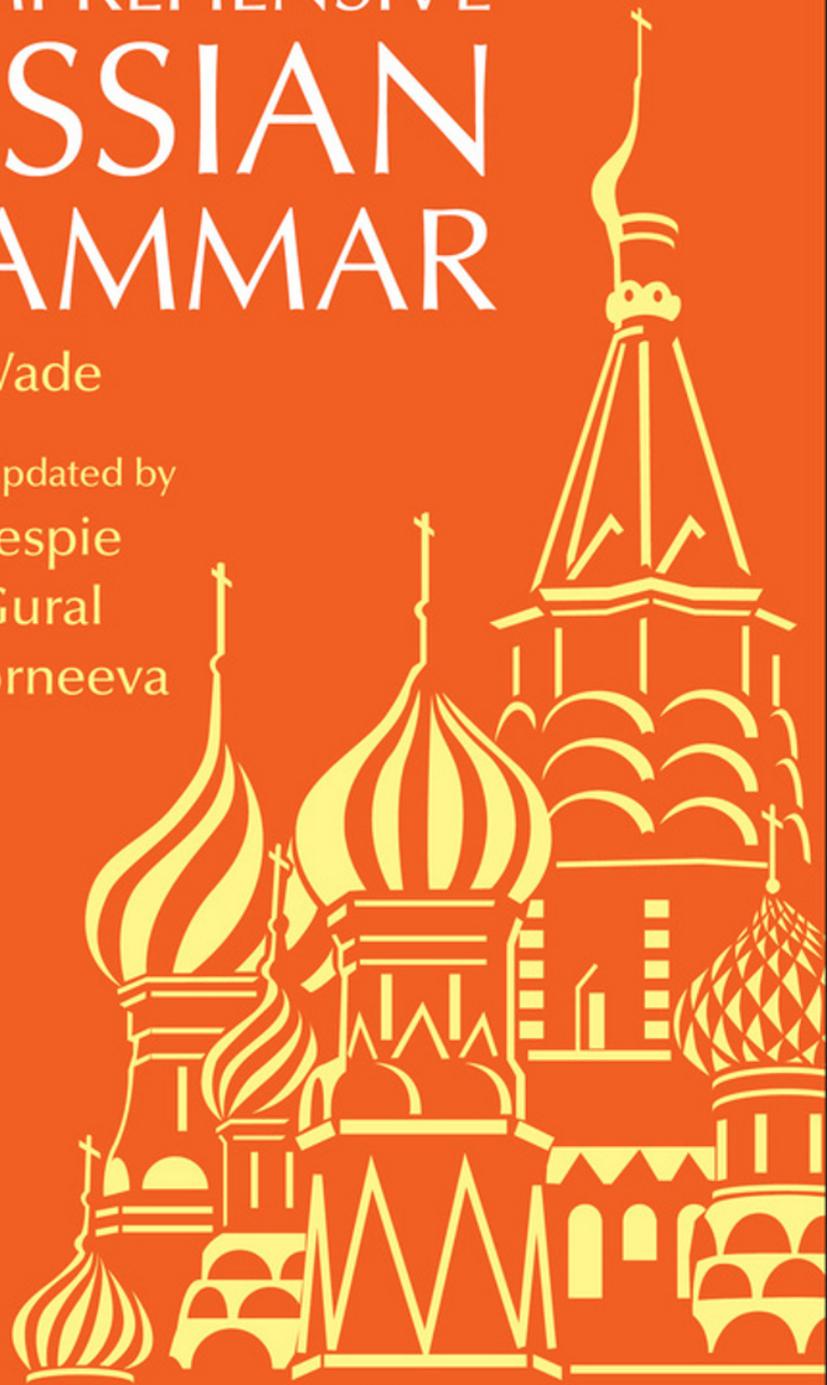


FOURTH EDITION

A COMPREHENSIVE
RUSSIAN
GRAMMAR

Terence Wade

Revised and Updated by
David Gillespie
Svetlana Gural
Marina Korneeva



WILEY Blackwell

A Comprehensive Russian Grammar

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Published

A Comprehensive Russian Grammar, Fourth Edition

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WILEY Blackwell

This edition first published 2020
© 2020 Terence Wade & John Wiley & Sons Ltd

Edition History

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John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Wade, Terence, 1930–2005, author. | Gillespie, David, 1957– author. |

Gural, S. K., author. | Korneeva, Marina (Marina Aleksandrovna), author.

Title: A comprehensive Russian grammar / Terence Wade ; updated, with additional material,
by David Gillespie, Svetlana Gural and Marina Korneeva.

Description: Fourth edition. | Hoboken, NJ : Wiley-Blackwell, 2020. | Series: Blackwell reference grammars
| Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019045086 (print) | LCCN 2019045087 (ebook) | ISBN 9781119520290 (paperback) |
ISBN 9781119520320 (adobe pdf) | ISBN 9781119520283 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Russian language—Grammar.

Classification: LCC PG2106 .W33 2020 (print) | LCC PG2106 (ebook) | DDC 491.782/421—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019045086>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019045087>

Cover image: Nicki Averill/Wiley

Cover design by Wiley

Set in 10.5/12pt STIXGeneral by SPi Global, Pondicherry, India

Printed in Great Britain by Bell & Bain Ltd, Glasgow

Pb printing 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

To May

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Preface

The *Comprehensive Russian Grammar* is meant for English-speaking pupils and students of Russian at the post-introductory stage. It is also a reference aid for teachers, translators and interpreters and others who use the language in a professional capacity.

The first new reference grammar of Russian to have been published in the United Kingdom since the 1950s, it is based on personal research and observation, long experience of teaching Russian at all levels from beginners up to the Honours Degree and the Civil Service Interpretership, and on a close study of reference materials by Russian, British and American linguists.

The approach is descriptive throughout, and rules of usage are constantly measured against current practice as reflected in contemporary journalistic and literary sources. It is entirely practical in conception and design and has no pretensions to theoretical disquisition. Particular emphasis is laid on problems which are of especial difficulty for the English speaker.

The grammar provides comprehensive guidance to usage, with exhaustive tabulated material and succinct explanations. It is presented in 484 sections which are further subdivided to take account of finer points of usage. It provides mainstream rules for quick reference, as well as access to the subtleties of the language for those who need more detailed information.

The intention is to provide the essential facts of the language and to tackle perennial problems such as adverbs and pronouns in -то and -нибудь, agreement, animacy, conjugation, declension, gerunds, long and short adjectives, numerals, participles, the partitive genitive, verbs of motion,

and so on, as well as problems which have often received less attention: the gender of acronyms, alphabetisms, soft-sign nouns, the differences between *в/на* and other key prepositions, and between *то́же* and *та́кже*, the use of capital letters, particles, the principles of word order etc. Treatment of verbal aspect differentiates usage in the past, future, imperative and infinitive, thus throwing the rules into sharper relief. Special emphasis is given to stress patterns.

Ease of reference is assured by comprehensive indexing of subject headings and Russian words, and by general adherence to the alphabetic principle throughout.

Preface to the Second Edition

A Comprehensive Russian Grammar was first published in 1992, since when the book has been reprinted eight times, on most occasions with minor amendments. The present, second, edition of the *Grammar* takes account of the very considerable changes, both social and linguistic, that have taken place in the post-Soviet period.

The transliteration system of the Library of Congress has been added to those enumerated in section **1**, but that of the British Standards Institute continues to be used throughout the *Grammar*.

Amendments have been made to sections dealing with all parts of speech, with pronunciation, the noun, the adjective, the verb and the preposition most affected.

There are three entirely new, substantial sections on word formation in the Russian noun. These comprise sections **27** (general), **28** (prefixation) and **29** (suffixation), the sections that formerly bore these numbers having been conflated with earlier sections to make room for the new material. These sections have not been curtailed in any way.

Some sections on pronunciation have been amplified by additional examples, sometimes involving new lexis, e.g. принтер 'printer', Интернет 'Internet' and экстрасенс 'psychic' in section **7**. Changes have also been made to sections **12**, **13** and **15** (on the pronunciation of -чн-, consonants omitted in pronunciation, and stress, respectively).

Section **17** (on the use of capital and small letters in titles and names) has been completely rewritten in the light of changes that have occurred over the past few years. Many of the changes involve new names such as

Российская Федерация ‘Russian Federation’ and Совет Федерации ‘Council of the Federation’, but historicisms such as Советский Союз ‘Soviet Union’ will clearly remain current for some time to come and have been retained. Other changes result from new official attitudes, affecting, for example, the spelling of the names of deities.

Other amended sections on the noun take account of recent neologisms, e.g. флóппи ‘floppy disk’, папара́цци ‘paparazzi’ (section **36**), ВИЧ ‘HIV’, СКВ ‘freely-convertible currency’ (section **40**), забастко́м ‘strike committee’ (section **42**), etc. Most amendments have grammatical implications, e.g. the genitive plurals байт ‘byte’ and бит ‘bit’ (section **56**), the plurals техноло́гии ‘technologies’ and эконо́мики ‘economies’ (section **48**), the use of the accusative case in заказа́л вино́ ‘ordered some wine’ (section **83**), and so on, others reflect name changes of the past decade (e.g. the replacement of the former place name Ки́ров ‘Kirov’, section **71**).

Amendments to the sections on adjectives also reflect changes in nomenclature, e.g. ду́мский ‘Duma’ (adj.), or amplify extant categories, e.g. ли́зинговый ‘leasing’ (adj.) (both section **148**).

Changes to the sections on the verb include an increase in the number of bi-aspectuals with alternative perfectives (e.g. профинанси́ровать ‘to finance’, section **237**), and the amplification of other sections.

Section **404** on the buffer vowel -o in prepositions has been expanded, as has section **424** on через and по in the meaning ‘across’, and section **451** on по with nouns that denote means of communication (по мобі́льному ‘on a mobile’, по фа́ксу ‘by fax’), including variant usage in conjunction with телеві́дение ‘television’. The preposition порядка in the meaning ‘approximation’ has been added to section **445**.

The bibliography has been expanded to include new dictionaries, grammars and other works of the mid- to late 1990s, especially those specifically describing the language at the end of the twentieth century (Comrie, Stone and Polinsky, Dulichenko, Karaulov, Kostomarov, Offord, Rakhmanova and Suzdal'tseva, Ryazanova-Clarke and Wade, Shaposhnikov and Zemskaya), as well as new journals, newspapers, magazines and prose works.

A glossary of grammatical terms has also been included in the new edition. The table of contents and indexes have been revised to take account of new material and revised pagination.

TW, Glasgow 2000

Preface to the Third Edition

When Professor Terence Wade died in 2005, he was already well advanced in his plans to produce a third edition of *A Comprehensive Russian Grammar*. This would have included appendices on geographical terms, irregular verbs, irregular noun plurals, indeclinable nouns and abbreviations.

Since it remains unclear just what form these appendices would take I have chosen not to attempt to second-guess. Indeed, it remains my conviction that Professor Wade's grammar is the most comprehensive and illuminating of all Russian grammars currently available for student use. It would not be advisable to make it unwieldy or too detailed for its own good!

My purpose in preparing the third edition is not to seek to emulate Professor Wade's ambition, but rather to enhance the status and significance of the grammar throughout the scholarly world by consolidation and a few select additions. I have been guided by Professor Wade's own desire, in planning the third edition, to 'ensure that the essential balance of the book is maintained'. I have therefore chosen to expand the sources and reference materials used, including writers and texts from well-known modern Russian writers, as well as from the political and journalistic discourse of post-Soviet Russia. In only one or two cases have explanations been 'tweaked', but the grammar itself remains largely as Professor Wade presented it in the first edition in 1992.

I am indebted to colleagues from the Department of European Studies and Modern Languages of the University of Bath for their advice and support during my time spent working on this edition, and for their invaluable help

with recent developments in the language, especially vocabulary. My fellow teachers Natasha Zhuravkina and Elena Kidd have been particularly helpful. I would also like to thank staff and students of Moscow State University who have studied on short courses at the University of Bath in 2008 and 2009, especially Lidiia Polubichenko, Elena Aleksandrova and Maria Guzenko.

David Gillespie
Bath, November 2009

Preface to the Fourth Edition

The fourth edition of Professor Wade's *A Comprehensive Russian Grammar* is intended to reflect recent (i.e. since approximately 2010) changes and developments in the Russian language, especially with regard to the digital age and what is commonly termed 'globalization'. The structure of the book remains the same, with the same chapter structure, though with some content amended and examples updated from both literary and socio-political sources. Moreover, we have included a short appendix that contains words and phrases that have entered the Russian language largely from English, with regard to IT and social network terminology. We are deeply indebted to students and colleagues from Tomsk State University, where DG spent the autumn of 2018 and spring of 2019, especially Professor Ol'ga Obdalova of the Faculty of Foreign Languages.

We have also made the transliteration of Russian names more consistent, using a modified version of the accepted ALA-LC Romanization system used by the US Library of Congress, Cambridge University Library, the Modern Humanities Research Association and most other leading Western academic institutions. The table can be found at www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsol/roman.html.

David Gillespie, Svetlana Gural, Marina Korneeva
Tomsk, April 2019

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the following for advising on aspects of the book: Natalya Bogoslavskaya (University of Leeds), Sheelagh Graham (University of Strathclyde), Larissa Ryazanova (Edinburgh University), who also read the page proofs, Professor Dennis Ward (University of Edinburgh), Nijole White (University of Strathclyde); also Dr Marina Kozyreva (Moscow and Leeds Universities) for reading through a late draft and writing a helpful report. I am particularly grateful to my specialist readers, Dr R. Bivon (University of Essex, formerly of the University of East Anglia) and Dr Svetlana Miloslavskaya (Pushkin Institute, Moscow) for writing detailed reports at an early stage, thus enabling me to make substantial improvements. I also valued a lengthy consultation with Svetlana Miloslavskaya which allowed me to make amendments to the final draft. My editor, Professor Michael Holman (University of Leeds), supplied helpful and detailed critical analyses of each chapter during the writing of the grammar and I am most grateful to him for his support and encouragement and for the many insights that he provided. I should also like to thank Professor Glanville Price (University College of Wales), general editor of Blackwell's series of grammars of European languages, for his comments on some early chapters, particularly that on verbs. Any errors are, of course, entirely the responsibility of the author.

I wish to thank my late mother, who first encouraged me to learn Russian.

The book is dedicated to my wife, May, who bore with me throughout the thousands of hours and nine drafts that went into this grammar.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to the publishers of the books I was able to consult (see bibliography): Akademiya nauk, Birmingham University, Collets International, CUP, Dover Publications, Durham University, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Hutchinson, Kniga, MGU, Nauka, Oliver and Boyd, OUP, Pan Books, Pergamon, Progress Publishers, Prosveshchenie, Russkii yazyk, Sovetskaya entsiklopediya, University of East Anglia, University of London Press, Vysshaya shkola.

TW

Acknowledgements to the Second Edition

I am grateful to Russian colleagues who have helped with the new edition, particularly Professor V. G. Kostomarov, Rector of the Pushkin Institute, Moscow, for allowing me to carry out research at the Institute on a number of occasions.

I wish to thank Professor G. Corbett (University of Surrey) and Professor B. Scherr (Dartmouth College) for their valuable comments on the first edition of the *Grammar* and suggestions for improving the second.

I also wish to express my thanks to Mrs Nijole White, my colleague at the University of Strathclyde, who read the sections on word formation in the Russian noun and gave valuable advice on presentation.

I should also like to thank editorial and production staff at Blackwell: Tessa Harvey, Louise Spencely, Lorna Berrett, Brian Johnson, Helen Rappaport and proof reader Penny Dole for their work in producing this second edition of the book.

Above all I am again indebted to my editor, Professor Michael Holman, of the University of Leeds, who has supplied unstinting supportive and professional assistance throughout, especially in preparing the new sections on word formation in the Russian noun.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used:

acc.	accusative
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
anim.	animate
cf.	compare
dat.	dative
f.	feminine
fig.	figurative
gen.	genitive
imper.	imperative
impf.	imperfective
inan.	inanimate
indecl.	indeclinable
infin.	infinitive
instr.	instrumental
intrans.	intransitive
lit.	literally
m.	masculine
n.	neuter
nom.	nominative
part.	participle
pej.	pejorative
pf.	perfective
pl.	plural
prep.	prepositional
sing.	singular
theatr.	theatrical
trans.	transitive

Introduction

1 The Cyrillic alphabet

(1) The Russian Cyrillic alphabet contains 33 letters, including 20 consonants, 10 vowels, a semi-consonant/semi-vowel (ѣ), a hard sign (ѣ) and a soft sign (ь).

(2) There are a number of different systems for transliterating the Cyrillic alphabet. Three of these, that of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), that of the British Standards Institute (BSI) and that of the Library of Congress (LC), whose system is used throughout this *Grammar*, are listed alongside the Cyrillic alphabet, as well as the Russian names of the individual letters:

Cyrillic letters	Letter name	ISO	BSI	LC
Аа	[а]	a	a	a
Бб	[бэ]	b	b	b
Вв	[вэ]	v	v	v
Гг	[гэ]	g	g	g
Дд	[дэ]	d	d	d
Ее	[е]	e	e	e
Ёё	[ё]	ë	ë	e
Жж	[жэ]	ž	zh	zh
Зз	[зэ]	z	z	z
Ии	[и]	i	i	i
Йй	[и краткое]	j	ÿ	i
Кк	[ка]	k	k	k
Лл	[эль]	l	l	l

A Comprehensive Russian Grammar, Fourth Edition. Terence Wade, David Gillespie, Svetlana Gural and Marina Korneeva.

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Cyrillic letters	Letter name	ISO	BSI	LC
Мм	[эм]	m	m	m
Нн	[эн]	n	n	n
Оо	[о]	o	o	o
Пп	[пэ]	p	p	p
Рр	[эп]	r	r	r
Сс	[эс]	s	s	s
Тт	[тэ]	t	t	t
Уу	[у]	u	u	u
Фф	[эф]	f	f	f
Хх	[ха]	h/ch	kh	<u>kh</u>
Цц	[цэ]	c	ts	ts
Чч	[че]	č	ch	ch
Шш	[ша]	š	sh	sh
Щщ	[ща]	šč	shch	shch
Ъъ	[твёрдый знак]	”	”	”
Ыы	[ы]	y	ȳ	y
Ьь	[мягкий знак]	’	’	’
Ээ	[э оборотное]	ě	é	è
Юю	[ю]	ju	Yu	<u>iu</u>
Яя	[я]	ja	Ya	<u>ia</u>

Note

- Certain letters with diacritics and accents which appear in the standard BSI system (ě for э, ĭ for ѣ, é for э, ȳ for ы) are used without diacritics and accents here.
- The ligatures used over certain combinations of letters in the standard LC system (ts, iu, ia) are often omitted by other users.
- The endings -ый/-ий are rendered as -ii in names.

2 The international phonetic alphabet (IPA)

The following symbols from the IPA are used in the Introduction for the phonetic transcription of Russian words.

Vowels

i	as in ил	[il]
ɨ	as in пыл	[pɨl]
ɪ	as the first vowel in игла́	[ɪ'gla]
ɨ	as the first vowel in дыра́	[dɨ'ra]

ε	as in лес	[ʎes]
e	as in весь	[ʎesʃ]
a	as in рад	[rat]
æ	as in пять	[pæʃ]
Λ	as the first vowel in одйн	[Λ' dʲin]
э	as the first vowel in хорошó	[xəɾΛ' fo]
o	as in моx	[moχ]
ö	as in тётя	['tötə]
u	as in бук	[buk]
ü	as in ключ	[kʎütʃ]

Semi-consonant/semi-vowel

j	as in бой	[boj]
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Consonants

p	as in пол	[pol]
p̣	as in пёс	[p̣os]
b	as in бак	[bak]
ḅ	as in бел	[ḅeɪ]
t	as in том	[tom]
ṭ	as in тем	[ṭem]
d	as in дом	[dom]
ḍ	as in день	[ḍeɲ]
k	as in как	[kak]
ḳ	as in кем	[ḳem]
g	as in гол	[gol]
g̣	as in гид	[g̣it]
f	as in флóра	['florə]
f̣	as in фен	[f̣eɲ]
v	as in вот	[vot]
ṿ	as in винó	[ṿi'no]
s	as in сам	[sam]
ʃ	as in сев	[ʃeɪ]
z	as in зуб	[zup]
ẓ	as in зéбра	['zɛbrə]
ʃ̣	as in шум	[ʃ̣um]
ʒ	as in жук	[ʒuk]
x	as in хам	[xam]
x̣	as in хíмик	['x̣imik]
ʃ̣ʃ̣	as in щекá	[ʃ̣ʃ̣i'ka]
ts	as in цех	[tsex]

ʧ	as in чин	[tʃin]
м	as in мол	[mol]
м̄	as in мел	[m̄ɐl]
н	as in нос	[nos]
н̄	as in нет	[n̄ɐt]
л	as in лак	[lak]
л̄	as in ляг	[l̄ak]
р	as in рак	[rak]
р̄	as in река́	[r̄ɪ'ka]
ј	as in јама	[ˈjamə]

Pronunciation

3 Stressed vowels

Russian has ten vowel letters:

а э ы о у
я е и ё ю

- (1) **А** is pronounced with the mouth opened a little wider than in the pronunciation of ‘a’ in English ‘father’, e.g. зал [zal] ‘hall’.
- (2) **Э** is pronounced like ‘e’ in ‘end’, but the mouth is opened a little wider and the tongue is further from the palate than in articulating English ‘e’ in ‘end’, e.g. это [ˈɛtə] ‘this is’.
- (3) **У** is pronounced with the tongue drawn back and the lips rounded and protruding. The sound is similar to but shorter than the vowel in ‘school’, e.g. бук [buk] ‘beech’.
- (4) **О** is also pronounced with rounded and protruding lips, but to a lesser extent than in the pronunciation of у. The sound is similar to the vowel in English ‘bought’, e.g. бок [bok] ‘side’.
- (5) The vowel **Ы** is pronounced with the tongue drawn back as in the pronunciation of у, but with the lips spread, not rounded or protruding, e.g. сын [sɪn] ‘son’.
- (6) The vowels **я** [ja], **е** [jɛ], **ё** [jo] and **ю** [ju] are ‘iotated’ variants of а, э, о and у (i.e. they are pronounced like those vowels preceded by the sound [j]). The vowel **и** resembles ‘ea’ in English ‘cheap’, but is a ‘closer’ sound, that is, the centre of the tongue is nearer to the hard palate in articulation, e.g. мир [mɪr] ‘world, peace’. After a preposition or other word ending in

a hard consonant, however, stressed initial **н** is pronounced [i]: от Игоря [Λ'ʰigəɟə], cf. also 4 (4) note.

Note

Vowels can be classified as:

- (a) **back** vowels (pronounced with the back part of the tongue raised towards the back of the palate): **у/ю, о/ё**;
- (b) **central** vowels (pronounced with the central part of the tongue raised towards the central part of the palate): **ы, а/я**;
- (c) **front** vowels (pronounced with the central part of the tongue raised towards the front of the palate): **и, э/е**.

4 Unstressed vowels

(1) Unstressed у, ю, и and ы

The sound of unstressed **у/ю** is similar to that of English 'u' in 'put': дуга́ [du'ga] 'arc', юла́ [ju'la] 'top'. Unstressed **и** and **ы** are shorter and pronounced in a more 'relaxed' fashion than their stressed equivalents: игра́ [i'gra] 'game', была́ [bɪ'la] 'was'. **Ё** does not appear in unstressed position. The other vowels are 'reduced' in unstressed position.

(2) Reduction of о and а

(i) The vowels **о** and **а** are pronounced as [o] and [a] only when they appear in stressed position: дом [dom], зал [zal]. In unstressed position they are reduced, **о** being the vowel most affected by various forms of reduction resulting from its position in relation to the stress.

(ii) In pre-tonic position or as the unstressed initial letter in a word **о** and **а** are pronounced [Λ]: потóм [pΛ'tom] 'afterwards', оди́н [Λ'dʲin] 'one', парóм [pΛ'rom] 'ferry', аку́ла [Λ'kuɫə] 'shark'. This also applies to pre-tonic prepositions: под мóрем [pΛ'dm oɟim] 'under the sea', над дóмом [nΛ'ddoməm] 'above the house'. The combinations **аа, ао, оа, оо** are pronounced [ΛΛ], e.g. сообрази́ть [sΛΛbrɪ'zʲitʲ] 'to comprehend'.

(iii) In pre-pre-tonic position (except as initial letters, see (ii)) or in post-tonic position both vowels are pronounced [ə]: thus парохóд [pəɫ'xot] 'steamer', молодóй [mɐɫ'doj] 'young', рáно [rənə] 'early', ви́лка [vɪlkə] 'fork'. This also applies to prepositions (под водóй [pəd'vɫ'doj] 'under water', над головóй [nəd'gɐɫ'voj] 'overhead') and to the initial letters of words governed by prepositions (в огорóде [v'ɐgɫ'roɟɪ] 'in the market garden' (cf. огорóд [ɐgɫ'rot] 'market garden')).

Note

- (a) Unstressed **o** is pronounced [o] in a number of words of foreign origin (какáо ‘cocoa’, ráдио ‘radio’, хáос ‘chaos’), with an optional [o] in véто ‘veto’, досьé ‘dossier’, шоccé ‘highway’ and some other words. In certain cases, pronunciation is differentiated stylistically. The pronunciation [ʌ] in words such as поэт ‘poet’ and шоccé ‘highway’, said to be the more colloquial variant, has gained ground in educated speech and is found even in the pronunciation of foreign names such as Шопéн [ʃʌ'pɛn]/[ʃo'pɛn] ‘Chopin’, especially where these have gained common currency (e.g. Толья́тти ‘Togliatti’). However, [o] is retained in words where it follows another vowel: трío ‘trio’.
- (b) The vowel **a** is pronounced [ɪ] in pre-tonic position after **ч** and **щ**: thus часы́ [tʃɪ'si] ‘clock’, щадíть [ʃʃɪ'djɪtʃ] ‘to spare’. The pronunciation of unstressed **a** as [ɪ] after **ж**, **ш** is now limited for many speakers to жалéть [ʒɪ'ɟɛtʃ] ‘to regret’, к сожалéнию [kʰsəʒɪ'ɟɛnɨju] ‘unfortunately’ and end-stressed plural oblique cases of лошадь ‘horse’, e.g. gen. pl. лошаде́й [lɔʃɪ'dɛj]. **Ца** is pronounced [tsɪ] in the oblique cases of some numerals: двадцатí [dvɛtsɪ'tɕi] ‘twenty’ (gen.).

(3) Reduction of **e** and **я**

(i) In pre-tonic position both **e** and **я** are pronounced [(j)ɪ]: язы́к [jɪ'zɪk] ‘language’, перево́д [pɹɪɟɪ'vot] ‘translation’. Thus, разре́дить ‘to thin out’ and разря́дить ‘to unload’ have the same pronunciation.

(ii) In post-tonic position **e** is pronounced [ɪ] (пóле [ˈpoɪ] ‘field’), while **я** is usually pronounced [ɐ] (ды́ня [ˈdɨɲɐ] ‘melon’). However, post-tonic **я** is pronounced [ɪ] before a soft consonant (па́мять [ˈpamɨtʃ] ‘memory’) and in non-final post-tonic position (вы́глянул [ˈvɨglɨnʉl] ‘looked out’).

(4) Reduction of **э**

Э is pronounced [ɪ] in unstressed position (э́тап [ɪ'tap] ‘stage’).

Note

Unstressed initial **н** and **э** and conjunction **и** are pronounced [ɪ] after a preposition or other word ending in a hard consonant (see 3 (6)): в Ита́лию [vɪ'taɪɨju] ‘to Italy’, брат и́дёт к Ива́ну [bratɪ'dɔt kɪ'vanu] ‘my brother is on his way to see Ivan’, над эква́тором [nɛdɪ'kvatɛrəm] ‘above the equator’. **И** is also pronounced [ɪ] in certain stump compounds, e.g. Госизда́т [gostɪ'zdat] ‘State Publishing House’.

5 Hard and soft consonants

With the exception of **ж**, **ц** and **ш**, which are invariably hard, and **ч** and **щ**, which are invariably soft, all Russian consonants can be pronounced hard or soft.

(1) Hard consonants

(i) A hard consonant is a consonant which appears at the end of a word (e.g. the **м** in **дом** [dom] ‘house’, the **т** in **вот** [vot] ‘here is’) or is followed by **а**, **ы**, **о** or **у** (**э** appears only as an *initial* letter, except in acronyms such as **нэп** ‘NEP’ (New Economic Policy) and rare words such as **сэр** ‘sir’). Thus, the consonants in the words **голова́** [gəɫə'va] ‘head’, **мы́ло** ['milə] ‘soap’ and **ду́ма** ['dumə] ‘thought’ are all hard.

(ii) Most hard consonants, e.g. **б**, **в**, **г**, **з**, **к**, **м**, **п**, **с**, **ф**, are pronounced in similar fashion to their English counterparts, i.e. ‘b’ in ‘bone’, ‘v’ in ‘van’, ‘g’ in ‘gone’, ‘z’ in ‘zone’, ‘c’ in ‘come’, ‘m’ in ‘money’, ‘p’ in ‘pun’, ‘s’ in ‘sun’, ‘f’ in ‘fun’. However, **к** and **п** (and **т**; see (iii)) lack the slight aspiration of ‘k’, ‘p’ and ‘t’.

(iii) In pronouncing the dentals **д** [d], **т** [t] and **н** [n], the tip of the tongue is pressed against the back of the upper teeth in the angle between teeth and gums.

(iv) **Р** is a moderately ‘trilled’ [r]. **Л** is pronounced with the tip of the tongue in the angle between the upper teeth and the gum, and the middle of the tongue curved downwards. The ‘l’ sound in English ‘bubble’ is a good starting-point for the pronunciation of this letter.

(v) **Х** sounds as ‘ch’ in ‘loch’ or German ‘acht’, but is formed a little further forward in the mouth.

(vi) Unlike other consonants, **ж**, **ц** and **ш** are always pronounced hard (see, however, note (b), below). This means in practice that the vowels **е** and **и** are pronounced as **э** and **ы** after **ж**, **ц** and **ш** (**жест** [zest] ‘gesture’, **жир** [zʲɪr] ‘fat’, **цех** [tsɛx] ‘workshop’, **цирк** [tsɪrk] ‘circus’, **шест** [ʃɛst] ‘pole’, **машина́** [mɫɪ'ʃɪnə] ‘car’) while **ё** is pronounced as **о** after **ж** and **ш** (**жёлоб** [ʲzəlɔp] ‘groove’, **шёлк** [ʃɔlk] ‘silk’). A soft sign (as in **рожь** [roʃ] ‘rye’) has no softening effect on the pronunciation of **ж** or **ш**.

Note

(a) Neither a soft sign nor the vowel **ё** can be written after **ц**.

- (b) **Ш** is sounded hard in the loan words парашют [pəɾɐʎut] ‘parachute’ and брошюра [brɐʎurə] ‘brochure’, while **ж** is pronounced soft in жюри [ʒüʎi] ‘jury’.

(2) Soft consonants

(i) A soft consonant is a consonant (other than **ж**, **ц** or **ш**) followed by a soft sign, e.g. **ль** in сталь ‘steel’, or by **я**, **е**, **и**, **ё** or **ю**. Thus, the initial consonants in мята [ʎatə] ‘mint’, лес [ʎes] ‘forest’, пил [ʎil] ‘was drinking’, нёбо [ʎobə] ‘palate’ and дюна [ʎunə] ‘dune’ are all soft.

(ii) Soft consonants are pronounced with the centre of the tongue raised towards the hard palate, as in articulating **и**, for example. Correct rendering of the vowels **я** [ja], **е** [je], **и** [i], **ё** [jo] and **ю** [ju] will assist in the articulation of the preceding soft consonants. Soft [ʎ] as in только ‘only’ is similar to ‘ll’ in ‘million’, with the tip of the tongue against the teeth-ridge and the front of the tongue pressed against the hard palate.

(iii) Soft consonants may also appear at the end of words, e.g. **пь** and **ть** in топь [top] ‘swamp’ and мать [mat] ‘mother’; the final sounds in these words are similar to those of the initial consonants in ‘pure’ and ‘tune’ (standard British English ‘Received Pronunciation’).

(iv) Unlike other consonants, **ч** and **щ** are always pronounced soft. In practice this means that the vowels **а**, **о** and **у** are pronounced as [ja], [jo] and [ju] following these consonants (час ‘hour’, чопорный ‘prim’, чугун ‘cast iron’, пощάда ‘mercy’, щука ‘pike’).

(v) The consonant **щ** is pronounced as a long soft **ш** [ʃʃ] (e.g. защищάть [zəʃʃʎʎ] ‘to defend’); the pronunciation [ʃtʃ] is falling into disuse.

(vi) The double consonants **жч** (мужчина ‘man’), **зч** (заказчик ‘client’), **сч** (подписчик ‘subscriber’) are pronounced like **щ** [ʃʃ]. The pronunciation [ʃtʃ], however, is preferred in prefixed forms such as бесчисленный ‘innumerable’, расчленить ‘to dismember’.

(vii) **Жж** and **Зж** may be pronounced either as a double soft **ж** (with the front of the tongue raised towards the hard palate) in words such as вбжжи [ʎozʒi] ‘reins’, дрбжжи ‘yeast’, жжёт ‘burns’, жужжάть ‘to buzz’, брызжет ‘sprays’, визжάть ‘to scream’, ёзжу ‘I travel’, поезжай! ‘go!’, пбжже ‘later’, especially in the speech of the older generation, as well as in that of actors and professionally trained announcers, or alternatively as a double hard **ж** [ʎozʒt], a pronunciation preferred by very many younger speakers. **Зж** is invariably pronounced as hard [ʒʒ] across the boundary between prefix and stem:

изжѣть ‘to eradicate’. The cluster **жд** in **дождя** ‘of rain’ etc. is pronounced as soft **жж** by some speakers and as [ʒʤ] by others.

(3) Use of hard and soft consonants to differentiate meaning

Hard and soft consonants may be used to differentiate meaning, cf. **лук** [luk] ‘onions’ and **люк** [lʲuk] ‘hatch’, **мат** [mat] ‘checkmate’ and **мать** [matʲ] ‘mother’ etc.

6 Double palatalization

Some words contain two adjacent soft consonants, a phenomenon known as ‘double palatalization’ or ‘regressive softening’. The following combinations of letters are involved:

(1) [dʲ], [tʲ] and [nʲ] followed by other soft dentals or by [ʂ], [ʒ], [tʃ], [ʃʃ] or [ʎ]: **оттепель** [ʲotʲtʲɛpʲɪ] ‘thaw’, **дни** [dʲnʲi] ‘days’, **кóнчик** [ˈkɔnʲtʃɪk] ‘tip’, **гóнщик** [ˈgɔnʲʃʃɪk] ‘racer’, **пýтница** [ˈpʲætʲnʲɪtsə] ‘Friday’, **пéнсия** [ˈpʲeɲsʲijə] ‘pension’.

(2) [ʂ] or [ʒ] followed by a soft dental, [ʂ], [ʒ] or [ʎ]: **вознѣк** [vɔlˈʒnʲɪk] ‘arose’, **раздѣл** [rɔlˈʒdʲɛl] ‘partition’, **здѣсь** [ʒdʲɛʂ] ‘here’, **снег** [ʂnʲɛk] ‘snow’, **стенá** [ʂtʲɪˈnɔ] ‘wall’, **вмѣсте** [ˈvmʲɛʂtʲɪ] ‘together’.

Note

In some words, single or double palatalization is possible: **две** [dʲvʲɛ] or [dʲvʲɛ] ‘two’, **дверь** [dʲvʲɛɹʲ] or [dʲvʲɛɹʲ] ‘door’, **зверь** [ʒvʲɛɹʲ] or [ʒvʲɛɹʲ] ‘wild animal’, **пéгля** [ˈpʲetʲɔ] or [ˈpʲetʲɔ] ‘loop’, **свет** [svʲet] or [ʂvʲet] ‘light’, **след** [slʲet] or [ʂlʲet] ‘trace’, **чѣтверть** [ˈtʃʲetʲvʲɪɹʲ] or [ˈtʃʲetʲvʲɪɹʲ] ‘quarter’.

7 Non-palatalization of consonants in some loan words

(1) The consonants **т** and **д** are pronounced hard before **е** in certain loan words and foreign names (**тѣрмос** [ˈtʲɛrmɔs] ‘thermos flask’, **антѣнна** ‘aerial’, **апартейд** ‘apartheid’, **ательѣ** ‘workshop’, **бифштѣкс** ‘beefsteak’, **бутербрѣд** ‘sandwich’, **отѣль** ‘hotel’, **партѣр** ‘stalls’, **прѣнтер** ‘printer’, **стенд** ‘stand’), in words with the prefix **интер-** (**Интернѣт** ‘Internet’), **кѣдекс** ‘legal code’, **мѣдѣль** ‘model’, **стюардѣсса** ‘stewardess’ and in many words with the prefix **де-** (**деградáция** ‘degradation’).

(2) Hard **з** has been retained in *безе* ‘meringue’; hard **м** in *консоме* ‘consommé’, *резюме* ‘résumé’; hard **н** in *кашне* ‘scarf’, *бизнес* ‘business’, *кибернэтика* ‘cybernetics’, *тоннель* ‘tunnel’, *турне* ‘tour’, *фонэтика* ‘phonetics’, *энэргия* ‘power’; hard **п** in *купэ* ‘compartment’; hard **р** in *кабарэ* ‘cabaret’, *релэ* ‘relay’; hard **с** in *шоссэ* ‘highway’, *экстрасэнс* ‘a psychic’; and hard **ф** in *кафэ* ‘café’.

