Он был на рабо´те. А моя´ ма´ма была´ до´ма.

He was at work. And my mum was at home.

📋 Quick Reference — Резюме´

TOPIC	SUMMARY
masculine	consonant, *-й*, some in *-ь*; *он*; *мой, э́тот, был*
feminine	*-а, -я*, many in *-ь*; *она́*; *моя́, э́та, была́*
neuter	*-о, -е* and *-мя* (*вре́мя, и́мя*); *оно́*; *моё, э́то, бы́ло*
nouns in -ь	learn each with its gender; *-жь, -чь, -шь, -щь* are usually feminine
persons	a male person is masculine whatever the ending (*па́па, дя́дя*); *мать, дочь* are feminine
indeclinable	mostly neuter (*кино́, пальто́, метро́, такси́*); *ко́фе* is masculine in standard use
animate / inanimate	*кто?* people and animals; *что?* everything else; matters from Chapter 6
nominative	dictionary form: subject, *э́то* …, after the dash, lists and titles
professions	many have a masculine word only (*врач*); others add *-ка, -ница, -иса*

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Упражне´ния

Say or write the answer first, then click to check.

1. What gender are *стол, кни´га, окно´, музе´й, неде´ля, мо´ре*?

▼ Show answer

Masculine: *стол, музе´й*. Feminine: *кни´га, неде´ля*. Neuter: *окно´, мо´ре*.

2. Choose *мой, моя́* or *моё*: *… маши́на, … дом, … письмо́, … семья́*.

▼ Show answer

моя́ маши́на, мой дом, моё письмо́, моя́ семья́.

3. What gender is *дверь*, and what gender is *день*? Why can you not tell from the ending?

▼ Show answer

дверь is feminine and *день* is masculine. Both end in *-ь*, which is used for both genders, so each noun is learned with its gender.

4. Is *па́па* masculine or feminine? How do you know?

▼ Show answer

Masculine, because it names a male person. Say *Мой па́па был до́ма.*

5. Is *вре́мя* masculine, feminine or neuter? Say “The time was here.”

▼ Show answer

Neuter. *Вре́мя бы́ло здесь.*

6. Replace the noun with the right pronoun: *Где кни́га? / Где стол? / Где окно́?*

▼ Show answer

Она́ там. / Он там. / Оно́ там.

7. Which of these are animate: *брат, стол, соба́ка, кни́га, врач*?

▼ Show answer

брат, соба́ка, врач (*кто?*). *стол* and *кни́га* are inanimate (*что?*).

8. Say “This is a taxi” and “The taxi was here.” What gender is *такси́*?

▼ Show answer

Э́то такси́. / Такси́ бы́ло здесь. Neuter, and it never changes its ending.

9. How do you say “My mum is a doctor”? Why no verb?

▼ Show answer

Моя́ ма́ма — врач. There is no present tense of *to be*; a dash can stand between two nouns.

10. Give the feminine word for *учи́тель* and for *студе́нт*.

▼ Show answer

учи́тельница and *студе́нтка*.

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-16): that most masculine nouns end in a consonant, feminine nouns in *-а, -я* and neuter nouns in *-о, -е*; that nouns in *-ь* can be either masculine or feminine and must be memorised (*день* and *олень* masculine, *дверь* and *тень* feminine); that nouns naming male people (*папа, дядя, дедушка*) are masculine whatever the ending; and that *мать* and *дочь* are feminine by meaning (sources: bucknell.edu: Russian nouns, fluentu.com: Russian gender, masterrussian.com: gender and number, russianenthusiast.com: nouns, from search results only, the pages themselves were not read in full).
Not settled: the gender of borrowed nouns that do not change. The sources I saw disagree: one says *кофе* is historically neuter but now used as masculine, another lists it as either; for *такси* the results showed no clear authority, and I found nothing on *метро*. My statements that *кино, пальто, метро, такси, кафе, радио* are neuter and that *кофе* is masculine in standard use come from my general knowledge.
Not checked, from general knowledge: the -мя group, the soft-sign patterns (*-жь, -чь, -шь, -щь* and *-тель*, months), the animate and inanimate lists, the profession words, the uses of the nominative, every stress mark, the example sentences and dialogs, which were written for this course, and the respellings. No dictionary was consulted. Check a Russian dictionary or a native speaker before relying on them.

Coming up in Chapter 4: Plural Nouns. The endings *-ы, -и, -а, -я*; the spelling rules at work; irregular plurals (*друг — друзья́, челове́к — лю́ди*); and the vowels that drop out (*день — дни*).

👥 Plural Nouns — Мно´жественное число´

*The plural is the next step after gender, because every case has its own plural endings. This chapter teaches the **nominative plural**: the form you use for the subject of a sentence and for naming several things. It is also the plural you will see in a dictionary, and it is the base for the other cases. The rules are short; the interest is in the exceptions (друг — друзья´, челове´к — лю´ди) and in the places where the stress moves.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

Masculine and feminine nouns take **-ы** (or **-и** after *г, к, х, ж, ч, ш, щ* and after a soft ending): *стол — столы´*, *кни´га — кни´ги*. **Neuter nouns** change **-о** to **-а** and **-е** to **-я**: *окно´ — о´кна*, *мо´ре — моря´*. The ending is the same for all genders in the plural (*мои´ столы´, мои´ кни´ги, мои´ о´кна*), and the stress and a few vowels may change.

Masculine and feminine: -ы or -и

SINGULAR ENDS IN…	PLURAL	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
a hard consonant	*-ы*	**стол — столы́**, **дом — дома́**	table, house
-а	*-ы*	**маши́на — маши́ны**, **сестра́ — сёстры**	car, sister
-й	*-и* (the *й* falls away)	**музе́й — музе́и**, **чай — чаи́**	museum, tea
-ь	*-и*	**слова́рь — словари́**, **дверь — две́ри**	dictionary, door
-я	*-и*	**неде́ля — неде́ли**, **семья́ — се́мьи**	week, family

SINGULAR ENDS IN…	PLURAL	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
-ия	*-ии*	**ста́нция — ста́нции**, **фами́лия — фами́лии**	station, surname

The spelling rules at work

These are the rules from Chapter 2. After *г, к, х, ж, ч, ш, щ* the plural is never *-ы*, so it is **-и**.

SINGULAR	PLURAL	ENGLISH	WHICH RULE
кни́га	**кни́ги**	book	*-ы* not written after *г*
подру́га	**подру́ги**	friend (female)	after *г*
ру́чка	**ру́чки**	pen	after *к*
ко́шка	**ко́шки**	cat	after *к*
нож	**ножи́**	knife	after *ж*
каранда́ш	**карандаши́**	pencil	after *ш*
врач	**врачи́**	doctor	after *ч*
ключ	**ключи́**	key	after *ч*
пти́ца	**пти́цы**	bird	after *ц* the ending is *-ы*

> **Watch out: the stress mark shows where the stress lands**
>
> In **нож — ножи́** and **врач — врачи́** the stress moves to the **ending**. Words of one syllable have no mark in the singular, so the mark in the plural is the first sign that the stress shifted. Always learn the plural with its stress.

Neuter: -o becomes -a, -e becomes -я

SINGULAR	PLURAL	ENGLISH	NOTE
окно́	о́кна	window	stress moves back to the stem
сло́во	слова́	word	stress moves to the ending
ме́сто	места́	place	stress moves to the ending
письмо́	пи́сьма	letter	stress moves back to the stem
мо́ре	моря́	sea	*-е* becomes *-я*
зда́ние	зда́ния	building	*-ие* becomes *-ия*
я́блоко	я́блоки	apple	an exception: *-и* after *к*

Masculine nouns with -a or -я in the plural

A group of masculine nouns, many of them very common, take **stressed -а or -я** in the plural. They look like neuter plurals, but they stay masculine: **мои́ города́** (“my cities”).

SINGULAR	PLURAL	ENGLISH
го́род	города́	city
дом	дома́	house
но́мер	номера́	number, hotel room
а́дрес	адреса́	address
па́спорт	паспорта́	passport
глаз	глаза́	eye
лес	леса́	forest
по́езд	поезда́	train
ве́чер	вечера́	evening

SINGULAR	PLURAL	ENGLISH
учи́тель	учителя́	teacher

> **Watch out: you cannot predict this group**
>
> Nothing in the singular tells you that *го́род* takes *-а* and *стол* takes *-ы*. Learn the common ones as they appear. When you meet a new masculine noun, assume *-ы* or *-и* unless you have been told otherwise.

Vowels that drop out

Some nouns have a vowel in the singular that **disappears** when an ending is added. It is called a **fleeting vowel**. It appears in nouns ending in *-ок, -ец*, and in a few very common words such as *день*.

SINGULAR	PLURAL	ENGLISH	WHAT DROPS
день	дни	day	*е* drops and the soft sign goes with it
оте́ц	отцы́	father	*е*
коне́ц	концы́	end	*е*
кусо́к	куски́	piece	*о*
сон	сны	dream, sleep	*о*

Irregular plurals

A short list of very common nouns has a plural that follows no rule. Learn each as a pair. Several end in **-ья** or **-я́**.

SINGULAR	PLURAL	ENGLISH
друг	друзья́	friend

SINGULAR	PLURAL	ENGLISH
брат	бра́тья	brother
муж	мужья́	husband
сын	сыновья́	son
стул	сту́лья	chair
лист	ли́стья	leaf, sheet
де́рево	дере́вья	tree
челове́к	лю́ди	person, people
ребёнок	де́ти	child, children
мать	ма́тери	mother
дочь	до́чери	daughter
и́мя	имена́	name
вре́мя	времена́	time, tense

Nouns that exist only in the plural

Some nouns name things that come in pairs or sets and have **no singular** in Russian. A few are plural in Russian although English uses a singular.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	EXAMPLE
де́ньги	money	**Де́ньги там.** The money is there.
очки́	glasses	**Мои́ очки́ на столе́.** My glasses are on the table.
брю́ки	trousers	**Э́ти брю́ки хоро́шие.** These trousers are good.
джи́нсы	jeans	**Мои́ джи́нсы здесь.** My jeans are here.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	EXAMPLE
часы́	a watch, clock	**Мои́ часы́ до́ма.** My watch is at home.
роди́тели	parents	**Мои́ роди́тели до́ма.** My parents are at home.
кани́кулы	holidays, school break	**Кани́кулы бы́ли хоро́шие.** The holidays were good.

The words around a plural noun

In the plural, **there is no gender**: *мои́, твои́, э́ти* and the past tense *бы́ли* are the same for masculine, feminine and neuter.

SINGULAR	PLURAL
мой стол, моя́ кни́га, моё окно́	**мои́ столы́, мои́ кни́ги, мои́ о́кна**
твой, твоя́, твоё	**твои́**
э́тот, э́та, э́то	**э́ти**
был, была́, бы́ло	**бы́ли**
он, она́, оно́	**они́**

Words in this chapter

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
кни́га — кни́ги	KNEE-gah — KNEE-gee	book
ключ — ключи́	KLYOOCH — klyoo-CHEE	key
го́род — города́	GOH-raht — gah-rah-DAH	city
окно́ — о́кна	ahk-NOH — OHK-nah	window
сло́во — слова́	SLOH-vah — slah-VAH	word

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
друг — друзья́	DROOK — drooz-YAH	friend
брат — бра́тья	BRAHT — BRAHT-yah	brother
челове́к — лю́ди	chee-lah-VYEHK — LYOO-dee	person — people
ребёнок — де́ти	ree-BYOH-nahk — DYEH-tee	child — children
де́ньги	DYEHN'-gee	money (plural only)
очки́	ahch-KEE	glasses (plural only)
роди́тели	rah-DEE-tee-lee	parents

In Use — Применя´ем

Read the exchanges aloud, and notice that the plural words need no gender.

① Whose are they?

A:

Э´то твои´ ключи´?

Are these your keys?

B:

Да, э´то мои´ ключи´. А э´то мои´ очки´.

Yes, these are my keys. And these are my glasses.

② Who are they?

A:

Кто э´ти лю´ди?

Who are these people?

B:

Э´то мои´ друзья´. Они´ студе´нты.

These are my friends. They are students.

A:

А э´то кто?

And who is this?

B:

Э´то мои´ де´ти.

These are my children.

③ Where are they?

A:

Где твои́ роди́тели?

Where are your parents?

B:

Они́ до́ма.

They are at home.

A:

А твои́ бра́тья?

And your brothers?

B:

Они́ на рабо́те.

They are at work.

📋 Quick Reference — Резюме́

TOPIC	SUMMARY
masculine and feminine	*-ы*; *-и* after *г, к, х, ж, ч, ш, щ*, after *-ь, -й, -я*; *-ия* gives *-ии*
neuter	*-о* gives *-а*; *-е* gives *-я*; *-ие* gives *-ия*
stressed -а, -я	a group of masculine nouns: *го́род — города́, дом — дома́, учи́тель — учителя́*
fleeting vowel	*-ок, -ец, день, сон*: *кусо́к — куски́, оте́ц — отцы́, день — дни*
irregular	*друг — друзья́, брат — бра́тья, челове́к — лю́ди, ребёнок — де́ти, мать — ма́тери*
plural only	*де́ньги, очки́, брю́ки, джи́нсы, часы́, роди́тели, кани́кулы*
agreement	no gender in the plural: *мои́, твои́, э́ти, бы́ли, они́*

TOPIC	SUMMARY
stress	often moves; learn each plural with its stress

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Упражне´ния

Say or write the answer first, then click to check.

1. Write the plural: *стол, маши´на, неде´ля, музе´й, слова´рь*.

▼ Show answer

столы´, маши´ны, неде´ли, музе´и, словари´.

2. Write the plural: *кни´га, ру´чка, нож, врач, пти´ца*. Which rule explains each?

▼ Show answer

кни´ги, ру´чки, ножи´, врачи´, пти´цы. After *г, к, ж, ч* the ending is *-и*, never *-ы*; after *ц* the ending is *-ы*.

3. Write the plural: *окно´, мо´ре, зда´ние, письмо´*.

▼ Show answer

о´кна, моря´, зда´ния, пи´сьма.

4. Write the plural: *го´род, дом, па´спорт, учи´тель*. What is special?

▼ Show answer

города´, дома´, паспорта´, учителя´. They are masculine nouns with a stressed *-а* or *-я* in the plural.

5. Write the plural: *оте´ц, кусо´к, день*. What drops out?

▼ Show answer

отцы´, куски´, дни. The vowel *е* (in *оте´ц* and *день*) or *о* (in *кусо´к*) falls away: a fleeting vowel.

6. Write the plural: *друг, брат, челове́к, ребёнок.*

▼ Show answer

друзья́, бра́тья, лю́ди, де́ти.

