

AZBUKA

RUSSIAN FOR BEGINNERS

WITH AUDIO FILES



Elena Minakova-Boblest

LEARN RUSSIAN

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AZBUKA. RUSSIAN FOR BEGINNERS.

BY ELENA MINAKOVA-BOBLEST

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INTRODUCTION

This intensive introductory course of Russian is intended for everybody who wish to learn Russian spelling and pronunciation in the shortest possible time. Step by step, "Azбука" will enable you to read Russian, as well as to communicate in Russian in typical everyday situations.

The course consists of 10 lessons. Each lesson has basically the same structure: Every lesson begins with presenting of new letters of the Russian alphabet, followed by a complete and clear explanation of the pronunciation and spelling rules.

Finally, each unit provides exercises which train you to read and to understand the first words and sentences, as well as to hear different types of intonation.

In these exercises, you will learn not only new sounds and letters, but also many useful words, expressions and phrases for everyday conversations.

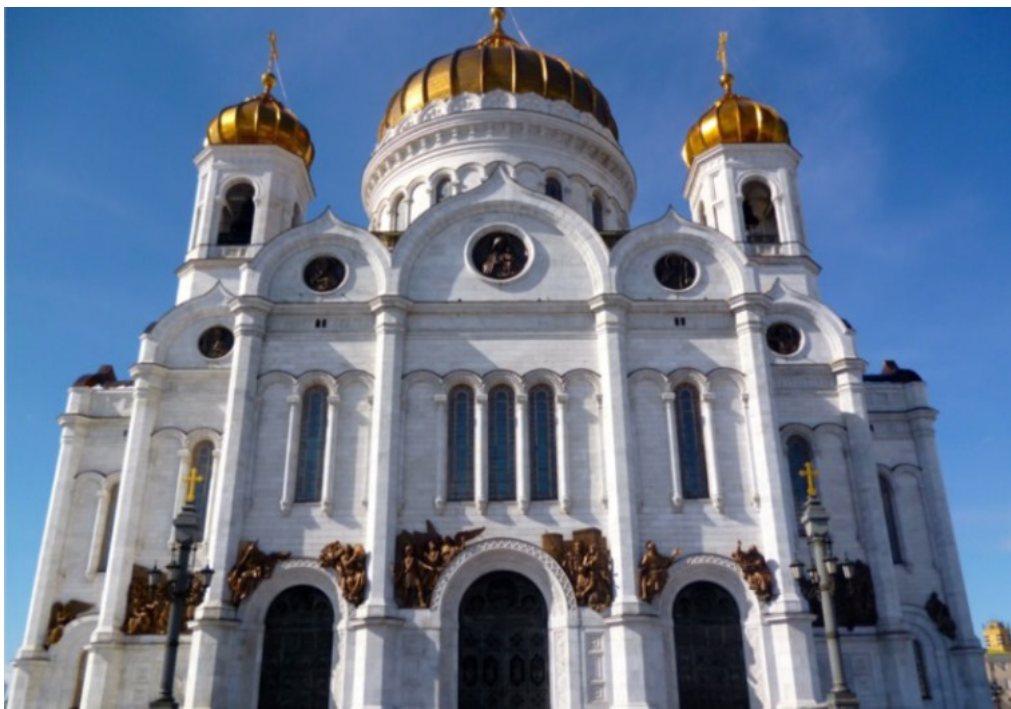
All practice material has been recorded by Russian professional speakers and is accompanied with an English translation, making it suitable for self-study as well as classroom use.

In the chapter „Everyday Russian“ you will learn how to use the basic vocabulary of the lessons, in order to master most common everyday situations in Russian.

In addition, all grammar topics of the lessons are summarized in the chapter „Grammar“. Finally, you will find all words of the lessons in the Russian/English and English/Russian dictionary.

To search for a Russian word you should add a Russian keyboard to your iPad: Open Settings General -> Keyboard -> Add New Keyboard -> select Russian. To switch to the Russian keyboard tap the Globe icon at the bottom of the screen.

GOOD LUCK AND HAVE FUN WITH AZBUKA!



Moscow, Cathedral of Christ the Saviour

LESSON 1

А а	Б б	В в	Г г	Д д	Е е	Ё ё	Ж ж	З з	И и	Й й
К к	Л л	М м	Н н	О о	П п	Р р	С с	Т т	У у	Ф ф
Х х	Ц ц	Ч ч	Ш ш	Щ щ	Ъ ъ	Ы ы	Ь ь	Э э	Ю ю	Я я

Don't be afraid of the Cyrillic script!