Note

A hard consonant is more likely to be retained in foreign loan words immediately preceding the stressed vowel (e.g. *тэннис* ‘tennis’). Dental consonants (**д, т, н**) are more likely to remain hard than labials (**б, п, м**).

8 Hard sign and soft sign

(1) The hard sign appears only between a hard consonant — usually at the end of a prefix — and a stem beginning **я, е, ё** or **ю**: *отъезд* [ɔ'ʲjɛst] ‘departure’, *объяснять* ‘to explain’.

(2) A soft sign appearing between a consonant and **я, е, ё** or **ю** indicates that the consonant is soft and that the sound **й** [j] intervenes between consonant and vowel: *семья* [sʲi'mʲja] ‘family’. See also 5 (2) (i) and (iii).

9 The reflexive suffix -сь/-ся

(1) The pronunciation of **сь** as [sʲ] is widespread: *боюсь* [bɔ'ʲjuʂ] ‘I fear’, *боюсь* [bɔ'ʲjaʂ] ‘fearing’ etc.

(2) The suffix **-ся** is usually pronounced [sə] in the infinitive (*мьться* ‘to wash’) and the present tense (*мьется* ‘he/she washes’), though an alternative soft pronunciation [sʲə] is also found in the second-person singular and first-person plural.

(3) [sʲə] is preferred in participles (*смеющийся* [sʲə] ‘laughing’), the imperative (*не смейся* ‘don’t laugh’) and the past tense (*он смеялся* ‘he was laughing’) — except for forms in **-ссия** or **-зся** (*пасся* [pʲassə] ‘was grazing’).

10 Effect of a soft consonant on a vowel in the preceding syllable

(1) **Э** and **е** are pronounced [ɛ] and [jɛ] in stressed position when followed by a hard consonant (e.g. *это* [ʲetɔ] ‘this is’, *лес* [ʲlɛs] ‘forest’),

but as [e] and [je] (similar to French ‘e acute’ [é]) when followed by a soft consonant (e.g. эти [‘eʲtʲi] ‘these’, весь [‘vʲeʃ] ‘all’).

(2) **Я** is pronounced as [æ], **ё** as [ö] and **ю** as [ü] preceding a soft consonant: мяч [mʲæʧ] ‘ball’, тётя [‘tʲöʧə] ‘aunt’, ключ [kʲütʃ] ‘key’.

(3) **А, о** and **ы** are also affected as the tongue is raised closer to the palate in anticipation of a following soft consonant (e.g. мать ‘mother’, ночь ‘night’, пыль ‘dust’, where **а, о** and **ы** are pronounced as if followed by a much-reduced **и** sound).

11 Voiced and unvoiced consonants

(1) Some consonants are pronounced with vibration of the vocal cords (‘voiced’ consonants), and others without such vibration (‘unvoiced’ consonants).

(2) There are six pairs of voiced and unvoiced equivalents:

Voiced	Unvoiced
б	п
г	к
з	с
д	т
в	ф
ж	ш

The eight other consonants include the unvoiced **ц, х, ч, ш** and the voiced sonants **л, р, м, н**.

(3) **Б, г, з, д, в, ж** are pronounced as their unvoiced counterparts when they appear in final position or before a final soft sign.

лоб ‘forehead’	is pronounced [lop]
луг ‘meadow’	is pronounced [luk]
раз ‘time’	is pronounced [ras]
сад ‘garden’	is pronounced [sat]
лев ‘lion’	is pronounced [ʲɛf]
муж ‘husband’	is pronounced [muʃ]

(4) When a voiced and an unvoiced consonant appear side by side, the first assimilates to the second. Thus, voiced consonant + unvoiced

consonant are both pronounced unvoiced, while unvoiced consonant + voiced consonant are both pronounced voiced.

(i) **Voiced + unvoiced (both pronounced unvoiced)**

губка	'sponge'	is pronounced [ˈgʊpkə]
загс	'registry office'	is pronounced [zaks]
рэзко	'sharply'	is pronounced [ˈrɛskə]
лодка	'boat'	is pronounced [ˈlotkə]
входит	'goes in'	is pronounced [ˈfxodʲɪt]
ложка	'spoon'	is pronounced [ˈlɔʃ kə]

Note

- (a) Devoicing also takes place on the boundary between preposition and noun or adjective: в комнате [ˈfkomnətʲ] 'in the room', под столом [pəf stəˈlom] 'under the table'.
- (b) The devoicing of a final consonant may in turn cause the devoicing of the consonant which precedes it: визг [vɨsk] 'scream', дрозд [drosʲt] 'thrush'.
- (c) Г is pronounced as [x] in лёгкий 'light, easy', легче 'easier', мягкий 'soft' and мягче 'softer', as well as in Бог 'God' (only in the singular nominative case, however). The initial consonant in Господи! 'Lord!' is now usually pronounced as [g], though [h] is still heard. The noun бухгалтер 'book-keeper' is the only word in which хг is pronounced as [h].

(ii) **Unvoiced + voiced (both pronounced voiced)**

футбол	'football'	is pronounced [fuˈdbol]
к дому	'towards the house'	is pronounced [ˈgˈdomu]
просьба	'request'	is pronounced [ˈprozʲbə]
также	'also'	is pronounced [ˈtagʲzʲ]
машбюро	'typing pool'	is pronounced [mazʲɥuˈro]

Note

- (a) The voicing of consonants also occurs at the boundary between words, especially when the second word is a particle or other unstressed form: Я спас бы его [ˈspaz ˈbɨ] 'I would have saved him'. Ц is voiced as [dz] in such circumstances (Отец был дома [ɒˈtʲɛdz ˈbɨl] 'Father was in') and ч as [dʒ] (дочь была [dodʒ ˈbɨˈla] 'the daughter was').
- (b) В has no voicing effect on a preceding unvoiced consonant, e.g. твой [tvoj] 'your'.

12 The pronunciation of -чн-

(1) **-чн-** is pronounced [ʃn] in certain words (конечно [кɔ'нѐʃнə] 'of course', нарочно 'on purpose', очечник 'spectacle case', прачечная 'laundry', скучно 'boring', яичница 'fried eggs'), as well as in the patronymics Ильична 'P'lichna', Саввична 'Savvichna' and Никитична 'Nikitichna'.

(2) However, the pronunciation [tʃn] is used in more 'learned' words such as алчный ['altʃntʃ] 'greedy', античный 'ancient', добавочный 'additional' and конечный 'ultimate'.

(3) **-чн-** is pronounced either as [ʃn] or [tʃn] in булочная 'bakery' and молочная 'dairy'. Коричневый 'brown' is pronounced with [tʃn].

Note

Ч is also pronounced [ʃ] in что 'that' and чтобы 'in order to'.

13 Consonants omitted in pronunciation

In some groups of three or more consonants one is omitted in pronunciation. Thus, the first **в** is not pronounced in здравствуйте! 'hallo!', чувство 'feeling' (however, it **is** pronounced in девственный 'virgin' and нравственный 'moral'), **д** is not pronounced in звёздный 'starry', ландшафт 'landscape', поздно 'late', праздник 'festival' or сердце 'heart' (however, it **is** pronounced in бездна 'abyss'), **л** is not pronounced in солнце 'sun' (however, it **is** pronounced in солнечный 'solar') and **т** is not pronounced in грустный 'sad', известный 'well-known', лестный 'flattering', местный 'local', окрестность 'vicinity', частный 'private' and счастливый 'happy' (however, the first **т** in постлать 'to spread' **is** pronounced).

14 The pronunciation of double consonants

Double consonants are pronounced as two letters across the boundary between prefix and stem, e.g. оттащить [tt] 'to drag away'. When a double consonant appears within a stem, practice varies, cf. грамматика [m] 'grammar', группа [pp or p] 'group'. A single consonant is pronounced in final position: грамм [m] 'gram', грипп [p] 'influenza'.

15 Stress

(1) Stress in Russian is ‘free’, that is, in some words it falls on the initial syllable (дóлго ‘for a long time’), in others on a medial syllable (до́рога ‘road’) and in others on the final syllable (кара́ндаш ‘pencil’). The vowel *ë* is *always* stressed.

(2) A change in stress may indicate a change in meaning: о́рган ‘organ of the body’, оpraн ‘organ’ (musical instrument). A few words have alternative stress without a change in meaning: твopóг (the commoner form)/ твóрог ‘cottage cheese’.

(3) For stress patterns in individual parts of speech see nouns (57, 60, 62, 63 (4)), adjectives (164, 165), verbs (219, 223, 228, 232, 341, 343, 345, 350, 369) and prepositions (405).

(4) Secondary stress (a weaker stress marked here with a grave accent [̀]) is found in some compounds, e.g. маш́иностроéние ‘engineering’ (in fast speech, however, the word is pronounced with one full stress only: машиностроéние). Secondary stress is particularly common in words with foreign prefixes: а́нтикоммуни́зм ‘anti-communism’, ко́нтраме́ры ‘counter-measures’, тpaнсaтлaнти́ческий ‘transatlantic’, у́льтрaкopoткий ‘ultra-short’; also in words with the prefix свёрх-: свёрхурóчные ‘overtime’; in technical terms: морóзoустóйчивый ‘frost-proof’; in compounds where there is a polysyllabic gap between the natural stresses in the components: врéмяпpeпpoвoждéние ‘past-time’; and in compounds consisting of a truncated word and a full word: го́сбюджéт (= гoсудáрственный бюджет) ‘state budget’. The use of secondary stresses is sometimes optional, varying with speaker and speech mode. Generally speaking, the newer a compound word is, the more likely a secondary stress (e.g. кинoсцeна́рий ‘film script’). Tertiary stresses are found in some compounds: а́втомoтoклyб ‘car and motor-cycle club’.

(5) Some primary-stressed adverbs take secondary stress when used as prepositions: внyтpí/внyтpь ‘inside’, вoзле/вoзлe ‘near’, вoкpyг/вoкpyг ‘around’, мýмо/мýмо ‘past’, oкoлo/oкoлo ‘close (to)’, пoслe/пoслe ‘after’.

Note

Stresses are marked in a Russian text only:

- (a) to resolve ambiguity, cf. Я знаю, что он говорит ‘I know that he is speaking’ and Я знаю, чтó он говорит ‘I know what he is saying’, большáя часть ‘a large part’, бoльшaя часть ‘a larger part’;

- (b) to denote archaic pronunciations (e.g. библио́тека for contemporary библиотéка ‘library’);
- (c) in rendering certain professional words, non-Russian words, dialect and slang words;
- (d) in verse, where normal stress is sometimes distorted in the interests of rhythm.

Orthography

16 Spelling rules

Spelling rule 1

ы is replaced by **и**, **я** by **а** and **ю** by **у** after **ж, ч, ш, щ** and **г, к, х**:

ногá, ‘leg’, gen. sing. **ногí**

молча́ть, ‘to be silent’, first-person sing. **молчу́**, third-person pl.

молча́т

Note

Exceptions are found in some non-Russian words and names: брошю́ра ‘brochure’, Кызылкúм ‘Kyzylkum Desert’, Кя́хта ‘Kiakhta’.

Spelling rule 2

о is replaced by **е** in unstressed position after **ж, ч, ш, щ, ц**:

не́мец ‘German’, instr. sing. **не́мцем**, gen. pl. **не́мцев**

Spelling rule 3

Initial **и** is replaced by **ы** following a prefix ending in a consonant:

impf. **игра́ть**/pf. **сыгра́ть** ‘to play’

интерéсный ‘interesting’, **небезынтерéсный** ‘not uninteresting’ (for exceptions see **28** (3)(c))

Spelling rule 4

The prefixes **без-/бес-**; **вз-, воз-/вс-, вос-**; **из-/ис-**; **раз-/рас-** are spelt with **з** before voiced consonants, voiced sonants or vowels and with **с** before unvoiced consonants: **беззúбый** ‘toothless’ but **бесконéчный** ‘infinite’; **взлетáть** ‘to take off’ but **всходíть** ‘to rise’; **избíть** ‘to beat up’ but **испíть** ‘to sup’; **разобра́ть** ‘to dismantle’ but **расцепíть** ‘to uncouple’.

Spelling rule 5

Prefixes ending in a consonant (e.g. **под-, от-, раз-, с-**) are spelt **подо-, ото-, разо-, со-**:

- (i) In compounds of **-йти** (**подойти** ‘to approach’, **подошёл** ‘I approached’ etc.) (see **333** (2)).
- (ii) Before consonant + **ь** (**сошью** ‘I shall sew’) (see **234** (5)).
- (iii) Before certain consonant clusters (**разогнать** ‘to disperse’) (see **234** (1–4)).

Note

For spelling rules relating to prepositions see **404**.

17 Use of capital and small letters in titles and names

(1) In the names or titles of most posts, institutions, organizations, books, newspapers and journals, wars, festivals etc., *only the first word* is spelt with a capital letter: Всемирная федерация профсоюзов ‘World Federation of Trade Unions’, Европейский союз ‘European Union’, Министер́ство трáнспорта ‘Ministry of Transport’, Москóвский госудáрственный университет ‘Moscow State University’, Политехн́ческий музéй ‘Polytechnical Museum’, Росси́йская акадéмия нау́к ‘Russian Academy of Sciences’, Тверско́й муниципáльный суд ‘Tver’ Municipálist Court’, Худóжественный теáтр ‘Arts Theatre’, «*Война́ и мир*» ‘*War and Peace*’, *Нью-Йорк таймс* ‘*New York Times*’, Семилéтняя война́ ‘Seven Years’ War’ (but Вели́кая Оте́чественная война́ ‘Great Patriótic War’), Но́вый год ‘New Year’, Пéрвое ма́я ‘May Day’, Но́белевская прéмия ‘Nobel Prize’.

Note

Any word spelt with a capital letter in its own right retains the capital in extended titles: Госудáрственный акадéмический **Бо́льшой** теáтр ‘The State Academic Bolshoi Theatre’.

(2) In geographical names, the names of administrative areas, local features and so on, the generic terms are spelt with a *small* letter and the descriptive words with a *capital*: о́зеро Байка́л ‘Lake Baikal’, Бе́лое мо́ре ‘the White Sea’, пу́стыня Го́би ‘the Gobi Desert’, мыс До́брой Наде́жды ‘the Cape of Good Hope’, трóпик Ра́ка ‘the Tropic of Cancer’, Се́верный Ледови́тый океáн ‘the Arctic Ocean’, полу́остров

Таймыр ‘the Taimyr Peninsula’, Южный полюс ‘the South Pole’, Тверская́ улица ‘Tverskaia Street’, Зимний дворец ‘the Winter Palace’, Исаакиевский собор ‘St Isaac’s Cathedral’, Красная площадь ‘Red Square’, Минский автомобильный завод ‘Minsk Car Factory’.

Note

Generic terms are spelt with a *capital* letter, however, if used in a non-literal sense: Золотой Рог ‘the Golden Horn’ (a bay), Огненная Земля ‘Tierra del Fuego’ (an archipelago).

(3) Some titles consist of words, all of which have *capital* letters. These include the names of exalted governmental institutions and organizations, as well as a number of international bodies (and certain geographical names, e.g. Белый Нил ‘the White Nile’, Дальний Восток ‘the Far East’, Новая Земля ‘Novaia Zemlia’): Генеральная Ассамблея ООН ‘the General Assembly of the UN’, Международный Красный Крест ‘the International Red Cross’, Совет Федерации ‘the Council of the Federation’, including, as a rule, the names of states: Объединённые Арабские Эмираты ‘the United Arab Emirates’, Республика Татарстан ‘the Republic of Tatarstan’, Российская Федерация ‘the Russian Federation’, Советский Союз ‘the Soviet Union’, Соединённое Королевство ‘the United Kingdom’, Соединённые Штаты Америки ‘the United States of America’.

Note

- (a) Государственная дума *or* Государственная Дума ‘the State Duma’.
- (b) Партия ‘party’ is not usually spelt with a capital letter: Коммунистическая партия Российской Федерации [КПРФ] ‘Communist Party of the Russian Federation’, Либерально-демократическая партия России [ЛДПР] ‘the Russian Liberal Democratic Party’.
- (4) Unofficial titles, the names of foreign parliaments and some other titles consist of words, all of which are spelt with a *small* letter: московский аэропорт ‘Moscow Airport’ (cf. official titles, now also used colloquially, e.g. аэропорт Внуково ‘Vnukovo Airport’), партия большевиков ‘the Bolshevik Party’ (cf. official Российская социалдемократическая рабочая партия (большевиків) ‘Russian Social Democratic Workers’ Party (of Bolsheviks)’), палата общин ‘House of Commons’, бундестаг ‘the Bundestag’, сейм ‘the Sejm’.
- (5) Nouns denoting nationality, town of origin etc., are also spelt with a *small* letter (англичанин ‘Englishman’, москвич ‘Muscovite’), as are

the corresponding adjectives (английский ‘English’, москóвский ‘Moscow’), except where they form part of a title (Английский банк ‘the Bank of England’, Москóвский цирк ‘Moscow Circus’). This principle is also applied to the names of months, thus март ‘March’, октябрь ‘October’, октябрьский ‘October’ (adj.), but 8 Мάρта ‘8 March’ (International Women’s Day), Октябрь/Октябрьская революция ‘the October Revolution’; and to days of the week, thus пýтница ‘Friday’, but Страстнáя Пýтница ‘Good Friday’.

(6) The words земля ‘land’, луна ‘moon’, солнце ‘sun’ are spelt with capitals when they denote heavenly bodies: Земля ‘the Earth’, Луна ‘the Moon’, Солнце ‘the Sun’.

(7) (i) Names of deities are spelt with capital letters: Аллáх ‘Allah’, Бор ‘God’, Брáхма ‘Brahma’, Шýва ‘Shiva’.

Note

Of heathen gods, one of a number of gods, or figuratively, бор is spelt with a *small* letter: бог Аполлón ‘the god Apollo’, бóже мой! ‘my God!’ In certain contexts, however, a capital is possible:

“Как хорошó — сказа́ла жена́, ме́дленно натягивая на себя́ шёлковое одея́ло. — Сла́ва **Бо́гу**, сла́ва **Бо́гу** . . .” (Nabokov) “‘That is good,’ said his wife, slowly drawing a silken blanket about her. ‘Thank God, thank God . . .’”

(ii) Capitals are also used for religious festivals: Па́сха ‘Easter’, Рожде́ствó ‘Christmas’, holders of exalted ecclesiastical offices: Святе́йший Патриа́рх Москóвский и все́я Руси́ ‘His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia’, Па́па Рýмский ‘The Pope’, and sacred texts: Би́блия ‘the Bible’, Корáн ‘the Koran’, То́ра ‘the Torah’, Талму́д ‘the Talmud’, Ве́ды ‘the Vedas’.

Division of Words

18 Division into syllables

(1) Each syllable in a Russian word contains a vowel and, in most cases, consonants peripheral to it, e.g. па́спорт.

(2) Russian distinguishes ‘open’ syllables, which end in a vowel (го-ло-ва́) from ‘closed’ syllables, which end in a consonant (нос).

(3) The principles of syllabic division are different in English and Russian, cf. E doc-tor/R до-ктор, E her-o/R ге-ро́й. Russian non-initial syllables are formed on the basis of an ascending level of ‘sonority’, vowels being the most sonorous letters, the voiced sonants (**р, л, м, н**) the next most sonorous and noise-consonants (the other sixteen consonants) the least sonorous.

(4) In practice, this means that the **syllable boundary** occurs either:

(i) **between a vowel and a following consonant**: со-ло́-ма, сте-пной́, ка́-ска, ко-стю́м, ста-ле-ва́р, стра-на́, о-тбро́-сить, вра-жда́ etc.;

or:

(ii) **between a sonant and a following consonant** (including another sonant): су́м-ка, кон-ве́рт, боль-шой́, ка́р-та, вол-на́, че́р-ный, кар-ма́н.

Note

Non-initial syllables cannot begin with the sequence sonant + noise-consonant (this sequence is possible, however, in an *initial* syllable, e.g. **мшй́-стый**). Note, however, the sequences sonant + sonant (во-лньный́), consonant + consonant (ме-сто) and noise-consonant + sonant (ме-тла́). The syllabic boundary may occur *before* or *between* two sonants (ка-рма́н or кар-ма́н, во-лна́ or вол-на́).

Syllabic division in a text

Я встал и на-дел паль-то́. Же-на́ ре-ши́-ла, что я по-шёл за си-га-ре́-та-ми, и ве-ле́-ла не су-ту́-ли-ться при хо-дьбе́. О-на́ ска-за́-ла, что ко-гда́ я хо-жу́, то ны-ря́-ю вниз го-ло-во́й, как при-стя-жна́-я ло́-шадь. Е-щё о-на́ ска-за́-ла, что я всё вре́-мя смо-трю́ вниз, бу́-дто хо-чу́ най-ти́ на а-сфа́ль-те мо-не́-тку (Tokareva).

19 Splitting a word at the end of a line

(1) Two basic criteria are observed in splitting a word at the end of a line:

(i) Syllabic division: го-ловá or голо-ва́.

(ii) Word structure: it is desirable, for example, not to disrupt monosyllabic prefixes etc. (**под-бежа́ть, со-гла́сен**) (cf. **пе-рево́д** and note that the rule does not apply when a prefix is no longer perceived as such: **ра́-зум, разо-ря́ть**).

(2) A word is normally split **after a vowel**: го́-род, го́-лоден or го́ло-ден, ребя́-та or ре-бя́та. Sometimes this involves splitting a two-vowel sequence: **чита́-ете**.

(3) A sequence of **two or more consonants** may also be split: ме́д-ленно, ро́д-ственники, проб-ле́ма, и́стин-ный etc.

(4) Other conventions include the following:

(i) A hard or soft sign must not be separated from the preceding consonant (**подь-езд, боль-шой**) and **й** must not be separated from the preceding vowel (**вой-на́**).

(ii) A single vowel should not appear at the end of a line or be carried over onto the next: **аги-та́ция** (*not* *а-гита́ция or *агита́ци-я).

(iii) Two identical consonants appearing between vowels should be split: **жуж-жа́ть, ма́с-са, ко́н-ный**.

(iv) A monosyllabic component of a stump compound should not be split (**спецоде́жда**); nor should abbreviations (**ОО́Н, и т.д.**).

(5) Some words can be split in different ways, e.g. **се-стра́, сес-тра́** or **сест-ра́**.

Punctuation

20 Introductory comments

Rules of punctuation are, in general, more rigorously applied in Russian than in English. Differences of usage between the two languages relate in particular to the comma (especially in separating principal from subordinate clauses), the dash and the punctuation of direct speech.

21 The full stop, exclamation mark and question mark

Usage of the full stop, exclamation mark and question mark is comparable in the two languages:

Лю́ди и́щут сча́стья в любви́.

Кака́я прекра́сная пого́да!

Куда́ вы иде́те?

‘People seek happiness in love.’

‘What magnificent weather!’

‘Where are you going?’

Note

- (a) There is a tendency to use exclamation marks more frequently in Russian than in English.
- (b) An exclamation mark may appear in the middle of a sentence: Так мне было плохо, **так горько и постыло!** — хуже всякой болезни (Rasputin) ‘I felt so bad, so bitter and wretched! — it was worse than any illness’.
- (c) Exclamation marks are also used in commands expressed other than by a grammatical imperative: **Молчать!** ‘Shut up!’, **За мной!** ‘Follow me!’, **Встали!** ‘On your feet!’
- (d) An exclamation mark enclosed in parentheses (!) may be used to indicate irony or indignation.
- (e) Exclamation and question marks may appear together for special emphasis: **Да что же это такое?!** ‘Now what’s all this?!’

22 The comma: introductory comments

The comma is more frequently used in Russian than in English. In extreme examples a series of commas in a Russian sentence may have no English equivalents at all:

Макаренко пишет, что дети, которые умеют трудиться, уважают труд других людей, стремятся прийти на помощь тем, кто в этой помощи нуждается (Beliakova)

‘Makarenko writes that children who know how to work respect the labour of other people and strive to come to the assistance of those who need it’

23 Uses of the comma

Correspondence with English usage

Commas are used, in Russian *and* English, to perform the following functions:

- (1) To separate:
- (i) **two or more adjectives** which define one noun:
- Он шёл по **тёмной, грязной, шумной** улице
 ‘He was walking down the dark, dirty, noisy street’
- (ii) **two or more adverbs** qualifying one verb:

Медленно, мучительно он встал с постели
'Slowly, painfully he rose from the bed'

- (2) To separate **items in a list**:

Плата за **квартиру, электричество, газ** составляет около 20 рублей (Beliakova)
'The rent, electricity and gas bills amount to about 20 roubles'

- (3) To mark off words and phrases which stand **in apposition**:

Валентина Терешкова, рабочая девочка из старинного текстильного городка, стала первой женщиной-космонавтом
'Valentina Tereshkova, a working girl from an ancient textile town, became the first woman in space'

- (4) To mark off words which serve to **define and specify**:

Здание детского сада двухэтажное, **с большими светлыми окнами, с верандами для дневного сна** (Beliakova)
'The building of the kindergarten is two-storey, with large light windows and verandas for a daytime nap'

- (5) After **да** 'yes' and **нет** 'no':

Да, я согласен с вами/Нет, я не согласен
'Yes, I agree with you/No, I don't agree'

- (6) In **addressing people**:

Здравствуйте, Иван Иванович!
'Hallo, Ivan Ivanovich!'

- (7) After **interjections**:

— **Ой**, как неудачно. Вчера упал или сегодня? (Rasputin)
'Oh, what bad luck. Did you fall over yesterday or today?'

- (8) Between **repeated words**:

Ничего, ничего, утешал он себя, самое трудное позади (Abramov)
'Never mind, never mind, he consoled himself, the worst is over'

- (9) To mark off **participial phrases**:

По равнине, **освещённой поздним солнцем**, скакал табун диких лошадей
'Over the plain, (which was) illuminated by the late sun, galloped a herd of wild horses'

(10) To mark off **gerundial phrases**:

Я молча́л, **не зная́**, что де́лать (Rasputin)
‘I was silent, not knowing what to do’

Note

In English, ‘and’ is often used as an alternative to a comma before the final element in enumerations and when two or more adjectives qualify a single noun or two adverbs a single verb (cf. (1) and (2) above).

Differences in usage between Russian and English

Russian *requires* the use of a comma in the following contexts, where usage in English is optional or inconsistent:

(1) Between clauses linked by **co-ordinating conjunctions** (see **454** (2) (i) and **455–457**):

О́ля зна́ет бу́квы, **но** я по́ка помога́ю ей чита́ть (Beliakova)
‘Olia knows the letters, but for the time being I help her to read’

Note

- (a) While a comma *always* appears before **но** (except when it is the first word in a sentence), the insertion of a comma before English ‘but’ depends largely on the length of the pause required by the context, cf. ‘He is young but experienced’ and ‘He is young, but everyone trusts him’.
- (b) A comma is used between clauses linked by **и** if the clauses have different subjects (Но волк был мёртв, **и** его́ сейча́с никто́ не бо́ялся (Abramov) ‘But the wolf was dead, and no one was afraid of him any more’), but not if they have the same subject (Разожгли́ костёр **и** сварили́ грибной́ суп (Beliakova) ‘They lit a fire and made mushroom soup’). In such contexts **и** may be replaced by a comma: Два́ дня он **не пил, не ел** (= не пил **и** не ел) (Abramov) ‘For two days he did not drink or eat’.

(2) Between clauses linked by the conjunctions **и . . . и** ‘both . . . and’, **ни . . . ни** ‘neither . . . nor’, **или . . . или** ‘either . . . or’, **то . . . то** ‘now . . . now’:

На ве́чере выступáли **и** ма́льчики, **и** де́вочки
‘Both boys and girls performed at the party’

Нельзя́ **ни** споко́йно почита́ть, **ни** сосре́доточе́ться (Beliakova)
‘You can neither do a little quiet reading, nor concentrate’

Э́то **или** соба́ка, **или** волк
‘That is either a dog or a wolf’

Она **то** смеётся, **то** плачет
 ‘Now she laughs, now she weeps’

(3) Between a **principal** and a **subordinate clause** (see 458–467):

Я знаю, **что** конец будет не скоро
 ‘I know the end is still some way off’

Мы не отдавали детей в ясли, **хотя** такая возможность была
 (Beliakova)

‘We didn’t put the children into a day-nursery, even though we had the opportunity to do so’

Денис стал с нетерпением ждать лета, **чтобы** поехать с бабушкой к Чёрному морю

‘Denis waited impatiently for the summer, in order to go with his grandmother to the Black Sea’

Он работал бы, **если бы** мог
 ‘He would work if he could’

Она уходит, **потому что** она опаздывает
 ‘She is leaving because she is late’

Note

The appearance of a comma between **потому** and **что** in Мы победим потому, что мы сильнее throws the element of cause into sharper relief: ‘We shall win because we are stronger’ (i.e. and for no other reason). This effect can be intensified by distancing **потому** from **что** (**Потому** мы победим, **что** мы сильнее), or by the addition of **лишь**, **только** or other intensifying words before **потому**.

(4) To separate **main** from **relative clauses** (see 123):

Я посещал город, **в котором** (где) провёл детство
 ‘I was visiting the town in which (where) I had spent my childhood’

Note

English distinguishes *relative* clauses (which are marked off by commas) — ‘Cats (i.e. *all* cats), who have excellent night vision, are nocturnal predators’ — from *adjective* clauses (which are *not* marked off by commas): ‘Cats (i.e. *only those* cats) who have no tails are called Manx cats’. In Russian, however, both types of clause are marked off with commas.

(5) To mark off **parenthetical words**:

во-первых/во-вторых	‘in the first place/in the second place’
допустим ‘let us assume’	напримёр ‘for example’

ка́жется	‘it seems’	пожа́луйста	‘please’
конечно́	‘of course’	по-мо́ему	‘in my opinion’
к сожалéнию	‘unfortunately’	ска́жем	‘let us say’
ме́жду прóчим	‘incidentally’	с одной, друго́й	‘on the one, the
мо́жет быть	‘perhaps’	стороны́	other hand’
наве́рное	‘probably’		

Он, **должно́ быть**, ушёл
‘He must have left’

Нам, **конечно́**, удобнее, что де́ти сидят ти́хо (Beliakova)
‘Of course, it’s more convenient for us if the children are sitting quietly’

Не спорь, **пожа́луйста**, со мной, я зна́ю (Rasputin)
‘Please don’t argue with me, I know best’

Он сказа́л, что, **к сожалéнию**, нам придётся идти́ без него́
‘He said that unfortunately we would have to go without him’

(6) In **comparisons**:

Он ла́зит по дере́вьям, **как обезья́на**
‘He scrambles about in the trees like a monkey’

Кто́-то научи́л своего́ малыша́ пла́вать **ра́ньше, чем** тот стал ходи́ть
(Beliakova)
‘Someone taught his baby to swim before he could walk’

Он спал беспробу́дным сном, **бу́дто** его́ ничто́ не трево́жило
‘He was sound asleep, as though without a care in the world’

24 The colon. The semicolon. The dash

The colon

The colon is used to perform the following functions:

(1) To **introduce a list**, in which case the colon is usually preceded by a generic term:

Моя семья́ состоит из четырёх человек: **мой муж Ви́ктор, две́е дете́й и я** (Beliakova)
‘My family consists of four people: my husband Victor, the two children and myself’

(2) To introduce a statement which **elaborates on, supplements or indicates the cause** of the statement which precedes the colon:

И тут их ожида́ла но́вая беда́: **оте́ц пропа́л** (Abramov)
 ‘And now a new misfortune awaited them: father had disappeared’

В нау́ке всегда́ должна́ быть то́чность: **ка́ждому нау́чному те́рмину
 должнó соотве́тствовать о́дно поня́тие** (Vvedenskaia)
 ‘There should always be accuracy in science: a single concept should
 correspond to each scientific term’

У́тром я со стра́хом смотре́л на себя́ в зе́ркало: **нос вспух, под
 ле́вым гла́зом синя́к** (Rasputin)
 ‘In the morning I gazed at myself in the mirror in horror: my nose had
 swollen up, there was a bruise under my left eye’

(3) To **introduce direct speech, thought or other communication**:

В кинофи́льме «Дожи́вём до понеде́льника» подро́сток пи́шет:
«Сча́стье — э́то когда́ тебя́ понима́ют!» (Kovaleva)
 ‘In the film *We’ll survive till Monday* a teenager writes, “Happiness is
 when people understand you!”’

(4) To introduce a **quotation**:

По́мните, в «Евге́нии Оне́гине»:
 Привы́чка свы́ше нам дана́:
 За́мена сча́стию она́
 ‘Do you remember, in *Evgenii Onegin*:
 “Habit is granted us from on high:
 It is a substitute for happiness”’

The semicolon

The semicolon is used to **separate extensive clauses** which are **not linked by conjunctions**, especially if each clause is itself broken up by commas:

В Ленингра́де все хотя́т посмотре́ть на легенда́рную «Аврору»,
 побыва́ть в пу́шкинских места́х, в многочи́сленных дворца́х; в
 Улья́новске познако́миться с места́ми, где жил и учы́лся В. И.
 Ле́нин; в На́бережных Челна́х проеха́ть по о́гро́мному молодóму
 го́роду, посмотре́ть Кама́з (Vvedenskaia)
 ‘In Leningrad everyone wants to see the legendary “Aurora”, visit
 places associated with Pushkin, the numerous palaces; in UI’ianovsk to
 get to know the places where V. I. Lenin lived and worked; and in

Naberezhnye Chelny to drive through the enormous new town, see the Камаз truck factory’

Note

In 1991 Ленинград ‘Leningrad’ reverted to Санкт-Петербург ‘St Petersburg’ and Ульяновск ‘Ul’ianovsk’ to Симби́рск ‘Simbirsk’.

The dash

The dash is extremely widespread in Russian. It not only has a number of specific uses of its own but in some contexts substitutes for other punctuation marks, in particular the comma, the colon and parentheses.

(1) Specific uses of the dash.

(i) It separates **subject noun** from **predicate noun**, replacing the verb ‘to be’:

Мой отец — преподаватель ву́за, а ма́ма — врач (Beliakova)
‘My father is a college lecturer, and my mother is a doctor’

Са́мое глубо́кое о́зеро ми́ра — э́то пресново́дный краса́вец Байка́л (Vvedenskaia)
‘The deepest lake in the world is the beautiful fresh-water Lake Baikal’

Note

(a) The subject may sometimes be an **infinitive**:

Са́мое тяжёлое при проща́нии — **не огла́дываться** (*Ogonek*)
‘The hardest thing on parting is not to look back’

(b) The dash is not normally used to replace the verb ‘to be’ when the subject is a pronoun: Он водола́з ‘He is a diver’.

(ii) In elliptical statements it replaces a word, usually a verb, which is ‘understood’:

Студе́нт смотре́л на профе́ссора, профе́ссор — на студе́нта (Shukshin)
‘The student was looking at the professor, and the professor (was looking) at the student’

(2) The dash is also used as a substitute for:

(i) The comma (when, for example, introducing an unexpected turn of events or sharp contrast):

Она сделала ещё попытку посадить меня за стол — **напрáсно** (=, **но напрáсно**) (Rasputin)
‘She made another attempt to seat me at the table, but in vain’

Note

Generally speaking, the dash indicates a *more pronounced pause* than the comma, for example, in expressing apposition: Со мной был грузинский чай — моё единственное удовольствие (=, моё единственное удовольствие) ‘I had with me some Georgian tea, my only pleasure’.

(ii) The colon:

(a) in introducing an **enumeration**, following a generic term:

Иногда клуб приглашает гостей — **учёных, педагогов, врачей** (Beliakova)
‘Sometimes the club invites guests — scientists, teachers and doctors’

(b) in **elucidating** a statement:

В Таджикистане гражданская война — бегут в Россию таджики (Solzhenitsyn)
‘There is a civil war in Tadjikistan, (and so) Tadjiks flee into Russia’

(iii) Parentheses:

На территории Российской Федерации — **не забывайте о том, что она занимает одну седьмую часть всей суши Земли!** — тысячи рек и речушек
‘On the territory of the Russian Federation (do not forget that it occupies one-seventh of the Earth’s surface!) there are thousands of rivers and streams’

25 The punctuation of direct speech

(1) If the introductory verb *precedes* the direct speech, the verb is followed by a *colon*, and the direct speech *either*

(i) appears on a new line, preceded by a *dash*:

Я промямлил:
— **Правда** (Rasputin)
“‘It is true,’” I mumbled’

(ii) *or* runs on after the colon and is enclosed in *guillemets* (« »):

Сам хозяин ра́за два крича́л с крыльца́: «Эй, кто там?»
 ‘The master himself shouted a couple of times from the porch,
 “Hey, who’s there?”’

(2) If, however, the verb *follows* the direct speech, the latter is flanked by *dashes*:

— Уснул, — услужливо отве́тила Сима (Rasputin)
 “‘He’s fallen asleep,” answered Sima obligingly’

(3) A **conversation** may be rendered as follows:

— Я знаю, почему́ ты все ещё живёшь со мной. Сказа́ть?
 — Ну, почему́?
 — Да просто́ лень тебе́ купи́ть раскладу́шку. (S. Dovlatov)
 “‘I know why you still live with me. Shall I tell you?’
 “Well, why?’
 “You’re just too lazy to buy a camp bed.”’