7. Make plural: *Э́то мой стол. / Э́то моя́ кни́га. / Э́то моё окно́.*

▼ Show answer

Э́то мои́ столы́. / Э́то мои́ кни́ги. / Э́то мои́ о́кна.

8. Make plural (past): *Мой брат был до́ма. / Моя́ сестра́ была́ до́ма.*

▼ Show answer

Мои́ бра́тья бы́ли до́ма. / Мои́ сёстры бы́ли до́ма.

9. Why do you say *Мои́ очки́ там* and not *Мой очко́*?

▼ Show answer

очки́ has no singular in Russian. It exists only in the plural, so it takes *мои́*.

10. Which word is not like the others in the plural: *стол, ключ, окно́, го́род*?

▼ Show answer

го́род: its plural is *города́* (stressed *-а*), while the others take *-ы, -и, -а* in the usual way (*столы́, ключи́, о́кна*).

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-16): that irregular plurals include *человек — люди*, *ребёнок — дети*, *друг — друзья* and *брат — братья*, and that *муж — мужья*, *сын — сыновья*, *мать — матери* and *дочь — дочери* are also irregular; that stress can shift to the ending in some of them; that fleeting vowels drop in *отец — отцы*, *день — дни* and nouns in *-ок, -ец* (*кусок — куски*); and that some neuter nouns have plurals in *-ы/-и* (sources: pelister.org: nominative plural, russianenthusiast.com: irregular plurals, elon.io: fleeting vowels, russian.cornell.edu: plural nouns, from search results only, the pages themselves were not read in full).

Not checked, from general knowledge: the stress of every plural (*города́, слова́, места́, ножи́, ключи́* and the rest); the list of masculine nouns with *-а/-я* in the plural, which the search

did not list (its results said nothing on *города* or *дома*); the rule that *-и* follows *г, к, х, ж, ч, ш, щ*; the plural of the nouns in *-ия* and the neuter *-ие*; the plural-only nouns and the sentences that use them; the plurals of *стул, лист, дерево, имя, время, яблоко*; the example sentences and dialogs, which were written for this course; and the respellings. No dictionary was consulted. Check a Russian dictionary or a native speaker before relying on them.

Coming up in Chapter 5: The Prepositional Case. Place and "about": the endings *-е, -и, -у*; *в* and *на*; the special place forms (*в лесу́*); and the plural.

📍 The Prepositional Case — Предло´жный паде´ж

*The prepositional is the first case to learn in detail, because it is the easiest. It answers где? ("where?") and о ком? о чём? ("about whom? about what?"), and it is used **only after a preposition**, which is why it has its name. It has one main ending, **-е**, and a few easy variations. You have used it often already in phrases like в до´ме and на рабо´те; here the rule is made explicit.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

The prepositional is used after **в** (in), **на** (on, at) and **о / об** (about), and also after **при** (in the time of, attached to). In the singular the ending is **-е** for most nouns: *стол — на столе´, кни´га — в кни´ге, окно´ — в окне´*. After **-ие, -ия, -ий** and feminine **-ь** it is **-и**: *в зда´нии, в Росси´и, в тетра´ди*. A few masculine nouns have a stressed **-у** for place: *в саду´, в лесу´*. In the plural the ending is **-ах** or **-ях**: *в кни´гах, в музе´ях*.

The singular endings

NOMINATIVE ENDS IN…	PREPOSITIONAL	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
a hard consonant (masculine)	*-е*	**стол — на столе́, дом — в до́ме**	on the table, in the house
-й (masculine)	*-е*	**музе́й — в музе́е**	in the museum
-ь (masculine)	*-е*	**слова́рь — в словаре́, портфе́ль — в портфе́ле**	in the dictionary, in the briefcase
-а	*-е*	**кни́га — в кни́ге, ко́мната — в ко́мнате**	in the book, in the room
-я	*-е*	**дере́вня — в дере́вне, семья́ — в семье́**	in the village, in the family

NOMINATIVE ENDS IN…	PREPOSITIONAL	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
-о	*-е*	**окно́ — в окне́, письмо́ — о письме́**	in the window, about the letter
-е (neuter)	*-е*	**мо́ре — на мо́ре**	at the seaside
-ие	*-ии*	**зда́ние — в зда́нии**	in the building
-ия	*-ии*	**Росси́я — в Росси́и, ста́нция — на ста́нции**	in Russia, at the station
-ий	*-ии*	**санато́рий — в санато́рии**	in the sanatorium
-ь (feminine)	*-и*	**тетра́дь — в тетра́ди, пло́щадь — на пло́щади**	in the exercise book, on the square

Watch out: -е is the main ending, but not the only one

The ending **-и** belongs to feminine nouns in *-ь* (*на двери́*, *в жи́зни*) and to all nouns in *-ие, -ия, -ий*. Because the same ending *-е* is used for the dative (Chapter 9), **кни́ге** alone could be either: the **preposition** tells you which. Nouns that do not change keep their form: **в кино́, в метро́, в такси́**.

Place: в or на?

Both mean “where”. **в** means “inside” something with walls. **на** means “on” a surface, “at” an open place or event, and is used with many set phrases. The two are not interchangeable, and each noun usually takes only one, so learn them together.

USE В (INSIDE)	USE НА (ON, AT, OPEN SPACE, EVENT)
в до́ме in the house, **в го́роде** in the city, **в шко́ле** at school, **в магази́не** in the shop, **в Росси́и** in Russia, **в университе́те** at university	**на столе́** on the table, **на у́лице** in the street, **на рабо́те** at work, **на по́чте** at the post office, **на ста́нции** at the station, **на вокза́ле** at the (railway) station

USE В (INSIDE)	USE НА (ON, AT, OPEN SPACE, EVENT)
в теа́тре in the theatre, **в кафе́** in the cafe	**на конце́рте** at the concert, **на уро́ке** at the lesson, **на встре́че** at the meeting

The compass points and many islands and regions take **на**: **на се́вере, на ю́ге, на восто́ке, на за́паде**, **на о́строве** (on an island). Countries and cities take **в**: **в Росси́и, в Ита́лии, в Москве́, в А́нглии**.

> **Watch out: на and в are not a matter of logic**
> English says “at school” and “at work”, and Russian says *в шко́ле* but *на рабо́те*. There is no rule that predicts every case, so learn each place with its preposition, as with a gender.

The stressed -у forms: в саду́, в лесу́

A short list of masculine nouns has a **second prepositional** in a stressed **-у** (or **-ю**). It is used **only for place, after в or на**. After **о** the ordinary *-е* form appears.

NOMINATIVE	PLACE (В / НА)	ABOUT (О)	ENGLISH
сад	в саду́	о саде́	garden
лес	в лесу́	о лесе́	forest
мост	на мосту́	о мосте́	bridge
пол	на полу́	о поле́	floor
шкаф	в шкафу́	о шкафе́	cupboard
у́гол	в углу́	об угле́	corner
бе́рег	на берегу́	о бе́реге	shore
аэропо́рт	в аэропорту́	об аэропо́рте	airport
год	в году́	о го́де	year

Time words in the prepositional

The prepositional is also used for months, weeks and years: the question is *когда́?* (“when?”).

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
в январе́, в сентябре́	in January, in September
в ма́рте, в ма́е	in March, in May
на э́той неде́ле	this week
в э́том году́	this year

About: о, об, обо

о means “about” and takes the prepositional. Before a word that begins with a vowel (*а, э, и, о, у*) it becomes **об**, for ease of speech. Before certain pronouns it becomes **обо** (*обо мне*, Chapter 11).

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	NOTE
о бра́те	about my brother	*о* before a consonant
о кни́ге	about the book	
об отце́	about my father	*об* before the vowel *о*
об окне́	about the window	*об* before a vowel
о Росси́и	about Russia	
о друзья́х	about my friends	plural

The plural: -ах and -ях

In the plural the prepositional ends in **-ах**, or **-ях** after a soft ending. Where the stress is on the ending of the nominative plural, it stays on the ending: *столы́* gives *на стола́х*.

NOMINATIVE PLURAL	PREPOSITIONAL PLURAL	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
столы́	стола́х	на стола́х	on the tables
кни́ги	кни́гах	в кни́гах	in the books
о́кна	о́кнах	в о́кнах	in the windows
дома́	дома́х	в дома́х	in the houses
города́	города́х	в города́х	in the cities
музе́и	музе́ях	в музе́ях	in the museums
ста́нции	ста́нциях	на ста́нциях	at the stations
тетра́ди	тетра́дях	в тетра́дях	in the exercise books
друзья́	друзья́х	о друзья́х	about the friends
лю́ди	лю́дях	о лю́дях	about people
де́ти	де́тях	о де́тях	about the children
роди́тели	роди́телях	о роди́телях	about the parents

Words in this chapter

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
на столе́	nah stah-LYEH	on the table
в ко́мнате	f KOHM-nah-tyeh	in the room
в го́роде	v GOH-rah-dyeh	in the city
в Росси́и	v rah-SEE-ee	in Russia

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
на рабо́те	nah rah-BOH-tyeh	at work
в шко́ле	f SHKOH-lyeh	at school
в саду́	f sah-DOO	in the garden
в лесу́	v lee-SOO	in the forest
на ста́нции	nah STAHN-tsee-ee	at the station
о кни́ге	ah KNEE-gyeh	about the book
о друзья́х	ah drooz-YAHKH	about the friends
в зда́нии	v ZDAH-nee-ee	in the building

In Use — Применя´ем

Read the exchanges aloud, and notice that every prepositional form follows a preposition.

① Where is everyone?

A:

Где твой па´па?

Where is your dad?

B:

Он на рабо´те. А мой брат в университе´те.

He is at work. And my brother is at university.

A:

А ма´ма?

And your mum?

B:

Она´ до´ма.

② What is it about?

A:

О чём э´та кни´га?

What is this book about?

B:

О Росси´и. Я чита´ю о Москве´ и о Санкт-Петербу´рге.

About Russia. I am reading about Moscow and about Saint Petersburg.

She is at home.

③ Where are the keys?

A:

Где ключи́?

Where are the keys?

B:

В су́мке.

In the bag.

A:

А очки́?

And the glasses?

B:

На столе́, в ко́мнате.

On the table, in the room.

📋 Quick Reference — Резюме́

TOPIC	SUMMARY
when used	only after a preposition: *в, на, о / об, при*
questions	*где?* place · *о ком? о чём?* about
singular -е	most nouns: *на столе́, в кни́ге, в окне́*
singular -и	feminine -ь; *-ие, -ия, -ий*: *в тетра́ди, в зда́нии, в Росси́и*
stressed -у	*в саду́, в лесу́, на мосту́, в углу́, в году́*; place only, after *в / на*
в or на	*в* inside; *на* surface, open place, event, many set phrases
о / об / обо	*об* before a vowel; *обо* before some pronouns

TOPIC	SUMMARY
time	*в январе́, в э́том году́, на э́той неде́ле*
plural	*-ах; -ях* after a soft ending: *в кни́гах, в музе́ях*
unchanging nouns	*в кино́, в метро́, в такси́*

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Упражне´ния

Say or write the answer first, then click to check.

1. Put into the prepositional after *в*: *го´род, шко´ла, зда´ние, тетра´дь*.

▼ Show answer

в го´роде, в шко´ле, в зда´нии, в тетра´ди.

2. Put into the prepositional after *на*: *стол, ста´нция, рабо´та, окно´*.

▼ Show answer

на столе´, на ста´нции, на рабо´те, на окне´.

3. Say “in the garden” and “about the garden”. Why do they differ?

▼ Show answer

в саду´ and *о саде´*. A few masculine nouns have a stressed *-у* for place only; after *о* the ordinary *-е* is used.

4. Say “in Russia” and “in Italy”.

▼ Show answer

в Росси´и, в Ита´лии. The ending *-ия* becomes *-ии*.

5. Which is correct, *в рабо´те* or *на рабо´те*? Why?

▼ Show answer

на рабо´те. Russian uses *на* with *рабо´та*; the choice between *в* and *на* is learned with each noun.

6. Say “about my brother” and “about my father”. Why *о* in one and *об* in the other?

▼ Show answer

о бра´те, об отце´. *об* is used before a vowel, *о* before a consonant.

7. Say “I live in the city”, using *я живу´*.

▼ Show answer

Я живу´ в го´роде.

8. Make plural: *в кни´ге, на столе´, в музе´е, в зда´нии*.

▼ Show answer

в кни´гах, на стола´х, в музе´ях, в зда´ниях.

9. Say “in January” and “this year”.

▼ Show answer

в январе´, в э´том году´.

10. Why can *кни´ге* not be identified from the ending alone?

▼ Show answer

The same ending belongs to the prepositional and the dative (Chapter 9). The preposition (*в кни´ге*) shows that this is the prepositional.

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-16): that the prepositional singular ends in *-е*, *-и*, *-у* or *-ю* and the plural in *-ах* or *-ях*; that the stressed *-у/-ю* is limited to certain masculine nouns, used only for place, with the ordinary *-е/-и* after other uses; that *угол, берег, порт, аэропорт, сад* were given as examples; and that the prepositional follows *в/во, на, о/об/обо* and *при* (sources: mangolanguages.com: locations with the prepositional, masterrussian.com: the prepositional case,

pelister.org: prepositional singular and plural, elon.io: the -у / -ю locative, from search results only, the pages themselves were not read in full).

Not settled: the results did not clearly lay out the *-ия, -ие, -ий* and feminine *-ь* pattern with *-и*, and did not confirm *лес, мост, пол, шкаф, год* in the -у list (only *сад*, *угол*, *берег*, *порт* and *аэропорт* were named). Both come from my general knowledge and need checking in a grammar reference.

Not checked, from general knowledge: the lists of nouns that take *в* and those that take *на* (they were not in the results), the compass-point and island rule, the time expressions, the stress of every form, the plural forms, the example sentences and dialogs, which were written for this course, and the respellings. No dictionary was consulted. Check a Russian dictionary or a native speaker before relying on them.

Coming up in Chapter 6: The Accusative Case. The direct object; the animate-masculine rule; direction with *в* and *на*; time expressions; and the plural.

🎯 The Accusative Case — Вини́тельный паде́ж

*The accusative is the case of the **direct object**: the thing or person that the verb acts on (I read **a book**, I see **my brother**). It also answers куда́? ("where to?") after в and на. It answers the questions кого́? что?. Chapter 5 gave you place; this chapter gives you direction and the object, and with it the rule that most surprises learners: **animate** and **inanimate** masculine nouns have different accusatives, the point from Chapter 3.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

Feminine nouns in *-а, -я* change to **-у, -ю** (*кни́га — кни́гу, неде́ля — неде́лю*). **Neuter nouns** and **feminine nouns in -ь** do not change. **Masculine nouns** depend on whether they are alive: an **inanimate** noun does not change (*Я ви́жу дом*), but an **animate** one takes the **genitive** ending *-а / -я* (*Я ви́жу бра́та*). In the **plural**, inanimate nouns use the nominative plural and animate nouns the genitive plural.