The Russian alphabet consists of 33 letters: 10 letters to designate vowel sounds, 21 letters to designate consonant sounds as well as 2 special letters without any sound of their own: the hard sign **Ѣ** and the soft sign **Ь**. They indicate hardness and softness of consonants.

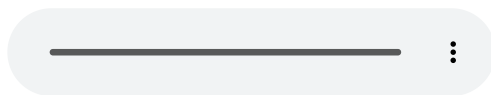
You already know six Russian letters because they look and sound the same as in the Latin alphabet. These are the letters **А, Е, О, К, М, Т**. Just read your first Russian words consisting of these letters.

Then you can listen to them:



мама <i>mama</i>	как <i>how?</i>	там <i>there</i>	так <i>so</i>	кто <i>who?</i>
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You can even read your first sentences formed from these words:



Как мама?	<i>How's mama?</i>	Как так?	<i>Why?</i>
Кто там?	<i>Who is there?</i>	Мама там.	<i>Mama is there.</i>

After this short sample, you are probably less afraid of the Russian alphabet, which can be found on the next page. To get an overview, you can hear the pronunciation of Russian letters or skip this part and just start with the first sounds and letters.

The Russian Alphabet in Dictionary Order



Letter	Transliteration	Letter	Transliteration	Letter	Transliteration
А а	a	Б б	b	В в	v
Г г	g	Д д	d	Е е	1. e after consonants 2. ye otherwise
Ё ё	1. yo 2. o after ж, ш, ч, щ	Ж ж	zh (voiced)	З з	zh (voiced)
И и	i	Й й	1. y 2. j	К к	k
Л л	l	М м	m	Н н	n
О о	o	П п	p	Р р	r
С с	s (voiceless)	Т т	t	У у	u
Ф ф	f	Х х	ch	Ц ц	ts
Ч ч	ch	Ш ш	sh	Щ щ	shch
Ъ	hard sign separation	Ы	y	Ь	soft sign, indicates softness of the preceding consonant
Э э	e	Ю ю	yu	Я я	ya

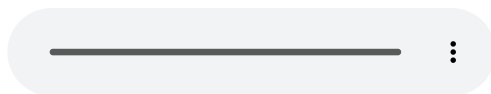
Vowel letters Aa, Oo, Yy, Ээ*

The letters **Aa** and **Oo** designate the vowel sounds [a] and [o]. They look and sound similar to their English counterparts. The letter **Yy** looks like an English one but has a different sound - [oo], and the letter **Ээ** looks unfamiliar but has familiar pronunciation - [e].

*All letters are represented here and subsequently as upper- and lower-case characters

A a	[a]	as in <i>father</i>	Y y	[oo]	as in <i>moon</i>
O o	[o]	as in <i>more or not</i>	Э э	[e]	as in <i>end</i>

1 Listen to the first examples and repeat:



a - o - y - э a - o - y э - a - o y - o - a э - o - y



Sounds and letters



А а	Б б	В в	Г г	Д д	Е е	Ё ё	Ж ж	З з	И и	Й й
К к	Л л	М м	Н н	О о	П п	Р р	С с	Т т	У у	Ф ф
Х х	Ц ц	Ч ч	Ш ш	Щ щ	Ъ ъ	Ы ы	Ь ь	Э э	Ю ю	Я я

The Russian language has more sounds than letters: 33 letters designate 42 basic sounds. Most of Russian sounds are similar to English sounds, so you don't need any special training to pronounce them.

The Russian spelling system is far simpler than that of English. The system is basically this: one letter, one sound. For example, the letter **К** is pronounced as the sound [k], and the letter **Т** represents the sound [t].!However, the sound value of the letter may vary according to the position in the word and the stress – not randomly but following some strict, easy-to-understand rules which are provided in this course.

Since there are a number of differences between spelling and pronunciation in Russian, all Russian sounds are represented in transcriptions by means of English orthography (in square brackets).

Moreover, all sounds, words and phrases in this course are accompanied by audio files to help you to pronounce correctly. However, keep in mind that even „similar“ Russian and English sounds are never absolutely identical, so learning to read Russian properly, you should rather listen to the audio examples than to look at the English transcription.