Note

- (a) A full stop, comma, semicolon or dash *follow* inverted commas.
- (b) Quotes within quotes may be distinguished as follows: «Кре́йсер “Аврора” сто́ял на я́коре» ‘The cruiser “Aurora” lay at anchor’.
- (c) In cursive script, inverted commas are rendered as follows: «Приве́т!» ‘Greetings!’

26 Suspension points (многоточие)

Suspension points (. . .) indicate one of the following.

(1) **Hesitation:**

— Проигрываешь, наве́рное?
 — Нет, **вы . . . выигрываю** (Rasputin)
 “‘I suppose you lose?’
 “No, I – I win”’

(2) An **unfinished statement:**

Знать бы нам, чем это всё ко́нчится . . . (Rasputin)
 ‘Had we but known how it would all end . . .’

The Noun

Word Formation

27 Word formation in the noun I: general

(I) Nouns in Russian may be basic irreducible stems (e.g. **лес** ‘forest’) or form the basis of compound nouns (e.g. **лесоруб** ‘wood cutter’). Compounding takes a number of different forms, involving *initial* components which may be the stems of:

- (i) nouns: **ледокол** ‘ice-breaker’ (**лёд** ‘ice’, **колоть** ‘to split’)
- (ii) adjectives: **чернозём** ‘black earth’ (**чёрный** ‘black’, **земля** ‘earth’)
- (iii) numerals: **двуокись** ‘dioxide’ (**дву-** ‘two’, **окись** ‘oxide’)
- (iv) adverbs: **громкоговоритель** ‘loud speaker’ (**громко** ‘loudly’, **говорить** ‘to speak’);

and *second* components which may be:

- (i) nouns: **тяжеловес** ‘heavy weight’ (**тяжёлый** ‘heavy’, **вес** ‘weight’)
- (ii) of verbal origin: **сенокос** ‘haymaking’ (**сено** ‘hay’, **косить** ‘to mow’).

Note

- (a) Compounds may also be based on phrases: **инопланетянин** ‘extra-terrestrial’ (cf. **иная планета** ‘another planet’), **однофамилец** ‘namesake’ (cf. **одна фамилия** ‘the same name’).

(b) The components of a compound are usually linked by the infixes **-о-**: **снегопáд** ‘snow fall’, **мáшинопи́сь** ‘typing’, **самолёт** ‘aeroplane’, or (where the stem of the first component ends in a soft consonant or in **ж, ч, ш, щ** or **ц**) **-е-**: **общеж́итие** ‘hostel’, **овцево́д** ‘sheep-breeder’, **пулемёт** ‘machine gun’ (cf. **пу́ля** ‘bullet’), **сталева́р** ‘steel founder’ (cf. **сталь** ‘steel’), **пешехо́д** ‘pedestrian’. However, **-о-** sometimes appears as an ‘illogical’ link-vowel when the stem of the first component of a compound ends in soft **в** (e.g. **кровообра́щение** ‘circulation of the blood’, cf. **крово́ь** ‘blood’), soft **н** (e.g. **баснопи́сец** ‘fabulist’, cf. **бáсня** ‘fable’), soft **р** (**звероло́в** ‘trapper’, cf. **зверь** ‘animal’), or soft **т** (**честолю́бие** ‘ambition’, cf. **честь** ‘honour’).

(2) A group of compounds with second components that denote persons or places is particularly common. Some of the elements are indigenous: **-вед**, as in **литерату́рове́д** ‘literature specialist’, **-вод**, as in **скотово́д** ‘stock-breeder’, others international: **-граф**, as in **гео́граф** ‘geographer’, **-дром**, as in **дельтадро́м** ‘hang-glider launch site’, **-лог**, as in **биоло́г** ‘biologist’, **-ман**, as in **балетомáн** ‘balletomane’, **-тека**, as in **фоноте́ка** ‘sound library’, **-фил**, as in **славянофи́л** ‘Slavophile’, **-фоб**, as in **англофо́б** ‘Anglophobe’.

(3) While most second components in compounds tend to be truncated forms: **водопа́д** ‘waterfall’, **парово́з** ‘steam engine’, **пчелово́д** ‘apiarist’, etc., some are suffixed: **монеторазме́нник** ‘change machine’, **пивова́рня** ‘brewery’, **работоспосо́бность** ‘efficiency’, **судостро́ение** ‘ship-building’.

(4) The relationships between initial and second components may be as follows:

(i) the first component may denote the object of the second: **бензovóз** ‘petrol tanker’ (cf. **вози́ть бензи́н** ‘to transport petrol’), **книголю́б** ‘book lover’, **нефтепрово́д** ‘oil pipeline’, **пылесо́с** ‘vacuum cleaner’;

(ii) the second component may denote an object designed for the first: **бензоба́к** ‘petrol tank’ (cf. **бак для бензи́на** ‘tank for petrol’), **де́тса́д** ‘kindergarten’;

(iii) the action denoted by the second component may be performed in or over the area designated by the first: **вездехо́д** ‘cross country vehicle’ (cf. **ходи́ть вездé** ‘to go everywhere’), **домосе́д** ‘stay-at-home’, **морепла́ватель** ‘seafarer’;

(iv) the first component may qualify the second: **новострóйка** ‘new building’ (cf. *но́вая стрóйка* ‘new building’), **общежи́тие** ‘hostel’, **пятибо́рье** ‘pentathlon’;

(v) the first component may denote the means by which the second is accomplished: **вертолёт** ‘helicopter’ (cf. *вертёт(ся)* ‘to rotate’, *лёт* ‘flight’), **га́зосва́рщик** ‘gas welder’, **пароход** ‘steamer’.

Note

For the formation of compound *abbreviations*, see **39** (acronyms), **40** (alphabetisms), **41** (stump compounds), **42** (compound hyphenated nouns).

28 Word formation in the noun II: prefixation

(1) Prefixes, while fewer in number than suffixes, effect more radical change than suffixes are capable of. Thus, in the word **бесконфли́ктность** ‘absence of conflict’ the suffix **-ость** merely denotes the abstract nature of the noun, while the prefix **бес-** fulfils a semantic role in denoting the absence of the quality denoted by the root noun (**конфли́кт** ‘conflict’).

(2) The following prefixes used with nouns are also commonly used with verbs (for the full range of their meanings, see sections **254** and **331**; for spelling rules see **16**, rules 3–5):

в- ‘into’:	вложéние ‘investment’
вз-/вс- ‘upwards’:	взлёт ‘take-off’
воз-/вос- (i) ‘upwards’:	восход <i>со́лнца</i> ‘sun-rise’
(ii) ‘re-’:	воссоеди́нение ‘reunification’
вы- ‘outwards’:	вы́пуск ‘output’
до- ‘addition’:	дополнéние ‘supplementation’
за- (i) ‘beyond’:	зарубе́жье ‘foreign countries’
(ii) ‘closing’:	закры́тие ‘closure’
из-/ис- ‘ex-, out’:	исключéние ‘expulsion’
на- (i) ‘on, onto’:	нау́шник ‘earphone’
(ii) ‘quantity’:	надóй ‘milk yield’
над- ‘above’:	надсмóтрщик ‘supervisor’
недо- ‘shortfall’:	недооце́нка ‘underestimate’
о-/об- (i) ‘encompassing’:	охва́т ‘scope, range’
(ii) ‘avoidance’:	объезд ‘detour’
от- ‘away from’:	отъезд ‘departure’
пере- (i) ‘across’:	перехо́д ‘crossing’
(ii) ‘repeat’:	переигро́вка ‘replay’

под- (i) 'support':	подсвѣчник 'candle-stick'
(ii) 'sham':	поддѣлка 'forgery'
пре- (i) 'trans-':	преобразованіе 'transformation'
(ii) 'excess':	преувеличеніе 'exaggeration'
пред- 'pre-':	предысторія 'pre-history'
при- (i) 'arrival, joining':	приземлѣніе 'landing'
(ii) 'attachment':	приложѣніе 'magazine supplement'
про- 'through, past':	пропуск 'pass'
раз-/рас- (i) 'spread':	распространѣніе 'dissemination'
(ii) 'reversal':	разрядка 'détente'
с- (i) 'together':	съезд 'congress'
(ii) 'down':	спуск 'descent'
у- 'away':	увольнѣніе 'dismissal'

(3) A further set of prefixes are used mainly with nouns, in some cases adjectives, and a few also with verbs (e.g. **без-/бес-**, **де-**, **дис-**, **ре-**). Many are loan prefixes and combine mostly with foreign roots, while some (**без-**, **между-**, **не-**, **по-**, **под-**, **пра-**, **пред-**, **само-**, **свѣрх-**, **после-**, **противо-**, **чрез-/чрес-**) are indigenous.

а- 'devoid of':	алогичность 'illogicality'
анти- 'opposed to':	антирыночник 'opponent of a market economy'
архи- 'extreme':	архиплут 'arch villain'
без-/бес- 'deprived of':	бессонница 'insomnia'
вице- 'deputizing for':	вицепредседатель 'vice-chairman'
гипер- 'extreme':	гиперинфляция 'hyper-inflation'
де- 'reversal':	децентрализация 'decentralization'
дез- 'removal':	дезодорант 'deodorant'
дис- 'deprived of':	дисквалификация 'disqualification'
интер- 'international':	интердевочка 'hard-currency prostitute'
квâзи- 'quasi-':	квâзидемократія 'quasi-democracy'
контр- 'counter to':	контрразвѣдка 'counter-espionage'
между- 'intermediate':	междуцарствие 'interregnum'
микро- 'small':	микроорганизм 'micro-organism'
не- 'negation of':	нераспространѣніе 'non-proliferation'
нео- 'revived':	неокапитализм 'neo-capitalism'
по- 'along':	пограничник 'frontier guard'
под (i) 'subordinate to':	подвид 'sub-species'
(ii) 'proximity':	Подмоскóвье 'Moscow region'
после- 'following':	послеслóвие 'epilogue'
пóст- 'subsequent':	пóстмóдернїзм 'post-Modernism'

пра- ‘great’ (in relationships)	прабабушка: ‘great-grandmother’
преди- ‘preceding’:	предисловие ‘foreword’
про- (i) ‘supportive of’:	проамериканец ‘pro-American’
(ii) ‘deputizing for’:	проректор ‘vice-principal’
противо- ‘opposed to’:	противоречие ‘contradiction’
псевдо- ‘sham’:	псевдодемократия ‘pseudo-democracy’
ре- ‘re-’:	реинтеграция ‘reintegration’
само- ‘self’:	самообслуживание ‘self-service’
сверх- ‘extreme’:	сверхдержава ‘super-power’
суб- ‘subordinate’:	субподряд ‘subcontract’
супер- ‘extreme’:	суперзвезда ‘super-star’
ультра- ‘extreme’:	ультрареакционер ‘ultrareactionary’
чрез-/чрес- ‘excessive’:	чрезмерность ‘excessiveness’
экс- ‘former’:	экс-премьер ‘the former premier’
	экс-вице-президент ‘the former vice-president’
экстра- ‘beyond’:	экстрасенс ‘psychic’

Note

(a) A number of prefixes fall into definable categories:

- (i) excess (**архи-, гипер-, сверх-, супер-, чрез-**);
- (ii) negation (**а-, без-, де-, дез-, дис-, не-**);
- (iii) time (**нео-, после-, подст-, преди-, ре-, экс-**);
- (iv) opposition/support (**анти-, контр-, про-, противо-**);
- (v) sham (**квази-, псевдо-**).

(b) In some cases a prefixed word has been borrowed virtually in its entirety (e.g. **анемия** ‘anaemia’) and should thus be regarded as a non-derivative stem in Russian.

(c) Spelling rule **16** (3), in accordance with which initial **и** is replaced by **ы** following a prefix ending in a consonant, does not apply to the loan prefixes **гипер-, дез-, подст-, суб-, супер-** (thus **дезинформация** ‘misinformation’, etc.).

29 Word formation in the noun III: suffixation

Introductory remarks

(i) Noun suffixes number over one hundred and play a fundamental role in the creation of nouns. Suffixed nouns may derive from verbs: **стрельба** ‘shooting’ from **стрелять** ‘to shoot’; adjectives: **мальиш** ‘child, small boy’

from *малый* 'small'; other nouns: **рыба́к** 'fisherman' from *рыба* 'fish'; prepositions: **преди́к** 'ancestor' from *перед/пред* 'before'; numerals: **тро́йка** 'troika' from *трёе* 'three'; adverbs: **почему́чка** 'inquisitive child' from *почему́?* 'why?'.

(ii) While little or no guidance can be offered on the selection of suffixes to convey particular meanings, familiarity with the range of suffixes available within each field of meaning can be beneficial.

(iii) Many loan suffixes are components of nouns that have been borrowed virtually in their entirety:

- аж** as in **то́ннаж** 'tonnage'
- ант** as in **дилетта́нт** 'dilettante'
- арий** as in **планета́рий** 'planetarium'
- ат** as in **электора́т** 'electorate'
- ент** as in **аге́нт** 'agent'
- ер** as in **тре́нер** 'trainer'
- есса** as in **поэте́сса** 'poetess'
- иада** as in **олимпиа́да** 'Olympiad'
- изм** as in **социали́зм** 'socialism'
- ик** as in **диабети́к** 'diabetic'
- ир** as in **банка́ир** 'banker'
- иса** as in **актри́са** 'actress'
- ист** as in **коммуни́ст** 'communist'
- ит** as in **артри́т** 'arthritis'
- итет** as in **приорите́т** 'priority'
- ор** as in **агрессо́р** 'aggressor'
- тор** as in **авиа́тор** 'aviator'

Note

Some of the compounds are based on Russian stems: **ельцини́ст** 'Yeltsin supporter', **трудоголи́зм** 'workaholism', in which case the suffixes (here, **-ист**, **-изм**) can be identified as separate formants.

(iv) Other suffixes cover broad categories of meaning (the most characteristic suffixes are listed here for each category; a full list appears under (vi), below, which enumerates fifty-two suffixes with their meanings):

- (a) Abstract meanings (attitudes, feelings, qualities):
-**ба**, -**ие/-ье**, -**изм**, -**ость/-есть**, -**ота**, -**ствие**, -**ство**, -**сть**
- (b) Actions (verbal nouns):
-**ация/-изация**, -**ка**, -**ние**, -**ок**, -**ство**, -**тие**

- (c) Animate beings (agents of actions, nationals, inhabitants, members of organizations, etc.):
-ак/-як, -анин/-янин, -арь, -ач, -ец, -ик, -ист, -ник, -ок, -тель, -ун, -щик/-чик
- (d) Collectives:
-ство, -ура
- (e) Objects/implements:
-ик, -ка, -ло, -ник, -ок, -тель, -щик/-чик
- (f) Places:
-ище, -ня, -ье
- (g) Quantity, dimension:
-ина, -ство

Note

- (a) Some suffixes have certain very specific meanings: **-ёнок/-онок** (young of animals), **-ика** (berries), **-ина** (types of meat), **-ки** (remnants), **-ница** (containers), **-ович/-(ь)евич/-ич** (patronymics), **-от** (sounds), **-ота** and **-уха** (medical conditions);
- (b) The commonest feminine suffixes (in addition to **-есса, -иса**, which are listed under (iii)) are: **-иня/-ыня, -иха, -ица, -ка, -ница, -ша, -щица/-чица, -ья**.
- (v) Most consonant changes in suffixed nouns affect the velar consonants. The following changes occur: **г: ж, к: ч** and **х: ш** before the suffixes: **-ество** (e.g. мона́х ‘monk’: мона́шество ‘monks’), **-ие** (вельи́кий ‘great’: вельи́чие ‘greatness’), **-ина** (горóх ‘peas’: горóшина ‘pea’), **-инка** (снег ‘snow’: снежи́нка ‘snow-flake’), **-ист** (шпа́га ‘sword’: шпажи́ст ‘fencer’ [but танк ‘tank’: танки́ст ‘tank-driver’]), **-иха** (мельник ‘miller’: мельничиха ‘miller’s wife’), **-ица** (волк ‘wolf’: волчи́ца ‘she-wolf’), **-ник** (молоко́ ‘milk’: молочник ‘milk-jug’), **-ница** (спичка́ ‘match’: спичечница ‘matchbox stand’), **-ня** ([in names of places] коню́х ‘groom’: коню́шня ‘stable’), **-ок** (прыга́ть ‘to jump’: прыжо́к ‘jump’), **-онок** (волк ‘wolf’: волчо́нок ‘wolf-cub’), **-ье** (бе́рег ‘shore’: побере́жье ‘coastline’).

Note

Nouns in **-онок** also undergo the mutations **д: ж** (медве́дь ‘bear’: медвежо́нок ‘bear-cub’) and **ц: ч** (за́яц ‘hare’: зайчо́нок ‘leveret’), those in **-ество** — **т: ч** (студе́нт ‘student’: студенче́ство ‘student body’), those in **-ина** — **ск: щ** (тре́скаться ‘to crack’: тре́щина ‘crack’) and **ст: щ**

(то́лстый ‘thick’: толщина ‘thickness’), those in **-иха** and **-ница** — **ц: ч** (плóвец ‘swimmer’: плóвчи́ха ‘female swimmer’, пéрец ‘pepper’: пéречница ‘pepper-pot’). For consonant change in the verbal noun, see section on **-(е)ние** (28) (ii), below, and for consonant change in nouns in **-анин**, see (2), below.

(vi) **Noun suffixes**

(1) **ак/-як** (-чак after -ль)

Persons

(i) with particular physical characteristics or personality traits (based on adjs.):

бедня́к ‘poor person’, **весельча́к** ‘jolly person’, **пошля́к** ‘vulgar person’, **смелы́чак** ‘daredevil’, **толсты́ак** ‘fat person’

(ii) practitioners (from nouns):

горня́к ‘miner’, **моря́к** ‘sailor’, **рыба́к** ‘fisherman’

(iii) nationalities, inhabitants of certain ancient towns and cities:

поля́к ‘Pole’, **слова́к** ‘Slovak’, **тверя́к** ‘inhabitant of Tver’

Note

сибиря́к ‘Siberian’.

(2) **-анин/-чанин/-янин**

Nationals, inhabitants, members of social, religious and other groups:

армя́нин ‘Armenian’, **гражда́нин** ‘citizen’ (from град ‘town’), **крестья́нин** ‘peasant’, **мусульма́нин** ‘Muslim’, **парижа́нин** ‘Parisian’, **рижа́нин** ‘inhabitant of Riga’ (from Рíга ‘Riga’), **северя́нин** ‘northerner’, **славя́нин** ‘Slav’, **христиа́нин** ‘Christian’, **южа́нин** ‘southerner’ (from юг ‘south’)

Note

Derivative **-чанин** (with infix **-ч-**) appears after **и** in **англича́нин** (but **россия́нин** ‘inhabitant of Russia’), **в** in **ростовча́нин** ‘inhabitant of Rostov’, **харьковча́нин** ‘inhabitant of Khar’kov’ (but **варшава́нин** ‘inhabitant of Warsaw’, **киевля́нин** ‘Kievan’), **ль** in **сельча́нин** ‘villager’, **м** in **сумча́нин** ‘inhabitant of Sumy’ (but **ры́млянин** ‘Roman’), **н** in **клинча́нин** ‘inhabitant of Klin’, **т** in **датча́нин** ‘Dane’ (but **египтя́нин** ‘Egyptian’, **израилья́нин** ‘Israeli’), and replaces **ск** in **братча́нин** ‘inhabitant of Bratsk’, **минча́нин** ‘inhabitant of Minsk’, **норильча́нин** ‘inhabitant of Noril’sk’.

(3) **-анка/-янка/-енка**

Female nationals (from zero-suffixed m. forms and some in -ец):

гречáнка ‘Greek woman’ (cf. грек ‘Greek’), **индиáнка** ‘Indian woman’ (cf. индiец ‘Indian’, индeец ‘North American Indian’), **китайнка** ‘Chinese woman’ (cf. китáец ‘Chinese’), **турчáнка** ‘Turkish woman’ (cf. тyрок ‘Turk’), **францyженка** ‘Frenchwoman’ (cf. францyз ‘Frenchman’)

(4) -арь

(i) Practitioners:

(a) from nouns:

аптeкарь ‘chemist’, **библиотeкарь** ‘librarian’, **вратáрь** ‘goalkeeper’

(b) from verbs:

звонáрь ‘bell-ringer’, **пeкарь** ‘baker’, **тoкарь** ‘turner’

(ii) Objects (from nouns or adjs.):

буквáрь ‘primer’, **словáрь** ‘dictionary’, **сyxáрь** ‘rusk’

(5) 5-ация/-изация/-фикация

Verbal nouns (from verbs in **-овать/-(-из)ировать/-фицировать**):

демонстрация ‘demonstration’, **классификация** ‘classification’,
приватизация ‘privatization’, **рекомендация** ‘recommendation’,
роботизация ‘robotization’

Note

(a) **-яция** after л: **вентиляция** ‘ventilation’.

(b) Some nouns in **-фикация** denote provision of facilities:
кинофикация ‘supplying with cinemas’, **электрификация** ‘electrification’.

(6) -ач

Persons:

(i) with particular characteristics:

(a) from adjs.:

богáч ‘rich man’, **лихáч** ‘reckless driver’, **ловкáч** ‘dodger’

(b) from nouns:

бородáч ‘bearded man’, **силáч** ‘strong man’, **усáч** ‘man with large moustache’

(ii) practitioners (from verbs or nouns):

врач ‘doctor’, **скрипáч** ‘violinist’, **трубáч** ‘trumpeter’, **ткач** ‘weaver’

(7) -ба

Verbal nouns (from impf. verbs):

борьба́ ‘struggle’, **жени́тьба** ‘marriage’, **про́сьба** ‘request’, **слу́жба** ‘service’, **стрельба́** ‘shooting’, **ходьба́** ‘walking’

(8) -ёж

Verbal nouns in **-ёж** derive from verbs in **-ить**:

грабе́ж ‘robbery’, **куте́ж** ‘carousing’, **плате́ж** ‘payment’

Note

галде́ж ‘din’, from **галде́ть** ‘to make a din’.

(9) -ёнок/-онок

The young of animals and birds:

медвежо́нок ‘bear-cub’, **львёнок** ‘lion-cub’, **орле́нок** ‘young eagle’, **тигрёнок** ‘tiger-cub’, **утёнок** ‘duckling’

(10) -ец

Persons:

(i) with personality traits (from adjs.):

горде́ц ‘arrogant man’, **мудре́ц** ‘wise man’, **счастли́вец** ‘happy person’, **хитре́ц** ‘cunning devil’

(ii) agents of actions (from verbs):

боре́ц ‘wrestler’, **гребе́ц** ‘oarsman’, **певе́ц** ‘singer’, **продаве́ц** ‘salesman’

Note

In **-лец**: **владеле́ц** ‘owner’, **корми́лец** ‘bread-winner’ and from verbal nouns in **-ение**: **переселе́нец** ‘settler’, **снабжение́ец** ‘supplier’.

(iii) many nationals:

америкáнец ‘American’, **испа́нец** ‘Spaniard’, **италья́нец** ‘Italian’, **кана́дец** ‘Canadian’, **не́мец** ‘German’, **норве́жец** ‘Norwegian’, **украи́нец** ‘Ukrainian’

(iv) most inhabitants:

европе́ец ‘European’, **кавказе́ц** ‘Caucasian’, **ло́ндонец** ‘Londoner’, **новгоро́дец** ‘inhabitant of Novgorod’, **петербу́ржец** ‘inhabitant of St Petersburg’

Note

Infix **-ов-** in **донба́ссовец** ‘inhabitant of Donbass’, etc.

(v) members of organizations, including acronyms and indeclinable nouns (often with infix -ов-):

вузовец 'higher education student' (from вуз 'institution of higher education'), **динамовец** 'member of Dynamo', **неделец** 'employee of *Nedelia*', **омоновец** 'member of OMON' (special police force), **обновец** 'UN official'

(11) -знь

States (based on verbs):

болéзнь 'illness', **бойзнь** 'fear', **жизнь** 'life', **неприязнь** 'hostility'

(12) -ие/-ье

Qualities (based on adjs.):

величие 'greatness', **весéлье** 'gaiety', **здоровье** 'health'

Note

Usage in compound words: **долголётие** 'longevity', **остроумие** 'wit', **равнодушие** 'indifference'.

(13) -изм

Policies, attitudes:

брежневизм 'Brezhnevism', **вещизм** 'acquisitiveness', **наплеvizм** 'couldn't-care-less attitude', **плюрализм** 'pluralism'

(14) -изна

Qualities (based on adjs.):

белизна 'whiteness', **дешевизна** 'cheapness', **крутизна** 'steepness', **новизна** 'newness'

Note

Infix **-ов-** in **дороговизна** 'expensiveness'.

(15) -ик

(i) Persons:

(a) (based on adjs. in -н-):

вечёрник 'evening-class student' (cf. вечерний 'evening'), **винóвник** 'culprit', **шкóльник** 'schoolboy'

Note

Some forms are based on adjs. in **-нный**: **тамóженник** 'customs officer', adjs. in **-ственный**: **общéственник** 'public figure', or verbs in **-ствовать**: **путешéственник** 'traveller'.

(b) practitioners, based on adjs. in:

-в-: **биржеви́к** ‘stockbroker’ (cf. биржево́й ‘stock-exchange’ [adj.]),
кроссови́к ‘cross-country runner’, **оптови́к** ‘wholesaler’,
плани́к ‘planner’

-н-: **глазни́к** ‘oculist’ (cf. глазно́й ‘eye’ [adj.]), **железнодоро́жник**
‘railway worker’, **пожа́рник** ‘firefighter’, **сезо́нник** ‘seasonal
worker’

(ii) Objects based on adjs. in:

-в-: **белови́к** ‘fair copy’ (cf. белово́й ‘fair’ [adj.]), **броневи́к**
‘armoured car’, **грузови́к** ‘lorry’, **чернови́к** ‘rough copy’

-н-: **купа́льник** ‘bathing costume’ (cf. купа́льный ‘bathing’ [adj.]),
па́мятник ‘monument’

(16) -ика

Berries:

брусни́ка ‘red whortleberry’, **голуби́ка** ‘bilberry’, **земляни́ка** ‘wild
strawberries’

(17) -ин

Nationals:

болга́рин ‘Bulgarian’, **грузи́н** ‘Georgian’, **осети́н** ‘Ossetian’, **тата́рин**
‘Tatar’

(18) -ина

(i) Dimensions:

глуби́на ‘depth’, **дли́на** ‘length’, **толщи́на** ‘thickness’, **шири́на**
‘width’

(ii) The results of actions or processes (based on verbs):

впа́дина ‘hollow’, **морщи́на** ‘wrinkle’, **ржа́вчина** ‘rust’, **тре́щина**
‘crack’, **цара́пина** ‘scratch’

(iii) Types of meat:

бара́нина ‘mutton’, **говя́дина** ‘beef’, **осетри́на** ‘sturgeon’, **свини́на**
‘pork’

Note

Derivative **-atina/-yatina**, based on the plural of young animals:
медвежа́тина ‘bear meat’, **теля́тина** ‘veal’.

(iv) Singulatives:

бу́сина (from бусы ‘beads’) ‘bead’, **виногра́дина** ‘grape’, **горо́шина**
‘pea’, **солóмина** ‘straw’

Note

Forms in **-инка**: **снежи́нка** ‘snowflake’, **чайни́ка** ‘tea-leaf’.

(19) -иня/-ыня

Feminine counterparts of zero-suffixed and some other nouns:

ба́рыня 'lady' (from ба́рин 'lord'), **геро́иня** 'heroine', **мона́хиня** 'nun'

(20) -ист

Persons (based on nouns):

(i) musicians:

арфи́ст 'harpist', **виолончели́ст** 'cellist', **гитаристи́ст** 'guitarist',
пиани́ст 'pianist'

(ii) sportsmen:

волейболи́ст 'volleyball player', **тени́сист** 'tennis-player',
футболи́ст 'footballer', **хоккеи́ст** 'ice-hockey player', **шахмати́ст**
'chess-player'

(iii) drivers:

такси́ст 'taxi driver', **танки́ст** 'tank driver', **трактори́ст** 'tractor
driver'

(21) -иха

Feminine ending (based on m. counterparts):

(i) women with particular characteristics:

труси́ха 'cowardly woman', **щеголи́ха** 'showy dresser'

(ii) practitioners:

пловчи́ха 'female swimmer', **повари́ха** 'cook', **портни́ха** 'dress-
maker', **ткачи́ха** 'weaver'

(iii) wives:

купчи́ха 'merchant's wife', **ме́льничиха** 'miller's wife', **полко́вничиха**
'colonel's wife'

(iv) animals:

зайчи́ха 'doe', **лоси́ха** 'female elk', **осли́ха** 'female ass', **слони́ха**
'cow elephant'

(22) -ица

Feminine ending:

(i) counterparts of zero-suffixed m. nouns:

фельдшери́ца 'female surgeon's assistant', **цари́ца** 'tsarina'

(ii) counterparts of nouns in -ец:

ревнивица 'jealous woman', **сослуживица** 'female colleague',
счастливица 'happy woman'

(iii) animals and birds:

волчица 'she-wolf', **львица** 'lioness', **медведица** 'she-bear', **орлица**
'female eagle'

(23) -ич

Inhabitants of certain ancient towns and cities (NB all lower case):

вятчич 'inhabitant of Viatka', **костромич** 'inhabitant of Kostroma',
москвич 'Muscovite', **томич** 'inhabitant of Tomsk', **пскович** 'inhabitant of Pskov'

(24) -ище

(i) Places (from nouns or — particularly those in -лице — verbs):

вместилище 'receptacle', **жилище** 'dwelling', **кладбище** 'cemetery',
стрельбище 'firing range', **убежище** 'refuge'

(ii) Handles:

ножевище 'knife-handle', **кнутовище** 'whip-handle', **топорище**
'axe-handle'

(25) -ка

(i) Verbal noun:

The suffix appears after vowel + consonant combinations, and derives from:

(a) some 2nd-conjugation verbs in -ить: **заправка** 'refuelling' (from **заправить(ся)** 'to refuel'), **перевозка** 'transportation', **чистка** 'cleaning'.

Note

Глажка 'ironing' from **гладить** 'to iron', **слежка** 'tracking' from **следить** 'to track', and derivative **-ёжка/-овка** after vowel + two consonants: **бомбёжка** 'bombing' (from **бомбить** 'to bomb'), **сверловка** 'drilling'.

(b) some verbs in -ать: **задержка** 'delay' (from **задержать** 'to delay'), **обработка** 'processing'.

Note

-овка after vowel + two consonants: **переигровка** 'replay' from **переиграть** 'to replay'.

- (c) many verbs in **-овать**: **стыко́вка** ‘docking’ from стыкова́ться ‘to dock’; and **-ировать**: **меблиро́вка** ‘furnishing’ from мебе́лирова́ть ‘to furnish’.

Note

Some verbs in **-ировать** have alternative verbal nouns in **-ка** and **-ние**, e.g., **регу́лиро́вка/регу́лирова́ние** ‘regulation’ from регу́лирова́ть ‘to regulate’.

- (d) some verbs in **-оть**, e.g. **ко́лка** ‘chopping’ (from коло́ть ‘to chop’).
 (e) a number of other verbs: **мо́йка** ‘washing’ (from мы́ть ‘to wash’), **по́йма** ‘capture’ (from пойма́ть ‘to catch’), **стри́жка** ‘hair-cutting’ (from стри́чь ‘to cut’).

- (ii) Feminine suffix (from many zero-suffixed m. nouns and many m. nouns in **-ент**: **-ец**, **-ин**, **-ист**, **-ич**):

грузи́нка ‘Georgian woman’, **ко́нькобе́жка** ‘skater’, **москв́ичка** ‘Muscovite’, **студе́нка** ‘student’, **трактори́стка** ‘female tractor driver’

- (iii) Contracted forms (from adj. + noun phrases):

вече́рка ‘evening paper’, **Ле́нинка** ‘Lenin Library’, **откры́тка** ‘postcard’, **электри́чка** ‘suburban commuter train’

Note

Some nouns in **-лка** denote rooms, e.g. **раздева́лка** ‘changing room’.

- (iv) Objects (in **-лка**, from impf. verbs):

веша́лка ‘stand’, **гре́лка** ‘hot-water bottle’, **зажигáлка** ‘lighter’, **открыва́лка** ‘bottle-opener’, **точи́лка** ‘pencil sharpener’

- (26) **-ки**

Remnants:

обье́дки ‘scraps’, **опи́лки** ‘sawdust’, **очи́стки** ‘peelings’, **подбо́нки** ‘dregs’

- (27) **-лю**

Implements, agents of action (from impf. verbs):

крыло́ ‘wing’, **мы́ло** ‘soap’, **сверло́** ‘drill’, **точило́** ‘grind-stone’, **ши́ло** ‘awl’

Note

N. pl. counterparts **черни́ла** ‘ink’, **уди́ла** ‘bit’.

- (28) **-ние** (**-ание/-ение**)

Verbal nouns:

(i) in **-ание/-яние** (from many verbs in **-ать/-ять**):

вяза́ние ‘knitting’ (from **вяза́ть** ‘to knit’), **пая́ние** ‘soldering’ (from **пая́ть** ‘to solder’), including verbs in:

-овать/-евать (**рисова́ние** ‘drawing’, **завоева́ние** ‘conquering’)

-ствовать (**бо́дрствова́ние** ‘keeping awake’)

-ировать (**кло́нирова́ние** ‘cloning’)

(ii) in **-ение**, from:

(a) many 2nd-conjugation verbs in **-ить**: **кура́ение** ‘smoking’ (from **кура́ить** ‘to smoke’), **сохране́ние** ‘preservation’

(b) verbs in **-еть**, of either conjugation:

ста́рение ‘ageing’ (from **ста́реть** ‘to age’), **гора́ение** ‘burning’ (from **гора́еть** ‘to burn’)

Note

Consonant change applies to the following stem consonants:

б: **бл** **употре́бле́ние** ‘use’ (from **употре́бить** ‘to use’)

в: **вл** **выздоровле́ние** ‘convalescence’ (from **выздорове́ть** ‘to convalesce’)

д: **ж** **бро́жение** ‘fermentation’ (from **бро́дить** ‘to ferment’)

д: **жд** **освобо́жде́ние** ‘liberation’ (from **освобо́дить** ‘to liberate’)

з: **ж** **отра́жение** ‘reflection’ (from **отра́зить** ‘to reflect’)

м: **мл** **оформле́ние** ‘lay-out’ (from **офóрмить** ‘to lay out’)

п: **пл** **подкре́пле́ние** ‘reinforcement’ (from **подкре́пить** ‘to reinforce’)

с: **ш** **приглаше́ние** ‘invitation’ (from **пригласи́ть** ‘to invite’)

ст: **щ** **упро́ще́ние** ‘simplification’ (from **упрости́ть** ‘to simplify’)

т: **ч** **кипя́чение** ‘boiling’ (from **кипя́тить** ‘to boil’)

т: **щ** **посеще́ние** ‘visit’ (from **посети́ть** ‘to visit’)

ф: **фл** **графле́ние** ‘ruling of lines’ (from **графи́ть** ‘to rule lines’)

(c) verbs in **-сть**, **-чь** and **-ти** (with present-future stem consonant in verbal noun):

нападе́ние ‘attack’, from **напа́сть** ‘to attack’ (cf. 3rd person sing. **нападёт**)

прочте́ние ‘reading’, from **проче́сть** ‘to read’ (cf. 3rd person sing. **прочтёт**)

извлече́ние ‘extraction’, from **извлече́ь** ‘to extract’ (cf. 3rd person sing. **извлечёт**)

пренебре́жение ‘disdain’, from **пренебре́чь** ‘to scorn’ (cf. 3rd person sing. **пренебрежёт**)

введéние ‘introduction’, from **ввести́** ‘to introduce’ (cf. 3rd person sing. **введёт**)

спасéние ‘salvation’, from **спасти́** ‘to save’ (cf. 3rd person sing. **спасёт**)

погребéние ‘burial’, from **погrestí** ‘to bury’ (cf. 3rd person sing. **погребёт**)

Note

Derivative **-овение** (mainly from pf. verbs in **-нуть(ся)**): **возникнове́ние** ‘rise’, **исчезнове́ние** ‘disappearance’, **столкнове́ние** ‘collision’.