The singular endings

NOUN TYPE	NOMINATIVE	ACCUSATIVE	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
feminine in *-а*	**кни́га**	**кни́гу**	**Я чита́ю кни́гу.**	I am reading a book.
feminine in *-я*	**неде́ля**	**неде́лю**	**Я ждал неде́лю.**	I waited a week.
feminine in *-ия*	**Росси́я**	**Росси́ю**	**Я люблю́ Росси́ю.**	I love Russia.
feminine in *-ь*	**дверь**	**дверь**	**Я ви́жу дверь.**	I see the door.

NOUN TYPE	NOMINATIVE	ACCUSATIVE	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
neuter	**окно́**	**окно́**	**Я ви́жу окно́.**	I see the window.
masculine, inanimate	**стол**	**стол**	**Я ви́жу стол.**	I see the table.
masculine, inanimate in *-ь* or *-й*	**слова́рь, музе́й**	**слова́рь, музе́й**	**Я ви́жу музе́й.**	I see the museum.
masculine, animate	**брат**	**бра́та**	**Я ви́жу бра́та.**	I see my brother.
masculine, animate in *-ь*	**учи́тель**	**учи́теля**	**Я ви́жу учи́теля.**	I see the teacher.
masculine in *-а, -я*	**па́па, дя́дя**	**па́пу, дя́дю**	**Я люблю́ па́пу.**	I love my dad.

Watch out: the genitive form for the animate masculine

The ending of **бра´та** is the **genitive** ending (Chapter 7). So for animate masculine nouns the accusative and genitive look the same. A few masculine nouns end in *-а* or *-я* but name men (*па´па, дя´дя, Ди´ма*); they follow the feminine pattern: **Я ви´жу Ди´му**.

Animals count as animate

Animals are animate, and so are people, whatever their gender. Plants and things are inanimate.

ANIMATE (КОГО́?)	INANIMATE (ЧТО?)
Я ви́жу кота́. (masculine animal) — I see the cat.	**Я ви́жу стол.** — I see the table.
Я ви́жу соба́ку. (feminine) — I see the dog.	**Я ви́жу кни́гу.** — I see the book.
Я ви́жу сестру́. — I see my sister.	**Я ви́жу окно́.** — I see the window.
Я ви́жу подру́гу. — I see my friend (female).	**Я ви́жу дверь.** — I see the door.

Watch out: the same form can be subject or object

Because feminine nouns in -ь, neuter nouns and inanimate masculine nouns do not change, a sentence can be unclear: **Мать лю´бит дочь.** Both *мать* and *дочь* look the same in the nominative and the accusative. Word order (subject first) and meaning settle it: “The mother loves her daughter.”

Direction: куда´?

After **в** and **на**, the accusative answers *куда´?* (“where to?”), the case of motion. Compare it with the prepositional of Chapter 5, which answers *где?* (“where?”). The preposition is the same; the case tells you whether there is movement.

ГДЕ? (PREPOSITIONAL)	КУДА́? (ACCUSATIVE)	ENGLISH
Я в шко́ле.	**Я иду́ в шко́лу.**	I am at school. / I am going to school.
Я на рабо́те.	**Я иду́ на рабо́ту.**	I am at work. / I am going to work.
Я на по́чте.	**Я иду́ на по́чту.**	I am at the post office. / I am going to the post office.
Я в магази́не.	**Я иду́ в магази́н.**	I am in the shop. / I am going to the shop.
Я в музе́е.	**Я иду́ в музе́й.**	I am in the museum. / I am going to the museum.
Я в Росси́и.	**Я е́ду в Росси́ю.**	I am in Russia. / I am going to Russia. (by transport)
Я до́ма.	**Я иду́ домо́й.**	I am at home. / I am going home.

The choice between *в* and *на* is the same in both columns: if a place takes *в* for “where”, it takes *в* for “where to”; if it takes *на*, it takes *на*. And three words of place have their own forms: **здесь** (here) becomes **сюда´**, **там** (there) becomes **туда´**, **до´ма** (at home) becomes **домо´й**.

Other prepositions with the accusative

PREPOSITION	MEANING	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
в, на	to (direction)	**в шко́лу, на вокза́л**	to school, to the station
че́рез	in (a time), through	**че́рез неде́лю**	in a week
на	for (a period)	**на неде́лю**	for a week
за	for, in exchange for	**спаси́бо за кни́гу**	thanks for the book
про	about (informal)	**Я чита́ю про Росси́ю.**	I am reading about Russia.

Days and time

With the **days of the week**, Russian uses **в** and the accusative: the question is *когда́?* (“when?”). Note **во вто́рник**, where *в* becomes *во* for ease of speech.

DAY	ON THAT DAY	NOTE
понеде́льник	**в понеде́льник**	masculine: unchanged
вто́рник	**во вто́рник**	*во*, not *в*
среда́	**в сре́ду**	feminine: *-у*, stress moves
четве́рг	**в четве́рг**	masculine: unchanged
пя́тница	**в пя́тницу**	feminine: *-у*
суббо́та	**в суббо́ту**	feminine: *-у*
воскресе́нье	**в воскресе́нье**	neuter: unchanged

The plural

In the plural, **inanimate** nouns of every gender use the **nominative plural** as the accusative (Chapter 4), and **animate** nouns of every gender use the **genitive plural**. You will learn the

genitive plural in Chapter 8; for now, learn the animate accusatives of the nouns below as set forms.

SINGULAR	ACCUSATIVE PLURAL	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
inanimate кни́га	**кни́ги**	**Я чита́ю кни́ги.**	I read books.
inanimate стол	**столы́**	**Я ви́жу столы́.**	I see the tables.
inanimate окно́	**о́кна**	**Я ви́жу о́кна.**	I see the windows.
animate студе́нт	**студе́нтов**	**Я зна́ю студе́нтов.**	I know the students.
animate брат	**бра́тьев**	**Я ви́жу бра́тьев.**	I see my brothers.
animate друг	**друзе́й**	**Я люблю́ друзе́й.**	I love my friends.
animate сестра́	**сестёр**	**Я ви́жу сестёр.**	I see my sisters.
animate подру́га	**подру́г**	**Я ви́жу подру́г.**	I see my (female) friends.
animate роди́тели	**роди́телей**	**Я люблю́ роди́телей.**	I love my parents.
animate лю́ди	**люде́й**	**Я ви́жу люде́й.**	I see people.
animate де́ти	**дете́й**	**Я ви́жу дете́й.**	I see the children.

Words in this chapter

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
чита́ть кни́гу	chee-TAHT' KNEE-goo	to read a book
ви́деть бра́та	VEE-deet BRAH-tah	to see (my) brother
в шко́лу	f SHKOH-loo	to school
на рабо́ту	nah rah-BOH-too	to work
домо́й	dah-MOY	home (going)

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
в понеде́льник	f pah-nee-DYEHL'-neek	on Monday
в пя́тницу	f PYAHT-nee-tsoo	on Friday
че́рез неде́лю	CHEH-rees nee-DYEH-lyoo	in a week
сестру́	see-STROO	sister (object)
друзе́й	drooz-YEHY	friends (object)
студе́нтов	stoo-DYEHN-tahf	students (object)
люде́й	lyoo-DYEHY	people (object)

In Use — Применя́ем

Read the exchanges aloud, and notice which nouns change and which do not.

① Where are you going?

A:

Куда́ ты идёшь?

Where are you going?

B:

Я иду́ в магази́н. А ты?

I am going to the shop. And you?

A:

Я иду́ на по́чту.

I am going to the post office.

② What do you see?

A:

Ты ви́дишь слова́рь?

Do you see the dictionary?

B:

Нет. Я ви́жу тетра́дь и кни́гу.

No. I see an exercise book and a book.

A:

А бра́та?

And my brother?

B:

Да, я ви́жу бра́та.

Yes, I see your brother.

③ When?

A:

Когда́ ты идёшь в музе́й?

When are you going to the museum?

B:

В суббо́ту. А во вто́рник я иду́ в теа́тр.

On Saturday. And on Tuesday I am going to the theatre.

📋 Quick Reference — Резюме́

TOPIC	SUMMARY
questions	*кого́? что?* object · *куда́?* direction · *когда́?* day
feminine -а, -я	*-у, -ю*: *кни́гу, неде́лю, Росси́ю*
no change	neuter; feminine in -ь; masculine inanimate
animate masculine	genitive form: *бра́та, учи́теля*; *па́ну, дя́дю* for *-а, -я* nouns
direction	*в, на* + accusative: *иду́ в шко́лу, на рабо́ту, домо́й*
days	*в* + accusative: *в понеде́льник, во вто́рник, в сре́ду, в пя́тницу*
other prepositions	*че́рез, на* (for), *за, про*
plural	inanimate = nominative plural; animate = genitive plural (Chapter 8)

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Упражне́ния

Say or write the answer first, then click to check.

1. Put into the accusative: *кни́га, маши́на, неде́ля, Росси́я.*

▼ Show answer

кни́гу, маши́ну, неде́лю, Росси́ю.

2. Say “I see the table” and “I see my brother”. Why does one change?

▼ Show answer

Я ви́жу стол. Я ви́жу бра́та. брат is animate, so it takes the genitive form; *стол* is inanimate and does not change.

3. Say “I love my dad” and “I love my sister”.

▼ Show answer

Я люблю́ па́пу. Я люблю́ сестру́. па́па is a masculine noun in *-а* and takes *-у*.

4. Say “I see a cat” (*кот*) and “I see a dog” (*соба́ка*).

▼ Show answer

Я ви́жу кота́. Я ви́жу соба́ку. Animals are animate.

5. Say “I am at school” and “I am going to school”.

▼ Show answer

Я в шко́ле. Я иду́ в шко́лу. The prepositional answers *где?*, the accusative *куда́?*.

6. Say “I am going to work” and “I am going home”.

▼ Show answer

Я иду́ на рабо́ту. Я иду́ домо́й.

7. Say “on Monday”, “on Tuesday” and “on Friday”.

▼ Show answer

в понеде́льник, во вто́рник, в пя́тницу.

8. Say “in a week” and “for a week”.

▼ Show answer

че´рез неде´лю, на неде´лю.

9. Say “I see the books” and “I see the students”. Which uses the genitive plural?

▼ Show answer

Я ви´жу кни´ги. Я ви´жу студе´нтов. The animate noun *студе´нтов* uses the genitive plural; the inanimate *кни´ги* uses the nominative plural.

10. Why is *Мать лю´бит дочь* not ambiguous to a Russian reader, even though both nouns look the same?

▼ Show answer

Word order puts the subject first, and the meaning (a mother loves her daughter) settles it, since neither noun changes in this sentence.

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-16): that animate masculine nouns take the genitive form in the accusative and inanimate masculine nouns the nominative form (*вижу брата*, *вижу дом*); that animate plurals follow the genitive plural and inanimate plurals the nominative plural; and that the accusative with prepositions of direction implies motion (sources: en.wikibooks.org: Russian cases, masterrussian.com: the accusative case, mangolanguages.com: animate and inanimate nouns, ruslanguage.ru: animate and inanimate nouns with the accusative, from search results only, the pages themselves were not read in full).
Not settled: the feminine *-а, -я* to *-у, -ю* rule was not covered, and one chart in the results listed the feminine singular accusative as “no change”, which does not match the rule I give. I am confident of *-у, -ю* from general knowledge, but check it in a grammar reference.
Not checked, from general knowledge: *в* and *на* with *куда´?* and the *здесь / сюда´*, *там / туда´*, *до´ма / домо´й* pairs; the prepositions *через, на, за, про*; the days of the week and *во вто´рник*; the genitive plurals I list (*бра´тьев, друзе´й, сестёр, подру´г, роди´телей, люде´й, дете´й, студе´нтов*); every stress mark; the example sentences and dialogs, which were written for this course; and the respellings. No dictionary was consulted. Check a Russian dictionary or a native speaker before relying on them.

Coming up in Chapter 7: The Genitive Case: Singular. Possession, absence (*нет*), quantity and “of”; the endings; and the prepositions *из, у, от, до, без, для, после, о́коло*.

🔗 The Genitive Case — Роди́тельный паде́ж

*The genitive is the busiest case in Russian. It answers кого́? чего́? ("of whom? of what?") and covers "of", **absence** (нет), **quantity**, and a long list of prepositions. You have met it already in the animate masculine accusative of Chapter 6 (Я ви́жу бра́та). This chapter teaches the singular; Chapter 8 teaches the plural and the numbers.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

Masculine and neuter nouns take **-а** (or **-я** after a soft ending): *стол — стола́*, *мо́ре — мо́ря*. **Feminine** nouns take **-ы** (or **-и** after *г, к, х, ж, ч, ш, щ* and after a soft ending): *сестра́ — сестры́*, *кни́га — кни́ги*, *неде́ля — неде́ли*. Use the genitive after **нет** (there is no), **у** (at, have), **без** (without), **для** (for), **из, с, от** (from), **до** (until), **по́сле** (after), **о́коло** (near), and for "of": *дом бра́та*.

The singular endings

NOMINATIVE ENDS IN…	GENITIVE	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
a hard consonant (masculine)	*-а*	**стол — стола́, брат — бра́та, дом — до́ма**	table, brother, house
-й (masculine)	*-я*	**музе́й — музе́я**	museum
-ь (masculine)	*-я*	**слова́рь — словаря́, учи́тель — учи́теля**	dictionary, teacher
-о (neuter)	*-а*	**окно́ — окна́, сло́во — сло́ва**	window, word
-е (neuter)	*-я*	**мо́ре — мо́ря**	sea
-ие (neuter)	*-ия*	**зда́ние — зда́ния**	building

NOMINATIVE ENDS IN…	GENITIVE	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
-а (feminine)	*-ы* (or *-и* by the spelling rules)	**сестра́ — сестры́**, **кни́га — кни́ги**, **ру́чка — ру́чки**	sister, book, pen
-я (feminine)	*-и*	**неде́ля — неде́ли**, **семья́ — семьи́**	week, family
-ия (feminine)	*-ии*	**Росси́я — Росси́и**, **ста́нция — ста́нции**	Russia, station
-ь (feminine)	*-и*	**дверь — две́ри**, **тетра́дь — тетра́ди**	door, exercise book
-а, -я (masculine person)	*-ы, -и*	**па́па — па́пы**, **дя́дя — дя́ди**	dad, uncle

Stress shifts and vowels that drop

The stress often moves in the genitive (*стол — стола́*, but *дом — до́ма*), so learn it with each word. A few nouns also lose a vowel (the fleeting vowels of Chapter 4) or add a longer stem.

