

Russian Basic Grammar

Guide for ex *ab-initio* and post-A-level students

Nouns

- basic number and gender endings (with exceptions);
- declension: Accusative (incl. animate masculines and plurals), Genitive (incl. Partitive Genitive, Dative, Instrumental, Prepositional (incl. masculine forms in *-e* and *-y*));
- indeclinable nouns (*кино, такси, шоу* etc.).

Pronouns

- personal, possessive, demonstrative (*этот/эта/это/эти*), interrogative (*кто, что, чей/чья/чьё/чьи*), determinative (*весь/вся/все/все*), reflexive (*себя*) and their declension;
- reflexive possessive *свой* vs. *его/ее/их*;
- negative pronouns (with *не-* and *ни-* prefixes); constructions *я ни с кем не говорил* vs. *мне не с кем говорить*;
- indefinite pronouns (*...-то, ...-нибудь, кое-...*) their meaning and inflection.

Adjectives

- basic number and gender endings;
- declension of adjectives (incl. substantivised adjectives/adjectival nouns (*рабочий, столовая* etc.) and their declension);
- long and short form adjectives;
- comparative and superlative forms.

Verbs

- finite endings: 1st and 2nd conjugation; irregular verbs (*дать, жить, есть, мочь, ждать, хотеть, брать, взять*);
- conjugation of *-ова-/-ева-* verbs (e.g. *интересоваться, танцевать*);
- conjugation of *-ва-* verbs (with roots *-да-, -зна-, -ста-*, e.g. *отдавать, узнавать, уставать*);
- tenses: present, past, future;
- irregular past tense (*идти, есть, мочь*);
- verbs of motion (unprefixed and prefixed);
- aspects: imperfective/perfective and the basic principles of usage;
- reflexive verbs;
- imperatives.

Adverbs

- negative adverbs (*нигде, никуда, ниоткуда, нисколько & некогда, некуда, неоткуда, незачем*);
- indefinite adverbs (in *...-то, ...-нибудь, ...-либо, кое-...* (e.g. *где-то, где-нибудь, где-либо, кое-где*));
- comparative and superlative forms.

Numerals

- cardinal and ordinal numerals and their declension;
- cardinal numerals and nouns (constructions such as 5 apples, 2 girls, 41 student);
- giving the age, giving the date, giving the time.

Verbal adjectives (Participles)

- active and passive, present and past: principles of formation; agreement with the noun.

Verbal Adverbs

- perfective and imperfective: principles of formation and usage.

Syntax

- constructions expressing possibility and necessity (*можно, нужно, надо, нельзя*);
- construction expressing absence (e.g. *у меня нет/не было/не будет занятий*);
- double (multiple) negation (e.g. *он никогда ни с кем не разговаривает*);
- relative clauses (with *который/какой/чей*);
- subjunctive mood (clauses with *если бы...*; *чтобы* + infinitive; *чтобы* + past tense);
- conditional vs. subjunctive clauses (*если...* vs. *если бы...*);
- constructions with *ли* (questions in indirect speech).

Basic spelling and punctuation rules

Spelling:

- no *ы* after *з, к, х, ж, ш, ч, ц, ц*;
- no *я* after *з, к, х, ж, ш, ч, ц*;
- no *ю* after *з, к, х, ж, ш, ч, ц*;
- no *о* in unstressed position after *ж, ш, ч, ц, ц*

*** for examples and exceptions see Terence Wade, A Comprehensive Russian Grammar, §16.***

Basic punctuation rules:

- commas between main and subordinate clause:
 - in relative clauses (before *который/какой/чей*);
 - before subordinate conjunctions (*что, чтобы, когда, почему* etc.);
 - to separate clauses with *ли*.
- commas to detach participle and verbal adverb constructions (причастные и деепричастные обороты);
- commas to separate comparison introduced by *чем*;
- commas to detach introductory words and phrases (*во-первых, конечно, по-моему, на мой взгляд, по моему мнению* etc.).

For details see Terence Wade, A Comprehensive Russian Grammar, §20-29.