(29) **-ник**

(i) Animate nouns:

(a) agent nouns (many based on verbs):

защитник ‘defender’, **изме́нник** ‘traitor’, **охотник** ‘hunter’, **рабо́тник** ‘worker’

(b) practitioners (based on nouns):

дво́рник ‘yardman’, **мясник** ‘butcher’, **плóтник** ‘carpenter’

Note

Some nouns in **-ник** denote animate beings *and* inanimate objects:

проводник (a) ‘guard on train’ (b) ‘electrical conductor’

(c) nouns based on passive parts (with retention of passive meaning):

воспита́нник ‘pupil’, **избра́нник** ‘chosen one’, **ста́вленник** ‘protégé’

Note

Some forms in **-еник** are active, others passive:

му́ченик ‘martyr’, **тру́женик** ‘worker’, **уче́ник** ‘pupil’

(ii) Inanimate nouns (based on nouns):

(a) groups of plants and trees:

э́льник ‘fir plantation’, **крапíвник** ‘clump of nettles’, **мали́нник** ‘raspberry bushes’, **оси́нник** ‘aspen copse’

(b) printed materials:

зада́чник ‘book of problems’, **разго́ворник** ‘conversation manual’, **сбо́рник** ‘collection’, **сло́вник** ‘glossary’

(c) other objects:

бага́жник ‘boot’, **гра́дусник** ‘thermometer’, **моло́чник** ‘milk-jug’,
спу́тник ‘satellite’, **ча́йник** ‘teapot’

Note

Objects in **-льник** take penultimate stress and derive from verbs:

буды́льник ‘alarm clock’, **холоды́льник** ‘refrigerator’

(d) animal housing:

коро́вник ‘cow shed’, **куро́ятник** ‘hen coop’, **пче́льник** ‘apiary’

Note

Forms in **-атник/-ятник** are based on the names of young animals:

гуся́тник ‘goose-run’, **кро́льча́тник** ‘rabbit-hutch’, **теля́тник** ‘calf shed’

(30) -ница

(i) Feminine suffix:

шко́льница ‘school-girl’, **уча́стница** ‘participant’, **учи́тельница**
‘female teacher’

(ii) Names of receptacles:

мы́льница ‘soap-dish’, **пе́пельница** ‘ash-tray’, **пе́речница** ‘pepper
pot’, **са́харница** ‘sugar-bowl’

(31) -ня

(i) Verbal nouns (denoting energetic, protracted, sometimes irritating,
activity):

бего́тня ‘rushing around’, **болто́вня** ‘chatter’, **возня́** ‘romping around’,
суе́тня ‘fuss, bustle’

(ii) Animate groups:

ребя́тня ‘kids’, **родня́** ‘relatives’, **солдате́ня** ‘soldiery’

(iii) Places (based on nouns):

колоко́бля ‘belfry’, **пека́рня** ‘bakery’, **тамо́жня** ‘customs house’

Note

(a) Some nouns denote housing for birds: **голубя́тня** ‘dovecote’, etc.

(b) Forms in **-льня** derive from verbs: **купа́льня** ‘bathing-place’ (from
купа́ться ‘to bathe’), **спа́льня** ‘bedroom’, **чита́льня** ‘reading room’.

Note

Also **ба́ня** ‘bath-house’, **бо́йня** ‘slaughter-house’, **ку́хня** ‘kitchen’.

(32) -ович/-(-ь)евич

The suffixes **-ович/-(-ь)евич** are used to form masculine patronymics, **-ович** for first names ending in a consonant: **Алекса́ндрович** 'Aleksandrovich', **-евич** for names in **-ай/-ей**: **Андре́евич** 'Andreevich', **Никола́евич** 'Nikolaevich', **-ьевич** for names in **-ий**: **Васи́льевич** 'Vasil'evich' (but **Дми́триевич** 'Dmitrievich' from **Дми́трий** 'Dmitrii').

Note

- (a) f. equivalents: **Алекса́ндровна** 'Aleksandrovna', **Андре́евна** 'Andreevna', **Васи́льевна** 'Vasil'evna'.
 (b) m. patronymics in **-ич** from first names in **-а/-я**: **Ильи́ч** 'Il'ich' (from **Илья́** 'Il'ia'), **Кузьми́ч** 'Kuz'mich' (from **Кузьма́** 'Kuz'ma'), with f. in **-инична**: **Ильи́нична** 'Il'inichna', **Кузьми́нична** 'Kuz'minichna'.

(33) -ок

- (i) Agents of actions (based on verbs):
ездо́к 'rider', **знато́к** 'expert', **игро́к** 'player', **стрело́к** 'marksman'
 (ii) Verbal nouns (individual physical actions, based on unprefixated verbs):
бро́сок 'a throw', **гло́ток** 'a swallow', **зево́к** 'a yawn', **звоно́к** 'a phone call', **прыжо́к** 'a jump', **свисто́к** 'a whistle', **скачо́к** 'a leap'
 (iii) Objects (mostly based on prefixed verbs):
набро́сок 'sketch', **обло́мок** 'fragment', **оку́рок** 'cigarette end', **оско́лок** 'splinter', **пода́рок** 'gift'

Note

Unprefixated **кипято́к** 'boiling water, boiled water'.

(34) -ость/-есть

- (i) Qualities (based on adjs. **-ый/-ий**):
ве́жливость 'politeness', **го́рдость** 'pride', **гру́бость** 'coarseness', **све́жесть** 'freshness', **хра́брость** 'bravery'

Note

Some are based on passive parts: **сде́ржанность** 'restraint', **терпи́мость** 'tolerance'.

- (ii) Feelings:
жа́лость 'pity', **не́жность** 'tenderness', **ра́дость** 'joy', **ре́вность** 'jealousy'

(iii) States, based on passive parts:

(a) in -мость:

невесóмость 'weightlessness', **незавíсимость** 'independence',
совместíмость 'compatibility'

(b) in -нность:

ангажíрованность 'partisanship', **влюблённость** 'infatuation',
вседозвóленность 'permissiveness'

(iv) Ratio or rate (based on passive parts):

разводíмость 'divorce rate', **рожда́емость** 'birth rate', **успева́емость**
'academic progress'

Note

Смертность 'death rate'.

(35) -от

Sounds (based on verbs):

грóхот 'din', **рóпот** 'murmur', **тóпот** 'clatter', **шёпот** 'whisper'

(36) -ота

(i) Qualities (based on adjs. in -ый/-ой):

добротá 'kindness', **красотá** 'beauty', **простотá** 'simplicity', **чистотá**
'cleanliness'

(ii) States (based on adjs.):

(a) general:

беднотá 'poverty', **теснотá** 'cramped conditions', **пустотá** 'empti-
ness', **теплотá** 'warmth'

(b) disabilities and ailments (based on adjs. in -ой):

глухотá 'deafness', **немотá** 'dumbness', **слепотá** 'blindness', **хромотá**
'lameness'

Note

Based on *verbs*, in -ота: **дремóта** 'drowsiness' (from дремáть 'to doze'),
зевóта 'fit of yawning', **икóта** 'hiccuping'.

(37) -ствие

(i) Abstract states:

бédствие 'disaster', **спóкойствие** 'tranquillity', **сумасшéствие** 'madness'

(ii) Verbal nouns (from verbs in -ствовать):

путешéствие 'journey', **содей́ствие** 'cooperation', **соотвéтствие**
'accordance'

(38) -ство

(i) Qualities (mostly from adjs. in **-ый**):

безу́мство 'foolhardiness', **досто́инство** 'dignity', **лука́вство** 'craftiness', **постоя́нство** 'constancy', **упо́рство** 'stubbornness'

Note

Some nouns in **-ничество** correlate with verbs in **-ничать**: **лоды́рничество** 'skiving' (cf. **лоды́рничать** 'to skive'), **скря́жничество** 'miserliness'.

(ii) States (based on nouns or adjs.):

а́вторство 'authorship', **бога́тство** 'wealth', **матеря́нство** 'motherhood', **оди́нчество** 'solitude', **пья́нство** 'drunkenness'

Note

Some nouns in **-ничество** correlate with verbs in **-ничать**:

бро́дяжничество 'vagrancy' (cf. **бро́дяжничать** 'to be a tramp')

(iii) Verbal nouns:

бе́гство 'escape', **воровство́** 'thieving', **дежу́рство** 'being on duty', **уби́йство** 'murder'

Note

Infix **-ов-** in **мотовство́** 'extravagance' (from **мота́ть** 'to squander'), **сватовство́** 'match-making', **хвастовство́** 'boasting'.

(iv) Collectives (national, social, administrative or other groups):

госуда́рство 'state', **министе́рство** 'ministry', **о́бщество** 'society', **п्रा́вительство** 'government', **студе́нчество** 'student body', **челове́чество** 'mankind'

(v) Quantity (based on adverbs):

большинство́ 'majority', **ко́личество** 'quantity', **меньшинство́** 'minority', **мно́жество** 'multitude'

(39) -сть

Feelings

за́висть 'envy', **не́нависть** 'hatred', **страсть** 'passion'

(40) -тель

(i) Agents of actions (mainly based on verbs):

(a) -атель (stress as in infinitive):

избира́тель 'voter', **покупа́тель** 'customer', **пользова́тель** 'user', **слу́шатель** 'listener', **чита́тель** 'reader'

(b) -итель (stress on -и-):

грабитель 'robber', **житель** 'inhabitant', **зритель** 'viewer',
мыслитель 'thinker'

(ii) Practitioners:

водитель 'driver', **писатель** 'writer', **строитель** 'builder', **учитель**
'teacher'

(iii) Objects (many from transitive verbs):

выключатель 'switch', **двигатель** 'engine', **загрязнитель** 'pollutant',
истребитель 'fighter plane'

(41) -тие

Verbal nouns, from verbs, mainly transitive and prefixed, based on:

-бить (e.g. **разби́тие** 'smashing')

-быть (e.g. **прибы́тие** 'arrival', but **добы́ча** 'extraction')

-вить (e.g. **разви́тие** 'development')

-дуть (e.g. **разду́тие** 'inflating')

-жать (e.g. **сжа́тие** 'compression')

-клясть (e.g. **прокля́тие** 'damnation')

-крыть (e.g. **закры́тие** 'closure')

-лить (e.g. **кровопроли́тие** 'bloodshed')

-плыть (e.g. **отплы́тие** 'departure')

-пять (e.g. **распя́тие** 'crucifixion')

-чать (e.g. **зача́тие** 'conception')

-(н)ять (e.g. **приня́тие** 'taking')

Also **взя́тие** 'capture' (from **взять** 'to take').

Note

Correlation with perfective passive participles in **-т-** (e.g. **взя́тый** 'taken',
взя́тие 'taking', etc. See 357–358).

(42) -ун

Agents of actions (from unprefixated impf. verbs):

бегу́н 'runner', **лгу́н** 'liar', **несу́н** 'pilferer', **опеку́н** 'guardian, carer',
плясу́н 'dancer'

Note

-ун in the names of some animals: **грызу́н** 'rodent', **скаку́н** 'racer'.

(43) -ура

Collectives:

адвокату́ра 'the Bar', **клиенту́ра** 'clientele', **номенклату́ра** 'nomen-
klatura' (Soviet élite), **прокура́тура** 'staff of prosecutor's office'

(44) -уха

(i) Medical conditions (based on colour adjs.):

желту́ха ‘jaundice’, **золоту́ха** ‘scrofula’, **красну́ха** ‘German measles’

(ii) Contracted forms (usually with pejorative meaning):

бытову́ха, ‘domestic routine’ (also ‘domestic violence’), **показу́ха** ‘sham, façade’, **порну́ха** ‘pornography’, **черну́ха** ‘denigration’

(45) -ча

Verbal nouns (from compounds of -дать and some others, e.g. **по́рча** ‘spoiling’, from **по́ртить** ‘to spoil’):**вы́дача** ‘issue’, **переда́ча** ‘transmission’, **разда́ча** ‘distribution’, **сда́ча** ‘handing over’*Note*(a) Some verbs in -дать have verbal nouns in -дание (e.g. **изда́ние** ‘publishing’); **продáть** ‘to sell’ has **продáжа** ‘sale’.(b) **Добы́ча** ‘mining’ from **добы́ть** ‘to mine’ (some verbs in -быть have verbal nouns in -тие, e.g. **прибы́тие** ‘arrival’).

(46) -ша

Feminine suffix (especially from nouns in -р/-рь, colloquial):

(a) practitioners:

ба́рменша ‘barmaid’, **библиотéкарша** ‘librarian’, **касси́рша** ‘cashier’

(b) wives:

генера́льша ‘general’s wife’, **министéрша** ‘minister’s wife’, **профе́ссорша** ‘professor’s wife’

(47) -щик (-чик after д, ж, з, с, т):

(i) Persons:

(a) general (from nouns or transitive verbs, often with a pejorative meaning):

обма́нщик ‘deceiver’, **отмы́вщик де́нег** ‘money-launderer’, **попу́тчик** ‘fellow-traveller’, **уго́нщик** ‘vehicle thief’

(b) practitioners:

а́томщик ‘atomic scientist’, **дальнобóйщик** ‘long-distance lorry-driver’, **ле́тчик** ‘pilot’, **перевóдчик** ‘interpreter’, **часовщи́к** ‘watch-maker’

Note

Some denote persons *and* implements: **счётчик** ‘census-taker’, ‘meter’.

Forms in derivative **-льщик** (with penultimate stress) derive from impf. verbs: **болельщик** ‘fan’, **чистильщик** ‘cleaner’.

(ii) Objects:

автоответчик ‘answerphone’, **бомбардировщик** ‘bomber’,
передатчик ‘transmitter’, **погрузчик** ‘loader’, **тральщик** ‘trawler’

(48) **-щина** (-чина after д and т)

Attitudes and trends (from adjs. and nouns, especially surnames, usually pejorative):

воённая ‘military attitude’, **обломовщина** ‘Obломovism’,
ста́линщина ‘Stalinism’, **деревённая** ‘yokel, redneck’

Also specific historical periods:

ежовщина ‘the Yezhov terror’ (i.e. 1937–38), **ждановщина** ‘the
Zhdanov repression’ (i.e. the years 1946–48 associated with Andrei
Zhdanov’s cultural policies)

Note

-ов- infix in **дедовщина** ‘army brutality, hazing’ (from дед ‘senior soldier’), **митинговщина** ‘megaphone diplomacy’.

(49) **-щица**

Feminine counterparts to nouns in **-щик/-чик**:

буфетчица ‘barmaid’, **крановщица** ‘crane-driver’

(50) **-ыш**

Non-adults and some others (sometimes expressing sympathy or condescension, from adjs.):

коротыш ‘short person’, **крепёш** ‘sturdy child’, **мальш** ‘child, little boy’

(51) **-ье**

Districts, areas, surroundings:

верховье ‘upper reaches’, **низовье** ‘lower reaches’, **побережье** ‘coast-line’,
предгорье ‘foothills’, **Подмоскóвье** ‘Moscow region’

(52) **-ья**

Feminine counterparts to nouns in **-ун**:

бегу́нья ‘runner’, **лгу́нья** ‘liar’, **плясу́нья** ‘dancer’

Note

For diminutive suffixes, see **105** (1–4) and **106** (1–2), for augmentative suffixes, **109** (1–2), for gender differentiation through suffixes, **43**.

Gender

30 Masculine, feminine and neuter gender

(1) Adjectives, pronouns and the past-tense forms of verbs have the same gender as the noun they qualify or stand for:

хоро́ший муж	‘a good husband’
хоро́шая жена́	‘a good wife’
хоро́шее де́ло	‘a good cause’
Оте́ц дово́лен	‘Father is pleased’
Ма́ть дово́льна	‘Mother is pleased’
Где сто́л ? Вот о́н	‘Where is the table? There it is’
Где ка́рта ? Вот о́на	‘Where is the map? There it is’
Где о́кно ? Вот оно́	‘Where is the window? There it is’

До́м сто́ял в це́нтре го́рода
‘The house stood in the city centre’

Ё́лка сто́яла в це́нтре го́рода
‘The Christmas tree stood in the city centre’

Зда́ние сто́яло в це́нтре го́рода
‘The building stood in the city centre’

Note

- (a) There is no equivalent in Russian of the articles ‘a’ and ‘the’. Thus, for example, **до́м** means ‘a house’ and ‘the house’, the difference being resolved by context or word order (see **476** (1) note (b), as well as **126** (2) (i), **128** (2) note, **138** (1) (iii) (b), **143** (2) (i), **193** (4) (iii)). Note that such forms as **э́тот** ‘this’, **то́т са́мый** ‘the very’, **вы́ше упомя́нутый** ‘the above-mentioned’, **о́дин** ‘one’ etc. are sometimes used where an article would be used in English.
- (b) When the predicate precedes the subject and the subject consists of a number of nouns, agreement may be with the first noun only: **Ну́жно терпе́ние, понима́ние, взаи́мная откры́тость и доброже́ла́тельность** (*Komsomol'skaia pravda*) ‘Patience, understanding, mutual openness and benevolence are necessary’ (pl. **ну́жны́** would also be possible, however).

(2) Grammatical gender (the assignment of gender to a noun in accordance with its ending) is distinguished from **natural** gender (the assignment of

gender in accordance with the sex of the being denoted by the noun, e.g. **мать** ‘mother’ (feminine), **дядя** ‘uncle’ (masculine)). Some nouns which can denote persons of either sex have **common** gender, that is, their gender varies in accordance with the sex of the person concerned (e.g. **сирота́** ‘orphan’ (masculine or feminine), see 35).

(3) Gender affects only the **singular** of nouns; **plural** forms do not exhibit gender characteristics. The same adjectival endings, for example, are used for the plurals of nouns of *all* genders, cf.:

Singular	Plural
хоро́ший муж ‘a good husband’	хоро́шие мужья́ ‘good husbands’
хоро́шая жена́ ‘a good wife’	хоро́шие жёны ‘good wives’
хоро́шее де́ло ‘a good cause’	хоро́шие дела́ ‘good causes’

Note

Gender may, however, be revealed in, for example, a subordinate clause: хоро́шие мужья́, **ка́ждый** (m. sing. relative pronoun) из кото́рых помога́л по до́му ‘good husbands, each of whom helped around the house’.

31 Masculine nouns

The following categories of noun are masculine:

- (1) All nouns ending in a hard consonant, e.g. **заво́д** ‘factory’.
- (2) All nouns ending in **-й**, e.g. **музе́й** ‘museum’.
- (3) ‘Natural’ masculines in **-а/-я**. These include:
 - (i) Nouns which by definition denote males:

де́душка	‘grandfather’
дядя́	‘uncle’
мужчи́на	‘man’
па́па	‘Dad’
слуга́	‘male servant’
ю́ноша	‘youth, young man’

including a few obsolescent nouns, e.g. **воево́да** ‘commander’.

- (ii) Some masculine first names:

Илья́	‘Il’ia’
Никита́	‘Nikita’
Фома́	‘Foma’

(iii) The familiar forms of many masculine first names:

Ва́ня	‘Vania’ (short for Ива́н)
Во́дя	‘Volodia’ (short for Влади́мир)
Са́ша	‘Sasha’ (short for Алекса́ндр (<i>or</i> for feminine Алекса́ндра)) etc.

(4) Diminutives and augmentatives based on masculine nouns:

доми́шко (from дом ‘house’)	‘little house’
доми́на, доми́ще (also from дом)	‘enormous house’

(5) **Подмасте́рье** ‘apprentice’.

(6) Many nouns ending in a soft sign (see 33).

32 Feminine nouns

Categories of feminine noun include the following.

(1) Most nouns in **-а/-я** (see, however, 31 (3) and 34 (4)).

(2) Many nouns which end in a soft sign (see 33).

33 Soft-sign nouns

Some soft-sign nouns are feminine (approximately three-quarters of the total); the rest are masculine. It is possible to give guidelines for determining the gender of many soft-sign nouns.

(1) Feminine soft-sign nouns

(i) ‘Natural’ feminines: **дочь** ‘daughter’ (see also (ii)), **ланы́** ‘doe’, **ма́ть** ‘mother’, **не́тель** ‘heifer’, **свекро́вь** ‘mother-in-law’ (husband’s mother).

(ii) All nouns in **-жь, -чь, -шь, -щь, -знь, -мь, -пь, -фь**.

(iii) All nouns in **-сть**, except for masculine **гос́ть** ‘guest’, **не́христь** ‘infidel, rogue’ and **тес́ть** ‘father-in-law’ (wife’s father).

(iv) All nouns in

-бь except for masculine **го́лубь** ‘dove’

- вь** except for masculine **червь** ‘worm’
- дь** except for masculine **вождь** ‘leader’, **гвоздь** ‘nail’, **Господь** ‘Lord’, **груздь** ‘milk-agaric’, **дождь** ‘rain’, **жёлудь** ‘acorn’, **лёбедь** ‘swan’, **медведь** ‘bear’ and a few historicisms
- зь** except for masculine **князь** ‘prince’, **ферзь** ‘queen’ (chess), **язь** ‘ide’ (fish of the carp family) and a few archaisms such as **вѣтязь** ‘knight’
- сь** except for masculine **гусь** ‘goose’, **карась** ‘Crucian carp’, **лосось** ‘salmon’, **лось** ‘elk’
- ть** except for natural masculines (see (2) (i) below) and masculine **дѣготь** ‘tar’, **кѣготь** ‘claw’, **лѣпоть** ‘bast shoe’, **лѣкоть** ‘elbow’, **ломѣть** ‘slice’, **нѣготь** ‘finger-nail’, **путь** ‘way’, **тать** ‘thief’, **ять** ‘the letter *iat*’

(v) Nouns derived through deaffixation from adjectives: **высь** ‘heights’ (cf. **высокий** ‘high’), **гладь** ‘smooth surface’, **глубь** ‘depth’, **глушь** ‘backwoods’, **даль** ‘distance’, **зелень** ‘greenery’, **лень** ‘laziness’, **мель** ‘shallows’, **новь** ‘virgin soil’, **тишь** ‘quiet’, **удаль** ‘daring’, **ширь** ‘expanse’, **явь** ‘reality’.

(vi) Nouns derived through deaffixation from verbs: **гарь** ‘burning’ (cf. **горѣть** ‘to burn’), **мазь** ‘ointment’, **насыпь** ‘embankment’, **подпись** ‘signature’, **связь** ‘connection’, **смесь** ‘mixture’, **тварь** ‘creature’.

(vii) Deverbal nouns in **-ель**, e.g. **гибель** ‘ruin’ (cf. **гибнуть** ‘to perish’), **колыбель** ‘cradle’, **метель** ‘snow storm’.

(2) Masculine soft-sign nouns

(i) ‘Natural’ masculines: **гость** ‘guest’, **дѣверь** ‘brother-in-law’ (husband’s brother), **зять** ‘son-in-law/brother-in-law’, **князь** ‘prince’, **кобель** ‘male dog’, **король** ‘king’, **пáрень** ‘lad’, **сѣлезень** ‘drake’, **тесть** ‘father-in-law’ (wife’s father), **царь** ‘tsar’.

(ii) Deverbal agent nouns (animate and inanimate) in **-тель** (**создатель** ‘creator’, **выключатель** ‘light-switch’) or **-итель** (**учитель** ‘teacher’, **краситель** ‘dye’).

(iii) Nouns in **-арь** derived from verbs (**пѣкарь** ‘baker’), nouns (**вратарь** ‘goal-keeper’) or adjectives (**дикарь** ‘savage’).

(iv) The names of **months** ending in a soft sign.

(v) All names of birds ending in a soft sign except for feminine **выпь** ‘bit-tern’ and **неясыть** ‘tawny owl’; all names of insects ending in a soft sign except for feminine **моль** ‘moth’.

The gender of other soft-sign nouns has to be learnt individually.

34 Neuter nouns

Categories of neuter noun include the following.

- (1) Nouns in **-о** (see, however, **31** (4)).
- (2) Nouns in **-е**. However, **кофе** ‘coffee’ is masculine (neuter in substandard registers only; see **36** (1) note (a)). See also **31** (4).
- (3) Nouns in **-ё**.
- (4) Nouns in **-мя**: **время** ‘time’, **имя** ‘first name’, etc. See **64**.
- (5) Other parts of speech functioning as nouns: **громкое** «урá» ‘a loud “hurrah”’.

35 Common gender

A number of nouns in **-а** and **-я** have common gender. They can denote males or females, adjectival, pronominal and verb agreement varying with the sex of the person denoted by the noun, e.g. **горький** пьяница ‘confirmed drunkard’ (male), **горькая** пьяница ‘confirmed drunkard’ (female). Among the commonest of the nouns are бродяга ‘tramp’, глава ‘head, chief’, калёка ‘cripple’, коллега ‘colleague’, левша ‘left-handed person’, малютка ‘baby’, невежда ‘ignoramus’, неряха ‘litter-bug’, обжора ‘glutton’, одиночка ‘lone person’, пьяница ‘drunkard’, сирота ‘orphan’ (кру́глый/кру́глая сирота ‘person who has lost both parents’), убийца ‘murderer’, умница ‘clever person’:

Говорите со мной, как с **кру́глым** невеждой (Grekova)
‘You speak to me as to a complete ignoramus’

See also мать-одиночка ‘single mother’. (*Note*: отец-одиночка, ‘single father’, is masculine.)

36 Indeclinable nouns of foreign origin

(1) Most indeclinable loan-words in **-ао**, **-ау**, **-е**, **-и**, **-о**, **-оа**, **-оу**, **-у**, **-а**, **-ю**, **-э** are neuter: како́ ‘cocoa’; но́у-ха́у ‘know-how’; ателье́ ‘workshop’, желе́ ‘jelly’, каба́ре ‘cabaret’, кафе́ ‘café’, кашне́ ‘scarf’, коммюнике́ ‘communiqué’, купе́ ‘compartment’, портмоне́ ‘purse’, резюме́ ‘résumé’, тире́ ‘dash’, фойе́ ‘foyer’, шоссе́ ‘highway’; ви́ски ‘whisky’, жу́ри ‘jury’, па́ри ‘bet’, пенальти́ ‘penalty’ (also masculine), ра́лли ‘rally’, такси́ ‘taxi’, шасси́ ‘undercarriage’, ло́бби ‘lobby’; бистро́ ‘bistro’, бю́ро ‘office’, депó ‘depot’, кино́ ‘cinema’, метро́ ‘underground railway’, пальто́ ‘overcoat’,

пианино ‘piano’, радио ‘radio’, евро ‘the Euro’, вето ‘veto’; боа ‘boa’ (but боа ‘boa-constrictor’ is masculine); шоу ‘show’; рагу ‘ragout’; ампула ‘role’; интервью ‘interview’, меню ‘menu’, ревью ‘review’; каратэ ‘karate’.

Note

- (a) **Кóфе** ‘coffee’ is masculine: Ляля спросила, не сделать ли **крéпкий** кóфе (Trifonov) ‘Lialia asked if she should not make some strong coffee’; similarly, **лáтте** (‘latte’), **америкáно** (‘americano’) and **капучино** (‘capuccino’) are also masculine, as is the cocktail **мохито** (‘mojito’); масс-мэдиá, ‘mass media’ is feminine.
- (b) Only context can show the number (singular or plural) of an indeclinable noun: thus В шкафу **висит нóвое** пальто/**висят нóвые** пальто ‘A new coat is hanging/new coats are hanging in the cupboard’; **о́дно** пальто ‘one coat’, **дéсять** пальто ‘ten coats’.

(2) Some indeclinables assume the gender of the central or ‘generic’ noun. Thus, **торна́до** ‘tornado’ is masculine (cf. вéтер ‘wind’), likewise **пуштá** ‘Pushtu’, **урдú** ‘Urdu’, **хинди** ‘Hindi’ (cf. язы́к ‘language’) and **фло́ппи** (cf. фло́ппи-диск) ‘floppy disk’. **Авениó** ‘avenue’ is feminine (cf. у́лица ‘street’), as are **саля́ми** ‘salami’ (cf. колбасá ‘sausage’), **цеце́** ‘tsetse fly’ (cf. му́ха ‘fly’) and **цуна́ми** ‘tsunami’ (alternatively neuter) (cf. волна́ ‘wave’):

Цуна́ми **унесла́** его́ в океа́н (Gagarin)
‘The giant wave carried him out to sea’

(3) The gender of many indeclinable nouns which denote human beings follows the principle of natural gender. Thus, буржуа́ ‘bourgeois’, крупье́ ‘croupier’, мафиóзо/мафиóзи ‘mafioso’, маэстро́ ‘maestro’ and ре́фери/ре́фери ‘referee’ are masculine, while ле́ди ‘lady’ and мада́м ‘madam’ are feminine. Some nouns have common gender (визави́ ‘counterpart’, ‘vis-à-vis’, проте́же ‘protégé(e)’, хиппи́ ‘hippy’), whereas атташе́ ‘attaché’, инко́гнито ‘person who is incognito’ and конфе́рансье́ ‘compère’ are masculine and папара́цци ‘paparazzi’ is plural only.

(4) Indeclinable names of animals also have common gender: гну́ ‘gnu’, кенгуру́ ‘kangaroo’, шимпанзе́ ‘chimpanzee’ etc. Nouns are treated as masculine when the sex of the animal is irrelevant (**ра́ненный** гну́ ‘a wounded gnu’), but feminine gender is assigned in ‘female’ contexts:

Шимпанзе́ **корми́ла** дете́ныша
‘The chimpanzee was feeding her baby’

(5) The names of some birds are masculine (какаду́ ‘cockatoo’, марабу́ ‘marabou’, фла́мिंगо ‘flamingo’) while коли́бри ‘humming-bird’ is masculine or feminine.

37 Indeclinable place names

Indeclinable place names take the gender of the central ('generic') noun. Names of towns and islands are masculine (cf. *го́род* 'town' and *о́стров* 'island'): Баку́ 'Baku', Гла́зго 'Glasgow', Кале́ 'Calais', О́сло 'Oslo', Ско́пье/Ско́пле 'Skopje', Со́чи 'Sochi' (also plural: ста́рые Со́чи 'old Sochi'), Тбили́си 'Tbilisi', То́кио 'Tokyo'; Ка́при 'Capri', Та́йти 'Tahiti'. Similarly, the names of rivers are feminine (cf. река́ 'river'): споко́йная Мисси́сипи 'the calm Mississippi'. Ю́нгфрау 'the Jungfrau' is feminine (cf. го́ра 'mountain'). Э́ри 'Lake Erie' is neuter (cf. о́зеро 'lake'). Ма́ли 'Mali' has alternative feminine and neuter gender (cf. страна́ 'country' and госуда́рство 'state'). Despite exceptions to the rule, the 'generic' principle is the norm.

38 Titles of books etc.

The generic principle is usually applied in assigning gender to titles which are indeclinable: **ту́ргене́вская** «Му́му» 'Turgenev's *Mumu*' (cf. пове́сть (f.) 'tale'), **ло́ндонская** «Та́ймс» 'the London *Times*' (cf. газе́та 'newspaper'). A title based on an oblique case may observe the generic principle (**го́рьковская** «На дне» 'Gorky's *Lower Depths*' (cf. пье́са 'play')) or take a neuter adjective (**го́рьковское** «На дне»). Otherwise, gender is determined by the gender and number of the title: **пу́шкинский** «Евге́ний Оне́гин» 'Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*', **ту́ргене́вское** «Дворя́нское гнездо́» 'Turgenev's *Nest of Noblemen*', **савра́совские** «Гра́чи прилете́ли» 'Savrasov's (painting) *The Rooks Have Arrived*'.

Note

In order to avoid possible incongruence, a genre word may be introduced: **ромáн** Толсто́го «А́нна Каре́нина» 'Tolstoi's novel *Anna Karenina*'.

39 Acronyms

The gender of acronyms is usually determined by their ending. Thus, **бомж** (from без определённого ме́ста жительства 'without a definite place of residence') 'homeless person', **вуз** (from вы́сшее учебное заведе́ние 'higher teaching establishment'), **загс** (from отде́л за́писи а́ктов гражда́нского состоя́ния 'registry office') are masculine. However, the gender of the central noun may sometimes prove decisive.

Thus, **роно́** (from районный отдел народного образования ‘local education authority’) was originally neuter but is now usually treated as masculine.

Note

Loan acronyms such as лазер, from English ‘laser’ (light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation).

40 Alphabetisms

Alphabetisms consist of initial *capital* letters, many being pronounced as letters rather than words, and most are indeclinable, though there are exceptions among those assigned masculine gender (see 73). In terms of gender assignment, alphabetisms subdivide as follows:

(1) Those which retain the gender of the central noun:

(i) Masculine: **ВИЧ** [вич] (вирус иммунодефицита человека) ‘human immunodeficiency virus’, ‘HIV’, **МГУ** [эм-гэ-ý] (Московский государственный университет) ‘Moscow State University’, **МХАТ** [мхат] (Московский художественный академический театр) ‘Moscow Art Theatre’, **НИИ** [ний] (Научно-исследовательский институт) ‘Scientific Research Institute’, **ОВИР** [овир] (Отдел виз и регистрация иностранных граждан) ‘Visa Department and Registration of Foreign Nationals’, **СКА** [эс-ка́ оґ ска] (спортивный клуб армии) ‘Army Sports Club’.

(ii) Feminine: **АТС** [а-тэ-э́с] (автоматическая телефонная станция) ‘automatic telephone exchange’, **ГАИ** [гай] (Государственная автомобильная инспекция) ‘State Vehicle Inspectorate’ (see page 601), **ГЭС** [гэс] (гидроэлектрическая станция/гидроэлектростанция) ‘hydroelectric power station’, **ООН** [оон] (Организация Объединённых Наций) ‘United Nations Organization’, **СКВ** [эс-ка-вэ́] (свободно конвертируемая валюта) ‘freely convertible currency’, **ТЭЦ** [тэц] (тепловая электростанция) ‘thermal power station’, **КПРФ** [кэ-пэ-эр-эф] (Коммунистическая партия Российской Федерации) ‘Communist Party of the Russian Federation’, **ЛДПР** [эл-дэ-пэ-эр] (Либерально-демократическая партия России) ‘Liberal Democratic Party of Russia’.

Здесь **рабо́тала** мо́щная ГЭС (*Sputnik*)

‘A mighty power station was in operation here’

(iii) Neuter: **СНГ** [эс-эн-гэ́] (Содружество независимых государств) ‘Commonwealth of Independent States’, ‘CIS’, **СП** [эс-пэ́] (совместное предприятие) ‘joint venture’, **ТЯО** [тяо́] (тактическое ядерное оружие) ‘tactical nuclear weapons’.

(iv) Plural: **ЯКВ** [я-ка-вэ́] (ядерные космические вооружения) ‘nuclear space armaments’.

(2) Some much-used alphabetisms acquire the gender implied by the ending. Thus, **Минздрав** (from Министерство здравоохранения ‘Ministry of Health’) is masculine, **Минобразованиe** (from Министерство образования ‘Ministry of Education’) is neuter. **МИД** [мид] (Министерство иностранных дел ‘Ministry of Foreign Affairs’), which was once neuter, is now masculine, **НЭП** [нэп] (новая экономическая политика ‘New Economic Policy’), which was once feminine, is now masculine and **ТАСС** [тасс] (Телеграфное агентство Советского Союза ‘Telegraphic Agency of the Soviet Union’) (now replaced by **ИТАР-ТАСС**: Информационное телеграфное агентство России- Телеграфное агентство суверенных стран ‘Information and Telegraphic Agency of Russia – Telegraphic Agency of the Sovereign Countries’), once neuter, also acquired masculine gender.

(3) Some alphabetisms differentiate gender stylistically. Thus, **ЖЭК** [жэк] (жилищно-эксплуатационная контора ‘housing office’), initially feminine in written styles (cf. контора), is commonly assigned masculine gender in everyday speech.

(4) Those based on the initials of *foreign* words tend to acquire gender in accordance with the ending. Thus, **ФИАТ** [фиат] (Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino) is masculine, **ФИФА** [фифа] (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) is feminine and **НАТО** [нато] (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) is neuter. **США** [сша/сэ-ше-а] (Соединённые Штаты Америки ‘United States of America’) is plural.

Note

Alphabetisms may be rendered phonetically, particularly in dialogue:

Вашу **эн-тэ-эр** (НТР — научно-техническая революция) я видел (Grekova)

‘I have seen your scientific-technical revolution’

Если не в ремесленное, то в **фе-зе-о** (ФЗО — фабрично-заводское обучение), может быть, возьмёт, сказал он (Panova)

“‘If I don’t get into trade school,” he said, “I might get accepted for factory apprentice training”

41 Stump compounds

‘Stump compounds’ incorporate the truncated forms of one or more words: **забастко́м** (from забастовочный комите́т) ‘strike committee’, **колхо́з** (from коллективное хозяйство) ‘collective farm’, **ликбе́з** (from ликвидация безграмотности) ‘elimination of illiteracy’, **собе́с** (from социальное обеспе́чение) ‘social security’ (all masculine). Most nouns in this productive category take their gender from the ending of the stump compound. Those which denote people may have common gender, e.g. **управдо́м** (from управляющий/-ая до́мом) ‘house manager’ (управдо́м сказа́л, что дово́лен ‘the house manager said he was pleased’, управдо́м сказа́ла, что дово́льна ‘the house manager said she was pleased’) and similarly **за́вкэфедрой** (from заведу́ющий/-ая кáфедрой) ‘head of university department’. **Са́мбо** (from самооборо́на без ору́жия) ‘unarmed combat’ is neuter, **сте́нгазе́та** (from сте́нная газе́та) ‘wall newspaper’ is feminine, **тера́кт** (from терро́ристический акт) ‘terrorist outrage’ is masculine.