NOMINATIVE	GENITIVE	ENGLISH	WHAT HAPPENS
день	**дня**	day	*е* drops
оте́ц	**отца́**	father	*е* drops
кусо́к	**кска́**	piece	*о* drops
коне́ц	**конца́**	end	*е* drops
сон	**сна**	dream, sleep	*о* drops
мать	**ма́тери**	mother	longer stem
дочь	**до́чери**	daughter	longer stem
и́мя	**и́мени**	name	*-мя* nouns: stem in *-мен-*

NOMINATIVE	GENITIVE	ENGLISH	WHAT HAPPENS
вре́мя	**вре́мени**	time	*-мя* nouns: stem in *-мен-*

The uses of the genitive

1. “Of”: possession and relation

The possessor goes **after** the thing it owns, in the genitive. There is no apostrophe-s and no *of*: just the genitive.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
дом бра́та	my brother’s house, the house of my brother
кни́га сестры́	my sister’s book
окно́ до́ма	the window of the house
центр го́рода	the centre of the city
столи́ца Росси́и	the capital of Russia
друг па́пы	dad’s friend

2. Absence: нет

Нет (“there is no”) is always followed by the **genitive**. In the past it is *не́ было* and in the future *не бу́дет*, and the genitive stays.

TENSE	RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
present	**В го́роде нет музе́я.**	There is no museum in the city.
present	**Нет ча́я.**	There is no tea.
past	**У меня́ не́ было вре́мени.**	I had no time.
future	**У меня́ не бу́дет вре́мени.**	I will have no time.

Watch out: with нет the nominative disappears

Есть кни́га (“there is a book”) has a nominative; **Нет кни́ги** (“there is no book”) has a genitive. The thing that is missing is never in the nominative. And with *нет* the word *есть* is dropped: you say *Нет кни́ги*, not *Нет есть кни́ги*.

3. Having: у меня́ есть …

Russian does not say “I have” with a verb. It says “at me there is”: **у** + genitive + (**есть**) + the thing in the nominative. In the negative, the thing goes into the genitive after *нет*.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
У меня́ есть брат.	I have a brother.
У меня́ нет бра́та.	I do not have a brother.
У бра́та есть сестра́.	My brother has a sister.
У сестры́ нет кни́ги.	My sister has no book.
У па́пы есть маши́на.	Dad has a car.

4. Quantity and containers

Words for a measure or a container are followed by the genitive of the thing measured: *a glass **of water***.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
стака́н воды́	a glass of water
ча́шка ча́я	a cup of tea
буты́лка молока́	a bottle of milk
кусо́к хле́ба	a piece of bread
килогра́мм са́хара	a kilogram of sugar

5. Some of: the partitive in -у

A short list of masculine nouns can take **-у / -ю** in place of *-а / -я* to mean “some of” something. It is optional and mostly spoken. The ordinary genitive is always correct.

NOMINATIVE	ORDINARY GENITIVE	PARTITIVE	EXAMPLE
чай	ча́я	ча́ю	**Хо́чешь ча́ю?** Would you like some tea?
са́хар	са́хара	са́хару	**Дай са́хару.** Give me some sugar.
сыр	сы́ра	сы́ру	**Хочу́ сы́ру.** I want some cheese.

Prepositions with the genitive

These prepositions are always followed by the genitive. The first group matches *в* and *на* from Chapters 5 and 6: **из** is the opposite of *в* and **с** is the opposite of *на*.

ГДЕ? (В / НА)	КУДА́? (В / НА)	ОТКУ́ДА? (ИЗ / С)	ENGLISH
в шко́ле	в шко́лу	из шко́лы	at school · to school · from school
в Росси́и	в Росси́ю	из Росси́и	in Russia · to Russia · from Russia
на рабо́те	на рабо́ту	с рабо́ты	at work · to work · from work
на по́чте	на по́чту	с по́чты	at the post office · to the post office · from the post office

The other common prepositions:

PREPOSITION	MEANING	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
от	from (a person), away from	**от бра́та**, **от до́ма**	from my brother, away from the house
до	until, as far as	**до понеде́льника**, **до вокза́ла**	until Monday, as far as the station

PREPOSITION	MEANING	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
у	at, by, near (a person)	**у бра́та**	at my brother's
без	without	**без са́хара**, **без молока́**	without sugar, without milk
для	for (the benefit of)	**для бра́та**, **для сестры́**	for my brother, for my sister
по́сле	after	**по́сле рабо́ты**, **по́сле уро́ка**	after work, after the lesson
о́коло	near, about	**о́коло по́чты**, **о́коло до́ма**	near the post office, near the house

Watch out: same ending, different job

бра́та can be a genitive (*дом бра́та*) or an animate accusative (*Я ви́жу бра́та*), and **сестры́** is only a genitive. As with other cases, the **preposition or verb** shows which case you have.

Words in this chapter

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
бра́та	BRAH-tah	of the brother
сестры́	see-STRIH	of the sister
ча́шка ча́я	CHAHSH-kah CHAH-yah	a cup of tea
стака́н воды́	stah-KAHN vah-DIH	a glass of water
без са́хара	byehs SAH-khah-rah	without sugar
у меня́ нет	oo mee-NYAH NYEHT	I do not have
из Москвы́	ees mahs-KVIH	from Moscow

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
с рабо́ты	s rah-BOH-tih	from work
по́сле рабо́ты	POH-slyeh rah-BOH-tih	after work
о́коло до́ма	OH-kah-lah DOH-mah	near the house
до понеде́льника	dah pah-nee-DYEHL'-nee-kah	until Monday
для бра́та	dlyah BRAH-tah	for my brother

🗣️ In Use — Применя´ем

Read the exchanges aloud, and notice the genitive after нет, у and без.

① Do you have a brother?

A:

У тебя´ есть брат?

Do you have a brother?

B:

Да, у меня´ есть брат. А у тебя´?

Yes, I have a brother. And you?

A:

Нет, у меня´ нет бра´та. У меня´ есть то´лько сестра´.

No, I have no brother. I have only a sister.

② Tea?

A:

Хо´чешь ча´ю?

Would you like some tea?

B:

Да, ча´шку ча´я, пожа´луйста. Без са´хара.

Yes, a cup of tea, please. Without sugar.

③ Where are you from?

A:

Отку´да ты?

Where are you from?

B:

Я из Москвы´. А ты?

I am from Moscow. And you?

A:

Я из А´нглии. Я живу´ о´коло ста´нции.

I am from England. I live near the station.

📋 Quick Reference — Резюме´

TOPIC	SUMMARY
questions	*кого́? чего́? · отку́да?*
masculine, neuter	*-а*; *-я* after a soft ending: *столá, мóря, здáния*
feminine	*-ы*; *-и* after *г, к, х, ж, ч, ш, щ, -я, -ь*; *-ия* gives *-ии*
stress and vowels	stress shifts (*столá, дóма*); fleeting vowels (*день — дня, отéц — отцá*); *-мя* nouns (*úмени, врéмени*)
of	the possessor follows: *дом брáта*
absence	*нет* + genitive; *нé было, не бýдет*
having	*у менá есть* + nominative; *у менá нет* + genitive
quantity	*стакáн воды́, кусóк хлéба*
partitive	*чáю, сáхару, сы́ру*: optional, spoken
из / с	*из* opposes *в*; *с* opposes *на*
others	*от, до, у, без, для, пóсле, óколо*

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Упражне´ния

Say or write the answer first, then click to check.

1. Put into the genitive: *брат, кни́га, окно́, неде́ля, тетра́дь.*

▼ Show answer

бра́та, кни́ги, окна́, неде́ли, тетра́ди.

2. Say “my brother’s house” and “my sister’s book”.

▼ Show answer

дом бра́та, кни́га сестры́.

3. Say “I have a sister” and “I have no sister”.

▼ Show answer

У меня́ есть сестра́. У меня́ нет сестры́.

4. Say “There is no tea” and “I had no time”.

▼ Show answer

Нет ча́я. У меня́ не́ было вре́мени. After *нет* and *не́ было* the noun is genitive.

5. Say “a glass of water” and “a kilogram of sugar”.

▼ Show answer

стака́н воды́, килогра́мм са́хара.

6. Say “at school, to school, from school” and “at work, to work, from work”.

▼ Show answer

в шко́ле, в шко́лу, из шко́лы; на рабо́те, на рабо́ту, с рабо́ты.

7. Say “without sugar”, “for my brother”, “after work”.

▼ Show answer

без са́хара, для бра́та, по́сле рабо́ты.

8. Put into the genitive: *день, оте́ц, кусо́к*. What drops out?

▼ Show answer

дня, отца́, куска́. A fleeting vowel falls away.

9. Put *и́мя* and *вре́мя* into the genitive. What is special?

▼ Show answer

и́мени, вре́мени. These are *-мя* nouns, which add *-мен-* to the stem before the ending.

10. Why is *Я ви́жу бра́та* not a genitive, even though the ending is the same?

▼ Show answer

The verb *ви́деть* takes the accusative, and animate masculine nouns use the genitive form in the accusative (Chapter 6). The verb shows the case.

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-16): that the common singular endings are *-а, -я, -и, -ы*; that *чай* gives *чая*; that the main uses are possession, number, negation and prepositions; that *нет* always takes the genitive (*Нет чая*); that the numerals 2, 3 and 4 take the genitive singular; that *у* + genitive + *есть* + nominative expresses "I have"; and that a partitive in *-у/-ю* exists for roughly a hundred masculine nouns, with *чаю* and *сахару* as examples (sources: en.wikibooks.org: genitive case, masterrussian.com: the genitive case, mangolanguages.com: using the genitive, themoscowtimes.com: the partitive genitive, clozemaster.com: Russian genitive case, from search results only, the pages themselves were not read in full).
Not settled: the sources disagree about how strictly the partitive is used (a fixed list or optional in many contexts), so treat the *-у* forms as optional and spoken. *Сыру* was not named in the results; it comes from my general knowledge. The results did not give a full list for *из, от, до, без, для, после, около*.
Not checked, from general knowledge: the *из / с* pairing with *в / на*, *не́ было* and *не бу́дет*, the stress of every genitive, the fleeting vowels and the *-мя* nouns, the container phrases, the example sentences and dialogs, which were written for this course, and the respellings. No dictionary was consulted. Check a Russian dictionary or a native speaker before relying on them.

Coming up in Chapter 8: The Genitive Plural and Quantity. The plural endings *-ов, -ей* and the zero ending; *мно́го, ма́ло, не́сколько*; and numbers 2 to 4 against 5 and up.

🔢 The Genitive Plural — Роди́тельный паде́ж: мно́жественное число́

*The genitive plural is the form you use after **мно́го**, **ма́ло**, **не́сколько** and after the numbers **5 and up**. It is also the form that animate nouns take in the accusative (Chapter 6). It is the hardest of the plural endings because it has several forms and a zero ending, but only a few patterns decide it. The numbers have a pattern of their own: one noun form after 1, another after 2, 3 and 4, and a third after 5 and up.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

Hard masculine consonant: -ов (*стол — столо́в*). **Masculine in -ж, -ч, -ш, -щ or -ь: -ей** (*нож — ноже́й*). **Feminine in -а or -я, and neuter in -о:** the **zero ending**, the last vowel is removed (*кни́га — книг, окно́ — о́кон*). **-ие and -ия: -ий** (*зда́ние — зда́ний*). **Feminine in -ь, and neuter in -е: -ей** (*дверь — двере́й, мо́ре — море́й*). After the numbers: **1** takes the nominative singular, **2, 3, 4** the genitive *singular*, **5 and up** the genitive *plural*.

The endings

NOMINATIVE ENDS IN…	GENITIVE PLURAL	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
a hard consonant (masculine)	*-ов*	**стол — столо́в**, **дом — домо́в**, **студе́нт — студе́нтов**	tables, houses, students
-ж, -ч, -ш, -щ (masculine)	*-ей*	**нож — ноже́й**, **врач — враче́й**, **ключ — ключе́й**	knives, doctors, keys
-й (masculine)	*-ев*	**музе́й — музе́ев**	museums
-ь (masculine)	*-ей*	**слова́рь — словаре́й**, **учи́тель — учителе́й**	dictionaries, teachers

NOMINATIVE ENDS IN…	GENITIVE PLURAL	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
-а (feminine)	zero	**кни́га — книг**, **шко́ла — шко́л**, **подру́га — подру́г**	books, schools, friends
-я (feminine)	zero, with *-ь*	**неде́ля — неде́ль**	weeks
-ь (feminine)	*-ей*	**дверь — двере́й**, **тетра́дь — тетра́дей**	doors, exercise books
-ия, *-ие*	*-ий*	**ста́нция — ста́нций**, **зда́ние — зда́ний**	stations, buildings
-о (neuter)	zero	**сло́во — слов**, **ме́сто — мест**	words, places
-е (neuter)	*-ей*	**мо́ре — море́й**	seas

Watch out: the stress usually lands on the ending

In **столо́в**, **ноже́й** and **словаре́й** the stress is on the ending, which follows the nominative plural (*столы́*, *ножи́*, *словари́*). In the zero-ending words it is the stem, so the stress has to land somewhere: **кни́г**. Learn each genitive plural with its stress mark.

Vowels that appear in the zero ending

When the last vowel is removed, a cluster of consonants can be left that is hard to say. Russian then puts a vowel back in: usually **о**, but **е** after *ж, ч, ш, щ* and often before a soft sign.

NOMINATIVE SINGULAR	GENITIVE PLURAL	ENGLISH	VOWEL ADDED
ко́шка	**ко́шек**	cat	*е* after *ш*
де́вочка	**де́вочек**	girl	*е* after *ч*
ру́чка	**ру́чек**	pen	*е* after *ч*
ло́жка	**ло́жек**	spoon	*е* after *ж*

NOMINATIVE SINGULAR	GENITIVE PLURAL	ENGLISH	VOWEL ADDED
студе́нтка	студе́нток	female student	*о*
окно́	о́кон	window	*о*, stress moves back
письмо́	пи́сем	letter	*е* replaces the soft sign
сестра́	сестёр	sister	*ё* (stressed)

Irregular and special forms

A short list of common nouns has a genitive plural that follows no rule. Several of these you know from Chapter 4.

