

## АЛФАВИТ - (The Russian alphabet)

The Russian language is spoken by over 155 million people in the world. It is a Slavic language like Polish, Serbo-Croat, Czech, Bulgarian, Ukrainian... But, unlike some Slavic countries which use the Latin alphabet, Russia uses the Cyrillic alphabet, which owes its name to St Cyril, a Byzantine monk, who- in the 9th century with the help of his brother- created the first Slavic alphabet which goal was to translate Greek religious texts into Slavic. The Cyrillic alphabet was then developed based on the Slavic one; this is why now, the Russian alphabet is a mix of Greek letters and letters that are specific to the Slavic language sounds.

But enough with history! Now, that we have put our alphabet into context, let's have a look at its composition and learn it!

### 1) The Alphabet

The Cyrillic alphabet is composed of **10 vowels**, 21 consonants and **2 silent letters** named *tvorydy znak* (hard sign) and *Myahky znak* (soft sign), which totally equals to 33 letters. See in the table hereunder:

Capital letters	English equivalent & [pronunciation]	English examples
<b>А</b>	A -[Ah]	<i>Far</i>
<b>Б</b>	B - [Beh]	<i>Box</i>
<b>В</b>	<b>V</b> -[Veh]	<i>Voice</i>
<b>Г</b>	G -[Gue]	<i>go</i>
<b>Д</b>	D -[Deh]	<i>Day</i>
<b>Е</b>	E -[Ye]	<i>Yet</i>
<b>Ё</b>	Ë -[Yo]	<i>Your</i>
<b>Ж</b>	[Zhe]	<i>Pleasure</i>
<b>З</b>	[Ze]	<i>Zoo</i>
<b>И</b>	E	<i>Meat</i>
<b>Й</b>	"Ee kratkoye" [short Ee]	<i>Boy</i>
<b>К</b>	K -[Kah]	<i>Cat</i>
<b>Л</b>	L -[Leh]	<i>Lamp</i>
<b>М</b>	M	<i>Man</i>
<b>Н</b>	<b>N</b>	<i>Note</i>
<b>О</b>	O	<i>Not</i>
<b>П</b>	P -[Peh]	<i>Pet</i>
<b>Р</b>	<b>R</b> [rolling r]	<i>Rock</i>
<b>С</b>	<b>S</b>	<i>Sun</i>

<b>Т</b>	T -[teh]	<i>Table</i>
<b>У</b>	U – [oo]	<i>Moon</i>
<b>Ф</b>	F	<i>Food</i>
<b>Х</b>	Kh	<i>Loch</i>
<b>Ц</b>	Ts	<i>Boots</i>
<b>Ч</b>	Ch	<i>Chat</i>
<b>Ш</b>	Sh	<i>Short</i>
<b>Щ</b>	Sh'	<i>Sheep</i>
<b>Ъ</b>	Tvyordy znak (hard sign) [Silent letter]	
<b>Ы</b>	Y [hard y]	<i>Ill</i>
<b>Ь</b>	Myagkiy znak (soft sign) [silent letter]	
<b>Э</b>	Eh	<i>End</i>
<b>Ю</b>	Yu	<i>Use</i>
<b>Я</b>	Ya	<i>Yard</i>

To listen to the pronunciation of the alphabet, you can go onto this website:

→ <https://www.russlandjournal.de/en/learn-russian/russian-alphabet/>

Lots of letters have similar sounds because they work in pairs:

- **Vowels:**

<b>А</b>	<b>Э</b>	<b>О</b>	<b>У</b>	<b>Ы</b>
<b>Я</b>	<b>Е</b>	<b>Ё</b>	<b>Ю</b>	<b>И</b>

- **Consonants:**

<b>Б</b>	<b>В</b>	<b>Г</b>	<b>Д</b>	<b>Ж</b>	<b>З</b>	<b>Ц</b>
<b>П</b>	<b>Ф</b>	<b>К</b>	<b>Т</b>	<b>Ш</b>	<b>С</b>	<b>Ч</b>

**Exercise:** transcribe into English the following Russian words:

-парк = .....

-шеф = .....

-спорт = .....

-фильм = .....

-суп = .....

-кино = .....

-банк = .....

-киоск = .....

-бокс = .....

-театр = .....

-текст = .....

-атлет = .....

-стоп = .....

-мама = .....

-факс = .....

-папа = .....

-класс = .....

-лампа = .....

-тигр = .....

-карта = .....

**Exercise:** transcribe into Russian the following words:

-football = .....

-taxi = .....

-student = .....

-restaurant = .....

-tourist = .....

-telephone = .....

-metro = .....

-transport = .....

## 2) The cursive alphabet

One of the difficulties of a beginner learning Russian is to be able to read and write cursive letters. As you will see hereunder, some letters are really different in the handwritten form. So, you will need to master both capital and cursive letters as in Russia both are used in daily life.



**Exercise:** reproduce the letters and practise:

А а а



Д д д



Б б б



Е е е



В в в



Ё ё ё



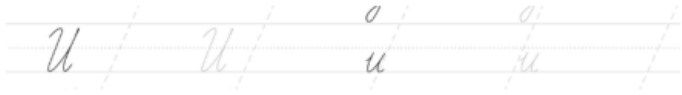
Г г г



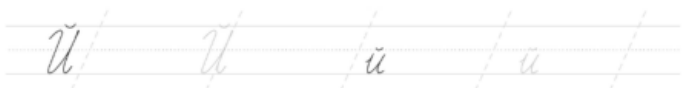
З з з



И и и



Й й й



К к к



П п п



Р р р



С с с



Т т т



Ч ч ч



Ш ш ш



Щ щ щ



Ж ж ж



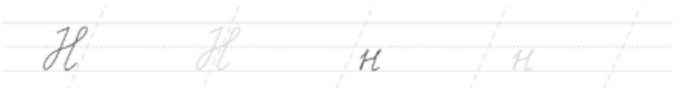
Л л л



М м м



Н н н



О о о



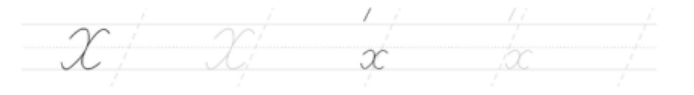
У у у



Ф ф ф



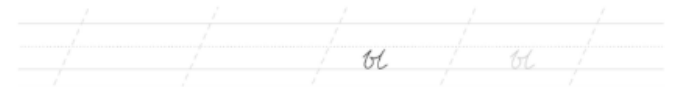
Х х х



Ц ц ц



Ы ы



Ь ь



Э э э



Ъ ъ



Ю ю ю



Я я я



**Exercise:** write the following words using cursive letters:

- Радио → .....
- музыкальный → .....
- митинг → .....
- паспорт → .....
- интернет → .....
- меню → .....
- салат → .....
- робот → .....
- маркетинг → .....
- библиотека → .....

3) Useful vocabulary

Да	→ .....
Нет	→ .....
Здравствуй(те)	→ .....
До свидания	→ .....
Привет	→ .....
Пока	→ .....
Извини(те)	→ .....
Пожалуйста	→ .....
Спасибо	→ .....
Я не знаю !	→ .....
Я не понимаю !	→ .....
Я не говорю по-русски	→ .....