Note

The full title заведу́ющий кáфедрой ‘head of department’ is preferred to за́вкэфедрой in official contexts, referring to persons of either sex, and in contexts where the sex of the person is irrelevant, заведу́ющая being confined to colloquial registers or references to a particular person, cf.:

Собесе́дник называ́ет Евге́нию Ива́новну Ду́рову, заведу́ющую группой биохимических иссле́дований (*Pravda*)

‘The person I am speaking to mentions Evgeniia Ivanovna Durova, head of the biochemical research group’

42 Compound hyphenated nouns

The gender of compound hyphenated nouns is determined by the gender of the central noun, which often precedes the qualifier: **автомобиль-инома́рка** (m.) ‘foreign car’, **га́лстук-ба́бочка** (m.) ‘bow-tie’, **дива́н-крово́ть** (m.) ‘divan-bed’, **крэ́сло-кача́лка** (n.) ‘rocking chair’, **раке́та-носите́ль** (f.) ‘carrier-rocket’, **шко́ла-интерна́т** (f.) ‘boarding school’. However, in some compounds the qualifier precedes the central noun: **автомáт-заку́сочная** (f.) ‘vending machine’, **шта́б-кварты́ра** (f.) ‘headquarters’, **ве́б-страница́** (f.) ‘web page’, **пресс-конферен́ция** (f.) ‘press conference’, **сма́рт-ка́рта** (f.) ‘smart card’:

Автомáт-заку́сочная **отремонти́рована**

‘The vending machine has been repaired’

13 июля на стартовом поле **появилась** дублирующая ракета-носитель (*Russia Today*)

'A reserve carrier-rocket appeared on the launch pad on 13 July'

43 Differentiation of gender through suffixes

(1) Suffixes are used to distinguish male and female representatives of various occupations, professions, organizations, functions, nationalities etc. See also 29.

Male	Female	
армя ни н	армя нка	'Armenian'
бегу н	бегу нья	'runner'
большев и к	большев и чка	'Bolshevik'
кормил е ц	кормил и ца	'breadwinner'
кранов щ и к	кранов щ и ца	'crane operator'
лёт ч и к	лёт ч и ца	'pilot'
не м е ц	не м к а	'German'
поэ т	поэт э с са	'poet'
сто р о ж	сторо ж и х а	'guard'
супр у г	супр у г а	'spouse'
уче н и к	уче н и ца	'pupil'
учи т ель	учи т ель ни ца	'teacher'

Note also стар**и**к 'old man', стар**у**х**а** 'old woman'.

(2) The masculine form may, however, be used for persons of either sex:

(i) Where gender differentiation is of no significance in a particular occupation. Thus, библиотек**а**рь 'librarian', водит**е**ль 'driver', касси**р** 'cashier', кондук**т**ор '(bus) conductor' etc. can be used of men *and* women. The feminine suffix **-ша** (as in библиотек**а**р**ш**а, касси**р**ш**а**, кондук**т**орш**а**) has in any case been devalued by its earlier use in designating a woman in terms of her husband's occupation: генер**а**льш**а** 'general's wife' (cf. купч**и**х**а** 'merchant's wife'). In modern Russian **-ша** is reserved for some occupations practised predominantly by women (e.g. маникюр**ш**а 'manicurist' (маникюр means 'manicure')) or denotes a lower-prestige occupation (cf. секрет**а**рш**а** 'shorthand typist' and секрет**а**р**ь** 'secretary' (of, for example, a party committee)). See also 29 (46).

Note

Учит**ель** tends to sound more prestigious than учи**т**ель**ни**ца and may refer to a female as well as to a male teacher, especially where the subject is specified: Она учи**т**ель математики 'She is a mathematics

teacher'. Compare Она́ наилучший **учитель** в школе 'She is the best teacher in the school' (i.e. of all the teachers, male and female) and Она́ наилучшая **учительница** в школе 'She is the best female teacher in the school'.

(ii) In cases where a plural covers male and female practitioners: профсоюз **работников** транспорта 'transport workers' union'.

(3) Gender differentiation is retained, however, when male and female practitioners fulfil different functions: thus **актёр, актриса** 'actor, actress' (playing, respectively, male and female roles). This also applies in most sports (where men and women compete against others of their own sex, not against each other): thus **конькобежец/конькобежка** 'skater', **пловец/пловчиха** 'swimmer', **чемпион/чемпионка** 'champion' (note, however, that only the more prestigious-sounding **чемпион** is used in official titles).

(4) In cases where men take up a 'female' occupation, a male equivalent of the name of the profession may be created, e.g. **дойр**, cf. дойрка 'milkmaid' (however, both have been superseded in mechanized dairies by **оператор** or **мастер машинного доения** 'milking-machine operator'), **перепи́щик на машинке**, cf. **машини́стка** 'typist' (машини́ст 'engine-driver'). Note also **медицинский брат** (or **санита́р**) 'male nurse' (cf. медицинская сестра́ 'nurse'). The male equivalent of балери́на 'ballerina' is **арти́ст балета́**. However, there are seemingly no masculine equivalents for **модистка** 'milliner' and **швей-мотористка** 'sewing-machine operator'.

44 Professions

(1) Where professions which were almost exclusively male dominated before the Revolution are now also practised by women, the same designation is used for either sex. This applies to all professions in **-вед, -граф, -лог** (языковед 'linguist', биолог 'biologist', топограф 'topographer' etc.) and to автор 'author', архитектор 'architect', ветерина́р 'veterinary surgeon', врач 'doctor' (жéнщина-врач 'woman doctor' is no longer appropriate in a society where most doctors *are* women; cf., however, **жéнщина-космонавт** 'space-woman' and **жéнщина-офице́р** 'woman officer'), ди́ктор 'announcer', дире́ктор 'director', до́ктор 'doctor', инже́нер 'engineer', композито́р 'composer', мини́стр 'minister', парикма́хер 'hairdresser', по́вар 'cook', почта́льон 'postman', председа́тель 'chairman', продаве́ц 'sales assistant', профе́ссор 'professor', строите́ль 'builder',

судья 'judge', счетовод 'accountant', тренер 'trainer', шеф 'boss, head', экскурсовод 'guide' etc.

Note

- (a) Though some of the above have feminine equivalents which are also in use (e.g. **продавщица** 'sales-girl'), all *can* be used to designate either men or women. Masculine and feminine forms may, however, be distinguished stylistically, with masculine (**продавец** 'sales assistant', **секретарь** 'secretary' etc.) preferred in official contexts and feminine in conversation (Она работает **продавщицей** 'She works as a shop assistant').
- (b) The sex of an individual may be indicated by context: **В** клубе с родителями не раз **встречалась** профессор **А. А. Люблинская**, специалист по детской психологии (*Rabotnitsa*) 'Professor A. A. Liublinskaia, a specialist in child psychology, met parents in the club on more than one occasion'.
- (c) In colloquial Russian, **историчка** refers to a female history teacher (cf. историк 'historian, history teacher'). **Электричка** (cf. электрик 'electrician') and **техничка** (cf. техник 'technician') mean respectively 'suburban commuter train' and 'cleaning lady'.
- (d) Male and female also share ranks in the services: **Рядовой** Вера Захаренко награждена орденом Отчественной войны (*Rabotnitsa*) 'Private Vera Zakharenko has been awarded the Patriotic War Medal'.

(2) The nouns are qualified by *masculine* attributive adjectives irrespective of sex:

Он хорóший врач	'He is a good doctor'
Она хорóший врач	'She is a good doctor'

Note

The use of feminine adjectives in such cases (e.g. **молодая** экскурсовод 'a young guide') is characteristic of 'relaxed' speech. **Молодой** экскурсовод is preferred for persons of either sex. In oblique cases masculine agreement is mandatory: Он подошёл к нашей экскурсоводу Ивановой 'He approached Ivanova, our guide'. Since there are some professions with which feminine adjectives may not combine (**агрóном** 'agronomist', **учитель** 'teacher', **хирург** 'surgeon'), feminine agreement is best avoided altogether.

(3) The gender of **predicative** adjectives and past verb forms depends on the sex of the individual:

Врач бóлен	'The doctor (male) is sick'
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Врач **больна́** ‘The doctor (female) is sick’

Касси́р б́чень ве́жливо и б́чень пр́осто всё **объя́снила** (*Izvestiia*)
‘The cashier explained everything very politely and very simply’

Библиотéкарь **добáвила**: У нас 12 000 томóв (Nosov)
‘The librarian added “We have 12,000 volumes”’

45 Animals

(1) Most nouns denoting animals, birds, insects etc. refer to the species in general: **ёж** ‘hedgehog’, **жура́вль** (m.) ‘crane’, **ки́т** ‘whale’, **кры́са** ‘rat’, **мышь** (f.) ‘mouse’ and so on. Thus, there is no indication of the sex of the animal or bird in **Ёж скры́лся в лесу́** ‘The hedgehog disappeared into the forest’, **Лáсточка ви́лa гнездó** ‘The swallow was building a nest’. Male and female can be differentiated where necessary by using the words **самéц** ‘male’ and **самка́** ‘female’ followed by the genitive case of the name of the animal: **самéц/самка́ ежа́** ‘male/female (of the) hedgehog’ etc.

(2) Some animal names, however, do distinguish male and female: **волк/волчи́ца** ‘wolf’, **за́яц/зайчи́ха** ‘hare’, **лев/льви́ца** ‘lion/lioness’, **слон/слони́ха** ‘elephant’, **тигр/тигри́ца** ‘tiger/tigress’. The male form also denotes the species in general (except for **кот/ко́шка** ‘cat’, where the female form **ко́шка** denotes the species in general).

(3) Male and female are differentiated in the names of farm animals: **барáн/овца́** ‘ram/sheep’, **бóров/сви́нья** ‘boar/sow’, **бык/кóрова** ‘bull/cow’, **козéл/коза́** ‘billy-/nanny-goat’, **пету́х/ку́рица** ‘cockerel/hen’, **сéлезень/у́тка** ‘drake/duck’.

(4) A few species have three names denoting (a) the species in general, (b) male and (c) female: **гусь** (m.) ‘goose’, **гуса́к** ‘gander’, **гусы́ня** ‘goose’; **лоша́дь** (f.) ‘horse’, **жеребе́ц** ‘stallion’, **кобы́ла** ‘mare’; **соба́ка** ‘dog’, **кобе́ль** (m.) ‘male dog’, **су́ка** ‘bitch’.

Declension

46 Introduction

(1) Nouns decline according to one of three declension patterns. Most masculine and neuter nouns belong to the first declension and most

feminine nouns to the second, except for feminine soft-sign nouns, which belong to the third declension (see **63**).

(2) The first and second declensions contain both hard-ending nouns (e.g. first-declension **дом** ‘house’, **окно́** ‘window’, second-declension **ка́рта** ‘map’) and soft-ending nouns (e.g. first-declension **музе́й** ‘museum’, **гос́ть** ‘guest’, **мо́ре** ‘sea’, second-declension **ку́хня** ‘kitchen’). All nouns in the third declension are feminine and end in a soft sign.

(3) Some declension endings are affected by the rules of spelling (see **16** (1) and (2)).

(4) For *stress* changes in all three declensions, see **57, 60, 62, 63** (4).

47 Animacy

(1) The accusative case of an animate **masculine** singular noun is identical with the genitive (see (**51**)), cf.

дом **бра́та** (genitive) ‘my brother’s house’
ви́жу **бра́та** (accusative) ‘I see my brother’

Note

The differentiation of animate subject and animate object is important in a language where either may precede the other with virtually no change in meaning, cf. Оте́ц лю́бит сы́на ‘The father loves the son’ and Сы́на лю́бит оте́ц ‘The father loves the son’ (or ‘It is the father who loves the son’, see **475** (2)). The need to avoid ambiguity determines the accusative/genitive rule in animate masculine nouns.

(2) The following types of masculine singular noun are affected:

(i) Human beings: Оте́ц лю́бит сы́на ‘The father loves the son’.

(ii) Animals: Я ви́жу **быка́** ‘I see the bull’.

(iii) Common nouns used figuratively to denote human beings: болва́н ‘dimwit’, дуб ‘dunce’, куми́р ‘idol’, тип ‘type’, пень ‘blockhead’ etc.:

Я ре́дко встреча́л **тако́го болва́на/тако́го забавно́го типа́/тако́го пня́**
‘I have seldom met such a dimwit/such a funny character/such a blockhead’

Note

(a) Я вё́л «Форда́» ‘I was driving a “Ford”’ (car) is more colloquial than Я вё́л «Форд», and the treatment of cars in general as animate objects is becoming commonplace.

- (b) Usage with **рѳбот**: cf. Инженѳр конструирует **рѳбот** ‘The engineer is designing a robot’ (i.e. an automaton), and figurative usage in превращать человека в **рѳбота** ‘to turn a man into a robot’. However, the animate accusative/genitive is now normal in non-figurative contexts also:

Компаниѳ «Мацусима» уже испытала рѳбота (*Nedelya*)
 ‘The “Matsushima” company has already tested a robot’

(iv) Some folk dances, e.g. плясать **трепакѳ**, **гопакѳ** ‘to dance the trepak, the gopak’; animate beings in book titles, e.g. Держал в руках «*Чапѳева*» ‘In his hands he held *Chapaev*’ (a novel); playing cards, e.g. сбросить **валѳга**, снять **тузѳ**, ‘to discard a knave, cut an ace’; billiards and snooker balls, e.g. положить **зелѳного** (шарѳ) влѳзу ‘to pocket the green’; chess pieces, e.g. взять **слѳна**, **кѳрѳля**, **ферзѳ** ‘to take a bishop, the king, the queen’; the words **змеѳ** ‘kite’ and **разведчик** ‘reconnaissance aircraft’ (cf. animate connotations (‘serpent’ and ‘reconnaissance agent’ respectively)), e.g. пускать **змеѳ** ‘to fly a kite’, сбить **разведчика** ‘to shoot down a reconnaissance aircraft’. Analogous usage such as сбить **истребителя** ‘to shoot down a fighter’ and поставитѳ **дворника** ‘to fit a windscreen wiper’ characterizes professional colloquial speech but is otherwise regarded as substandard for usage with standard inanimate accusatives **истребитель** and **дворник**. As car ownership increases, animacy expresses affection: я купил джѳпа ‘I have bought a Jeep’. Плод ‘fruit’ when referring to an embryo or unborn child remains inanimate.

Note

- (a) Collective nouns (e.g. народ ‘people’, полк ‘regiment’, скот ‘cattle’) are *not* treated as animate:

Вначѳле тѳгр нападѳет на **скот** (*Russia Today*)
 ‘First a tiger attacks the cattle’

- (b) The nouns мертвец ‘dead person’ and покойник ‘deceased’ are treated as animate, while труп ‘corpse’ is not, cf.

Он взял **мертвецѳ** за плѳчѳ и повернул нѳ спину (*Nagibin*)
 ‘He took the dead person by the shoulder and turned him on his back’

and

На берегу моря мы наткнулись на **труп** дельфина (*Granin*)
 ‘We came across the corpse of a dolphin on the coast’

- (3) The following types of **plural** noun are affected by the rule.

- (i) Human beings and animals of *all* genders (see 51, 61, 158 (6) (iv)):

Она кѳрмит **мѳльчиков** и **дѳвѳчек**
 ‘She is feeding the boys and girls’

Он кóрмит **ослóв и овéц**

‘He is feeding the donkeys and the sheep’

Он вíдит **живóтных**

‘He sees the animals’

Note

Ловíть **омáров** ‘to catch (live, i.e. animate) lobsters’, but есть, покупáть **омáры** ‘to eat, buy (dead, i.e. inanimate) lobsters’. The distinction applies mainly to crustaceans, but is not consistently observed, e.g. мы ёли кальмáров, ўстриц (‘we were eating squid, oysters’), **but** мы готóвили крeвётки (‘we were cooking shrimps’). ‘Kiwi’ when denoting the fruit is inanimate: я вíжу ёти кíви на пóлке (‘I see the kiwi fruit on the shelf’), but animate when referring to the bird: я вíжу ётих бродящих кíви (‘I see the kiwi roaming’).

(ii) Toys fashioned in human form:

Там дéлают **матрёшек**

‘Nesting dolls are made there’

Дéвочка одeвáет **кўкол**

‘The little girl is dressing the dolls’

Note

Марионётка ‘puppet’ also belongs in this category.

(iii) Plural equivalents of the singular categories listed above: читáть «**Брáтьев Карамáзовых**» ‘to read *The Brothers Karamazov*’ (see (2) (iii) and (iv) above).

Note

- (a) Бактёрия ‘bacterium’, бацíлла ‘bacillus’, вíрус ‘virus’, зарóдыш ‘foetus’, микрóб ‘microbe’ are treated as inanimate: Человéк убивáет **бацíллы и бактёрии** ‘Man kills bacilli and bacteria’. Use of the accusative/genitive in such cases is regarded as somewhat old-fashioned but may be encountered in books on biology and medicine: Изучáть **бактёрий, вíрусов, микрóбов** ‘To study bacteria, viruses, microbes’.
- (b) **Войскá** (pl.) ‘troops’ is treated as inanimate and has accusative войскá.
- (c) The animate accusative genitive rule also applies to adjectives, pronouns and certain numerals (see **193** (1 note (c)), **196** (2) and **200**).

48 Nouns which are used only in the singular

Some nouns have singular form only. They include nouns which denote:

- (1) **Qualities, sensations**: хрáбрость ‘bravery’, грусть ‘sadness’.

(2) **Collectives:** бельё ‘linen’, листьв́а ‘foliage’ etc.

(3) **Substances, foods, cereals:** д́ерево ‘wood’, овёс ‘oats’ and so on. Note, however, that the plurals of some nouns in these categories are encountered in the meaning ‘brands’, ‘large quantities’: жиры́ ‘fats’. This also applies to certain **natural phenomena** normally found in the singular only: дожди́ ‘persistent rain’, морóзы ‘persistent heavy frost’, снегá ‘heavy snow’. The names of some **vegetables and fruits** are also used in the singular only (виногрáд ‘grapes’, горóх ‘peas’, изю́м ‘raisins’, капу́ста ‘cabbage’, карто́фель ‘potatoes’, лук ‘onions’, морко́вь ‘carrots’), a different word being used to denote ‘one onion’ (лу́ковица/голова́ лука от лу́ку): cf. виногрáдина ‘a grape’, горóшина ‘a pea’, изю́мина ‘a raisin’, карто́фелина/клóбень карто́феля ‘a potato’, кочáн капу́сты ‘a cabbage’, морко́вка ‘a carrot’. Compare also солóма ‘straw’, солóмина ‘a straw’; шокола́д ‘chocolate’, шоколо́дка ‘a chocolate’.

(4) ‘Singulatives’ are also used to create plural forms from abstracts and collectives which have no plural of their own: долг ‘duty’ (**обязанности** ‘duties’ (note that долг in the meaning ‘debt’ *has* a plural: дол́гий)), ложь ‘lie’ (**вы́думки** ‘fabrications, lies’), ору́жие ‘weapons’ (pl. **ви́ды** ору́жия), полíтика ‘policy, politics’ (политíческие **направл́ения** ‘policies’), промыш́ленность ‘industry’ (**óтрасли** промыш́ленности ‘industries’), спорт ‘sport’ (**ви́ды** спóрта ‘sports, events’). Note also that разл́ичия can be used as the plural of рáзница (which has no plural of its own).

(5) The names of animals, trees etc. may denote a whole species:

В нáшем лесу́ растёт тóлько **сосна́**
‘Only pine trees grow in our forest’

Здесь лóвят **лещá** и **осетрá**
‘Bream and sturgeon are caught here’

(6) Names of professions and some other words can also be used collectively: День **шахтёра** ‘Miners’ Day’, Дом **кни́ги** ‘book shop’, Дом **учи́теля** ‘Teachers’ Club’.

Note

A number of nouns, once used only in the singular, have acquired plurals: риск ‘risk’, pl. рíски, техноло́гия ‘technology’, pl. техноло́гии, эконо́мика ‘economy’, pl. эконо́мики, etc.

49 Nouns which have a plural form only

(1) Many plural-only nouns denote objects comprising two or more essential components: **брюки** ‘trousers’, **ножницы** ‘scissors’. Others denote complex processes (**роды** ‘childbirth’), games (**прятки** ‘hide and seek’) etc.

(2) Morphologically, the nouns subdivide as follows.

(i) Plurals in **-ы/-и/-я**, genitive **-ов**:

аплодисменты ‘applause’ gen. **аплодисментов**

Similarly **бегá** ‘trotting races’, **весы** ‘scales’, **выборы** ‘election’, **дебáты** ‘debate’, **джинсы** ‘jeans’, **духи** ‘perfume’, **заморозки** ‘light frosts’, **консервы** ‘preserves’, **мемуáры** ‘memoirs’, **остáнки** ‘human remains’, **очки** ‘spectacles’, **переговóры** ‘negotiations’, **подбóнки** ‘dregs’, **припáсы** ‘stores’, **роды** ‘childbirth’, **счёты** ‘abacus’, **трёпики** ‘tropics’, **трусíки/трусý** ‘shorts’, **штаны** ‘trousers’, **щипцы** ‘pincers, tongs’, **талибы**, ‘the Taliban’.

Note

Nouns ending in two vowels or unstressed **-цы** have gen. **-ев**: **обóи**, **оббóев** ‘wallpaper’ (likewise **побóи** ‘beating’, **помóи** ‘slops’), **плоскогýбцы**, **плоскогýбцев** ‘pliers’.

(ii) Plurals in **-ы/-и** with zero genitive ending:

в́илы ‘pitchfork’ gen. **вил**

Similarly **Аф́ины** ‘Athens’, **брю́ки** ‘trousers’, **де́ньги** (gen. **де́нег**) ‘money’, **име́нины** ‘name-day’, **кальсо́ны** ‘pants’, **кани́кулы** ‘holidays’, **носи́лки** (gen. **носи́лок**) ‘stretcher’, **но́жницы** ‘scissors’, **но́жны** (gen. **но́жен**) ‘sheath’, **опи́лки** (gen. **опи́лок**) ‘sawdust’, **панталóны** ‘knickers’, **пла́вки** (gen. **пла́вок**) ‘swimming trunks’, **по́хороны** (gen. **похоро́н**) ‘funeral’, **сала́зки** (gen. **сала́зок**) ‘toboggan’, **са́нки** (gen. **са́нок**) ‘sledge’, **сли́вки** (gen. **сли́вок**) ‘cream’, **су́мерки** (gen. **су́мерек**) ‘dusk’, **су́тки** (gen. **су́ток**) ‘24-hour period’, **у́зы** ‘bonds’, **хло́поты** (gen. **хлопо́т**) ‘trouble’, **ша́хматы** ‘chess’, **шо́ры** ‘blinkers’.

(iii) Plurals in **-а** with zero genitive ending:

ворóта ‘gate’ gen. **ворóт**

Similarly **дрова́** ‘firewood’, **кружева́** ‘lace’ (also sing. **кру́жево**), **не́дра** ‘bowels of the earth’, **пери́ла** ‘railing’, **черни́ла** ‘ink’.

(iv) Nouns in **-и**, genitive **-ей**:

качели ‘swing’ **gen. качелей**

Similarly **бўдни** ‘weekdays’ (gen. also **бўден**), **вўжжи** (gen. **вўжжэй**) ‘reins’, **грáблн** ‘rake’ (gen. also **грáбель**), **джўнгли** ‘jungle’, **дрўжжи** (gen. **дрўжжэй**) ‘yeast’, **клéщи** (gen. **клéщэй**) ‘pincers’, **кўдри** (gen. **кўдрэй**) ‘curls’, **пўмочи** (gen. **пўмочэй**) ‘braces’, **сáни** (gen. **санэй**) ‘sledge’, **щи** ‘cabbage soup’.

Note

- (a) **Прéния**, gen. **прéний** ‘debate’, **свéдения**, gen. **свéдений** ‘information’.
- (b) Countable nouns in the series, e.g. **сáни** ‘sledge’, can denote one object (‘sledge’) or a number of objects (‘sledges’). Meaning is determined by context: Из санэй вўскочил **солдáт** ‘A soldier jumped from the **sledge**’; Из санэй вўскочил **цéлый взвод солдáт** ‘A whole platoon of soldiers jumped from the **sledges**’.

50 Declension chart

The following chart shows, in simplified form, the declension pattern in all three declensions.

		<i>Singular</i>				<i>Plural</i>		
		<i>m.</i>	<i>n.</i>	<i>f.</i>		<i>m.</i>	<i>n.</i>	<i>f.</i>
N		cons. -й -ь	-о -е -ё	-а/-я	-ь	-ы/-и	-а/-я	-ы/-и
A	<i>INAN.</i>	= N	= N	-у/ю	-ь	= N		
	<i>ANIM.</i>	= G				= G		
	<i>G</i>	-а/-я		-ы/-и	-и	-ов/-ев/-ей	zero/ей	
	<i>D</i>	-у/-ю		-е	-и	-ам/-ям		
	<i>I</i>	unstr. ем -ом/ str. ём	-ей -ой/ -ёй	-ью		-ами/-ями		
	<i>P</i>	-е			-и	-ах/-ях		

51 First declension: masculine nouns

(1) Hard-ending nouns

Declension of **заво́д** ‘factory’ (inanimate) and **студе́нт** ‘student’ (animate):

	<i>Singular</i>		<i>Plural</i>	
<i>Nom.</i>	заво́д	студе́нт	заво́д- Ы	студе́нт- Ы
<i>Acc.</i>	заво́д (= nom.)	студе́нт- а (= gen.)	заво́д- Ы	студе́нт- ОВ
<i>Gen.</i>	заво́д- а	студе́нт- а	заво́д- ОВ	студе́нт- ОВ
<i>Dat.</i>	заво́д- у	студе́нт- у	заво́д- ам	студе́нт- ам
<i>Instr.</i>	заво́д- ом	студе́нт- ом	заво́д- ами	студе́нт- ами
<i>Prep.</i>	о заво́д- е	о студе́нт- е	о заво́д- ах	о студе́нт- ах

Note

- Nouns in **г, к, х/ж, ч, ш, щ** have nominative and inanimate accusative plural **-и**: урок ‘lesson’, **уро́ки**; нож ‘knife’, **ножи́** (see **16** (1)).
- Nouns ending in **ж, ч, ш, щ, ц** and with stem stress in declension have instrumental singular **-ем**: душ ‘shower’, **ду́шем**; ме́сяц ‘month’, **ме́сяцем** (see **16** (2)).
- Nouns ending in **ж, ч, ш, щ** have genitive plural **-ей**: нож ‘knife’, gen. pl. **ноже́й**.
- Nouns ending in **-ц** with stem stress in declension have genitive plural **-ев**: шприц ‘syringe’, gen. pl. **шпри́цев** (see **16** (2)).
- The genitive plural of some nouns is identical with the nominative singular (see **56**).
- Год** ‘year’ has genitive plural **лет** (**годо́в** in denoting decades: моды **50-х годо́в** ‘the fashions of the fifties’); cf. dative, instrumental, prepositional plural **года́м, годáми, о годáх**.

(2) Soft-ending nouns

(i) Nouns in **-й**

Declension of **музе́й** ‘museum’ and **геро́й** ‘hero’:

	<i>Singular</i>		<i>Plural</i>	
<i>Nom.</i>	музе́й	геро́й	музе́- и	геро́- и
<i>Acc.</i>	музе́й (= nom.)	геро́- я (= gen.)	музе́- и	геро́- ев
<i>Gen.</i>	музе́- я	геро́- я	музе́- ев	геро́- ев
<i>Dat.</i>	музе́- ю	геро́- ю	музе́- ям	геро́- ям
<i>Instr.</i>	музе́- ем	геро́- ем	музе́- ями	геро́- ями
<i>Prep.</i>	о музе́- е	о геро́- е	о музе́- ях	о геро́- ях

Note

- (a) Nouns in **-ий** have prepositional singular **-ии**: гений ‘genius’, о гении.
- (b) **Воробей** ‘sparrow’ is declined as follows: acc./gen. воробья́, dat. воробью́, instr. воробьём, prep. о воробье́; nom. pl. воробьи́, acc./gen. воробьёв, dat. воробья́м, instr. воробья́ми, prep. о воробья́х. Similarly, муравей ‘ant’, соловей ‘nightingale’ and inanimate (acc. = nom.) репей ‘burdock’, ручей ‘stream’ and stem-stressed улей ‘beehive’.

(ii) Soft-sign nouns

Declension of **портфель** ‘briefcase’ and **тесть** ‘father-in-law’:

	<i>Singular</i>		<i>Plural</i>	
<i>Nom.</i>	портфель	тесть	портфел-и	тést-и
<i>Acc.</i>	портфель (= nom.)	тést-я (= gen.)	портфел-и	тést-ей
<i>Gen.</i>	портфел-я	тést-я	портфел-ей	тést-ей
<i>Dat.</i>	портфел-ю	тést-ю	портфел-ям	тést-ям
<i>Instr.</i>	портфел-ем	тést-ем	портфел-ями	тést-ями
<i>Prep.</i>	о портфел-е	о тést-е	о портфел-ях	о тést-ях

52 The fleeting vowel

The vowel in the final syllable of many nouns which end in a hard consonant or soft sign does *not* appear in oblique cases. Vowels affected include the following:

(1) ‘o’: рынок ‘market’

	<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
<i>Singular</i>	рынок	ры́нка	ры́нку	ры́нком	о ры́нке
<i>Plural</i>	ры́нки	ры́нков	ры́нкам	ры́нками	о ры́нках

Most nouns in **-ок** are similarly declined. Exceptions include знато́к ‘connoisseur’ (gen. знато́ка), игро́к ‘player’, уро́к ‘lesson’.

Note

Some other nouns also contain a fleeting **-o-**:

- (a) Hard-ending nouns: лоб ‘forehead’, gen. лба; мох ‘moss’; посол ‘ambassador’; рот ‘mouth’; сон ‘sleep’; угол ‘corner’; шов ‘seam’.

(b) Soft-sign nouns: дёготь, gen. **дѣгтя** ‘tar’; коготь ‘claw’; ломоть ‘slice’; ноготь ‘nail’; огонь ‘fire’; уголь ‘coal’, gen. **угля/ўгля**.

(2) ‘e’: конец ‘end’

	<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
<i>Singular</i>	конѣц	концá	концú	концџм	о концѣ
<i>Plural</i>	концы́	концџв	концáм	концáми	о концáх

Most nouns in **-ец** are similarly declined. However, stressed **-ѣ-** is retained when preceded by a double consonant: близнец ‘twin’, gen. **близнецá**; кузнѣц ‘blacksmith’, gen. **кузнецá**.

Note

(a) See **51** (1) notes (b) and (d) for the instrumental singular and genitive plural of stem-stressed nouns in **-ц**.

(b) **-ле-** becomes **-ль-** in oblique cases: палец ‘finger’, gen. **пáльцá**.

(c) A fleeting vowel preceded by another vowel is replaced by **-й-** in oblique cases: бельгѣец ‘Belgian’, gen. **бельгѣйцá**; китáец ‘Chinese’, gen. **китáйцá**. Cf. заѣм ‘loan’, gen. **зáймá**; зáяц ‘hare’, gen. **зáйцá**.

Other hard and soft nouns with a fleeting **-e-** include вѣтер ‘wind’ (gen. **вѣтра**), зáмысел ‘project’, ўзел ‘knot’ (gen. **узлá**), хребѣт ‘range of hills’; день ‘day’ (gen. **дня**), кáмень ‘stone’, кáшель ‘cough’, кџрень ‘root’, лѣвень ‘downpour’, пáрень ‘fellow’, пень ‘stump’, ремѣнь ‘strap’, стѣбель ‘stalk’.

(3) ‘ѣ’: ковѣр ‘carpet’

Nouns with a fleeting **ѣ** include ковѣр ‘carpet’ (gen. **коврá**), козѣл ‘goat’, костѣр ‘bonfire’, котѣл ‘boiler’. Note that in some words **ѣ** is replaced by a soft sign following **л**, **н** or **р**: лѣд ‘ice’ (gen. **льда**), конѣк ‘skate’ (gen. **конькá**), хорѣк ‘ferret’ (gen. **хорькá**).

53 Partitive genitive in **-у/-ю**

Some hard-ending masculine nouns and a few nouns in **-й** have an alternative genitive singular in **-у/-ю**. The nouns all denote measurable quantities, e.g. виногрáд ‘grapes’ (gen. **виногрáда/виногрáду**), чай ‘tea’ (gen. **чáя/чáю**). Other nouns with a partitive genitive in **-у/-ю** include:

жир	‘fat’	сáхар	‘sugar’
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квас	‘kvass’	снег	‘snow’
клей	‘glue’	суп	‘soup’
лук	‘onions’	сыр	‘cheese’
мёд	‘honey’	табáк	‘tobacco’
мел	‘chalk’	творóг	‘cottage cheese’
мех	‘fur’	чесно́к	‘garlic’
наро́д	‘people’	шёлк	‘silk’
песо́к	‘sand, caster sugar’	шокола́д	‘chocolate’
рис	‘rice’		

Most genitives in **-у/-ю** appear only in quantitative expressions: кусо́к **сы́ру** ‘piece of cheese’, ча́шка **ча́ю** ‘cup of tea’. See also **84**.

Owing to the colloquial nature of the genitives in **-у**, they are not found with nouns denoting rarer substances such as, for example, **молибде́н** ‘molybdenum’.

54 Prepositional/locative singular in **-у/-ю**

(1) Locative in **-у**

Some nouns have an alternative prepositional singular in stressed **-у́**; it is used with the prepositions **в** and **на** to denote location, but not with other prepositions that take the prepositional case (о, по, при); cf. **в порту́** ‘in the port’ and **о порте́** ‘about the port’:

аэропо́рт	‘airport’
ба́л	‘ball, dance’
бе́рег	‘shore, bank’
бо́к	‘side’
бо́р	‘coniferous forest’
бо́рт	‘side’ (of a ship, etc.) (на борту́ ‘on board’)
ве́рх	‘top, summit’
глаз	‘eye’
До́н	‘the Don’
Кли́н	‘Klin’
Кры́м	‘the Crimea’
ле́д	‘ice’ (на льду́ ‘on the ice’)
лес	‘forest’
ло́б	‘forehead’ (на лбу́ ‘on the forehead’)

луг	‘meadow’
мост	‘bridge’
мох	‘moss’
	(во мху ‘in the moss’)
нос	‘nose, prow’
плот	‘raft’
пол	‘floor’
полк	‘regiment’
порт	‘port’
пост	‘post’
	(на посту́ ‘at one’s post’)
пруд	‘pond’
рот	‘mouth’
	(во рту ‘in the mouth’)
сад	‘garden, orchard’
снег	‘snow’
тыл	‘the rear’
угол	‘corner’
	(в/на углу́ ‘in/at the corner’)
шкаф	‘cupboard’

Note

- (a) Some phrases denote state: **в бреду́** ‘in a delirium’, **в быту́** ‘in everyday life’, **в жару́** ‘in a fever’, **в плену́** ‘in captivity’.
- (b) Where **в** or **на** have non-locational meanings, the noun takes the ending **-е**: **знать толк в ле́се** ‘to understand the forest’.
- (c) The ending **-е** is also used in the names of books: **в «Вишнёвом са́де»** Чехова ‘in Chekhov’s *Cherry Orchard*’.
- (d) Sometimes both **-е** and **-у́** are possible, the form in **-у́** being the more colloquial variant: **в о́тпуске/отпуску́** ‘on holiday’, **в це́хе/цеху́** ‘in the workshop’.
- (e) The endings **-е** and **-у́** may be differentiated semantically and phraseologically, cf. **в XX ве́ке** ‘in the twentieth century’ and **Мно́го ви́дел я люде́й на своём ве́ку** ‘I have seen a lot of people in my time’; **в ви́де** исключения ‘by way of an exception’ and **име́ть в ви́ду** ‘to bear in mind’; **в до́ме** ‘in the house’ and **на до́му** ‘on the premises’; **в спаса́тельном кру́ге** ‘in a lifebelt’ and **в се́мейном кру́гу** ‘in the family circle’; **трудо́ться в по́те** лица ‘to labour by the sweat of one’s brow’ and **весь в поту́** ‘bathed in sweat’; **в ря́де** слу́чаев ‘in a number of cases’ and **в пе́рвом ря́ду** ‘in the front row’; **уме́реть во цвёте** лет ‘to die in one’s prime’ and **дере́вья в по́льном**

цвету́ ‘the trees are in full bloom’; в **ча́се** лёта от Москвы́ ‘an hour’s flight from Moscow’ and во второ́м **часу́** ‘between one and two o’clock’.

- (f) Note also жить в **ладу́** ‘to live in harmony’, куртка **на меху́** ‘fur-lined jacket’, **на ка́ждом шагу́** ‘at every step’.

(2) Locative in -ю́

A few nouns in **-ий** and **-ь** have a locative singular in **-ю́**: **бой** ‘battle’, в **бою́** ‘in battle’ (but о **бо́е** ‘about the battle’). Similarly рай ‘paradise’, строй (стоя́ть в **строю́** ‘to stand in line’). Cf. на **краю́** ‘on the edge’, в родно́м **краю́** ‘on one’s native soil’, but в Краснода́рском **кра́е** ‘in Krasnodar Territory’, на **пе́реднем кра́е** оборо́ны ‘in the front line of defence’, from край ‘edge, territory, front line’. Хмель (a) ‘hops’ (b) ‘inebriation’ has a locative in -ю́ in meaning (b): во **хмелю́** ‘in his cups’, cf. о **хмеле́** ‘about hops’.

55 Special masculine plural forms

Some first-declension masculine nouns have special plural forms.