NOMINATIVE SINGULAR	GENITIVE PLURAL	ENGLISH
друг	друзе́й	friend
брат	бра́тьев	brother
сын	сынове́й	son
челове́к	люде́й	person: “people”; after a number *челове́к*
ребёнок	дете́й	child
роди́тели	роди́телей	parents (plural only)
де́ньги	де́нег	money (plural only)
и́мя	имён	name
вре́мя	времён	time
год	лет	year (after 5 and up)
день	дней	day
раз	раз	time, occasion: zero ending

NOMINATIVE SINGULAR	GENITIVE PLURAL	ENGLISH
глаз	**глаз**	eye: zero ending
солда́т	**солда́т**	soldier: zero ending
я́блоко	**я́блок**	apple

After много, мало, несколько and сколько

Мно´го (“a lot”), **ма´ло** (“few”), **не´сколько** (“several”) and **ско´лько** (“how many”) are followed by the **genitive plural** for things you can count, and by the **genitive singular** for things you cannot.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	WHY
мно́го друзе́й	many friends	countable: genitive plural
ма́ло книг	few books	countable: genitive plural
не́сколько студе́нтов	several students	countable: genitive plural
ско́лько люде́й?	how many people?	countable: genitive plural
мно́го вре́мени	a lot of time	uncountable: genitive singular
ма́ло воды́	little water	uncountable: genitive singular
ско́лько де́нег?	how much money?	*де́ньги* is plural: genitive plural *де́нег*

The numbers

The noun after a number changes with the **last word of the number**. The pattern is: **1** → nominative singular; **2, 3, 4** → genitive *singular*; **5 and up** → genitive *plural*. The numbers 11 to 14 are the exception: they follow the *5 and up* rule.

NUMBER	NOUN FORM	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
оди́н, одна́, одно́	nominative singular	**оди́н стол, одна́ кни́га, одно́ окно́**	one table, one book, one window
два, две, три, четы́ре	genitive singular	**два стола́, две кни́ги, три окна́, четы́ре бра́та**	two tables, two books, three windows, four brothers
пять, шесть, семь, во́семь, де́вять, де́сять	genitive plural	**пять столо́в, шесть книг, семь о́кон, де́сять студе́нтов**	five tables, six books, seven windows, ten students
оди́ннадцать … четы́рнадцать	genitive plural	**двена́дцать столо́в**	twelve tables
два́дцать оди́н	nominative singular	**два́дцать оди́н стол**	twenty-one tables
два́дцать два	genitive singular	**два́дцать два стола́**	twenty-two tables
два́дцать пять	genitive plural	**два́дцать пять столо́в**	twenty-five tables

Watch out: два and две, and the odd nouns

Два goes with masculine and neuter nouns, **две** with feminine ones: *два стола́, две кни́ги*. With years, days and people the form is irregular: **оди́н год, два го́да, пять лет**; **оди́н день, два дня, пять дней**; **оди́н челове́к, два челове́ка, пять челове́к**. Adjectives after numbers are tricky too, and Russian Grammar 2 covers them.

Other uses of the genitive plural

Everything the singular did in Chapter 7 also happens in the plural: *нет*, *у*, *без*, *для*, *из*, *по́сле* and the rest.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
У меня́ нет друзе́й.	I have no friends.
У меня́ нет книг.	I have no books.
Нет де́нег.	There is no money.
дом без о́кон	a house without windows
по́дарок для роди́телей	a present for the parents
по́сле уро́ков	after the lessons

Words in this chapter

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
мно́го друзе́й	MNOH-gah drooz-YEHY	many friends
ма́ло вре́мени	MAH-lah VRYEH-mee-nee	little time
не́сколько студе́нтов	NYEH-skahl'-kah stoo-DYEHN-tahf	several students
ско́лько люде́й?	SKOHL'-kah lyoo-DYEHY	how many people?
оди́н стол	ah-DEEN STOHL	one table
два стола́	dvah stah-LAH	two tables
две кни́ги	dvyeh KNEE-gee	two books
пять столо́в	pyaht' stah-LOHF	five tables
шесть книг	shehst' KNEEK	six books
во́семь о́кон	VOH-seem OH-kahn	eight windows
де́сять студе́нтов	DYEH-seet' stoo-DYEHN-tahf	ten students

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
пять лет	pyaht' LYEHT	five years

In Use — Применя´ем

Read the exchanges aloud, and notice which form of the noun follows each number.

① How many friends?

A:

Ско´лько у тебя´ друзе´й?

How many friends do you have?

B:

У меня´ мно´го друзе´й. А у тебя´?

I have many friends. And you?

A:

У меня´ ма´ло друзе´й, то´лько два дру´га.

I have few friends, only two.

② How many books?

A:

Ско´лько у тебя´ книг?

How many books do you have?

B:

Пять книг. А у тебя´?

Five books. And you?

A:

У меня´ де´сять книг и три тетра´ди.

I have ten books and three exercise books.

③ In the class

A:

Ско´лько в гру´ппе студе´нтов?

How many students are in the group?

B:

Двена´дцать студе´нтов и два преподава´теля.

Twelve students and two teachers.

📋 Quick Reference — Резюме́

TOPIC	SUMMARY
hard masculine	*-ов*: *столо́в, студе́нтов*
masculine in -ж, -ч, -ш, -щ, -ь	*-ей*: *ноже́й, врачей́, учителе́й*
masculine in -й	*-ев*: *музе́ев*
feminine, neuter -о	zero ending: *книг, шко́л, слов, мест*
-ь feminine, -е neuter	*-ей*: *двере́й, море́й*
-ия, -ие	*-ий*: *ста́нций, зда́ний*
vowels that appear	*ко́шек, студе́нток, о́кон, пи́сем, сестёр*
irregular	*друзе́й, бра́тьев, люде́й, дете́й, де́нег, имён, лет*
мно́го, ма́ло, не́сколько, ско́лько	genitive plural (countable) or singular (uncountable)
1 / 2–4 / 5+	nominative singular · genitive singular · genitive plural; 11–14 follow 5+

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Упражне́ния

Say or write the answer first, then click to check.

1. Put into the genitive plural: *стол, студе́нт, нож, учи́тель*.

▼ Show answer

столо́в, студе́нтов, ноже́й, учителе́й.

2. Put into the genitive plural: *кни́га, шко́ла, сло́во, ме́сто*.

▼ Show answer

книг, шко´л, слов, мест. These have the zero ending.

3. Put into the genitive plural: *ко´шка, ру´чка, окно´*. What happens?

▼ Show answer

ко´шек, ру´чек, о´кон. A vowel appears between the last two consonants.

4. Put into the genitive plural: *ста´нция, зда´ние, дверь, мо´ре*.

▼ Show answer

ста´нций, зда´ний, двере´й, море´й.

5. Say “many friends”, “few books” and “a lot of time”. Which is singular, and why?

▼ Show answer

мно´го друзе´й, ма´ло книг, мно´го вре´мени. *вре´мени* is singular because time is uncountable.

6. Say “two books”, “three windows” and “four brothers”.

▼ Show answer

две кни´ги, три окна´, четы´ре бра´та. After 2, 3, 4 the noun is genitive singular.

7. Say “five tables” and “ten students”.

▼ Show answer

пять столо´в, де´сять студе´нтов. After 5 and up the noun is genitive plural.

8. Say “twelve students” and “twenty-two tables”. Why do they differ?

▼ Show answer

двена´дцать студе´нтов, два´дцать два стола´. 11 to 14 follow the 5-and-up rule; 22 ends in 2, so it follows the 2-to-4 rule.

9. Say “one year”, “two years” and “five years”.

▼ Show answer

оди́н год, два го́да, пять лет.

10. Say “I have no friends” and “There is no money”.

▼ Show answer

У меня́ нет друзе́й. Нет де́нег.

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-16): that hard-stem masculine nouns take *-ов*; that feminine *-а/-я* and neuter *-о* nouns take the zero ending; that *-ия* and *-ие* nouns take *-ий*; that other neuter *-е* nouns take *-ей*; that stems in a consonant plus *й* take *-ев/-ёв*; and that a fleeting vowel appears in some zero endings (*окно — окон*) (sources: elon.io: master table of case endings, russian.cornell.edu: genitive plural, pelister.org: genitive plural, elon.io: second-declension nouns, wisc.pb.unizin.org: declension tables, from search results only, the pages themselves were not read in full). One low-quality site in the results gave a wrong genitive plural for *кот*, so I did not use it.
Not covered by the search, from general knowledge: the numeral rules (1 nominative singular, 2 to 4 genitive singular, 5 and up genitive plural, and the 11 to 14 exception); *много, мало, несколько, сколько* with the genitive plural or singular; the *-ж, -ч, -ш, -щ* rule for *-ей*; which nouns get *-ек*, *-ок* or *-ёр* (*кошек, студенток, сестёр*); the irregular list (*друзей, братьев, сыновей, людей, детей, денег, имён, времён, лет, дней, раз, глаз, солдат, яблок*); every stress mark; the example sentences and dialogs, which were written for this course; and the respellings. No dictionary was consulted. Check a Russian dictionary or a native speaker before relying on them.

Coming up in Chapter 9: The Dative Case. The recipient (“to”, “for”); age; feelings and need (*Мне хо́лодно*); the endings; *к* and *по*; and verbs that take the dative.

🎁 The Dative Case — Да́тельный паде́ж

*The dative answers кому́? чему́? ("to whom? to what?"). It is the case of the **recipient**, the person something is given, said or shown to. It is also the case of the **person who feels**: Russian does not say "I am cold" or "I am twenty" with a nominative subject but with "to me is cold" and "to me twenty years". You have met many of these phrases in the Basic courses; here is the rule behind them.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

Masculine and neuter nouns take **-у** (or **-ю** after a soft ending): *брат — бра́ту*, *окно́ — окну́*, *учи́тель — учи́телю*. **Feminine** nouns take **-е** (*сестра́ — сестре́*), **-и** after *-ия* and *-ь* (*Росси́я — Росси́и*, *тетра́дь — тетра́ди*). **Plural: -ам** or **-ям** for every gender (*стола́м*, *кни́гам*, *друзья́м*). The two prepositions are **к** (to, towards a person) and **по** (along, around, by).

The singular endings

NOMINATIVE ENDS IN…	DATIVE	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
a hard consonant (masculine)	*-у*	**брат — бра́ту**, **студе́нт — студе́нту**, **врач — врачу́**	to my brother, to the student, to the doctor
-й, *-ь* (masculine)	*-ю*	**музе́й — музе́ю**, **учи́тель — учи́телю**	to the museum, to the teacher
-о (neuter)	*-у*	**окно́ — окну́**	to the window
-е (neuter)	*-ю*	**мо́ре — мо́рю**	to the sea
-ие (neuter)	*-ию*	**зда́ние — зда́нию**	to the building
-а (feminine)	*-е*	**сестра́ — сестре́**, **кни́га — кни́ге**, **ма́ма — ма́ме**	to my sister, to the book, to Mum

NOMINATIVE ENDS IN…	DATIVE	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
-я (feminine)	*-е*	**неде́ля — неде́ле**	to the week
-ия (feminine)	*-ии*	**Росси́я — Росси́и**	to Russia
-ь (feminine)	*-и*	**тетра́дь — тетра́ди**, **мать — ма́тери**, **дочь — до́чери**	to the exercise book, to my mother, to my daughter
-а, -я (masculine person)	*-е*	**па́па — па́пе**, **дя́дя — дя́де**	to Dad, to my uncle

Watch out: the feminine dative looks like the prepositional

кни´ге, **сестре´** and **ма´ме** are the same in the dative and the prepositional (Chapter 5). The **preposition or verb** shows which: *в кни´ге* (“in the book”) against *дава´ть ма´ме* (“to give to Mum”). Masculine and neuter nouns are easier, because *-у* and *-е* differ.

1. The recipient

The person who receives something is in the dative. The thing that is given stays in the accusative.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
Я даю́ кни́гу сестре́.	I give the book to my sister.
Я пишу́ письмо́ дру́гу.	I am writing a letter to a friend.
Мы дари́м цветы́ ма́ме.	We give flowers to Mum.
Он говори́т студе́нтам.	He is speaking to the students.
Я покажу́ го́род дру́гу.	I will show the city to a friend.

2. Age

You say how old someone is by putting the **person** in the dative and the years in the number pattern of Chapter 8: *1 год, 2–4 го́да, 5 и бо́лее лет*. There is no verb.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
Ско́лько тебе́ лет?	How old are you?
Мне два́дцать пять лет.	I am 25.
Бра́ту оди́н год.	My brother is one.
Сестре́ три го́да.	My sister is three.
Ма́ме со́рок лет.	Mum is forty.

The pronouns you need already come from the Basic courses and are taught in full in Chapter 11: **мне** (to me), **тебе́** (to you), **ему́** (to him), **ей** (to her), **нам** (to us), **вам** (to you), **им** (to them).

3. Feelings, weather, need and liking

The person who feels something goes into the dative, and the feeling is an adverb with no subject: *Мне хо́лодно* (“To me is cold”).

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
Мне хо́лодно.	I am cold.
Ей жа́рко.	She is hot.
Нам ску́чно.	We are bored.
Ему́ ве́село.	He is having fun.
Мне на́до идти́.	I have to go.
Мне ну́жно пальто́.	I need a coat.
Мне ну́жен слова́рь.	I need a dictionary.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
Мне нужна́ кни́га.	I need a book.
Мне ну́жны кни́ги.	I need books.

> **Watch out: нужен, нужна, нужно, нужны agree with the thing needed**
> The thing you need is in the **nominative** and the word *ну́жен* agrees with it in gender and number: **ну́жен слова́рь** (masculine), **нужна́ кни́га** (feminine), **ну́жно пальто́** (neuter), **ну́жны кни́ги** (plural). *Мне ну́жно* + infinitive also means “I must”.

Нра́виться (“to be pleasing to”) works the same way. The person who likes is in the dative, and the thing liked is the subject, in the nominative: **Мне нра́вится му́зыка.** (“I like music”, literally “Music is pleasing to me”) and **Мне нра́вятся кни́ги.** (“I like books”). The verb agrees with the thing liked, not with the person.

4. Verbs that take the dative

Some verbs take the dative where English uses a direct object. Learn them as pairs.

VERB	ENGLISH	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
помога́ть	to help	**Я помога́ю отцу́.**	I help my father.
звони́ть	to call, phone	**Он звони́т дру́гу.**	He calls his friend.
сове́товать	to advise	**Ма́ма сове́тует до́чери.**	Mum advises her daughter.
ве́рить	to believe, trust	**Я ве́рю ма́ме.**	I believe Mum.
отвеча́ть	to answer	**Учени́к отвеча́ет учи́телю.**	The pupil answers the teacher.
меша́ть	to disturb	**Не меша́й дру́гу.**	Do not disturb your friend.