(1) Nominative plural in -а́/я́

- (i) Some hard-ending nouns have a nominative plural in stressed -а́: адре́с ‘address’, pl. **адреса́**. Similarly:

бе́рег	‘shore’	но́мер	‘number, issue’
бок	‘side’	обшла́г	‘cuff’
бо́рт	‘side of ship’	о́круг	‘district’
бу́фер	‘buffer’	о́рдер	‘warrant’
ве́ер	‘fan’	о́стров	‘island’
век	‘age, century’	па́рус	‘sail’
ве́чер	‘evening’	па́спорт	‘passport’
глаз	‘eye’	пе́репел	‘quail’
го́лос	‘voice, vote’	по́езд	‘train’
го́род	‘town’	по́яс	‘belt’
ди́ре́ктор	‘director’	профе́ссор	‘professor’
до́ктор	‘doctor’	ро́г	‘horn’
дом	‘house’	рука́в	‘sleeve’
ко́локол	‘bell’	со́рт	‘brand’
лес	‘forest’	сто́рож	‘watchman’
луг	‘meadow’	то́м	‘volume’
ма́стер	‘craftsman’	че́реп	‘skull’

Note

- (a) Some plurals in **-а** and **-ы/-и** are differentiated semantically: кондукторá ‘bus conductors’, кондукторы ‘electrical conductors’; корпусá ‘corps, buildings’, корпусы ‘torsos’; мехá ‘furs’, мехи́ ‘bellows’; образá ‘icons’, образы́ ‘forms’; орденá ‘orders, decorations’, ордены́ ‘monastic orders’; проводá ‘electric wires’, проводы́ ‘send-off’ (no sing.); счётá ‘accounts’, счёты́ ‘abacus’ (no sing.); тонá ‘colour shades’, тоны́ (musical) ‘tones’; тормозá ‘brakes’, тормозы́ ‘hindrances’; хлебá ‘cereals’, хлебы́ ‘loaves’; цветá ‘colours’, цветы́ ‘flowers’ (sing. цветóк).
- (b) Some plurals in **-ы/-и** are used in written styles, and their counterparts in **-á** in colloquial or technical contexts: год ‘year’, инспектор ‘inspector’, инструктор ‘instructor’, корректор ‘proofreader’, крейсер ‘cruiser’, редактор ‘editor’, цех ‘workshop’.
- (ii) A few nouns ending in **-й** or **-ь** have nominative plural **-я́**: край ‘edge’, pl. **края́** (gen. pl. **краёв**); вéксель ‘bill of exchange’, pl. **векселя́**. Likewise лагерь ‘camp’ (but лагери́ ‘political camps’), тополь ‘poplar’, учитель ‘teacher’ (but pl. учители́ in the meaning ‘teachers of a doctrine’, e.g. учители́ коммунизма ‘the teachers of communism’), штабелъ ‘stack’, штéмпель ‘stamp’, якорь ‘anchor’.

Note

Пéкарь ‘baker’, слéсарь ‘metal worker’ and то́карь ‘turner’ have standard plurals in **-и** and alternative, colloquial plurals in **-я́** (also used in professional parlance).

(2) Nominative plural in **-я́**

- (i) Stem-stressed: стул ‘chair’ (inanimate), брат ‘brother’ (animate)

<i>Plural</i>	<i>Nom.</i>	<i>Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
	сту́лья	сту́лья	сту́льев	сту́льям	сту́льями	о сту́льях
	бра́тья	бра́тьев	бра́тьев	бра́тьям	бра́тьями	о бра́тьях

Similarly (all inanimate): брус ‘beam’, зуб ‘cog’ (cf. зуб ‘tooth’, pl. зу́бы, зу́бов), клин ‘wedge’, клóк ‘shred’ (pl. **клóчья**, **клóчьев** ‘tatters’), кол ‘stake’, кóлос ‘ear of corn’ (pl. **колóсья**), ком ‘lump’, лист ‘leaf’ (cf. лист ‘sheet of paper’, pl. **листы́**, **листо́в**), лоску́т ‘scrap’ (pl. **лоску́тья** ‘rags’, cf. **лоскуты́** ‘scraps of paper’), обод ‘rim’ (pl. **обóдья**), пóвод ‘rein’ (pl. **повóдья**, cf. **пóводы** ‘causes’), полóз ‘runner’ (pl. **пóлозья**, cf. **пóлозы** ‘grass-snakes’), прут ‘twig’, стру́п ‘scab’, сук ‘bough’ (pl. **су́чья**, **су́чьев** or **суки́**, **суко́в**). Note also the plural-only form **хлопья́** ‘flakes’.

- (ii) End-stressed in plural

(a) **Дёверь** ‘brother-in-law’, **друг** ‘friend’, **муж** ‘husband’, **сын** ‘son’:

<i>Plural Nom.</i>	<i>Acc./Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
деверья́	деверей	деверья́м	деверья́ми	о деверья́х
друзья́	друзей	друзья́м	друзья́ми	о друзья́х
мужья́	мужей	мужья́м	мужья́ми	о мужья́х
сыновья́	сыновей	сыновья́м	сыновья́ми	о сыновья́х

(But мужи́ нау́ки ‘men of science’, сыны́ ро́дины ‘sons of the fatherland’.)

(b) **зять** ‘son-in-law, brother-in-law’, **кум** ‘godfather’:

<i>Plural Nom.</i>	<i>Acc./Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
зятья́	зятьёв	зятья́м	зятья́ми	о зятья́х
кумовья́	кумовьёв	кумовья́м	кумовья́ми	о кумовья́х

(3) Plural of nouns in -анин/-янин, e.g. англича́нин ‘Englishman’

<i>Plural Nom.</i>	<i>Acc./Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
англича́не	англича́н	англича́нам	англича́нами	об англича́нах

Note the stress change in гражда́нин ‘citizen’, pl. гражда́не, гражда́н.

(4) Plural of ба́рин, болгарин, тата́рин, цыга́н

The plural of **болга́рин** ‘Bulgarian’ is: nom. болгары́, acc./gen. болгар, dat. болгарам, instr. болгара́ми, prep. о болгара́х. Similarly ба́рин ‘landowner’ (nom. pl. (demotic) ба́ры/ба́ре), тата́рин ‘Tatar’, цыга́н ‘gipsy’ (nom. pl. цыга́не).

(5) Plural of nouns in -ёнок/-онок

Nouns in -ёнок/-онок have plurals in -ята/-ата: котёнок ‘kitten’.

<i>Plural Nom.</i>	<i>Acc./Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
котя́та	котя́т	котя́там	котя́тами	о котя́тах

Similarly волчо́нок ‘wolf-cub’, pl. волча́та, волча́т etc.

Note

- (a) Щенóк ‘puppy’ has alternative plurals щеня́та, щеня́т/щенки́, щенко́в.
- (b) Ребе́нок ‘child’ has plural де́ти ‘children’, acc./gen. дете́й, dat. дете́ям, instr. детьми́, prep. о дете́ях. Colloquially, ребя́та is also used as a plural of ребёнок. Ребя́та can also mean ‘the lads’, cf. девча́та ‘the girls’ (also де́вушки и ребя́та ‘young men and girls’).

(6) Plural of сосёд and чёрт

Сосёд ‘neighbour’ and чёрт ‘devil’ have hard endings in the singular, soft endings in the plural: **сосёди, сосёдей, сосёдам; чёрти, чертёй, чертя́м.**

(7) Plural of господи́н and хозя́ин

Господи́н ‘master’ and хозя́ин ‘owner, host’ have nominative plural **-а**:

<i>Plural</i>	<i>Nom.</i>	<i>Acc./Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
	господá	госпо́д	господа́м	господа́ми	о господа́х
	хозя́ева	хозя́ев	хозя́евам	хозя́евами	о хозя́евах

56 Nouns whose genitive plural is identical with the nominative singular

The genitive plural of some masculine nouns is the same as the nominative singular: глаз ‘eye’, погón ‘epaulette’, раз ‘time’, человек ‘person’ (after numerals: пять **челове́к** ‘five people’, cf. нет **люде́й** ‘there are no people’). Note the stress difference in во́лос ‘a hair’, gen. pl. **волóс**. Categories also include:

(1) Footwear: боти́нок ‘shoe’, ва́ленок ‘felt boot’, носóк ‘sock’ (gen. pl. also **носокóв**), сапо́г ‘boot’, чуло́к ‘stocking’.

(2) Nationalities (including some minorities in the former USSR): башки́р ‘Bashkir’, буря́т ‘Buriat’, грузи́н ‘Georgian’, ма́дьяр ‘Magyar’, осети́н ‘Ossetian’, румы́н ‘Romanian’, ту́рок ‘Turk’.

(3) The military: партиза́н ‘partisan’, солда́т ‘soldier’ and others.

(4) Measurements: ампе́р ‘ampere’, байт ‘byte’, бит ‘bit’, ватт ‘watt’, вольт ‘volt’, герц ‘cycle’, грамм ‘gram’, децибе́л ‘decibel’ (10 **ампе́р** ‘10 amperes’, 100 **ватт** ‘100 watts’, 5 **вольт** ‘5 volts’). The zero genitive plural is used in technical and scientific contexts, especially after numerals, and in colloquial speech, while **-ов** is normal in literary styles with some measurements, especially **грамм** ‘gram’ (Выпи́ли сто **гра́ммов** тёплой во́дки (Vanshenkin) ‘They drank 100 grams of warm vodka’), though here too the zero ending is making headway.

(5) Fruits (colloquial speech only): абрикóс ‘apricot’, апельси́н ‘orange’, баклажа́н ‘aubergine’, помидóр ‘tomato’. In written Russian, however, the genitive plural **-ов** is preferred for these nouns.

57 Stress patterns in first-declension masculine nouns

There are three basic types of stress pattern in declension.

(1) Fixed stem stress

Стул ‘chair’, **геро́й** ‘hero’, **автомобиль** ‘car’ etc.

Note

- With few exceptions (e.g. **дирéктор** ‘manager’, pl. **директорá**), nouns with medial stress have fixed stem stress in declension.
- Most nouns of three or more syllables have fixed stem stress throughout declension (**пароход** ‘steamer’ etc.).
- All masculine nouns with unstressed prefixes or suffixes have fixed stem stress throughout declension (**разговóр** ‘conversation’, **мáльчик** ‘boy’ etc.).
- Only a limited number of monosyllabic masculine nouns have fixed stem stress throughout declension (e.g. **звук** ‘sound’).

(2) Fixed end stress

(i) Hard ending:

	<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
<i>Singular</i>	стол	стол-á	стол-ý	стол-óм	о стол-é
<i>Plural</i>	стол-ы́	стол-óв	стол-áм	стол-áми	о стол-áх

(ii) Soft ending:

<i>Singular</i>	рубль	рубл-я́	рубл-ю́	рубл-ём	о рубл-é
<i>Plural</i>	рубл-и́	рубл-ей	рубл-я́м	рубл-я́ми	о рубл-я́х

Note

- This category includes many hard-ending nouns, including almost all those with the stressed suffixes: **-áк/-я́к**, **-áч**, **-éж**, **-ёж**, **и́к**, **-и́ч**, **-у́н**, **-у́х**: бегу́н ‘runner’, моря́к ‘sailor’, платёж ‘payment’, рубéж ‘boundary’, скрипа́ч ‘violinist’, стары́к ‘old man’ etc.
- Soft-ending nouns include богаты́рь ‘hero’, вождь ‘leader’, врата́рь ‘goalkeeper’, дождь ‘rain’, жура́вль ‘crane’ (bird), календа́рь ‘calendar’, кора́бль ‘ship’, кремль ‘kremlin’, ломо́ть ‘slice’, ноль/нуль ‘nought’, реме́нь ‘strap’, секретáрь ‘secretary’, слова́рь ‘dictionary’ etc.

(3) Mobile stress

(i) Stem stress in the **singular**, end stress in the **plural**: **дуб** ‘oak’, **бой** ‘battle’.

	<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
<i>Singular</i>	дуб	дуб-а	дуб-у	дуб-ом	о дуб-е
<i>Plural</i>	дуб-ы́	дуб-ов	дуб-ам	дуб-ами	о дуб-ах
<i>Singular</i>	бой	бб-я	бб-ю	бб-ем	о бб-е
<i>Plural</i>	бо-и́	бо-ев	бо-ям	бо-ями	о бо-ях

Note

- (a) Many nouns in the category have a prepositional-locative in **-у/-ю**: **бой** ‘battle’, **круг** ‘circle’, **мост** ‘bridge’, **ряд** ‘row’, **сад** ‘garden’ etc. (see 54).
- (b) Other nouns in the category include many with plurals in **-ья** (see 55 (2) (ii)) and in **-а/-я** (see 55 (1)).

(ii) End stress in **oblique** cases of the **plural**: **порт** ‘port’, **жёлудь** ‘acorn’.

	<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
<i>Singular</i>	порт	порт-а	порт-у	порт-ом	о порт-е
<i>Plural</i>	порт-ы	порт-ов	порт-ам	порт-ами	о порт-ах
<i>Singular</i>	жёлудь	жёлуд-я	жёлуд-ю	жёлуд-ем	о жёлуд-е
<i>Plural</i>	жёлуд-и	жёлуд-ей	жёлуд-ям	жёлуд-ями	о жёлуд-ях

Note

This group comprises mainly soft-sign nouns: голубь ‘dove’, гость ‘guest’, гусь ‘goose’, зверь ‘wild animal’, камень ‘stone’, коготь ‘claw’, корень ‘root’, локоть ‘elbow’, ноготь ‘fingernail’, парень ‘lad’, стéбелъ ‘stalk’ (gen. pl. also **стéблей**). Hard-ending nouns include волк ‘wolf’ and зуб ‘tooth’.

(iii) End stress in **oblique** cases of **singular and plural**: **гвоздь** ‘nail’.

	<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
<i>Singular</i>	гвоздь	гвозд-я́	гвозд-ю́	гвозд-ём	о гвозд-е́
<i>Plural</i>	гвóзд-и	гвозд-ей	гвозд-ям	гвозд-ями	о гвозд-ях

Likewise конь ‘steed’, уголь ‘coal’ (gen. sing. **угля́/угля**), червь ‘worm’.

Note

For all animate nouns acc. = gen. See 47.

58 First declension: neuter nouns in -о

(1) Declension of **болото** ‘swamp’:

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	болóт- о	болóт- а
<i>Acc.</i>	болóт- о	болóт- а
<i>Gen.</i>	болóт- а	болóт
<i>Dat.</i>	болóт- у	болóт- ам
<i>Instr.</i>	болóт- ом	болóт- ами
<i>Prep.</i>	о болóт- е	о болóт- ах

Note

- (a) Hébo ‘sky’, pl. **небеса́**, gen. pl. **небёс**, dat. pl. **небеса́м**. Likewise **чúдо** ‘miracle’.
- (b) Сúдно ‘ship’, pl. **суда́**, **судóв** (cf. судно ‘chamber-pot’, pl. **сúдна**, **сúден**).

(2) Buffer vowel in the genitive plural.

(i) In the ‘zero’ genitive plural of many nouns in **-о**, a ‘buffer’ vowel appears between two final consonants. This may be **-о-** (following **к**):

волокну́ ‘fibre’ **воло́кон**

Similarly **окно́** ‘window’, gen. pl. **о́кон**; **стекло́** ‘pane of glass’, gen. pl. **сте́кол**.

(ii) Otherwise the buffer vowel is **-е-**:

бедро́ ‘hip’ **бе́дер**

Others of this type include **бревно́** ‘log’, **ведро́** ‘bucket’, **весло́** ‘oar’, **зерно́** ‘grain’, **кольцо́** ‘ring’ (gen. pl. **коле́ц**), **крёсло** ‘armchair’ (gen. pl. **крёсел**), **крыльцо́** ‘porch’ (gen. pl. **крыле́ц**), **письмо́** ‘letter’ (gen. pl. **пи́сем**), **полотно́** ‘canvas’, **пятно́** ‘stain’, **ребро́** ‘rib’, **ремесло́** ‘trade’ (gen. pl. **ремёсел**), **число́** ‘number’, **ядро́** ‘nucleus’.

Note

- (a) Vowel change from **e** to **ë** under stress.
- (b) **Не́дра**, **не́др** (pl. only) ‘bowels of the earth’.
- (c) **Яйцо́** ‘egg’, pl. **яйца**, **яйц**.
- (d) **Зло́** ‘evil’ has only one plural form, genitive plural **зол** only in the phrase: **ме́ньшее из двух зол** ‘the lesser of two evils’.
- (e) Nouns in **-ство** have no buffer vowel in the genitive plural: **чу́ство** ‘feeling’, gen. pl. **чу́ств**.

(3) The following nouns have nominative plural **-и**: **ве́ко** ‘eyelid’, pl. **ве́ки**, **век**; **коле́но** ‘knee’, pl. **коле́ни**, **коле́ней** (**коле́н** in combination with prepositions and comparatives, e.g. **вы́ше**, **ни́же** **коле́н** ‘above, below the knees’, **до** **коле́н** ‘to the knees’, **встать с** **коле́н** ‘to rise from one’s

knees’, **заж́ать** мѣжду колѣн ‘to grip between the knees’); **о́ко** ‘eye’ (archaic), pl. **о́чи, очѣй**; **плечо́** ‘shoulder’, pl. **плѣчи, плеч**; **у́хо** ‘ear’, pl. **у́ши, уше́й**.

Note

Except for **о́блако** ‘cloud’, pl. **облака́, облако́в**, all nouns in **-ко** have nominative plural **-и**: **блю́дечко** ‘saucer’, pl. **блю́дечки, блю́дечек**; **дрѣвко́** ‘shaft’, pl. **дрѣвки, дрѣвков**; **зе́рнышко** ‘small grain’, pl. **зе́рнышки, зе́рнышек** (likewise **пе́рьшко** ‘small feather’); **колѣсико** ‘small wheel’, pl. **колѣсики, колѣсиков** (likewise **ли́чи́ко** ‘small face’, **плѣчи́ко** ‘small shoulder’ – pl. **плѣчи́ки** also means ‘coat-hanger’); **озерко́** ‘small lake’, pl. **озерки́, озерко́в**; **очко́** ‘point’ (in a game), pl. **очки́, очко́в** (also ‘spectacles’); **око́шко** ‘small window’, pl. **око́шки, око́шек**; **у́шко** ‘small ear’, pl. **у́шки, у́шек** (cf. **ушкó** ‘eye of a needle’, pl. **ушкí, ушкóв**); **я́блоко** ‘apple’, pl. **я́блоки, я́блок**.

(4) Some nouns in **-о** have plural **-ья**: **звенó** ‘link’.

<i>Plural</i>	<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
	звѣн-ья	звѣн-ьев	звѣн-ьям	звѣн-ьями	о звѣн-ьях

The following nouns behave similarly:

(i) With initial stress in the plural: **крыло́** ‘wing’, pl. **кры́лья, кры́льев**; **перó** ‘feather’; **ши́ло** ‘awl’.

(ii) With medial stress in the plural: **де́рево** ‘tree’, pl. **дерѣвья, дерѣвьев**; **колѣно́** ‘joint in a pipe’ (cf. **колѣно́** ‘knee’, see (3) above and note that in the meaning ‘bend in a river’, ‘generation’ (in a genealogical table), ‘part of a dance or song’, **колѣно́** has the plural **колѣна, колѣн**).

(iii) **Дно́** ‘bottom’ (of a barrel), pl. **до́нья, до́ньев**.

59 First declension: nouns in **-е, -ье, -ѐ, -ѣ**

(1) Declension of **мо́ре** ‘sea’ (likewise **по́ле** ‘field’):

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	мо́р-е	мо́р-я́
<i>Acc.</i>	мо́р-е	мо́р-я́
<i>Gen.</i>	мо́р-я	мо́р-ѣй
<i>Dat.</i>	мо́р-ю	мо́р-я́м
<i>Instr.</i>	мо́р-ем	мо́р-я́ми
<i>Prep.</i>	о мо́р-е	о мо́р-я́х

Note

- (a) Nouns in **-це, -ще** replace **я** by **а**: thus блюдце ‘saucer’, gen. sing./ nom. and acc. pl. **блюдца**. Similarly кладбище ‘cemetery’ etc.
- (b) Nouns in **-ье** (e.g. бельё ‘linen’) have instrumental singular **-ьем** and prepositional singular **-ё**.
- (c) Masculine augmentatives in **-ище** have nominative plural **-и**: домище ‘large house’, pl. **домищи, домйщ** (see 109 (2)).

(2) Nouns in **-е/-ье** and **-ё/-ье** take a variety of endings in the genitive plural:

- (i) **-ев**: болотце ‘little swamp’, **болотцев**. Likewise **оконце** ‘small window’.

Note

Some nouns in **-це** have alternative genitive plurals in **-ев** and zero ending: корытце ‘small trough’ (gen. pl. **корытцев/корытец**). Likewise одеяльце ‘small blanket’, щупальце ‘tentacle’.

- (ii) **-ей**: море ‘sea’, gen. pl. **морей** (likewise поле ‘field’); ружьё ‘gun’, gen. pl. **ружей**.

(iii) **-ий**: побережье ‘coast’, gen. pl. **побережий**. Likewise варенье ‘jam’, копьё ‘spear’ (gen. pl. **копий**), ущельё ‘ravine’.

(iv) **-ьев**: верховье ‘upper reaches’, gen. pl. **верховьев**. Likewise низовье ‘lower reaches’, платье ‘dress’, подмастерье (m.) ‘apprentice’, устье ‘river mouth’.

Note

Alternative genitive plurals **верховий** and **низовий**.

(v) **Zero ending**: блюдце ‘saucer’, gen. pl. **блюдц**. Likewise зёркальце ‘small mirror’, полотенце ‘towel’, сердце ‘heart’, gen. pl. **сердец**, as well as nouns in **-ище/-бище** (кладбище ‘cemetery’, gen. pl. **кладбищ**).

Note

Деревце/деревцо ‘small tree’ has genitive plural **деревцов** or **деревец**; **остриё** ‘point’, gen. pl. **остриёв**.

60 Stress patterns in the plural of neuter nouns

Stress in the plural of many neuter nouns moves as follows:

- (1) From the ending on to the stem (**е** changes to **ё**): thus, **окно́** ‘window’.

<i>Plural</i>	<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
	о́кна	о́кон	о́кнам	о́кнами	о́б о́кнах

Similarly ведро́ ‘bucket’, pl. **ве́дра, ве́дер**; весло́ ‘oar’, pl. **ве́сла, ве́сел**; вино́ ‘wine’, pl. **ви́на, вин**; гнездо́ ‘nest’, pl. **гне́зда, гне́зд**; зерно́ ‘grain’, pl. **зе́рна, зе́рен**; колесо́ ‘wheel’, pl. **колёса, колёс**; кольцо́ ‘ring’, pl. **ко́льца, колёц**; копьё́ ‘spear’, pl. **ко́пья, ко́пий**; крыльцо́ ‘porch’, pl. **кры́льца, крылёц**; лицо́ ‘face’, pl. **ли́ца, лиц**; письмо́ ‘letter’, pl. **пи́сьма, пи́сем**; пятно́ ‘stain’, pl. **пя́тна, пя́тен**; ружьё́ ‘gun’, pl. **ру́жья, ру́жей**; стекло́ ‘pane’, pl. **сте́кла, сте́кол**; число́ ‘number’, pl. **чи́сла, чи́сел**; яйцо́ ‘egg’, pl. **яй́ца, яйц**.

(2) From the stem on to the ending: де́ло ‘matter’.

<i>Plural</i>	<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
	делá	дел	делáм	делáми	о делáх

Similarly зе́ркало ‘mirror’, pl. **зеркала́**; ме́сто ‘place’, pl. **местá**; мо́ре ‘sea’, pl. **моря́, морей́**; по́ле ‘field’, pl. **поля́, полей́**; пра́во ‘right’, pl. **права́**; се́рдце ‘heart’, pl. **сердца́, серде́ц**; сло́во ‘word’, pl. **слова́**; ста́до ‘herd’, pl. **стада́**; те́ло ‘body’, pl. **телá**.

61 Second declension: nouns in *-а/-я*

(1) Most second-declension nouns are feminine; some are masculine, e.g. де́душка ‘grandfather’, дядя́ ‘uncle’; others are of common gender, e.g. пья́ница ‘drunkard’, разъя́ня ‘gawper’ (see 35).

(2) Declension of **ка́рта** ‘map’, **же́нщина** ‘woman’:

	<i>Singular</i>		<i>Plural</i>	
<i>Nom.</i>	ка́рт-а	же́нщин-а	ка́рт-ы	же́нщин-ы
<i>Acc.</i>	ка́рт-у	же́нщин-у	ка́рт-ы	же́нщин (= gen.)
<i>Gen.</i>	ка́рт-ы	же́нщин-ы	ка́рт	же́нщин
<i>Dat.</i>	ка́рт-е	же́нщин-е	ка́рт-ам	же́нщин-ам
<i>Instr.</i>	ка́рт-о́й/-о́ю	же́нщин-о́й/-о́ю	ка́рт-ами	же́нщин-ами
<i>Prep.</i>	о ка́рт-е	о же́нщин-е	о ка́рт-ах	о же́нщин-ах

Note

- (a) **ы** is replaced by **и** after **г, к, х, ж, ч, ш** or **щ**: ви́лка ‘fork’, да́ча ‘villa’, gen. sing./nom. and acc. pl. ви́лки, да́чи (see 16 (1)).
- (b) **о** is replaced by **е** in unstressed position after **ж, ч, ш, щ** or **щ**: у́лица ‘street’, instr. sing. у́лицей; кры́ша ‘roof’, instr. sing. кры́шей (see 16 (2)).

- (c) Some nouns in **-жа, -ча, -ша** have genitive plural **-ей**: свечá ‘candle’, gen. pl. **свечéй** (but игра́ не сто́ит свеч ‘the game is not worth the candle’). Likewise бахчá ‘water melon plantation’, левшá ‘left-handed person’, ханжá ‘hypocrite’, чýкча ‘Chukchi’, юноша ‘youth’.
- (d) The genitive plural of **мечтá** ‘dream’ (and of мечтáние ‘reverie’) is **мечтáний**.
- (e) The instrumental singular in **-ою** (and **-ею**, see (3)) is the more ‘literary’ form and is commonly found in poetry.
- (3) Declension of **ды́ня** ‘melon’ and **ня́ня** ‘nurse’:

	<i>Singular</i>		<i>Plural</i>	
<i>Nom.</i>	ды́н- я	ня́н- я	ды́н- и	ня́н- и
<i>Acc.</i>	ды́н- ю	ня́н- ю	ды́н- и	ня́н ь (= gen.)
<i>Gen.</i>	ды́н- и	ня́н- и	ды́н ь	ня́н ь
<i>Dat.</i>	ды́н- е	ня́н- е	ды́н- ям	ня́н- ям
<i>Instr.</i>	ды́н- ей/-ею	ня́н- ей/-ею	ды́н- ями	ня́н- ями
<i>Prep.</i>	о ды́н- е	о ня́н- е	о ды́н- ях	о ня́н- ях

Note

- (a) End-stressed nouns have **-ей** in the instrumental singular: земл́я ‘ground’, instr. **земл́ей**; стать́я ‘article’, instr. **стать́ей**.
- (b) *Stem-stressed* nouns in **-ья** have genitive plural **-ий**: го́стья ‘female guest’, gen. pl. **го́стий**.
- (c) *End-stressed* nouns in **-ья** have genitive plural **-ей**: семья́ ‘family’, gen. pl. **семéй**; судья́ ‘judge’, gen. pl. **судéй/судéей**. Similarly до́ля ‘share’, gen. pl. **долéй**; дядя́ ‘uncle’, gen. pl. **дядéей** (nom. pl. **дядя́**, gen. pl. **дядя́в** are also found); клешня́ ‘claw’ (of crustacean), gen. pl. **кleshnéй**; ноздря́ ‘nostril’, gen. pl. **ноздréй**; при́горшня ‘handful’, gen. pl. **при́горшней/при́горшен**; просты́ня ‘sheet’, gen. pl. **просты́нь/просты́не́й**; ступня́ ‘foot’, gen. pl. **ступне́й**; тётя ‘aunt’, gen. pl. **тётей/тётъ**.
- (d) Nouns in **-ая/-ея** have genitive plural **-ай/-ей**: ста́я ‘pack’, gen. pl. **стай**; ше́я ‘neck’, gen. pl. **шей**.
- (4) Buffer vowel in the genitive plural.
- (i) **-о-** appears between a consonant (see, however, (4) (ii) (a)) and **-к-** (or **-к-** + consonant):

бе́лка ‘squirrel’ **бе́лок**

Similarly бу́лка ‘roll’, gen. pl. **бу́лок**; доскá ‘board, plank’, gen. pl. **досóк**; кúкла ‘doll’, gen. pl. **кúкол**. Note also кúхня ‘kitchen’, gen. pl. **кúхонь**.

(ii) **-e-** appears:

(a) Between **ж, ч, ш** and **-к-**: ба́бочка ‘butterfly’, gen. pl. **ба́бочек**; ко́шка ‘cat’, gen. pl. **ко́шек**; ло́жка ‘spoon’, gen. pl. **ло́жек** etc. (but кишка́ ‘intestine’, gen. pl. **кишо́к**).

(b) Between pairs of consonants which do not include **к**:

сосна́ ‘pine tree’ **со́сен**

Likewise двéрца ‘car door’, gen. pl. **двэ́рец**; десна́ ‘gum’, gen. pl. **дэ́сен**.

(c) In place of a soft sign: де́ньги (pl. only) ‘money’, gen. pl. **де́нер**; сва́дьба ‘wedding’, gen. pl. **сва́деб**; тюрма́ ‘prison’, gen. pl. **тю́рем** (but ве́дьма ‘witch’, gen. pl. **ведьм**, про́сьба ‘request’, gen. pl. **просьб**).

(d) In place of **-й-** in diphthongs followed by **-к-**: ча́йка ‘seagull’, gen. pl. **ча́ек** etc. (cf. война́ ‘war’, gen. pl. **войн**).

(e) Between two final consonants in the genitive plural of many nouns in **-я**: земла́ ‘land’, gen. pl. **земéль**; ка́пля ‘drop’, gen. pl. **ка́пель**; крoвля ‘roof’, gen. pl. **крoвель**; পে́тля ‘loop’, gen. pl. **пéтелей**; ца́пля ‘heron’, gen. pl. **ца́пель**.

Note

Most nouns in consonant + **-ня** have *no* soft sign in the genitive plural: ба́шня ‘tower’, gen. pl. **ба́шен**. Similarly ви́шня ‘cherry’, жарoвня ‘brazier’, колоко́льня ‘belfry’, пе́сня ‘song’, со́тня ‘hundred’, спáльня ‘bedroom’, чере́шня ‘cherry tree’, чита́льня ‘reading room’. Note, however, ба́рышня ‘young lady’, gen. pl. **ба́рышень**; дере́вня ‘village’, gen. pl. **дереvéнь**.

(iii) **-ё-** appears in the genitive plural of a few nouns: кочерга́ ‘poker’, gen. pl. **кочерёг**; серьга́ ‘ear-ring’, gen. pl. **серёг**; сестра́ ‘sister’, gen. pl. **сестёр**.

(iv) Some clusters, many ending in **б, в, л, м, н, п, р**, have *no* buffer vowel in the genitive plural: бо́мба ‘bomb’, gen. pl. **бомб**. Likewise бу́ква ‘letter’, волна́ ‘wave’, ви́дра ‘otter’, зе́бра ‘zebra’, игла́ ‘needle’, игра́ ‘game’, изба́ ‘peasant hut’, йскра́ ‘spark’, но́рма ‘norm’, служба́ ‘service’, ты́ква ‘pumpkin’, у́рна ‘urn’, фо́рма ‘uniform’, цифра́ ‘figure’.

62 Stress patterns in second-declension nouns

Most nouns in stressed **-á/-я́** undergo stress change in declension (nouns in *unstressed* **-а/-я** are immune from stress change).

(1) Stem stress in the plural, e.g. **война́** ‘war’.

	<i>Nom.</i>	<i>Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
<i>Singular</i>	война́	войну́	войны́	войне́	войно́й	о войне́
<i>Plural</i>	во́йны	во́йны	во́йн	во́йнам	во́йнами	о во́йнах

Similarly волна́ ‘wave’ (alternative dat., instr., prep. pl. **волна́м, волна́ми, о волна́х**), глава́ ‘chapter’, заря́ ‘dawn’ (pl. **зо́ри, зорь**), змея́ ‘snake’ (pl. **зме́и, змей**), игра́ ‘game’, красота́ ‘beauty’ (pl. **красо́ты** ‘beauty spots’), овца́ ‘sheep’ (gen. pl. **ове́ц**), река́ ‘river’ (acc. sing. **реку́/реку**), сосна́ ‘pine’, страна́ ‘country’, струна́ ‘string’ (of instrument, racket) etc.

Note

e-ě mutation: десна́ ‘gum’, pl. **де́сны, де́сен**; жена́ ‘wife’, pl. **же́ны, же́н**; звезда́ ‘star’, pl. **звёзды, звёзд**; пчела́ ‘bee’, pl. **пчёлы, пчёл**; сестра́ ‘sister’, pl. **се́стры, сестёр**.

(2) Stem stress in accusative singular and nominative/accusative plural, e.g. **рука́** ‘hand, arm’:

	<i>Nom.</i>	<i>Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
<i>Singular</i>	рука́	ру́ку	руки́	руке́	руко́й	о руке́
<i>Plural</i>	ру́ки	ру́ки	рук	рука́м	рука́ми	о рука́х

Similarly гора́ ‘mountain’, доска́ ‘board’ (gen. pl. **доско́к**), нога́ ‘foot, leg’, щека́ ‘cheek’ (acc. sing. **ще́ку/щеку́**, pl. **ще́ки, ще́к, щека́м**), борода́ ‘beard’ (acc. sing. **боро́ду**, pl. **боро́ды, боро́д, борода́м**), голова́ ‘head’, полоса́ ‘strip’ (acc. sing. **полосу́/полосу́**), сторона́ ‘side’).

(3) Stem stress in nominative/accusative plural, e.g. **губа́** ‘lip’:

	<i>Nom.</i>	<i>Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
<i>Singular</i>	губа́	губу́	губы́	губе́	губо́й	о губе́
<i>Plural</i>	гу́бы	гу́бы	губ	губа́м	губа́ми	о губа́х

Similarly волна́ ‘wave’ (see also (1) above) and железа́ ‘gland’ (pl. **же́лезы, желе́з, железа́м**).

(4) Stem stress in accusative singular and all plural forms, e.g. **вода́** ‘water’:

	<i>Nom.</i>	<i>Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
<i>Singular</i>	вода́	во́ду	води́	воде́	водо́й	о воде́
<i>Plural</i>	во́ды	во́ды	вод	во́дам	во́дами	о во́дах

Similarly *спина́* ‘back’, *стена́* ‘wall’, *цена́* ‘price’.

(5) Stem stress in nominative/inanimate accusative, dative, instrumental and prepositional plural, e.g. *семья́* ‘family’:

	<i>Nom.</i>	<i>Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
<i>Singular</i>	семья́	семью́	семьи́	семье́	семье́й	о семье́
<i>Plural</i>	се́мьи	се́мьи	семей	се́мьям	се́мьями	о се́мьях

Likewise *свинья́* ‘pig’, *скамья́* ‘bench’ (pl. **скамьи́/ска́мьи**), *судья́* ‘judge’ (gen. pl. **суде́й/суде́й**).

(6) Stem stress in accusative singular and nominative, accusative, dative, instrumental and prepositional plural, e.g. *земля́* ‘land’:

	<i>Nom.</i>	<i>Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
<i>Singular</i>	земля́	зе́млю	земли́	земле́	земле́й	о земле́
<i>Plural</i>	зе́мли	зе́мли	земель	зе́млям	зе́млями	о зе́млях

63 Third declension: soft-sign feminine nouns

(1) Declension of *тетрадь* ‘exercise book’ and *свекрoвь* ‘mother-in-law’ (husband’s mother):

	<i>Singular</i>		<i>Plural</i>	
<i>Nom.</i>	тетрадь	свекрoвь	тетрад-и	свекрoв-и
<i>Acc.</i>	тетрадь	свекрoвь	тетрад-и	свекрoв-ей (= gen.)
<i>Gen.</i>	тетрад-и	свекрoв-и	тетрад-ей	свекрoв-ей
<i>Dat.</i>	тетрад-и	свекрoв-и	тетрад-ям	свекрoв-ям
<i>Instr.</i>	тетрадь-ю	свекрoвь-ю	тетрад-ями	свекрoв-ями
<i>Prep.</i>	о тетрад-и	о свекрoв-и	о тетрад-ях	о свекрoв-ях

Note

я is replaced by **а** after **ж, ч, ш, щ**: thus *ночь* ‘night’, dat., instr., prep. pl. **ноча́м, но́чами, о но́чах**; likewise *вещь* ‘thing’, *мышь* ‘mouse’ etc.

(2) Declension of *мать* and *дочь*: *мать* ‘mother’ declines in the singular nom./acc. *мать* ‘mother’, gen./dat. **ма́тери**, instr. **ма́терью**, prep. **о ма́терн**, and in the plural nom. **ма́тери**, acc./gen. **матерéй**, dat. **матеря́м**, instr. **матеря́ми**, prep. **о матеря́х**. Similarly *дочь* ‘daughter’ (instr. pl. **дочерьми́**).

(3) The fleeting vowel **-о-**. Genitive, dative and prepositional singular and all plural forms are affected, e.g. *вошь* ‘louse’, gen., dat. sing. **вщи**, instr.

вошью, prep. **о вши**; pl. **вши**, acc./gen. **вшей**, dat. **вшам**, instr. **вшáми**, prep. **о вшах**.