Prepositions: к and по

к / ко: “to” a person

к (**ко** before some groups of consonants) is the “going to” preposition for **people**. It matches *у* (“at”) and *от* (“from”) of Chapter 7.

ГДЕ? (У + GENITIVE)	КУДА́? (К + DATIVE)	ОТКУ́ДА? (ОТ + GENITIVE)	ENGLISH
у врача́	к врачу́	от врача́	at the doctor’s · to the doctor · from the doctor
у бра́та	к бра́ту	от бра́та	at my brother’s · to my brother · from my brother
у сестры́	к сестре́	от сестры́	at my sister’s · to my sister · from my sister

по: along, around, by

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
по у́лице	along the street
по го́роду	around the city
по телефо́ну	by phone
по пя́тницам	on Fridays (every Friday)
по утра́м	in the mornings

The plural: -ам and -ям

In the plural the dative ends in **-ам**, or **-ям** after a soft ending. It is the same for every gender.

NOMINATIVE PLURAL	DATIVE PLURAL	ENGLISH
столы́	столо́м	to the tables

NOMINATIVE PLURAL	DATIVE PLURAL	ENGLISH
кни́ги	кни́гам	to the books
о́кна	о́кнам	to the windows
студе́нты	студе́нтам	to the students
друзья́	друзья́м	to the friends
учителя́	учителя́м	to the teachers
ста́нции	ста́нциям	to the stations
де́ти	де́тям	to the children
лю́ди	лю́дям	to people
роди́тели	роди́телям	to the parents

Words in this chapter

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
бра́ту	BRAH-too	to my brother
сестре́	see-STREH	to my sister
ма́ме	MAH-myeh	to Mum
к врачу́	k vrah-CHOO	to the doctor
мне хо́лодно	mnyeh KHOH-lahd-nah	I am cold
мне ну́жно	mnyeh NOOZH-nah	I need / I must
мне нра́вится	mnyeh NRAH-veet-tsah	I like (it)
ско́лько тебе́ лет?	SKOHL'-kah tee-BYEH LYEHT	how old are you?

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
дава́ть	dah-VAHT'	to give
помога́ть	pah-mah-GAHT'	to help
звони́ть	zvah-NEET'	to call
по телефо́ну	pah tee-lee-FOH-noo	by phone

In Use — Применя´ем

Read the exchanges aloud, and notice that the person who feels or receives is always in the dative.

① To whom?

A:

Кому´ ты пи´шешь?

Who are you writing to?

B:

Я пишу´ письмо´ дру´гу. А ты?

I am writing a letter to a friend. And you?

A:

Я звоню´ ма´ме.

I am calling Mum.

② How old?

A:

Ско´лько тебе´ лет?

How old are you?

B:

Мне два´дцать пять лет. А тебе´?

I am 25. And you?

A:

Мне три´дцать.

I am 30.

③ Cold

A:

Мне хо´лодно.

I am cold.

B:

Мне то´же. Мне ну´жно пальто´.

Me too. I need a coat.

A:

А мне ну́жен чай.

And I need some tea.

📋 Quick Reference — Резюме́

TOPIC	SUMMARY
questions	*кому́? чему́?*
masculine, neuter	*-у*; *-ю* after a soft ending: *бра́ту, окну́, музе́ю*
feminine	*-е*; *-и* after *-ия, -ь*: *сестре́, Росси́и, тетра́ди*
plural	*-ам, -ям*: *кни́гам, друзья́м*
recipient	*дава́ть, писа́ть, говори́ть, дари́ть* + dative; the thing given is accusative
age	*Мне два́дцать лет*; *оди́н год, 2–4 го́да, 5+ лет*
feelings	*Мне хо́лодно, жа́рко, ску́чно, ве́село*
need and liking	*Мне ну́жен / нужна́ / ну́жно / ну́жны*; *Мне нра́вится / нра́вятся*
verbs	*помога́ть, звони́ть, сове́товать, ве́рить, отвеча́ть, меша́ть*
prepositions	*к* (to a person), *по* (along, around, by)
к / у / от	*к врачу́ · у врача́ · от врача́*

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Упражне́ния

Say or write the answer first, then click to check.

1. Put into the dative: *брат, сестра́, окно́, тетра́дь, Росси́я.*

▼ Show answer

бра´ту, сестре´, окну´, тетра´ди, Росси´и.

2. Say “I give the book to my sister”. Which noun is dative, and which accusative?

▼ Show answer

Я даю´ кни´гу сестре´. *сестре´* is dative (the recipient); *кни´гу* is accusative (the thing given).

3. Say “I am writing a letter to a friend”.

▼ Show answer

Я пишу´ письмо´ дру´гу.

4. Say “I am 25” and “My sister is three”.

▼ Show answer

Мне два´дцать пять лет. Сестре´ три го´да. The person is dative, and the years follow the number pattern.

5. Say “I am cold” and “She is hot”.

▼ Show answer

Мне хо´лодно. Ей жа´рко.

6. Say “I need a coat” and “I need books”. Why does the word for need change?

▼ Show answer

Мне ну´жно пальто´. Мне ну´жны кни´ги. It agrees with the thing needed: neuter *ну´жно*, plural *ну´жны*.

7. Say “I like music” and “I like books”. What does the verb agree with?

▼ Show answer

Мне нра´вится му´зыка. Мне нра´вятся кни´ги. The verb agrees with the thing liked, the nominative subject.

8. Say “I help my father” and “He calls his friend”. What do *помога́ть* and *звони́ть* have in common?

▼ Show answer

Я помога́ю отцу́. Он звони́т дру́гу. Both take the dative.

9. Say “at the doctor’s”, “to the doctor” and “from the doctor”.

▼ Show answer

у врача́, к врачу́, от врача́.

10. Put into the dative plural: *студе́нт, кни́га, друг, де́ти.*

▼ Show answer

студе́нтам, кни́гам, друзья́м, де́тям.

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-16): that the dative is the case of the indirect object or recipient (*Я даю подарок брату*); that its endings are *-у/-ю* for masculine and neuter nouns and *-е/-и* for feminine ones; that *к* and *по* are the main dative prepositions (*Я иду к врачу*); that age is given as *Мне 20 лет*; that liking and need are expressed with the dative (*Мне нравится фильм*); and that *звонить, помогать* and *советовать* take the dative (sources: gw2ru.com: the dative case, masterrussian.com: the dative case, mangolanguages.com: dative prepositions, storylearning.com: the dative case, polyglotclub.com: dative case, from search results only, the pages themselves were not read in full).

Not settled: most of the results were learner sites rather than reference grammars, and the plural ending *-ам/-ям* appeared in only one summary table that I could not confirm in a second source. It matches what I know, but check it in a textbook.

Not checked, from general knowledge: the list of feelings (*холодно, жарко, скучно, весело*), the agreement of *нужен / нужна / нужно / нужны* and *нравится / нравятся*, the verbs *верить, отвечать, мешать*, the *по* examples (*по пятницам, по утрам*), the *к / у / от* pattern, the pronoun forms previewed from Chapter 11, every stress mark, the example sentences and dialogs, which were written for this course, and the respellings. No dictionary was consulted. Check a Russian dictionary or a native speaker before relying on them.

Coming up in Chapter 10: The Instrumental Case. Means and company (*с*); roles and states (*рабо́тать врачо́м*); the endings; *над, под, пе́ред, за, ме́жду*; and the plural.

🛠️ The Instrumental Case — Твори́тельный паде́ж

*The instrumental answers кем? чем? ("by whom? with what?"). It is the case of the **tool** (I write **with a pen**), of **company** with с (with my brother), and of **roles** (he works **as a doctor**). It also follows a group of prepositions of position: над, под, пе́ред, за, ме́жду. Together with the prepositional (Chapter 5), accusative (Chapter 6), genitive (Chapters 7 and 8) and dative (Chapter 9), this is the last of the six cases.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

Masculine and neuter nouns take **-ом** (**-ем** after a soft ending, and after *ж, ч, ш, щ, ц* when the ending is unstressed): *брат — бра́том*, *муж — му́жем*, *нож — ножо́м*. **Feminine** nouns take **-ой** (**-ей** after a soft ending): *сестра́ — сестро́й*, *неде́ля — неде́лей*; feminine in **-ь** take **-ью**: *дверь — две́рью*. **Plural: -ами** or **-ями**: *кни́гами, друзья́ми*.

The singular endings

NOMINATIVE ENDS IN…	INSTRUMENTAL	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
a hard consonant (masculine)	*-ом*	**брат — бра́том**, **студе́нт — студе́нтом**, **стол — столо́м**	with my brother, as a student, with the table
-ж, -ч, -ш, -щ, -ц, stressed ending	*-ом*	**нож — ножо́м**, **врач — врачо́м**, **оте́ц — отцо́м**	with a knife, as a doctor, with my father
-ж, -ч, -ш, -щ, -ц, stressed stem	*-ем*	**муж — му́жем**	with my husband
-й, -ь (masculine)	*-ем*	**музе́й — музе́ем**, **учи́тель — учи́телем**	with the museum, as a teacher

NOMINATIVE ENDS IN…	INSTRUMENTAL	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
-ь, stressed ending	*-ём*	**слова́рь — словарём**, **день — днём**	with a dictionary, in the afternoon
-о (neuter)	*-ом*	**окно́ — окно́м**, **сло́во — сло́вом**	with a window, with a word
-е, *-ие* (neuter)	*-ем*, *-ием*	**мо́ре — мо́рем**, **зда́ние — зда́нием**	with the sea, with the building
-а (feminine)	*-ой*	**сестра́ — сестро́й**, **кни́га — кни́гой**, **ма́ма — ма́мой**	with my sister, with a book, with Mum
-я (feminine)	*-ей* (*-ёй* if stressed)	**неде́ля — неде́лей**, **семья́ — семьёй**	with a week, with the family
-ия (feminine)	*-ией*	**Росси́я — Росси́ей**, **ста́нция — ста́нцией**	with Russia, with the station
-ь (feminine)	*-ью*	**дверь — две́рью**, **тетра́дь — тетра́дью**, **мать — ма́терью**	with the door, with the exercise book, with my mother
-а, *-я* (masculine person)	*-ой*, *-ей*	**па́па — па́пой**, **дя́дя — дя́дей**	with Dad, with my uncle
-мя nouns	*-менем*	**и́мя — и́менем**, **вре́мя — вре́менем**	with a name, with time

Watch out: the same letter, two endings

After *ж, ч, ш, щ, ц* the ending depends on the stress: **му́жем** (stress on the stem, so *-ем*) but **ножо́м** (stress on the ending, so *-ом*). The same pattern holds for the endings of adjectives later in the course. A soft-stem noun with a stressed ending takes *-ём*: **словарём**, **семьёй**.

1. With: с + instrumental

To say “with” in the sense of company, Russian uses **с** (**со** before some groups of consonants) and the instrumental.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
Я иду́ с бра́том.	I am going with my brother.
Я говорю́ с сестро́й.	I am talking with my sister.
Мы живём с роди́телями.	We live with our parents.
Я пью чай с са́харом.	I drink tea with sugar.
ко́фе с молоко́м	coffee with milk

> **Watch out: с can take two cases**
>
> **с** + **instrumental** means “with”, but **с** + **genitive** means “from, off” (Chapter 7: *с рабо́ты*, “from work”). The ending of the noun tells you which: **с сестро́й** (instrumental, “with my sister”) against **с по́чты** (genitive, “from the post office”).

2. Means and tools: no preposition

To say **what you do something with**, or how you travel, use the instrumental **with no preposition at all**.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
Я пишу́ ру́чкой.	I write with a pen.
Я пишу́ каранда́шом.	I write with a pencil.
Он ест ло́жкой.	He eats with a spoon.
Мы е́дем авто́бусом.	We are travelling by bus.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
Я плачу́ ка́ртой.	I pay by card.

3. Roles and states: быть, стать, работать

When a noun says **what someone is, was or will be**, in the past or future, it goes into the **instrumental**. In the present, Russian leaves out *to be* and the noun stays in the nominative (Chapter 1).

TENSE	RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
present (no verb)	**Он врач.**	He is a doctor. (nominative)
past	**Он был врачо́м.**	He was a doctor. (instrumental)
future	**Она́ бу́дет врачо́м.**	She will be a doctor.
becoming	**Он стал врачо́м.**	He became a doctor.
working as	**Мой брат рабо́тает инжене́ром.**	My brother works as an engineer.
working as	**Сестра́ рабо́тает учи́тельницей.**	My sister works as a teacher.

A small group of verbs always takes the instrumental object:

VERB	ENGLISH	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
интересова́ться	to be interested in	**Я интересу́юсь му́зыкой.**	I am interested in music.
занима́ться	to do, engage in	**Я занима́юсь спо́ртом.**	I do sport.
по́льзоваться	to use	**Я по́льзуюсь телефо́ном.**	I use the phone.
увлека́ться	to be keen on	**Он увлека́ется футбо́лом.**	He is keen on football.

4. Prepositions of position

These prepositions are followed by the instrumental when they say **where**.

PREPOSITION	MEANING	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
над	above	**Ла́мпа вися́т над столо́м.**	The lamp is hanging above the table.
под	under	**Кни́га лежи́т под столо́м.**	The book is lying under the table.
пе́ред	in front of	**Маши́на стои́т пе́ред до́мом.**	The car is standing in front of the house.
за	behind	**Сад за до́мом.**	The garden is behind the house.
ме́жду	between	**Ме́жду ба́нком и по́чтой есть магази́н.**	There is a shop between the bank and the post office.
ря́дом с	next to	**Ря́дом с кни́гой лежи́т слова́рь.**	A dictionary is lying next to the book.

> **Watch out: под and за change case with motion**
>
> **Под** and **за** take the **instrumental** for place (*где?*) but the **accusative** for motion (*куда́?*): **Кни́га лежи́т под столо́м.** (“The book is lying under the table.”) against **Кни́га упа́ла под стол.** (“The book fell under the table.”). *Над*, *пе́ред* and *ме́жду* take the instrumental only. Chapter 11 puts the two-case prepositions in one table.

5. Times of day and seasons

A group of time words is an instrumental used as an adverb, with no preposition.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
у́тром	in the morning	**зимо́й**	in winter
днём	in the afternoon	**весно́й**	in spring
ве́чером	in the evening	**ле́том**	in summer

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
но́чью	at night	**о́сенью**	in autumn

The plural: -ами and -ями

In the plural the instrumental ends in **-ами**, or **-ями** after a soft ending, for every gender. Two common plurals are irregular.