Note

- (a) Ложь ‘lie’ is found only in the singular (gen./dat. **лжи**, instr. **лóжью**, prep. **о лжи**); likewise любовь ‘love’, рожь ‘rye’.
- (b) As a first name Любовь ‘Lyubov’ has gen./dat. **Любóви**, prep. **о Любóви (Орловой)**.
- (c) Церковь ‘church’ has soft endings in the singular (gen./dat. **цёркви**, instr. **цёрковью**, prep. **о цёркви**) and nominative/accusative and genitive plural (**цёркви**, **цёрквэй**), but hard endings in the other oblique cases of the plural (**цёрквám**, **цёрквáми**, **о цёрквáх**).
- (4) Stress changes in declension:

- (i) Some nouns have prepositional singular **-й** when governed by the prepositions **в** and **на**:

дверь ‘door’ **на дверй́** ‘on the door’

Likewise глубь ‘depths’, горсть ‘handful’, грязь ‘mud’ (**в грязй́** ‘covered in mud’), кровь ‘blood’ (**в кровй́** ‘covered in blood’), мель ‘shallows’ (**на мелй́** ‘aground’), печь ‘stove’, пыль ‘dust’ (**в пылй́** ‘covered in dust’), Русь ‘Rus’ (**на Русй́** ‘in Rus’), связь ‘connection’ (**в связй́ с** ‘in connection with’), сеть ‘net’, степь ‘steppe’, Тверь ‘Tver’ (**в Тверй́** ‘in Tver’), тень ‘shadow’, цепь ‘chain’.

Note

- (a) *Stem* stress is used when these nouns combine with other prepositions (**о двéри** ‘about the door’), or when **в** and **на** do *not* denote location (Ему́ отказáли **в нóвой двéри** ‘He was refused a new door’).
- (b) Глушь ‘backwoods’ and грудь ‘chest, breast’ have end stress in genitive, dative (**глушй́**, **грудй́**) and prepositional singular (**в глушй́**, **в грудй́**).
- (ii) Many nouns have end stress in plural oblique cases, e.g. **сетъ** ‘net’:

<i>Plural</i>	<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
	сéти	сетéй	сетя́м	сетя́ми	о сетя́х

Likewise вещь ‘thing’, кость ‘bone’, мышь ‘mouse’ (acc./gen. pl. **мышéй**), новость ‘piece of news’, ночь ‘night’, область ‘oblast, province’, очередь ‘queue’, печь ‘stove’, площадь ‘square’, скáтерть ‘tablecloth’, скóрость ‘speed’, смерть ‘death’, соль ‘salt’, степь ‘steppe’, тень ‘shade’, трéть ‘third’, цепь ‘chain’, часть ‘part’, чéтверть ‘quarter’.

Note

- (a) Plural власти ‘the authorities’, gen. **властѣй**, dat. **властѣям**.
 (b) Дверь ‘door’ and лошадь ‘horse’ have alternative instrumental plural **дверями/дверьми** (colloquial), **лошадьми** or **лошадьями**.

64 Declension of neuter nouns in -мя

Declension of **имя** ‘name’:

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	им- я	имен- я
<i>Gen.</i>	имен- и	имён
<i>Dat.</i>	имен- и	имен- я м
<i>Instr.</i>	имен- ем	имен- я ми
<i>Prep.</i>	об имен- и	об имен- я х

Similarly время ‘time’, знамя ‘banner’ (pl. **знамёна**, **знамён**), плёмя ‘tribe’, семя ‘seed’ (gen. pl. **семьян**), стремя ‘stirrup’ and (sing. only) бремя ‘burden’, вымя ‘udder’, пламя ‘flames’ (cf. **языки пламени** ‘flames, tongues of flame’), темя ‘temple’.

65 Declension of nouns in -ия/-ие

Declension of **станция** ‘station’, **здание** ‘building’:

	<i>Singular</i>		<i>Plural</i>	
<i>Nom.</i>	станци- я	здани- е	станци- и	здани- я
<i>Acc.</i>	станци- ю	здани- е	станци- и	здани- я
<i>Gen.</i>	станци- и	здани- я	станци й	здани й
<i>Dat.</i>	станци- и	здани- ю	станци- я м	здани- я м
<i>Instr.</i>	станци- ей/-ею	здани- ем	станци- я ми	здани- я ми
<i>Prep.</i>	о станци- и	о здани- и	о станци- я х	о здани- я х

66 The masculine noun путь

Путь ‘way’ declines as follows:

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	путь	пут- и
<i>Gen.</i>	пут- и	пут- ей

<i>Dat.</i>	пут- й	пут- ям
<i>Instr.</i>	пут- ём	пут- ями
<i>Prep.</i>	о пут- й	о пут- ях

Note

Despite feminine endings in the genitive, dative and prepositional singular, путь is qualified by masculine adjectives: **Счастливого пути!** ‘Bon voyage!’

67 The neuter noun дитя́

Дитя́ ‘child’ declines as follows:

<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	дит- я́
<i>Gen./Dat.</i>	дитя́т- и
<i>Instr.</i>	дитя́т- ей/-ею
<i>Prep.</i>	о дитя́т- и

Note

Дитя́ is now used only in some figurative expressions, e.g. **дитя́ ве́ка** ‘child of the age’, and, in some contexts, for emotional effect, e.g. Да он же ещё **дитя́!** ‘Why, he’s still just a child!’ For practical purposes it has been replaced by ребёнок ‘child’.

68 Де́ти and лю́ди

Де́ти ‘children’ (sing. ребёнок or дитя́) and **лю́ди** ‘people’ (sing. человек) decline in the same way:

<i>Nom.</i>	де́т- и	лю́д- и
<i>Acc./Gen.</i>	дет- ей	лю́д- ей
<i>Dat.</i>	де́т- ям	лю́д- ям
<i>Instr.</i>	деть- ми́	лю́дь- ми́
<i>Prep.</i>	о де́т- ях	о лю́д- ях

69 Declension of first names

First names ending in a consonant or **-й** (e.g. Ива́н, Никола́й, Ю́рий) decline like first-declension nouns (see **51**), first names in **-а** and **-я** (e.g. О́льга ‘Ol’ga’, Ната́лья ‘Natal’ia’) like second-declension nouns (see **61**).

Patronymics (e.g. Ива́нович, Ива́новна) also decline like first- and second-declension nouns respectively.

70 Declension of surnames

(1) Surnames in **-ев, -ёв, -ин, -ов, -ын** decline partly like nouns and partly like adjectives, e.g. Турге́нев ‘Turgenev’:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	Турге́нев	Турге́нев-а	Турге́нев-ы
<i>Acc.</i>	Турге́нев-а	Турге́нев-у	Турге́нев-ых
<i>Gen.</i>	Турге́нев-а	Турге́нев-ой	Турге́нев-ых
<i>Dat.</i>	Турге́нев-у	Турге́нев-ой	Турге́нев-ым
<i>Instr.</i>	Турге́нев-ым	Турге́нев-ой	Турге́нев-ыми
<i>Prep.</i>	о Турге́нев-е	о Турге́нев-ой	о Турге́нев-ых

Note

Foreign names in -ин have instrumental singular **-ом**: Ча́плин ‘Chaplin’, instr. Ча́плином; cf. Ге́рцен ‘Herzen’, instr. Ге́рценом.

(2) Surnames in **-ский, -ой** etc. decline like adjectives.

(3) Surnames in **-ко, -енко** (e.g. Громы́ко ‘Gromyko’, Шевче́нко ‘Shevchenko’) tend not to decline, though in speech they may decline like second-declension nouns in **-а** (Максиме́нко, acc. Максиме́нку, gen. Максиме́нки, dat. Максиме́нке, instr. Максиме́нкой, prep. о Максиме́нке) or (the less-preferred option) like first-declension nouns in **-о**.

(4) Surnames in **-аго, -яго** (e.g. Жива́го ‘Zhivago’), **-ово** (e.g. Дурново́ ‘Durnovo’), **-их, -ых** (e.g. Чутки́х ‘Chutkikh’) and stressed **-ко́** (Франко́ ‘Franko’) do not decline:

Ники́тин шагáл рядом с **Княжко́** (Bondarev)
‘Nikitin strode along beside Kniazhko’

(5) Masculine foreign surnames ending in a consonant (e.g. Шми́дт ‘Schmidt’) decline like nouns of the first declension, but they do *not* decline at all when they refer to a woman: Ка́тя переписывае́тся с англича́нкой **Джейн Смит** ‘Katia corresponds with the Englishwoman Jane Smith’, cf.

Э́то натолкну́ло Мелáнью **Цатиня́н** на мысль написа́ть пьесе́у
(*Sputnik*)
‘This gave Melan’ia Tsatinian the idea of writing a play’

(6) Foreign surnames ending in **-е, -и, -о, -у** and in stressed **-а́** and **-я́** do not decline: Гариба́льди ‘Garibaldi’, Ге́те ‘Goethe’, Гюго́ ‘Hugo’, Дюма́

‘Dumas’, Золя ‘Zola’, Шоу ‘Shaw’. However, foreign names in unstressed **-а** and **-я** *do* decline: картины **Гóйи** ‘paintings by Goya’, пёсны **Окуджáвы** ‘Okudzhava’s songs’. Вáйда ‘Wajda’, Куросáва ‘Kurosawa’ etc. also decline. Less-familiar Japanese names such as Танáка ‘Tanaka’ do not normally decline.

71 Declension of place names

(1) Place names ending in a consonant or **-а** (Кíев ‘Kiev’, Москвá ‘Moscow’) decline like nouns of the first and second declensions respectively. Hyphenated Russian place names decline in both parts: в Петропáвловске-Камчáтском ‘in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskii’. Place names in **-ин**, **-ов**, **-ын** have instrumental **-ом** (Пу́шкин ‘Pushkin’, Пу́шкином; Ростóв ‘Rostov’, Ростóвом), cf.:

Держáл у себя́ дóма, под **Сарáтовом**, мото́рную лóдку (Trifonov)
‘He kept a motor boat at his home near Saratov’

(2) Place names in **-ево**, **-ино**, **-ово**, **-ыно** tend *not* to decline (òколо Рёпино ‘near Repino’), especially where the names derive from a proper name (от Лёрмонтово ‘from Lermontovo’). The tendency not to decline such names was consolidated by practice in the 1941–45 War, designed to avoid ambiguity in place names such as Пу́шкин ‘Pushkin’ and Пу́шкино ‘Pushkino’, which would share declension endings. Despite instances of declension in written styles (e.g. в Пу́щине ‘in Pushchino’ (*Russia Today*)), non-declension remains the recommended norm.

(3) Non-Russian place names in **-е**, **-н**, **-о**, **-у** do not decline, e.g. Ско́пье ‘Skopje’; Чíили ‘Chile’; Брно ‘Brno’, Мéхико ‘Mexico City’; Баку́ ‘Baku’. Бангладéш ‘Bangladesh’ does not decline either: из Бангладéш ‘from Bangladesh’. Тáтры ‘the Tatrás’ declines like a plural noun (gen. Татр). Both nouns in a hyphenated compound decline where a river is involved: во Фрáнкфурте-на-Мáйне ‘in Frankfurt-am-Main’. Compare, however, под Буэ́нос-Айресом ‘near Buenos Aires’, в Алмá-Атэ ‘in Alma-Ata’ (now Алмáты), из Карл-Маркс-штадта ‘from Karl-Marx-Stadt’ (now Chemnitz).

72 Apposition in the names of publications, towns etc.

(1) Titles of books, newspapers etc. decline like nouns: в “Извёстиях” ‘in *Izvestiia*’; Он читáл «Отцóв и дете́й» ‘He has read *Fathers and*

Sons'. If, however, the genre of the work is mentioned, the title is not declined: в газете "Извѣстия" 'in the newspaper *Izvestiia*', Он читал роман «Отцы и дети» 'He has read the novel *Fathers and Sons*'.

(2) In referring to the names of Russian towns, both город 'town' and the name decline (в городе Москвѣ 'in the city of Moscow') except:

(i) When confusion may arise, e.g. in the case of towns in -ин and -ино, where only the former declines: в городе Пушкине 'in the town of Pushkin', cf. в городе Пушкино 'in the town of Pushkino'.

(ii) When a town has a plural name: в городе Великие Луки 'in the town of Velikie Luki' (if город is omitted, however, the town name is declined: в Великих Луках 'in Velikie Luki').

(iii) When the place name consists of adjective + noun: в городе Нижний Тагил 'in the town of Nizhnii Tagil'.

(3) Similar criteria apply to river names: на рекѣ Днепрѣ 'on the river Dnieper', but на рекѣ Сѣверный Донец 'on the river Severnyi Donets'. 'On the Moscow river' may be rendered as на Москвѣ-рекѣ/на рекѣ Москвѣ, cf. вниз по Волге-рекѣ/вниз по рекѣ Волге 'down the river Volga'.

(4) The names of well-known non-Russian towns decline (except for those ending in -е etc., see 71 (3)), whether they stand in apposition to город or not: в Париже 'in Paris', в городе Париже 'in the city of Paris'. Compare, however, близ города Мэнстон 'near the town of Manston' (which is unlikely to be known to Russians and is therefore left undeclined).

(5) With place names other than those of towns and rivers it is normal to decline only the generic term: у горы Казбек 'by Mount Kazbek', в деревне Белкино 'in the village of Belkino', на озере Байкал 'on Lake Baikal', рейсы между портами Одесса и Новороссийск 'trips between the ports of Odessa and Novorossiisk'.

(6) This also applies to foreign place names: над вулканом Этна 'above Mount Etna', в графстве Сассекс 'in the county of Sussex', на острове Диѳго-Гарсиа 'on the island of Diego-Garcia', из порта Гдыня 'from the port of Gdynia', в штате Алабама 'in the State of Alabama'. Where the generic term is omitted, however, the place name declines: на острове Кипр 'on the island of Cyprus', but на Кипре 'on Cyprus'. In a few cases, where the generic term and the place name are

of the same gender, both may decline: в **пусты́не Саха́ре/Саха́ра** ‘in the Sahara desert’.

73 Declension of alphabetisms

(1) Only those alphabetisms decline which are masculine and have the form of first-declension nouns ending in a consonant (see 40 (1) (i), (2), (3)):

Долг **ВА́За** бюджету действительно вели́к (*Komsomol'skaia pravda*)

‘The Volga Car Factory’s debt to the budget is truly substantial’

Риск зара́зиться **СПИ́Дом** вы́ше у наркомáнов (*Sputnik*)

‘The risk of contracting AIDS is greater in drug addicts’

(2) Other alphabetisms are not declined: **ГАИ** [гай] (Госуда́рственная автомоби́льная инспекция) ‘State Vehicle Inspectorate’ (see page 601), **ГЭС** [гэс] (гидроэлектроста́нция) ‘hydroelectric power station’, **НАТО** [на́то] ‘NATO’, **НИИ** [нии] (на́учно-иссле́довательскрний институ́т) ‘scientific research institute’, **ООН** [о́он] (Организа́ция Объеди́нных На́ций) ‘UNO’, **ОТК** [о-тэ-ка́] (отде́л техни́ческого контро́ля) ‘technical control department’, **ЦДА** [це-де-а́] (Центра́льный дом архите́ктора) ‘Central Architects’ Club’:

Мо́жно связа́ться с ближай́шим поста́мом **ГАИ́** (*Izvestiia*)

‘You can contact the nearest traffic police control point’

В **НА́СА** пока́ не реши́ли, сто́ит ли соглаша́ться с тре́бованиями законода́телей (*Komsomol'skaia pravda*)

‘NASA has not yet decided if it is worthwhile complying with the requirements of the legislators’

Note

- (a) Though **ГЭС** (power station) and **ООН** (UNO) end in a consonant they are of feminine gender and undeclined. Some new *masculine* forms such as **ВИЧ** ‘HIV’ are also at present undeclined.
- (b) **ЖЭК** [жэк] (жи́лищно-эксплуата́ционная конто́ра) ‘housing office’, now masculine, is either left undeclined or (in colloquial styles) is declined: в **на́шем ЖЭ́Ке**. Similarly, **МИД** [мид] (Министе́рство иностра́нных дел) ‘Ministry of Foreign Affairs’.

74 Declension of hyphenated noun co-ordinates

(1) The *first* element in the compound does not decline if it is:

(i) Indeclinable, a recent loan, an abbreviation or a letter of the alphabet: **альфа**-волны ‘alpha-waves’, **кафе**-закусочная ‘snackbar’, **конференц**-зал ‘conference hall’.

(ii) Descriptive and qualifies the second element: **национал**-социалисты ‘National Socialists’, **штаб**-квартира ‘headquarters’, **либерал**-демократы ‘Liberal Democrats’.

(iii) The first component in a rank or occupation: **генерал**-лейтенант ‘lieutenant-general’, **премьер**-министр ‘prime minister’.

(iv) The first component in a measurement: **киловатт**-час ‘kilowatt-hour’, **вольт**-ампер ‘volt-ampere’.

(2) The *second* element in the compound does not decline if its function is to qualify the first: словарь-**минимум** ‘minimum vocabulary’.

(3) *Both* components decline, each being a full noun in its own right: автомобиль-самосвал ‘tip-up lorry’, вагон-ресторан ‘restaurant car’, диван-кровать ‘divan bed’, женщина-милиционер ‘police-woman’, закусовая-автомат ‘vending machine’, инженер-строитель ‘construction engineer’, ракета-носитель ‘carrier-rocket’. In speech, only the *second* noun may decline in commonly used compounds: в вагоне-ресторане/вагон-ресторане ‘in the restaurant car’, на диване-кровати/диван-кровати ‘on the divan bed’.

Note

In the following, only the *second* element is declined: матч-турнир ‘match tournament’, плащ-палатка ‘groundsheet’, яхт-клуб ‘yacht-club’.

75 Agreement of ряд, большинство etc.

(1) **Ряд**:

(i) Ряд traditionally combines with a singular predicate, especially in a passive construction:

Допущен ряд ошибок
‘A number of mistakes have been made’

(ii) Ряд may combine with a plural predicate when followed by a dependent **genitive plural**, particularly when the construction involves an **animate** noun and an **active** verb:

Ряд штангистов занимали призовые места
 'A number of the weight-lifters occupied medal positions'

(2) Большинство also traditionally takes a singular predicate:

(i) In passive constructions: Большинство писем доставлено 'Most letters have been delivered'.

(ii) Where it has no post-positive dependent form: Большинство участвует в общественной жизни 'Most participate in public life'.

(iii) Where the dependent form is in the genitive singular or is the genitive plural of an **inanimate** noun:

Большинство населения пострадало от наводнения
 'Most of the population suffered as a result of the flood'

Большинство телефонов в городе безмолвствует (Tendriakov)
 'Most telephones in the town are silent'

When, however, большинство has a dependent form in the genitive plural of an **animate** noun, a **plural** predicate is possible:

Большинство учащихся хорошо подготовлены
 'Most of the pupils are well prepared'

Большинство советских граждан были уверены, что живут в самой счастливой и свободной стране (V. Voinovich)
 'The majority of Soviet citizens were sure that they lived in the happiest and freest country'

Note

Other collective nouns of this type behave in similar fashion. Compare

На площадке перед усадьбой обычно останавливается множество автобусов и автомобилей
 'A multitude of buses and cars usually stop on the area in front of the estate'

and

Множество людей поют эту песню на разных языках
 'A great many people sing this song in different languages'

Compare also

Часть писем затерялась
 'A number of the letters went missing'

Часть учащихся не явились/не явилась
 'A number of the pupils did not turn up'

76 Constructions of the type все повернули голову

(1) The singular of the object is regarded as the norm in constructions such as Все повернули **го́лову** ‘Everyone turned their head(s)’, where identical objects or parts of the body belong to or relate to each member of a group. A plural noun is recommended only when differentiation is essential: Все подняли **ру́ку** ‘Everyone raised their hand’, cf. Все подняли **ру́ки** ‘Everyone raised their arms’. Otherwise the singular is the preferred form:

Соба́ки бежа́ли, поджа́в **хвост**
 ‘The dogs were running along with their **tails** between their legs’

Все со связанными за **спиной** рука́ми (Rybakov)
 ‘All with their hands tied behind their **backs**’

Мама́ша, ба́бушка и па́па в кра́сных носка́х и с та́ким же кра́сным **лицо́м** (Granin)
 ‘Mum, Gran and Dad in red socks and with similarly red **faces**’

(2) However, there are signs of the alternative use of the *plural* in modern Russian:

Мужики́ слу́шали его́, одобри́тельно кива́я **голова́ми** (Dovlatov)
 ‘The peasants listened to him, nodding their heads in approval’

Они́ стоя́ли с раскры́тыми **рта́ми** (Kunin)
 ‘They stood with their mouths wide open’

Мы пожа́ли друѓ другу́ **ру́ки** (Rybakov)
 ‘We shook hands’

Хло́пали друѓ друга́ по **спина́м** (Aksenov)
 ‘They were slapping each other on the back’

Соба́ки с поджа́тыми **хвоста́ми** лез́ли в подворо́тни (Rasputin)
 ‘Dogs were slinking into the gateways with their tails between their legs’

Вскри́кивали, маха́ли **ша́пками** (Trifonov)
 ‘They were screaming, waving their caps’

(3) The singular is preferred for words denoting uniform:

В сре́днем ка́тере стоя́ли четы́ре челове́ка в служеб́ной полице́йской и тамо́женной **унифо́рме** (Kunin)
 ‘In the central launch stood four men in regulation police and customs officer uniforms’

(4) A similar alternative use of singular and plural is observed in the case of the noun **жизнь** ‘life’ (though the singular is more common in Russian, and the plural is used *far* more sparingly than in English). Compare

Я был капитаном «Кальмáра» и отвечáл за их **жизнь** (Gagarin)
‘I was the captain of the “Kal’mar” and was responsible for their lives’

and

Лю́ба, Воло́дя и их тоváрищи опери́ровали в полевы́х го́спиталях,
мно́гим сохрани́ли **жизни** (Rybakov)
‘Liuba, Volodia and their comrades operated in the field hospitals and saved many people’s lives’

Note

With numerals above four, only the genitive plural is possible (see **195**):

Боле́знь, кото́рая уже́ унесла́ почти́ 15 ты́сяч **жизней** (*Sputnik*)
‘A disease which has already claimed almost 15,000 lives’

Case Usage

See **401–453** for prepositional usage.

77 The nominative

The nominative is used as follows.

(1) It denotes the subject of an action or state:

Мой брат чита́ет кни́гу
‘My brother is reading a book’

На́ши де́ти дово́льны подарками
‘Our children are pleased with the presents’

(2) It may be introduced

(i) by **это** ‘this is, these are’:

Э́то **мо́я жена́** ‘This is my wife’
Э́то **мо́и де́ти** ‘These are my children’

(ii) by **вот** ‘here is, here are, there is, there are’:

Вот **мой дом** ‘There is my house’
Вот **кни́ги** ‘Here are the books’

(3) It is used in possessive constructions:

У меня [есть] **кни́га** ‘I have a book’
У него́ был **брат** ‘He had a brother’

(4) It is used in comparative constructions after **чем**:

Я ста́рше, чем **моё́ сестра́**
‘I am older than my sister’

(5) It is used in generalizing constructions after **как**:

в та́ких ста́нах, как **Ниге́рия**
‘in countries such as Nigeria’

Note

The meaning of the above example is ‘in countries such as Nigeria **is**’. Ниге́рия is therefore *not* in apposition to ста́нах. Compare:

Наш заво́д специа́лизи́руется по произво́дству та́ких изде́лий, как **ши́ны и коле́са**
‘Our factory specializes in the manufacture of products such as tyres and wheels’

(6) It is used in definitions:

Москва́ — **столи́ца** Росси́и ‘Moscow is the capital of Russia’

(7) It is used in apposition to various generic terms (see 72):

Я чита́ю рома́н «**А́нна Каре́нина**»
‘I am reading the novel *Anna Karenina*’

78 The vocative

Vocative meanings are expressed by the nominative: **Ива́н Фе́дорович!** ‘Ivan Fedorovich!’ Relics of the former vocative case survive only in certain ecclesiastical terms, now used as exclamations: **Бо́же мой!** ‘My God!’, **Го́споди!** ‘Good Lord!’ Some truncated familiar forms are used as vocatives in colloquial Russian: **мам!** ‘Mum!’, **Нин!** ‘Nina!’, **Вань!** ‘Vania!’, **Коль!** ‘Kolia!’, **Петь!** ‘Pete!’ (also **дядь!** ‘Uncle!’ etc.).

79 The accusative

The accusative case is used as follows.

(1) It denotes the object of a transitive verb:

Он любит Мáшу	‘He loves Masha’
Она́ учится водить мáшину	‘She is learning to drive a car’

Note

In colloquial Russian the verb may sometimes be ‘understood’: Будьте добры́, попросите к телефóну Зо́ю (‘Can I speak to Zoia, please’).

(2) It is used in certain impersonal constructions:

Де́вочку рвёт	‘The girl feels sick’
Дом зажгло́ мо́лнией	‘The house was struck by lightning’
Мне жаль (жа́лко) сестру́	‘I feel sorry for my sister’ (for жаль + genitive, see 80 (8))
Мне бо́льно ру́ку (colloquial)	‘My hand is sore’

For other impersonal constructions with the accusative, see **295** (1).

(3) It denotes:

(i) Duration in time:

Всю зы́му бы́ло хо́лодно	‘It was cold all winter’
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(ii) Duration in space:

Всю до́рогу они́ шли мо́лча	‘They walked in silence all the way’
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(iii) Repetition:

Он э́то говори́л ты́сячу раз	‘He has said that a thousand times’
Он боле́т ка́ждую весну́	‘He is ill every spring’

(iv) Cost, weight, measure etc.:

Кни́га сто́ит до́ллар	‘The book costs a dollar’
Уго́ль ве́сит то́нну	‘The coal weighs a ton’

Note

- (a) For the use of the accusative after negated transitive verbs, see **87** (4).
 (b) Some verbs which have traditionally governed the genitive may take the *accusative* of animate nouns in colloquial Russian: Он слýшается

сестру́ ‘He obeys his sister’, **Де́ти боя́лись ма́ть** ‘The children were afraid of their mother’, **Дожида́лись А́нну** ‘They were waiting for Anna’. See also **88** (1) (ii) (a) and (2) (i).

80 The genitive: possession and relationship

The genitive case is used to denote the following:

(1) Possession:

дом **бра́та** ‘my brother’s house’

(2) Relationships:

член **па́ртии** ‘a member of the party’

(3) The whole in relation to the part:

кры́ша **до́ма** ‘the roof of the house’

(4) The agent of an action or process:

высту́плéние **а́ртиста** ‘the artiste’s performance’

(5) The object of an action or process:

убо́рка **урожа́я** ‘the gathering in of the harvest’

(6) Descriptive attributes:

час **обе́да** ‘lunch time’

бума́га **пе́рвого со́рта** ‘first-grade paper’

(7) The second item in a comparison:

Он мо́ложе **бра́та** ‘He is younger than his brother’ (see also **182** (1) (ii))

(8) The object of regret (constructions with **жа́ль**):

Мне жа́ль **де́нег** ‘I grudge the money’

81 The genitive: quantity

The genitive is used with:

(1) **Ма́ло** ‘few’, **мно́го** ‘much, many’, **нема́ло** ‘not a little’, **немно́го** ‘not much, many’, **неско́лько** ‘a few’, **ско́лько** ‘how much, many’, **сто́лько** ‘so much, many’:

много дѐнег	‘a lot of money’
скѐлько лет?	‘how many years?’
нѐсколько человѐк	‘several people’

(2) **Достáточно** ‘enough’, **недоставáть** ‘to be insufficient’, **скопíть** ‘to accumulate’, **хватáть/хватíть** ‘to be enough’: **Врѐмени** хватáет ‘There is enough time’, Ему недостаёт **рублѝ** ‘He is a rouble short’, достáточно **сил** ‘enough strength’:

Хватит ли им **бензíна** для ночных блужданий? (Trifonov)
 ‘Will they have enough petrol for their nocturnal escapades?’

(3) Collective nouns:

ста́до **овѐц** ‘a flock of sheep’

(4) Nouns denoting measure:

литр **молока́** ‘a litre of milk’

(5) Nouns denoting containers:

ча́шка **молока́** ‘a cup of milk’

82 The genitive with adjectives

The following adjectives (and their short forms) govern the genitive: **достѝйный** ‘worthy’, **лишѝнный** ‘lacking in’, **пѝлный** ‘full’, **чѝуждый** ‘devoid’:

корзíна, пѝлная я́блок	‘a basket full of apples’
Он достѝин нагрáды	‘He is worthy of an award’
человек, чѝуждый честолю́бия	‘a man devoid of ambition’
Он лишѝн остроу́мия	‘He is lacking in wit’

83 The partitive genitive

(1) The genitive is used to denote part of a substance or liquid (Он вѝпил **молока́** ‘He drank some milk’) or to denote a quantity of objects (Он поѝл **я́год** ‘He ate some berries’). The accusative denotes *whole* rather than part: Он вѝпил **молоко́** ‘He drank **the** milk’.

(2) The partitive genitive appears only as the *object* of a verb, never as the subject, cf. Она́ налила́ гостѝям **винá** ‘She poured her guests some wine’ and На столѝ есть **вино́** ‘There is some wine on the table’.

(3) Except for constructions with verbs such as **хотéть/захотéть** ‘to want’ and **просíть/попросíть** ‘to request’, where either aspect may be used (Хочу **воды́** ‘I want some water’, Он про́сит **мёда** ‘He asks for some honey’), most partitive constructions involve *perfective* verbs only (Она́ принесла́ **дров** ‘She brought some firewood’, Он достáл **дéнег** ‘He acquired some money’, Он отмéрил **сатíна** ‘He measured out some satin’). With many imperfectives the partitive genitive is never used: Он вь́пил **воды́** ‘He drank some water’ but Он пил **воду́** ‘He was drinking some water’; Он съел **хлéба** ‘He ate some bread’ but Он ел **хлеб** ‘He was eating some bread’.

(4) Some perfectives with the quantitative prefix **на-** also take the partitive genitive: наéсться **я́год** ‘to eat one’s fill of berries’, закупíть **книг** ‘to buy some books’, нарвáть **цвётóв** ‘to pick some flowers’, нарубíть **дров** ‘to chop some wood’.

(5) Containers and quantitative words also appear in partitive constructions: лóжка **мёда** ‘a spoonful of honey’.

(6) Examples of partitive genitives:

Грíша привёз по её просьбе **овощéй** (Trifonov)
‘Grisha brought some vegetables at her request’

Налила́ ребя́там **молока́** (Rasputin)
‘She poured the kids some milk’

Дéнег на доро́гу вь́шлю (Shukshin)
‘I’ll send some money for the journey’

Я тебе́ дам **успокоительных ка́пель** (Rybakov)
‘I’ll give you some tranquilizers’

Note

The following are examples of the parallel availability, after verbs, of a relatively new phenomenon, a partitive *accusative*:

Хóчешь, я тебе́ **чай** принесу́ (Marinina)
‘Would you like me to bring you some tea?’

“Могу́ ли я воспóльзоваться ва́шим причáлом и купíть **прéсную воду́**?” (Kunin)
“‘May I use your berth and buy some fresh water?’”

Капитáн сел у окнá, заказáл **вино́** и шни́цель (Dovlatov)
‘The captain sat down by the window, ordered some wine and a schnitzel’

84 The partitive genitive in -у/-ю

(1) Some masculine nouns, mainly those which denote substances, have genitives in **-а/-я** and in **-у/-ю**, e.g. *сáхар* ‘sugar’, **сáхара/сáхару**; *ча́й* ‘tea’, **ча́я/ча́ю**. See 53.

(2) Other nouns with two genitives include *бензи́н* ‘petrol’, *виногра́д* ‘grapes’, *горо́х* ‘peas’, *кероси́н* ‘paraffin’, *кипято́к* ‘boiling water’, *ко́ньяк* ‘brandy’, *лу́к* ‘onions’, *ме́д* ‘honey’, *ме́л* ‘chalk’, *песчо́к* ‘sand’, *су́п* ‘soup’, *сыр* ‘cheese’, *таба́к* ‘tobacco’, *тво́рог* ‘cottage cheese’, *ше́лк* ‘silk’.

(3) Genitive **-у/-ю** appears only in partitive constructions: *нали́ть ча́ю* ‘to pour some tea’, *тарéлка су́пу* ‘a plate of soup’:

Бабушка послала Вовку пощипать **лу́ку** (Belov)
‘Grandma sent Vovka to pick some onions’

У́тром она́ взяла́ у хозя́ев **кипятку́** (Rybakov)
‘In the morning she fetched some boiling water from the proprietors’

Доста́л буты́лку **ко́ньяку́**
‘He got out a bottle of brandy’

(4) If quantity is *not* implied, **-а/-я** are used: *за́пах и цве́т таба́ка* ‘the smell and colour of tobacco’, *произво́дство сы́ра* ‘the production of cheese’, *це́на ча́я* ‘the price of tea’.

(5) Note that **-а/-я** are also used if the noun denoting the substance or liquid is qualified by an adjective: *стака́н крéпкого ча́я* ‘a glass of strong tea’.

(6) The use of the partitive genitive in **-у/-ю** is decreasing, and **-а/-я** are now possible in all meanings and styles (*ча́шка ча́ю/ча́я* ‘a cup of tea’), with the commonest nouns (e.g. *сáхар* ‘sugar’, *ча́й* ‘tea’) most likely to be found with a genitive in **-у/-ю**. However, even with such nouns the partitive in **-а/-я** is usually acceptable:

Стою́ в о́череди в ка́ссу и прики́дываю: килогра́мм **сáхара**, па́чка **ча́я** . . . (*Nedelia*)
‘I stand in the queue to the cash-desk and calculate: a kilogram of sugar, a packet of tea . . .’

(7) Genitive **-у/-ю** is most consistently found in end-stressed diminutives: *свари́ть ко́фейку́* (from *кофе́к*) ‘to boil some coffee’, *Хóчешь ча́йку́?* (from *чаё́к*) ‘Would you like some tea?’ (others include *ко́ньячку́* from *ко́ньяк/ко́ньячо́к* ‘brandy’, *лу́чку́* from *лу́к/лу́чо́к* ‘onions’, *сырку́* from *сыр/сыро́к* ‘cheese’, *табачку́* from *таба́к/табачо́к* ‘tobacco’).

(8) Partitive constructions involving perfective verbs and genitives in **-у/-ю** are also very common: **добавить сахара** ‘to add some sugar’, **заварить чаю** ‘to make some tea’, **поесть супу** ‘to eat some soup’, **положить чесноку** ‘to put in some garlic’.

(9) **-у/-ю** are also found with **нет**, with indefinite numerals and with measures and containers: **килограмм винограду** ‘a kilo of grapes’, **нет коньяку** ‘there is no brandy’, **много народу** ‘many people’, **пачка сахара** ‘a packet of sugar’, **кусок сыру** ‘a piece of cheese’; **-а/-я** are also possible in such cases:

Осталось лишь полпачки **чая** (Povoliaev)
‘Only half a packet of tea remained’

Only occasionally is the partitive governed by a frequentative *imperfective* verb:

Иногда мать набивала **творог** в баночку (Rasputin)
‘Now and again mother would cram some cottage cheese into a little jar’

85 Genitive in -у in set phrases

(1) Genitives in **-у** appear in certain idioms and set phrases:

до зарезу ну́жно	‘very necessary’
ни разу	‘not once’
ни слуху ни духу	‘neither sight nor sound’
ни шагу наза́д	‘not a step back’
с боку на́ бок	‘from side to side’
с глазу на́ глаз	‘tête-à-tête’
танцевать до упаду	‘to dance till one drops’
пускать из виду	‘to lose sight of’

(2) The genitive in **-а/-я** has had very little impact on such phrases, except for **без промаха/-а** ‘unerringly’ and **без разбору/-а** ‘indiscriminately’.

(3) In some causal expressions **от** combines with **-а/-я** (от **голода** ‘from hunger’, от **испуга** ‘from fright’, от **смеха** ‘with laughter’) and **с** with **-у/-ю** (умереть **с голоду** ‘to starve to death’, **крикнуть с испугу** ‘to scream with fright’, **приснуть со смеху** ‘to burst out laughing’, умереть со **страху** ‘to die of fright’). Some forms in **-у/-ю** appear in spatial

expressions: *уйти́ из до́му* ‘to leave home’ (cf. *уйти́ из до́ма* ‘to leave the house’), *выйти́ из ле́су* ‘to emerge from the forest’.