NOMINATIVE PLURAL	INSTRUMENTAL PLURAL	ENGLISH
столы́	**столо́ми**	with the tables
кни́ги	**кни́гами**	with the books
о́кна	**о́кнами**	with the windows
студе́нты	**студе́нтами**	with the students
друзья́	**друзья́ми**	with the friends
учителя́	**учителя́ми**	with the teachers
ста́нции	**ста́нциями**	with the stations
роди́тели	**роди́телями**	with the parents
де́ти	**детьми́**	with the children (irregular)
лю́ди	**людьми́**	with people (irregular)

Words in this chapter

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
с бра́том	s BRAH-tahm	with my brother
с сестро́й	s see-STROY	with my sister

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
с друзья́ми	s drooz-YAH-mee	with friends
ру́чкой	ROOCH-koy	with a pen
рабо́тать врачо́м	rah-BOH-taht' vrah-CHOHM	to work as a doctor
интересова́ться	een-tee-ree-sah-VAHT'-tsah	to be interested in
под столо́м	paht stah-LOHM	under the table
пе́ред до́мом	PYEH-reed DOH-mahm	in front of the house
за до́мом	zah DOH-mahm	behind the house
ме́жду до́мами	MYEHZH-doo DOH-mah-mee	between the houses
ле́том	LYEH-tahm	in summer
с детьми́	s deet'-MEE	with the children

In Use — Применя´ем

Read the exchanges aloud, and notice which nouns take the instrumental.

① With whom?

A:

С кем ты идёшь в кино´?

Who are you going to the cinema with?

B:

Я иду´ с друзья´ми. А ты?

I am going with friends. And you?

A:

Я иду´ с сестро´й.

I am going with my sister.

② What does he do?

A:

Кем рабо´тает твой брат?

What does your brother do?

B:

Он рабо´тает врачо´м. А твоя´ сестра´?

He works as a doctor. And your sister?

A:

Она´ рабо´тает учи´тельницей.

She works as a teacher.

③ Where is it?

A:

Где моя́ ру́чка?

Where is my pen?

B:

Под столо́м.

Under the table.

A:

А слова́рь?

And the dictionary?

B:

Ря́дом с кни́гой.

Next to the book.

📋 Quick Reference — Резюме́

TOPIC	SUMMARY
questions	*кем? чем?*; *с кем?*
masculine, neuter	*-ом*; *-ем* after a soft ending or unstressed after *ж, ч, ш, щ, ц*; *-ём* if stressed
feminine	*-ой*; *-ей / -ёй* after *-я*; *-ией* after *-ия*; *-ью* after *-ь*
plural	*-ами, -ями*; irregular *детьми́, людьми́*
company	*с* + instrumental: *с бра́том*; compare *с* + genitive = from
means	no preposition: *ру́чкой, авто́бусом, ка́ртой*
roles	*был, бу́дет, стал, рабо́тает* + instrumental; present *to be* stays nominative

TOPIC	SUMMARY
verbs	*интересова́ться, занима́ться, по́льзоваться, увлека́ться*
position	*над, под, пе́ред, за, ме́жду, ря́дом с*; *под, за* with motion take the accusative
time	*у́тром, днём, ве́чером, но́чью, зимо́й, весно́й, ле́том, о́сенью*

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Упражне´ния

Say or write the answer first, then click to check.

1. Put into the instrumental: *брат, сестра´, окно´, дверь, неде´ля*.

▼ Show answer

бра´том, сестро´й, окно´м, две´рью, неде´лей.

2. Say “with my sister” and “from the post office”. What is the difference in the case after *с*?

▼ Show answer

с сестро´й (instrumental, “with”) and *с по´чты* (genitive, “from”).

3. Say “I write with a pen” and “We travel by bus”. Is there a preposition?

▼ Show answer

Я пишу´ ру´чкой. Мы е´дем авто´бусом. No: tools and means take the instrumental alone.

4. Say “He is a doctor” and “He was a doctor”. Which case is the noun?

▼ Show answer

Он врач. (nominative, present) / *Он был врачо´м*. (instrumental, past).

5. Say “My brother works as an engineer”.

▼ Show answer

Мой брат рабо́тает инжене́ром.

6. Why is it *му́жем* but *ножо́м*?

▼ Show answer

After *ж* the ending is *-ем* when the stress is on the stem (*му́-*) and *-ом* when the stress is on the ending (*-жо́м*).

7. Say “The book is under the table” and “The book fell under the table”.

▼ Show answer

Кни́га лежи́т под столо́м. / *Кни́га упа́ла под стол.* Place takes the instrumental, motion the accusative.

8. Say “between the bank and the post office”.

▼ Show answer

ме́жду ба́нком и по́чтой.

9. Say “in the morning” and “in summer”.

▼ Show answer

у́тром, ле́том.

10. Put into the instrumental plural: *друг, кни́га, ребёнок, челове́к.*

▼ Show answer

друзья́ми, кни́гами, детьми́, людьми́. *детьми́* and *людьми́* are irregular.

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-16): that masculine and neuter nouns take *-ом, -ем* or *-ём*, feminine nouns *-ой, -ей, -ёй* or *-ью*, and the plural *-ами* or *-ями*; that after *ж, ш, ч, щ, ц* the ending *-ем* appears when it is not stressed; that the instrumental expresses company, means and tools, with *с* for company; that *с, за, под, над, между* and *перед* take the instrumental; that *над* and *перед* take it for both place and motion, while *за* takes the accusative for motion; and that *быть* and

будет take the instrumental for a role (*Он был студентом*, *Катя будет журналистом*) (sources: en.wikibooks.org: instrumental case, mangolanguages.com: the instrumental case, gw2ru.com: the instrumental case, masterrussian.com: the instrumental case, bucknell.edu: prepositions with the instrumental, from search results only, the pages themselves were not read in full).

Not covered by the search, from general knowledge: *работать* and *стать* with the instrumental, the verbs *интересоваться, заниматься, пользоваться, увлекаться, рядом с*, the time words (*утром, днём, вечером, ночью, зимой, весной, летом, осенью*), the *-ью* and *-менем* endings, the irregular *детьми* and *людьми*, the claim that *под* takes the accusative with motion (the search covered only *за*), every stress mark, the example sentences and dialogs, which were written for this course, and the respellings. No dictionary was consulted. Check a Russian dictionary or a native speaker before relying on them.

Coming up in Chapter 11: Personal Pronouns and Prepositions. *я, ты, он, она́, мы, вы, они́* in all six cases; the added *н-* after prepositions; which preposition takes which case; and the two-case prepositions (*в, на, за, под*).

👤 Personal Pronouns & Prepositions — Ли́чные местоиме́ния и предло́ги

You now know the six cases for nouns. The personal pronouns (я, ты, он, она́, мы, вы, они́) change for case too, and they are the words you use most. Their forms are irregular, so they have to be learned as a table; what is regular is the ***case each preposition takes****. This chapter gives you the pronoun table, the rule for the extra* ***н-****, and one summary of all the prepositions from Chapters 5 to 10.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

In the personal pronouns the **accusative equals the genitive** in every person (*меня́, тебя́, его́, её, нас, вас, их*). After a preposition, the third-person forms **его́, ему́, им, её, ей, их, им, и́ми** add **н-** at the front: *у него́, к нему́, с ним, у неё, о ней, о них*. Before *мне* the prepositions *к, с, о* become **ко, со, обо**: *ко мне́, со мно́й, обо мне́*. The possessives **его́, её, их** never change.

The table

CASE	Я	ТЫ	ОН / ОНО́	ОНА́	МЫ	ВЫ	ОНИ́
Nominative	я	ты	он, оно́	она́	мы	вы	они́
Genitive	меня́	тебя́	его́	её	нас	вас	их
Dative	мне	тебе́	ему́	ей	нам	вам	им
Accusative	меня́	тебя́	его́	её	нас	вас	их
Instrumental	мной	тобо́й	им	ей	на́ми	ва́ми	и́ми
Prepositional	мне	тебе́	нём	ней	нас	вас	них

Watch out: forms that look the same

мне is both dative and prepositional, and **им** is the dative plural *and* the instrumental of *он / оно́*. The verb or preposition shows which. For *она́* the instrumental **ей** also has a longer, bookish variant **ею** that you will meet in reading but rarely hear.

One pronoun in use: я

CASE	EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
Nominative	**Я зна́ю.**	I know.
Genitive	**У меня́ есть кни́га. Без меня́.**	I have a book. Without me.
Dative	**Мне хо́лодно. Он помога́ет мне.**	I am cold. He helps me.
Accusative	**Он зна́ет меня́.**	He knows me.
Instrumental	**Он идёт со мно́й.**	He is going with me.
Prepositional	**Он говори́т обо мне́.**	He is talking about me.

The н- after prepositions

The third-person pronouns *он, оно́, она́, они́* begin with a vowel in several cases (*его́, ей, им*). When a **preposition** comes right before them, an **н-** is added, so the preposition joins the pronoun smoothly. The nominative, *нас, вас, мне* and the other persons are unchanged.

WITHOUT A PREPOSITION	AFTER A PREPOSITION	ENGLISH
Я зна́ю его́.	**У него́ есть брат.**	I know him. · He has a brother.
Я зна́ю её.	**У неё есть брат.**	I know her. · She has a brother.
Я зна́ю их.	**У них есть брат.**	I know them. · They have a brother.
Я помога́ю ему́.	**Я иду́ к нему́.**	I help him. · I am going to him.
Я помога́ю ей.	**Я иду́ к ней.**	I help her. · I am going to her.

WITHOUT A PREPOSITION	AFTER A PREPOSITION	ENGLISH
Я помога́ю им.	**Я иду́ к ним.**	I help them. · I am going to them.
Он помога́ет им.	**Я иду́ с ни́ми.**	He helps them. · I am going with them.

> **Watch out: his, her, their never change**
>
> The **possessive** words **его́** (his), **её** (her) and **их** (their) look like the pronouns, but they **never take н-** and never change for gender or case: **у его́ бра́та** (“at his brother’s”), not *у него́ бра́та*. Compare **у него́ есть брат** (“he has a brother”). Russian Grammar 2 covers the possessives *мой, твой, наш, ваш*.

ко, со, обо

Before **мне** and some consonant groups the short prepositions get an **-о** added for ease of speech.

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
ко мне́	to me
со мно́й	with me
обо мне́	about me
к тебе́	to you
с тобо́й	with you
о тебе́	about you

Which preposition takes which case

This is the summary of every preposition used in Chapters 5 to 10. The case is fixed for each preposition, with a few exceptions that take two (next section).

CASE	PREPOSITIONS	CHAPTER
Prepositional	**в**, **на** (where), **о, об, обо** (about), **при**	5
Accusative	**в**, **на** (where to), **за**, **под** (motion), **че́рез**, **про**, **на** (for a period)	6
Genitive	**без**, **для**, **до**, **из**, **от**, **по́сле**, **о́коло**, **с** (from), **у**	7
Dative	**к**, **по**	9
Instrumental	**над**, **под**, **пе́ред**, **за** (place), **ме́жду**, **ря́дом с**, **с** (with)	10

The two-case prepositions

Five prepositions take a different case depending on meaning. In most of them the rule is the same: **place** takes one case and **motion** takes the accusative.

PREPOSITION	PLACE OR STATE	MOTION OR OTHER	EXAMPLE
в	prepositional (*где?*)	accusative (*куда́?*)	**в шко́ле** / **в шко́лу**
на	prepositional (*где?*)	accusative (*куда́?*)	**на рабо́те** / **на рабо́ту**
за	instrumental (behind)	accusative (to behind; for)	**за до́мом** / **за дом**
под	instrumental (under)	accusative (to under)	**под столо́м** / **под стол**
с	instrumental (with)	genitive (from, off)	**с бра́том** / **с рабо́ты**

> **Watch out: a simple test**
>
> Ask *где?* or *куда́?*. If the answer is “where”, use the prepositional (*в, на*) or instrumental (*за, под*); if the answer is “where to”, use the accusative. *с* is the odd one: ask *с кем?* (“with whom?”) for the instrumental, and *отку́да?* (“from where?”) for the genitive.

Words in this chapter

RUSSIAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
меня́	mee-NYAH	me
тебя́	tee-BYAH	you
его́	yee-VOH	him
её	yee-YOH	her
нас	NAHS	us
их	EEKH	them
мне	MNYEH	to me
у него́	oo nee-VOH	he has
к нему́	k nee-MOO	to him
с ней	s NYEHY	with her
о нём	ah NYOHM	about him
со мно́й	sah MNOY	with me

🗣️ In Use — Применя´ем

Read the exchanges aloud, and notice the н- in the third person after a preposition.

① Who do you know?

A:

Ты зна´ешь Ма´шу?

Do you know Masha?

B:

Да, я зна´ю её. Я рабо´таю с ней.

Yes, I know her. I work with her.

② Going to see him

A:

Ты идёшь к нему´?

Are you going to see him?

B:

Да, я иду´ к нему´. А ты?

Yes, I am going to him. And you?

A:

А у неё есть брат?

And does she have a brother?

B:

Да, у неё есть брат.

Yes, she has a brother.

A:

Я иду́ с тобо́й.

I am going with you.

③ Cold or warm?

A:

Вам хо́лодно?

Are you cold?

B:

Нет, нам тепло́.

No, we are warm.

A:

А им?

And them?

B:

Им то́же тепло́.

They are warm too.

📋 Quick Reference — Резюме́

TOPIC	SUMMARY
accusative	equals the genitive in every personal pronoun: *меня́, тебя́, его́, её, нас, вас, их*
dative	*мне, тебе́, ему́, ей, нам, вам, им*
instrumental	*мной, тобо́й, им, ей, на́ми, ва́ми, и́ми*

TOPIC	SUMMARY
prepositional	*мне, тебе́, нём, ней, нас, вас, них*
н-	*его́, ему́, им, её, ей, их, им, и́ми* add *н-* after a preposition: *у него́, к ней, с ни́ми*
not after a preposition	*Я зна́ю его́*; and possessive *его́, её, их* never take *н-*
ко, со, обо	before *мне* (*ко мне́, со мно́й, обо мне́*)
one case	*к, по* dative; *без, для, до, из, от, у* genitive; *над, пе́ред, ме́жду* instrumental
two cases	*в, на* (place / motion); *за, под* (place / motion); *с* (with / from)

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Упражне´ния

Say or write the answer first, then click to check.

1. Give the accusative and the dative of *я, ты, он, она´*.

▼ Show answer

Accusative: *меня´, тебя´, его´, её*. Dative: *мне, тебе´, ему´, ей*.

2. Say “I know him” and “He has a brother” (*у* + *он*). Which has н-?

▼ Show answer

Я зна´ю его´. / У него´ есть брат. The second has *н-* because a preposition comes before it.

3. Say “I am going with her” and “I am going to them”.

▼ Show answer

Я иду´ с ней. Я иду´ к ним.

4. Say “They have a book” and “I see them”. Why are the forms different?

▼ Show answer

У них есть кни́га. Я ви́жу их. After *у* the pronoun takes *н-*; the verb *ви́деть* is not a preposition.

5. Why is it *у его́ бра́та* and not *у него́ бра́та* for “at his brother’s”?

▼ Show answer

Here *его́* is a possessive meaning “his”, and possessives never take *н-*.

6. Say “with me”, “to me” and “about me”.

▼ Show answer

со мно́й, ко мне́, обо мне́.

7. Say “I am cold”, “She is cold” and “We are cold”.

▼ Show answer

Мне хо́лодно. Ей хо́лодно. Нам хо́лодно.

8. Put the right case after *в*: “I am at school” and “I am going to school”.

▼ Show answer

Я в шко́ле. Я иду́ в шко́лу.

9. Say “with my brother” and “from work”. How does *с* differ?

▼ Show answer

с бра́том (instrumental, with) and *с рабо́ты* (genitive, from).

10. Which case do *к, по* take? And *над, пе́ред, ме́жду*?

▼ Show answer

к, по: dative. *над, пе́ред, ме́жду*: instrumental.

Not Yet Verified

Checked (one web search on 2026-11-16): the full paradigm of the eight personal pronouns across the six cases, including that the accusative equals the genitive for every personal pronoun; that the third-person forms take an initial *н-* after a preposition and the prepositional is *мне, тебе, нём, ней, нас, вас, них*; that the instrumental of *она* has the variant *ею*; and that some prepositions take two forms (*у неё*) (sources: elon.io: personal pronouns and their declension, russianforfree.com: personal pronouns and cases, en.wikipedia.org: Russian declension, russianenthusiast.com: introduction to the cases, utexas.pressbooks.pub: personal pronouns, from search results only, the pages themselves were not read in full). One blog in the results contained typos in its forms, so I did not use it.

Not covered by the search, from general knowledge: the summary of which preposition takes which case (collected from my own chapters 5 to 10, so it is only as accurate as those), the two-case prepositions and the *где? / куда?* test, *ко, со, обо*, the claim that *его, её, их* as possessives never change or take *н-*, the use of *вы* and *тепло* in the dialog, every stress mark, the example sentences and dialogs, which were written for this course, and the respellings. No dictionary was consulted. Check a Russian dictionary or a native speaker before relying on them.

Coming up in Chapter 12: Putting It Together. The six cases in one table; reading a short text and naming the case of each noun; a recap of the whole course; and the way ahead to Russian Grammar 2 (adjectives, possessives and numerals).

🧩 Putting It Together — Собира´ем всё вме´сте

You have now met all six cases and the personal pronouns. This last chapter puts everything in one place: the full table for a few model nouns, a method for working out the case of any noun in a sentence, a short text to analyse, the mistakes learners make most often, and a recap of the course. Use it as a reference page.

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

To find a case, ask **three questions in order**. **1.** Is there a **preposition**? It fixes the case (Chapter 11). **2.** Is there a **verb or phrase** that demands a case (*нет, у меня´, мне хо´лодно, помога´ть, интересова´ться*)? **3.** Otherwise: **subject** is nominative, **direct object** is accusative, **possessor** is genitive, **recipient** is dative, **tool or role** is instrumental.

The six cases at a glance

CASE	QUESTION	MAIN JOBS	CHAPTER
Nominative	кто? что?	the subject; the dictionary form; role in the present	1, 3
Genitive	кого́? чего́?	"of"; absence (*нет*); *у*; quantity; from (*из, с, от*); *без, для, до, по́сле*	7, 8
Dative	кому́? чему́?	recipient; age; feelings and need; *к, по*	9
Accusative	кого́? что?	direct object; direction (*в, на*); days; *че́рез, за, про*	6
Instrumental	кем? чем?	company (*с*); means; roles; *над, под, пе́ред, за, ме́жду*	10
Prepositional	о ком? о чём?	place (*в, на*); "about" (*о*); only after a preposition	5

Five model nouns in the singular

CASE	СТОЛ (MASC., INANIMATE)	БРАТ (MASC., ANIMATE)	КНИ́ГА (FEM.)	ОКНО́ (NEUTER)	ДВЕРЬ (FEM. IN -Ь)
Nominative	стол	брат	кни́га	окно́	дверь
Genitive	стола́	бра́та	кни́ги	окна́	две́ри
Dative	столу́	бра́ту	кни́ге	окну́	две́ри
Accusative	стол	бра́та	кни́гу	окно́	дверь
Instrumental	столо́м	бра́том	кни́гой	окно́м	две́рью
Prepositional	столе́	бра́те	кни́ге	окне́	две́ри

The same nouns in the plural

CASE	СТОЛ	БРАТ	КНИ́ГА	ОКНО́
Nominative	столы́	бра́тья	кни́ги	о́кна
Genitive	столо́в	бра́тьев	книг	о́кон
Dative	столам́	бра́тьям	кни́гам	о́кнам
Accusative	столы́	бра́тьев	кни́ги	о́кна
Instrumental	столам́и	бра́тьями	кни́гами	о́кнами
Prepositional	столах́	бра́тьях	кни́гах	о́кнах

Watch out: patterns worth seeing

1. The accusative of *брат* is the genitive (singular and plural), but *стол* and *окно́* keep the nominative. **2.** The feminine dative and prepositional are the same (*кни́ге*), and the feminine -ь noun has the same form in the genitive, dative and prepositional (*две́ри*). **3.** In the plural the

dative, instrumental and prepositional are always regular: *-ам, -ами, -ах* (*-ям, -ями, -ях* after a soft ending).

Finding the case: question words and cues

IF YOU SEE…	THE CASE IS…	EXAMPLE
a subject, or *э́то*, or *Он студе́нт*	nominative	**Брат чита́ет.**
нет, *у*, *без*, *для*, *из*, *от*, *до*, *по́сле*, *мно́го*, 5+	genitive	**У меня́ нет бра́та.**
a recipient, *к*, *по*, *Мне хо́лодно*, age	dative	**Я пишу́ бра́ту.**
a direct object; *в, на* with motion; a day of the week	accusative	**Я ви́жу бра́та.**
с (with), a tool, a role after *был*, *над, под, пе́ред, ме́жду*	instrumental	**Я иду́ с бра́том.**
в, на for place; *о* (about)	prepositional	**Я говорю́ о бра́те.**

Reading a short text

Read the text aloud, then use the table that follows to name the case of each noun and pronoun and say why.

📖 Мой день

1

Я живу́ в Москве́ с роди́телями.

I live in Moscow with my parents.

2

У меня́ есть брат и сестра́.

I have a brother and a sister.

3

Мой брат рабо́тает на по́чте.

My brother works at the post office.

4

Сестра́ у́чится в университе́те.

My sister studies at the university.

5

В суббо́ту мы идём в музе́й с друзья́ми.

On Saturday we are going to the museum with friends.

6

По́сле музе́я мы пьём чай в кафе́.

After the museum we drink tea in a cafe.

7

Я пишу́ письмо́ дру́гу.

I am writing a letter to a friend.

8

Мне ну́жно купи́ть пода́рок для ма́мы.

I need to buy a present for Mum.

SENTENCE	WORD	CASE	WHY
1	**Москве́**	prepositional	*в* for place
1	**роди́телями**	instrumental	*с* meaning “with”
2	**меня́**	genitive	*у* + genitive for “have”
2	**брат, сестра́**	nominative	the thing that exists, after *есть*
3	**брат**	nominative	subject
3	**по́чте**	prepositional	*на* for place

SENTENCE	WORD	CASE	WHY
4	**университе́те**	prepositional	*в* for place
5	**суббо́ту**	accusative	*в* + a day
5	**музе́й**	accusative	*в* with motion; inanimate masculine
5	**друзья́ми**	instrumental	*с* meaning “with”
6	**музе́я**	genitive	*по́сле* takes the genitive
6	**чай**	accusative	direct object; inanimate masculine
6	**кафе́**	prepositional	*в* for place; the noun does not change
7	**письмо́**	accusative	direct object; neuter
7	**дру́гу**	dative	recipient
8	**мне**	dative	the person who needs
8	**пода́рок**	accusative	direct object; inanimate masculine
8	**ма́мы**	genitive	*для* takes the genitive

The most common mistakes

NOT THIS	BUT THIS	WHY
Я ви́жу брат.	**Я ви́жу бра́та.**	animate masculine: the accusative looks like the genitive (Chapter 6)
Я иду́ в шко́ле.	**Я иду́ в шко́лу.**	motion takes the accusative (Chapter 6)
Мне два́дцать год.	**Мне два́дцать лет.**	5 and up: the genitive plural, and *год* becomes *лет* (Chapter 8)
У меня́ нет кни́га.	**У меня́ нет кни́ги.**	*нет* takes the genitive (Chapter 7)

NOT THIS	BUT THIS	WHY
два кни́ги	**две кни́ги**	*два* is for masculine and neuter, *две* for feminine (Chapter 8)
кни́гы	**кни́ги**	no *ы* after *г, к, х, ж, ч, ш, щ* (Chapter 2)
У его́ есть брат.	**У него́ есть брат.**	*н-* after a preposition (Chapter 11)

🗣️ In Use — Применя́ем

Read the exchanges aloud, and name the case of each noun and pronoun.

① Going shopping

A:

Куда́ ты идёшь?

Where are you going?

B:

В магази́н. Мне ну́жен хлеб.

To the shop. I need bread.

A:

А у тебя́ есть де́ньги?

And do you have any money?

B:

Да, у меня́ есть де́ньги.

Yes, I have money.

② A phone call

A:

С кем ты говори́шь?

Who are you talking to?

B:

С бра́том. Он звони́т мне из Москвы́.

With my brother. He is calling me from Moscow.

③ A present

A:

О чём э́та кни́га?

What is this book about?

B:

О друзья́х.

About friends.

A:

Кому́ ты её даёшь?

Who are you giving it to?

B:

Сестре́.

To my sister.

📋 Recap of the course

CHAPTER	TITLE	YOU LEARNED
1	How Russian Works	no articles; no present *to be*; the six cases at a glance
2	Sounds & Spelling Rules	stress; vowel reduction; hard and soft; voicing; the spelling rules
3	Gender & the Nominative	three genders; *-ь* nouns; unchanging nouns; animate and inanimate
4	Plural Nouns	*-ы / -и*, *-а / -я*; stressed *-а*; irregular plurals; plural only
5	The Prepositional Case	*-е, -и*; *в* and *на*; *в саду́*; *-ах / -ях*
6	The Accusative Case	*-у / -ю*; the animate-masculine rule; direction; days
7	The Genitive Case: Singular	*-а / -ы*; *нет*; *у*; containers; *из, с, от, до, без, для*
8	The Genitive Plural & Quantity	*-ов, -ей*, zero; *мно́го*; the numbers
9	The Dative Case	*-у / -е*; recipient; age; feelings; *к, по*
10	The Instrumental Case	*-ом / -ой*; *с*; roles; *над, под, пе́ред*

CHAPTER	TITLE	YOU LEARNED
11	Personal Pronouns & Prepositions	the pronoun table; *н-*; which preposition takes which case
12	Putting It Together	the full table; finding the case; reading; common errors

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Упражне́ния

Say or write the answer first, then click to check.

1. Name the case: *в Москве́, с бра́том, у меня́, Мне хо́лодно, Я ви́жу кни́гу, Он был врачо́м.*

▼ Show answer

prepositional, instrumental, genitive, dative (*мне*), accusative, instrumental.

2. Put into the right form: *Я люблю́ (сестра́).*

▼ Show answer

Я люблю́ сестру́. (accusative of a feminine *-а* noun)

3. Put into the right form: *Я иду́ к (врач).*

▼ Show answer

Я иду́ к врачу́. (к + dative)

4. Put into the right form after *нет*: *брат, сестра́, друзья́*.

▼ Show answer

нет бра́та, нет сестры́, нет друзе́й.

5. Say “He works as a doctor”.

▼ Show answer

Он рабо́тает врачо́м. (instrumental of role)

6. Say “I have five books and two brothers”.

▼ Show answer

У меня́ пять книг и два бра́та. (5: genitive plural; 2: genitive singular)

7. Say “I am going to the doctor with my sister”.

▼ Show answer

Я иду́ к врачу́ с сестро́й.

8. Name the case of *стол* in *Кни́га лежи́т под столо́м* and *Кни́га упа́ла под стол*.

▼ Show answer

instrumental (place) and accusative (motion).

9. Add the right form of the pronoun: *у (она́), с (они́)*.

▼ Show answer

у неё, с ни́ми. After a preposition the third-person pronouns take *н-*.

10. Why do *Я ви́жу бра́та* and *дом бра́та* have the same ending but not the same case?

▼ Show answer

The first is accusative (the animate-masculine accusative looks like the genitive); the second is genitive (possessor).

🎓 COURSE COMPLETE

You have finished **Russian Grammar 1**: the Russian noun system, the six cases and the personal pronouns, with the spelling rules that explain the endings. Keep this chapter at hand as a reference table.

What comes next

The course plan puts **adjectives, possessives and numerals** (the words that agree with a noun) in **Russian Grammar 2**, and the **verb** in **Russian Grammar 3** and **Russian Grammar 4**. This split is provisional and will be confirmed when each course is outlined. You can already use what you learned here in the Basic Conversation courses by looking up the case behind each form.

> **Not Yet Verified**
>
> **Checked (one web search on 2026-11-16):** the six case names and their questions (*кто? что?*, *кому? чему?*, *кого? что?*, *кем? чем?*, *о ком? о чём?*), the main jobs of the nominative, dative, accusative and prepositional, and the three-step method of finding a case (ask the question, check for a preposition, check what the verb requires) (sources: mezzoguild.com: the six cases, gw2ru.com: the six cases explained, fluentu.com: Russian cases, russianenthusiast.com: Russian cases, linguanaut.com: Russian cases, from search results only, the pages themselves were not read in full).
> **Not covered by the search, from general knowledge:** the declension tables for *стол, брат, книга, окно, дверь* in the singular and plural (the *стол, книга, окно* singular table matched what I know, but the search did not supply it), the analysis table of the text, the list of common mistakes, the questions of the genitive (*кого? чего?*), every stress mark, the example sentences and dialogs, which were written for this course, and the respellings. No dictionary was consulted. The search also said that *ждать* takes the genitive; I have not used that verb here, and it also takes the accusative in many contexts, so check it before you use it. Check a Russian dictionary or a native speaker before relying on any of these.