86 Genitive and negative

(1) **Нет** ‘there is not’, **не́ было́** ‘there was not’ and **не бу́дет** ‘there will not be’ combine with the genitive to denote **non-existence** or **non-availability**:

Нет де́нег	‘There is no money’
Не́ было́ вре́мени	‘There was no time’
Не бу́дет войны́	‘There will be no war’

Note

- (a) Compare frequentative usage in *Всё ча́ще Ли́ли не быва́ет до́ма* (Kazakov) ‘Lilia is out more and more often’.
- (b) Compare constructions which involve identification, where the **nominative** is used: *Э́то не мо́я же́на* ‘That is not my wife’, *Э́то не́ были мо́и де́ти* ‘Those were not my children’.
- (c) Constructions of the type: **Роди́тели** (nominative) не до́ма ‘The parents are out’ (for the normal **Роди́телей** нет до́ма) may be used when actual whereabouts are indicated: *Они́ не до́ма, а в го́стях* ‘They are not in, but out visiting’.
- (2) The genitive is also used in possessive phrases: *У ме́ня нет ко́мпью́тера* ‘I have no computer’, *У нас не́ было́ дете́й* ‘We had no children’, *У вас не бу́дет пробле́м* ‘You will not have any problems’.
- (3) Other negated verbs denoting non-availability, non-occurrence or non-appearance may be used in this construction: **Ле́звий** не име́ется ‘There are no blades in stock’, **Де́нег** не оста́лось ‘There was no money left’, **Таки́х люде́й** не существу́ет ‘Such people do not exist’, **Встре́чных маши́н** не попада́лось ‘No oncoming vehicles were encountered’.
- (4) In some negative constructions a nominative indicates the absence of *specific* objects, a genitive the absence of *all* objects of a particular type, cf. **Докуме́нтов** не сохра́нилось ‘No documents were preserved’ (at all) and **Докуме́нты**, о кото́рых шла речь, не сохра́нились ‘The documents in question were not preserved’.
- (5) The genitive construction is also used after **не ви́дно** ‘cannot be seen’, **не заме́тно** ‘cannot be discerned’, **не слы́шно** ‘cannot be heard’:

Из-за дыма **дверей** не видно (Abramov)
'You can't see the doors for the smoke'

Ни **собаки**, ни **голосов** не было слышно (Trifonov)
'Neither the dog nor people's voices could be heard'

(6) It is also used with **не надо**, **не нужно** etc.:

Не надо ни **дров**, ни **угля** (*Rabotnitsa*)
'Neither firewood nor coal is necessary'

Note

Compare the use of the *genitive* case in the general statement: **Помощи** не нужно 'No help is required' and the *nominative* in the specific **Ваша помощь** не нужна 'Your help is not required'.

(7) The *genitive* case is used in negative passive constructions: **Книг** не выпускается 'No books are issued', **Подтверждения** не получено 'No confirmation has been received'.

(8) It is also used in time expressions:

И **пять минут** не прошло (Orlov)
'Not five minutes had passed'

Мы поженились, когда мне ещё не исполнилось **восемнадцать** (*Russia Today*)
'We got married when I had not yet **turned 18**'

87 The genitive and accusative after negated verbs

(1) Both the *genitive* and the *accusative* can be used after a negated transitive verb:

Он не посещал **город/города** 'He did not visit the town'

(2) While in case of doubt it is advisable to use a *genitive*, there are situations where one case or the other is preferable.

(3) The **genitive** is preferred:

(i) In generalized statements:

Я не вижу **стола**
'I don't see a (i.e. *any*) table'

(ii) With compound negatives:

Он никогда и никому не говорил **неправды** (Trifonov)
‘He has never told lies to anyone’

(iii) With the emphatic negative particle **ни**:

Он не прочитал **ни одной книги**
‘He has not read a single book’

(iv) With abstract nouns: Она не скрывает **своего раздражения** ‘She does not conceal her irritation’. Many set expressions are involved: не играть **ро́ли** ‘to play no part’, не иметь **понятия** ‘to have no idea’, не иметь **пра́ва** ‘not to have the right’, не иметь **смы́сла** ‘not to have any point’, не обращать **внимáния** ‘not to pay any attention’, не придавать **значéния** ‘not to attach significance to’, не принимать **учáстия** ‘not to take part’, не производить **впечатлéния** ‘to make no impression’, не терять **вре́мени** ‘not to waste time’.

(v) With a negative gerund: не скрывáя своéй **ра́дости** ‘without concealing his joy’, не дослу́шав **спóра** до конца ‘without hearing out the argument’.

(vi) With **это**: **Этого** я не допущу́ ‘I won’t allow that’, and after negated verbs of perception: Он не знал **уро́ка** ‘He did not know the lesson’, Он не по́нял **вопрóса** ‘He did not understand the question’, Он не чу́вствовал **бóли** ‘He did not feel any pain’.

(4) The **accusative** is preferred:

(i) When a specific object or objects are involved:

Я не ви́жу **стол**
‘I do not see *the* table’

Он не получи́л **письмо́**
‘He did not receive *the* letter’ (cf. Он не получи́л **письма́** ‘He did not receive *a* letter’)

(ii) When the object denotes a person:

Он не встрéтил **мою́ сестру́**
‘He did not meet my sister’

(iii) With ‘false’ negatives such as **едва́ не/чуть не**, ‘almost’, **не могу́ не** ‘I can’t help, cannot but’:

Он чуть не пропусти́л **трамва́й**
‘He almost missed the tram’

Не могу́ не простíть его́ **поведéние**
‘I cannot but forgive his behaviour’

(iv) When the noun is qualified by an instrumental predicate:

Я не считаю **эту статью** интересной
'I do not consider this article interesting'

(v) When a part of the sentence other than the verb is negated:

Он не **вполнѣ** усвоил урок
'He has not **completely** assimilated the lesson'

Не **я** придумал новый порядок
'It was not **I** who devised the new set up'

(vi) In set phrases: **палец** о палец не ударить 'not to do a stroke of work'.

(5) If none of the above criteria apply, then **either case** is usually possible. Factors which influence choice include:

(i) Word order, the accusative being preferred when the noun precedes the verb (**Идею** она не поняла 'She did not understand *the* idea') and the genitive when it follows (Она не поняла **идеи** 'She did not understand the idea').

(ii) An accusative is often regarded as the more colloquial alternative: Я не читал **вчера́шнюю газету́** 'I have not read yesterday's newspaper'.

(iii) Nouns in **-а** and **-я** are more prone to appear in the accusative case after a negated transitive verb than are other nouns.

(iv) When an infinitive appears between the negated verb and the object, the latter usually appears in the accusative:

Он не хотел смотре́ть **эту пьесу**
'He did not want to see this play'

Я не умею писа́ть **стихи́**
'I can't write verse'

However, the genitive is also possible:

Вы же никому́ не даёте раскрыв́ть **рта** (Трифонов)
'Why, you don't give anyone a chance to get a word in edgeways'

Note

To avoid ambiguity, it is better to replace, say, Он не чита́ет **кни́ги** either by Он не чита́ет **кни́гу** 'He is not reading the book' or by Он не чита́ет **книг** 'He does not read books' (since it is otherwise not clear whether **кни́ги** is genitive singular or accusative plural).

(6) In cases of doubt it is advisable to use the *genitive* after a negated transitive verb:

Пригну́вшись, чтòбы не задеть головой **потолка́** (Zalygin)
‘Stooping, so as not to hit his head on the ceiling’

Note

Verbs which take a case other than the accusative are not affected by the negative-genitive rule: Он *помога́ет* брата́ ‘He helps his brother’, Он *не помога́ет* брата́ ‘He does not help his brother’; Он *горди́тся* своим полко́м ‘He is proud of his regiment’, Он *не горди́тся* своим полко́м ‘He is not proud of his regiment’.

88 Verbs that take the genitive

Verbs which govern the genitive case belong to four principal categories:

(1) Verbs of asking, waiting, seeking, achieving etc.:

(i) Verbs that take only the genitive. These include **добива́ться** ‘to strive for’, **достига́ть** ‘to achieve’, **жа́ждать** ‘to crave for’, **жела́ть** ‘to desire’, **заслу́живать** ‘to deserve’:

добива́ться	успе́ха	‘to strive for success’
достига́ть	свое́й це́ли	‘to achieve one’s aim’
жа́ждать	сла́вы	‘to crave for glory’
жела́ть	сча́стья	‘to desire happiness’
засла́живать	похва́лы	‘to deserve praise’

Note

(a) The perfective **заслужи́ть** ‘to earn’ takes the accusative: заслужи́ть **дове́рие** ‘to earn someone’s confidence’.

(b) **Жела́ть** ‘to wish’ is ‘understood’ in such phrases as **Счастли́вого пути́!** ‘Bon voyage!’ and **И вам то́ же!** ‘The same to you!’

(ii) Verbs that take the genitive *and* the accusative. Generally speaking, such verbs take the genitive of nouns denoting general and abstract concepts, and the accusative of nouns denoting persons and specific inanimate objects. The verbs include:

(a) **Дожида́ться** ‘to wait until’.

<i>Genitive</i>	дожида́ться побе́ды	‘to wait till victory comes’
<i>Accusative</i>	дожида́ться сестру́	‘to wait till one’s sister comes’

(b) **Ждать** 'to wait for'.

<i>Genitive</i>	Жду отвѣта	'I am awaiting an answer'
	Жду приказа	'I am awaiting an order'
	Жду решѣния	'I am awaiting a decision'

Ждѣм **писем** о самых интереснѣх клубах (*Russia Today*)
'We are expecting letters about the most interesting clubs'

Она ждала от меня **комплимента** (Avdeenko)
'She was expecting a compliment from me'

<i>Accusative</i>	Жду сегоднѣшнюю	'I am waiting for today's mail'
	почту	

Сидѣл за столѣм, занимался, ждал **жену** (Grekova)
'He sat at the table, worked, waited for his wife'

Note

Ждать **автобуса** No. 5 'to wait for the number 5 bus' (a particular bus), but Жду **автобуса** 'I am waiting for a bus' (any bus; but Жду **автобуса** is also possible, especially in spoken Russian).

(c) **Искать** 'to seek, look for'.

Genitive ('to try to achieve')

искать возможности	'to seek an opportunity'
искать помощи	'to seek assistance'

Accusative ('to try to find')

искать упавшую иглолку	'to look for a dropped needle'
искать свое мѣсто в залѣ	'to look for one's place in the hall'
искать правду	'to seek the truth'
искать дорогу	'to try to find the way'

Note

Работа is found in either case (искать **работы/работу** 'to look for work'), with the accusative (the more usual form) referring to more specific work.

(d) **Ожидать** 'to wait for, expect'.

<i>Genitive</i>	ожидать случая	'to wait for an opportunity'
	ожидать автобуса	'to wait for a bus' (cf. ждать (b) note)

Втянул голову в плечи, будто ожидая **удара** со спинѣ (Gagarin) He hunched his shoulders, as if expecting a blow from behind

избегать тёщу	‘to avoid one’s mother-in-law’
опасаться осложнений	‘to fear complications’
остерегаться заразы	‘to beware of an infection’
пугаться грома	‘to be scared of thunder’
стесняться общества	‘to shun society’
Сторониться недобрых людей	‘to shun wicked people’
стыдиться своего вида	‘to be ashamed of one’s appearance’
чуждаться дурной компании	‘to avoid bad company’

(3) Verbs of depriving etc.

лишать родительских прав	‘to deprive of parental rights’
лишаться свободы	‘to be deprived of one’s freedom’

(4) Verbs denoting conformity or non-conformity. These include держаться ‘to adhere to’, ослушиваться ‘to disobey’, придерживаться ‘to hold to’, слушаться ‘to obey’:

держаться мнения	‘to stick to one’s opinion’
ослушиваться приказа	‘to disobey an order’
придерживаться точки зрения	‘to hold to a point of view’
слушаться совета	‘to heed advice’

Note

In colloquial styles the accusative is possible with an animate object: слушаться **матери** or **мать** ‘to obey one’s mother’.

Other verbs that take the genitive include касаться ‘to touch, touch on’ and стоить ‘to be worth’:

касаться стола	‘to touch the table’
касаться вопроса	‘to touch on a question’
это стоит награды	‘that is worth an award’

89 The dative as indirect object of a verb

The dative case denotes the indirect object of a verb, i.e. the person for whom an action is performed, the recipient or beneficiary: давать деньги **кассиру** ‘to give the money to the cashier’, звонить **сестре** на работу ‘to ring one’s sister at work’, отвечать **соседу** ‘to answer a neighbour’ (cf. отвечать **на письмо** ‘to answer a letter’), писать письмо **брату** ‘to write a letter to one’s brother’, платить **другу** ‘to pay one’s friend’, пожимать

ру́ку **солда́ту** ‘to shake the soldier’s hand’, посла́ть де́ньги **сы́ну** ‘to send money to one’s son’ (note, however, use of the preposition **к** when the object sent is animate: отпра́вить дете́й **к ро́дственникам** ‘to send the children to stay with relatives’), сказа́ть **отцу́** пра́вду ‘to tell one’s father the truth’.

90 Verbs that take the dative

Verbs which take the dative denote:

(1) Conforming, rendering assistance or other service; conversely, causing a hindrance: **аккомпани́ровать** ‘to accompany’ (music), **аплоди́ровать** ‘to applaud’, **вреди́ть** ‘to harm’, **изменя́ть** ‘to betray’, **меша́ть** ‘to hinder’, **напомина́ть** ‘to remind’, **повинова́ться** ‘to obey’, **позволя́ть** ‘to allow’, **покрови́тельствова́ть** ‘to patronize’, **помога́ть** ‘to help’, **препятствова́ть** ‘to hinder’, **противоре́чить** ‘to contradict’, **служи́ть** ‘to serve’, **сове́товать** ‘to advise’, **содействова́ть** ‘to cooperate’, **способствова́ть** ‘to foster’, **угожда́ть** ‘to please’.

Note

- (a) **Запреща́ть** ‘to forbid’ and **разреша́ть** ‘to permit’ take the dative of the person (**запреща́ть/разреша́ть солда́там** **кури́ть** ‘to forbid/permit the soldiers to smoke’) and the accusative of an action or process (**запреща́ть/разреша́ть обго́н** ‘to forbid/permit overtaking’).
- (b) **Учи́ть** ‘to teach’ takes the dative of the subject taught: **учи́ть дете́й му́зыке** ‘to teach the children music’. **Учи́ть** + accusative means ‘to learn’: **учи́ть ру́сский язы́к** ‘to learn Russian’. **Росси́ю** **постоя́нно учи́т** **демократи́и** (V. Putin) ‘Russia is constantly being taught democracy’.

(2) Attitude: **ве́рять** ‘to believe’, **грозы́ть** ‘to threaten’, **дове́рять(ся)** ‘to trust’, **досажда́ть** ‘to annoy’, **зави́довать** ‘to envy’, **льсти́ть** ‘to flatter’, **мсти́ть** ‘to take vengeance on’ (cf. **мсти́ть за** + accusative ‘to avenge someone’), **надоеда́ть** ‘to bore’, **подража́ть** ‘to imitate’, **поража́ться** ‘to be amazed at’, **ра́доваться** ‘to rejoice at’, **сочу́вствова́ть** ‘to sympathize with’, **удивля́ться** ‘to be surprised at’. Note also **смея́ться**, **улыба́ться** **шу́тке** ‘to laugh, smile at a joke’ (but **смея́ться над** **ке́м-нибу́дь** ‘to laugh at someone’).

(3) Other meanings: **насле́дова́ть** ‘to succeed’ (someone), **предше́ствова́ть** ‘to precede’, **принадлежа́ть** ‘to belong to’ (in the meaning of possession; cf. **принадлежа́ть к** ‘to belong to’ (a group, society etc.)), **равня́ться** ‘to equal’, **сле́дова́ть** ‘to follow’ (advice etc.).

Note

Many verbal and other nouns cognate with the above verbs also take the dative: обучение **ру́сскому языку́** ‘the teaching of Russian’, подража́ние **ска́зке** ‘imitation of a folk tale’, по́мощь **же́ртвам** землетрясе́ния ‘help for the victims of the earthquake’, служе́ние **нау́ке** ‘service to science’, соде́йствие **фло́ту** ‘co-operation with the navy’, сочу́вствие **чужо́му го́рю** ‘sympathy for others’ grief’, угро́за **ми́ру** ‘a threat to peace’.

91 Adjectives that take the dative

Adjectives (long *and* short forms) which take the dative include:

благодáрный	‘grateful to’
ве́рный	‘loyal to’
знако́мый	‘known to’
изве́стный	‘well known to’
подо́бный	‘similar to’
послу́шный	‘obedient to’
прису́щий	‘inherent in’
рад (short form only)	‘glad’ (я рад гостя́м ‘I am glad to see the guests’)
сво́йственный	‘characteristic of, inherent in’
Предусмотрíteльность сво́йственна э́тому челове́ку	
Prudence is inherent in this person	

92 Impersonal constructions using the dative

(1) Most impersonal constructions involving the dative case denote a state of mind, feeling, inclination or attitude:

Ученику́ вёсело, гру́стно, ду́шно, жа́рко, лу́чше, ску́чно, сты́дно, тепло́, удо́бно, хо́лодно, ху́же
‘The pupil feels cheerful, sad, stifled, hot, better, bored, ashamed, warm, comfortable, cold, worse’

(2) Some constructions involve verbs: **Бра́ту** ка́жется, что тепло́ ‘My brother thinks it is warm’, **Бра́ту** надо́ело рабо́тать ‘My brother is bored with working’, **Бра́ту** нездо́ровича ‘My brother feels off colour’, **Бра́ту** нра́вится танцева́ть ‘My brother likes dancing’, **Бра́ту** приходи́тся мно́го рабо́тать ‘My brother is obliged to work hard’, **Бра́ту** уда́лось

достать деньги ‘My brother managed to get the money’, **Брату** хотелось уйти ‘My brother felt like leaving’.

(3) Note also:

(i) Constructions with reflexive verbs that denote disinclination:

Сестре не поётся, не работается, не сидится
‘My sister does not feel like singing, working, sitting still’

(ii) The impersonal predicate **жаль** also combines with the dative: **Отцу** жаль ‘My father feels sorry’ (for жаль with accusative see 79 (2) and for жаль with genitive see 80 (8)).

(4) The dative is also used in denoting age: **Сыну** (исполнилось) 20 лет ‘My son is (has turned) 20’.

93 The dative as the logical subject of an infinitive

(1) A noun or pronoun in the dative case may function as the logical subject of an infinitive: **Что детям** делать? ‘What are the children to do?’, **Не вам** решать ‘It is not for you to decide’, **Брату** нeкуда идти ‘My brother has nowhere to go’.

(2) The dative can also be used to express a peremptory command: **Всем сотрудникам** собраться в час! ‘All employees meet at one!’

94 The instrumental of function

A noun is placed in the instrumental case to denote that the object it represents is being used to perform a function: мыться **горячей водой** ‘to wash with hot water’, писать **карандашом** ‘to write with a pencil’, резать **ножом** ‘to cut with a knife’, рубить **топором** ‘to chop with an axe’.

Note

- (a) Analogous use of the instrumental in бросать **камями** ‘to throw stones’ (at a target), говорить **громким голосом** ‘to speak in a loud voice’, дышать **кислородом** ‘to breathe oxygen’, платить **английскими деньгами** ‘to pay in English money’.
- (b) Use of the instrumental of function (e.g. резать **ножом** ‘to cut with a knife’) must be distinguished from с + instrumental (‘with’ in the meaning ‘holding’): он сидел **с ножом** в руке ‘he sat with a knife in his hand’.

- (c) Кормить **рыбой** ‘to feed on (= with) fish’, награждать **премией** ‘to reward with a bonus’, наполнять **водой** ‘to fill with water’, снабжать **нефтью** ‘to supply with oil’ also belong in the category ‘instrumental of function’.

95 The instrumental in constructions denoting movements of the body

The instrumental is used in constructions denoting movements of the body:

(1) Двигать **рукой** ‘to move one’s arm’ (cf. двигать **стол** ‘to move a table’), качать/кивать **головой** ‘to shake/nod one’s head’, махать **рукой** ‘to wave one’s hand’, мигать **глазами** ‘to blink one’s eyes’, пожимать **плечами** ‘to shrug one’s shoulders’, топтать **ногами** ‘to stamp one’s feet’, щёлкать **языком** ‘to click one’s tongue’.

(2) The construction also applies to objects held with the hand (размахивать **палкой** ‘to brandish a stick’, хлопать **дверью** ‘to slam a door’, щёлкать **бичом** ‘to crack a whip’) and to the figurative expressions **И бровью** не повёл ‘He did not turn a hair’, шевелить **мозгами** ‘to use one’s brains’.

96 The instrumental in passive constructions

The instrumental is used to denote the agent in a passive construction:

Дом стрóится рабочими	‘The house is being built by workers’
Горá покрýта снóгом	‘The mountain is covered with snow’
Вéтром сорвáло крышу	‘The roof was torn off by the wind’

See also **359** and **360** (2) for the use of the instrumental with passive participles.

97 The instrumental in adverbial expressions

The instrumental is used to denote movement through time or space, or the manner in which an action is performed:

(1) Space: The type of route covered in a journey: идти **бэрегом** ‘to walk along the shore’, éхатъ **лэсом** ‘to ride through the forest’, **мóрем** ‘by sea’, éхатъ **пóлем** ‘to ride through the fields’, **сухíм путём** ‘overland’. Note also идти **своёй дорóгой** ‘to go one’s own way’ (fig.).

(2) Time:

(i) Parts of the day: **ýтром, днём, вéчером, нóчью** ‘in the morning, daytime, evening, at night’ (**глубóкой нóчью** ‘at dead of night’, **однажды ýтром** ‘one morning’, **вечерáми** ‘in the evenings’, **ночáми** ‘(at) nights’).

Note

Днём may also mean ‘in the afternoon’ (also rendered as во вторóй половíне дня).

(ii) Seasons of the year: **веснóй, лéтом, óсенью, зимóй** ‘in the spring, summer, autumn, winter’ (однажды **зимóй** ‘one winter’, **пóздней óсенью** ‘in late autumn’ etc.).

(iii) Others: **цёлыми часáми/днáми** ‘for hours/days on end’.

(3) The **manner** in which or the **means** by which an action is performed, in terms of:

(i) Position: вверх **дном** ‘upside down’, вниз **головóй** ‘head first’, стоять **спинóй** к огню ‘to stand with one’s back to the fire’.

(ii) Movement: **бегóm** ‘at a run’, **шагом** ‘at walking pace’.

(iii) Group activity: уéхатъ **семьёй** ‘to leave in a family group’, пéние **хóром** ‘singing in chorus’.

(iv) Utterance: **другíми словáми** ‘in other words’, петь **бáсом** ‘to sing bass’, **шёпотом** ‘in a whisper’.

(v) Means of transport: éхатъ **пóездом**, летéть **самолётóм** ‘to go by train, by air’.

(vi) Degree of effort: **любóй ценóй** ‘at any cost’.

(vii) Quantity: Домá не стрóбили **ты́сячами**, как сейчáс (Rybakov) ‘Houses were not built in thousands as they are now’.

(viii) Form, manner: **какíм óбразом?** ‘in what way?’, Снег пáдает на зёмлю **большíми хлопьями** (Rasputin) ‘The snow falls to earth in large flakes’.

98 Use of the instrumental to denote similarity

The instrumental is also used to express similarity: *выть вóлком* ‘to howl like a wolf’, *умереть герóем* ‘to die like a hero’, *шипеть змеёй* ‘to hiss like a snake’, *Снег лежит коврóм* ‘The snow lies like a carpet’, *лететь стрелóй* ‘to fly like an arrow’, *усы щётóчкой* ‘toothbrush moustache’:

За кустáрником тёмной стéной выростáло чернолесье (Abramov)
‘Deciduous forest grew up beyond the bushes like a dark wall’

99 Verbs that take the instrumental

Verbs that take the instrumental case denote:

(1) **Use or control:** *владеть* ‘to own, have a command of’ (a language), *дирижировать* ‘to conduct’ (an orchestra), *заведовать* ‘to be in charge of’, *злоупотреблять* ‘to abuse, misuse’, *командовать* ‘to command’, *обладать* ‘to possess’, *пользоваться* ‘to use’, *править* ‘to rule’, *располагать* ‘to have at one’s disposal’, *распоряжаться* ‘to manage’, *руководить* ‘to run’, *управлять* ‘to control’.

(2) **Attitude:** *восхищаться* ‘to be delighted with’, *гордиться* ‘to be proud of’, *грозить* ‘to threaten with’, *довольствоваться* ‘to be satisfied with’, *дорожить* ‘to value’, *интересоваться* ‘to be interested in’, *любоваться* ‘to admire’ (also на + acc.), *наслаждаться* ‘to delight in’, *обходиться* ‘to make do with’, *пренебрегать* ‘to disregard’, *увлекаться* ‘to be obsessed with’, *хвастаться* ‘to boast of’, *шеголять* ‘to flaunt’.

(3) **Reciprocal action:** *делиться* ‘to share’, *обмениваться* ‘to exchange’.

(4) **Other meanings:** *болеть* ‘to be sick’, *жертвовать* ‘to sacrifice’ (cf. *жертвовать* + acc. ‘to donate’), *заниматься* ‘to busy oneself with’, *изобиловать* ‘to abound in’, *ограничиваться* ‘to limit oneself to’, *отличаться* ‘to be distinguished by’, *пахнуть* ‘to smell of’, *прославляться* ‘to be renowned for’, *рисковать* ‘to risk’, *страдать* ‘to suffer from’ (chronically) (cf. *страдать от* ‘to suffer from’ (a temporary ailment)), *торговать* ‘to trade in’.

Note

Participial, verbal and other nouns cognate with many of the above also take the instrumental: *владение дóмом* ‘ownership of a house’ (but *владéлец дóма* ‘house owner’), *злоупотребление вла́стью* ‘abuse of

power', командование **армией** 'command of the army', командующий **армией** 'army commander' (but командир **дивизии** 'divisional commander'), руководство **партией** 'leadership of the party' (as an action or process, cf. руководство **партии** 'the leadership (i.e. 'the leaders') of the party', руководитель **группы** 'leader of the group'), торговля **наркóтиками** 'drugs trade', увлечение **матемáтикой** 'obsession with mathematics'.

100 Adjectives that take the instrumental

These include long *and* (where available) short forms: беременная (**трéтым ребёнком**) 'pregnant' (with her third child), богáтый 'rich in', больнóй 'sick with', гóрдый 'proud of', дово́льный 'pleased with', извéстный 'famous for', обяза́нный 'obliged':

Своими успе́хами они́ бы́ли обяза́ны со́бственному трудолю́бию (Рyбаков)

'They owed their success to their own industriousness'

101 The instrumental of dimension

The instrumental is used to express dimension: гора́ **высо́той** в 1 000 мэтров 'a mountain 1,000 m high', река́ **длино́й** в сто киломе́тров 'a river 100 km long', челове́к **рóстом** в метр во́семьдесят 'a man one metre eighty tall'.

Note

- (a) The preposition **в** may be omitted, especially in technical styles.
- (b) Questions to which these are the notional answers appear in the *genitive*: **како́й высо́ты** гора́? 'How high is the mountain?', **како́й длино́й** река́? 'How long is the river?', **како́го он рóста**? 'How tall is he?'

102 The instrumental as predicate

(1) The instrumental is used as predicate to the infinitive, future tense, imperative, conditional and gerund of the verb **быть** 'to be': Я хочú **быть врачóм** 'I want to be a doctor', е́сли бы я был **врачóм** 'if I were a doctor',

Когда-нибудь вы будете **стариком** ‘One day you will be an old man’, Не будь **трусом** ‘Don’t be a coward’, Не будучи **знатоком**, не могу судить ‘Not being a connoisseur I cannot judge’.

Note

The *nominative*, not the *instrumental*, is used when no part of **быть** is present: Она врач ‘She is a doctor’.

(2) In the *past* tense:

(i) The *nominative* denotes **permanent** state, occupation, nationality etc.: По профессии он был **ботаник** ‘By profession he was a botanist’, Она была **испанка** (Granin) ‘She was a Spaniard’, Смолянов был **саратовец** (Trifonov) ‘Smolyanov was a native of Saratov’.

(ii) The *instrumental* denotes **temporary** status: Во время войны я был **офицером** ‘During the war I was an officer’ (the verb **быть** is sometimes omitted: Я потерял родителей (когда я был/будучи) **ребёнком** ‘I lost my parents as a child’).

Note

Permanent status may *also* be denoted by the *instrumental*: Она была **сестрой** Полевого (Propp), ‘She was Polevoi’s sister’, Пушкин был **величайшим русским поэтом/величайший русский поэт** ‘Pushkin was the greatest Russian poet’.

(3) Of two nouns (or noun and pronoun) linked by the verb **быть** the more specific appears in the *nominative*, the more general in the *instrumental*:

Ключом к успеху была грамотность
‘The key to success was literacy’

В нашем доме немецкий был **третьим языком** (Rybakov)
‘In our house German was the third language’

Одним из наших главных проблем был транспорт
‘One of our main problems was transport’

Note

The subject may be an *infinitive*: **Учиться** будет его целью ‘His aim will be to study’, Первым её побуждением было **помочь** дочери ‘Her first impulse was to help her daughter’.

(4) The rule described in (3) also applies to **являться** ‘to be’:

Основной формой работы в школе является урок (*Russia Today*)
‘The lesson is the basic form of work in school’

(5) An instrumental predicate also appears with verbs such as **записываться** ‘to enrol’, **работать** ‘to work’, **служить** ‘to serve’:

Записался **добровольцем**, дали ему коня (Rybakov)
‘He signed up as a volunteer, and they gave him a horse’

(6) A number of verbs which denote state, appearance or manner also take an instrumental: **выглядеть** ‘to look’, **казаться** ‘to seem’, **называться** ‘to be called’, **оказываться** ‘to turn out to be’, **оставаться** ‘to remain’, **расставаться** ‘to part’, **родиться** ‘to be born’, **состоять (членом)** ‘to be’ (a member), **становиться** ‘to become’, **считаться** ‘to be considered’, **чувствовать себя** ‘to feel’:

Ещё с войны она **вдовой** осталась (Shcherbakov)
‘She had been left a war widow’

Он кажется **опытным инженером**
‘He seems to be an experienced engineer’

В 2008-ом году **жертвами** насилия в России стали 126 тысяч детей (D. Medvedev)
‘In 2008 126,000 children became victims of violence’

(7) The instrumental may also be predicate to the object of transitive verbs which denote appointment, naming, considering: **Сестру зовут Танией** (alternatively, especially in colloquial Russian, **Сестру зовут Таня**) ‘My sister is called Tania’, **назначать Иванова председателем** ‘to appoint Ivanov chairman’, **Мак считают снотворным средством** ‘Poppy is considered to be a soporific’:

Он называет Тольятти «**экспериментальной лабораторией**» советского градостроительства (*Sputnik*)
‘He calls Togliatti “an experimental laboratory” in Soviet town planning’

Note

Тольятти ‘Togliatti’ was renamed Тольяттиград ‘Togliattigrad’ in 1991.

103 Nouns in apposition

When two or more nouns, pronouns or modifiers refer to the same object or person they appear in the same case:

Она жила в **Москве, столице** России
‘She lived in **Moscow, the capital** of Russia’

Он знал **моего отца, известного хирурга**
'He knew **my father, a famous surgeon**'

Я читаю "**Аргументы и факты**", **одну** из **самых** интересных еженедельных газет
'I am reading **Argumenty i fakty, one** of the most interesting weekly newspapers'

Diminutive and Augmentative Nouns

104 Meanings and functions of the diminutive

(1) Diminutive suffixes not only denote smallness (**столик** 'a small table'), but may also express emotional nuances such as affection (**дяденька** 'dear uncle'), disparagement (**городишко** 'wretched little town'), irony (**идейка** 'a paltry little idea') etc. Depending on context the same diminutive phrase may convey a caring attitude (Вот тебе **горяченький супчик** 'Here's some nice hot soup for you' (mother to child)) or be evidence of affectation.

(2) Diminutives are used mainly in colloquial speech. Many have acquired independent meanings, e.g. **ручка** 'handle', 'pen'.

105 Masculine diminutives

The following diminutive suffixes may be affixed to the stems of masculine nouns.

(1) -ец

-**ец** may express an affectionate or positive attitude (**братец** from брат 'brother', **хлебец** from хлеб 'bread'), or alternatively disparagement (**анекдóтец** from анекдóт 'anecdote').

(2) -ик

(i) -**ик** (*never stressed*) imparts the meaning of smallness to many masculine nouns: **до́мик** from дом 'house', **ко́врик** 'mat' from ковёр 'carpet'.

(ii) Emotional nuances expressed by -**ик** include affection (**са́дик** from сад 'garden'), and irony or scorn (**анекдóтик** from анекдóт 'anecdote').

(iii) Diminutives with independent meanings include **мóстик** ‘captain’s bridge’, **нóжик** ‘pen-knife’ and **стóлик** ‘restaurant table’.

(3) -ок/-ёк/-ек

(i) **-ок/-ёк** (*always stressed*) express affection, irony or disparagement, as well as smallness. Velar consonants undergo mutation:

дружóк from друг ‘friend’, **старичóк** from старíк ‘old man’, **пастушóк** from пастýх ‘shepherd’.

(ii) Other diminutives in **-ок** include **городóк** from гóрод ‘town’, **лесóк** from лес ‘forest’ etc. **Дурачóк** from дура́к ‘fool’ and **женишóк** from жени́х ‘fiancé, bridegroom’ express irony.

(iii) Nouns in **-ь** and **-й** take the suffix **-ёк**: **огонёк** from огóнь ‘fire, light’ (Нет ли у вас **огонька́**? ‘Do you happen to have a light?’), **чаёк** from чай ‘tea’ (Хотите **чайкú**? ‘Have some tea?’).

(iv) Nouns with independent meanings include **волосóк** ‘filament’, **глазóк** ‘peephole’, **значóк** ‘badge’, **конёк** ‘skate’, **кружóк** ‘circle, club’, **молотóк** ‘hammer’, **носóк** ‘sock, toe of shoe or stocking’, **язычóк** ‘tongue of shoe, clapper of bell’.

Note

(a) Second-stage diminutives can be formed: друг ‘friend’, дружóк, **дружóчек**.

(b) Diminutives in unstressed **-ек** include **человéчек** from человек ‘person’.

(4) -чик

(i) **-чик** (*never stressed*) is affixed mainly to nouns ending in:

(a) **-л/-ль** (**автомобíльчик** from автомобíль ‘car’, **журна́льчик** from журна́л ‘journal’).

(b) **-н** (**карма́нчик** from карма́н ‘pocket’).

(c) **-р** (**забо́рчик** from забо́р ‘fence’).

(d) **-й** (**трамва́йчик** from трамва́й ‘tram’).

(e) **-ф** (**шка́фчик** from шка́ф ‘cupboard’).

(ii) The suffix may also express affection: **дива́нчик** from дива́н ‘couch’. Forms with independent meanings include **колоко́льчик** ‘bluebell’ from ко́локол ‘bell’.

(5) Examples of masculine diminutives expressing:

(i) Smallness:

На корме поблёскивал **моторчик** (Nagibin)
'In the stern glinted a small engine'

(ii) Animosity:

Я придумывал нóвый **вопрóсец** похлестче (Gagarin)
'I was devising a more scathing question'

(iii) Irony:

А муж считаёт, что ужé отвéтил на ётот вопрóс, нарёв кольцо на **пáльчик** своёй супрúги
'Whereas the husband thinks he has already answered this question by placing a ring on his wife's dear little finger'

(iv) Disparagement:

Сынóк профессора. Чистенький такой **пижóнчик** (Iakhontov)
'A professor's pampered brat. A young fop, pure as the driven snow'

106 Feminine diminutives

(1) -ица

(i) The suffix **-ица** bears the stress in diminutives derived from nouns in stressed **-á**, **-я́** and in **-ь**: **вещи́ца** from вещь 'thing' (cf. **прóсьбица** from просьба 'request').

(ii) Second-stage diminutives in **-ичка** are also formed: вода́ 'water', води́ца, **води́чка** (both have the positive nuance typical of diminutives based on the names of food and drink); сестра́ 'sister', сестри́ца, **сестри́чка** (cf., from Russian folk-tale, **Лиси́чка-Сестри́чка** 'Sister Fox').

(2) -ка

(i) The suffix may denote smallness (**крово́тка** 'cot' from кровать 'bed') as well as affection (**до́чка** from дочь 'daughter') or irony (**иде́йка** from идея 'idea').

(ii) The stress in diminutives in **-ка** derived from end-stressed nouns falls on the syllable preceding **-ка**: **голо́вка** from голова́ 'head'. Some

diminutives are based on genitive plurals with the vowel **-e-**: *пéсня* ‘song’, gen. pl. *пéсен*, dim. **пéсенка**; *сeмья́* ‘family’, gen. pl. *сeмeй*, dim. **сeмeйка**.

(iii) Velar consonants and **ц** undergo mutation: **кнiжка** from *кнiга* ‘book’, **рeчка** from *рeкa* ‘river’, **мyшка** from *мyxa* ‘fly’, **стрaничка** from *стрaницa* ‘page’.

(iv) The following have independent meanings: **голoвка** ‘head of a nail’ (also **бoеголoвка** ‘war-head’), **дорoжка** ‘path’, **ёлка** ‘Christmas tree’, **крышка** ‘lid’, **машинка** ‘typewriter’, **ножка** ‘leg of chair, table’, **плитка** ‘bar’ (of chocolate), **площадка** ‘stair landing, playground, launch pad’, **птичка** ‘tick’, **ручка** ‘arm of a chair’, **сетка** ‘tennis net’, **спинка** ‘back of a chair’, **стрелка** ‘clock-hand’, **трубка** ‘telephone receiver, pipe’.

(v) Second-stage diminutives in **-очка** are formed as follows: *минyта* ‘minute’, *минyтка*, **минyточка** (*Подождите минyточку!* ‘Wait a sec!’).

(vi) Nouns with a double consonant + **-a** form **first-stage** diminutives in **-очка**: *звездá* ‘star’, **звездочка** ‘small star, asterisk’; *кáрта* ‘card, map’, **кáрточка** ‘greetings card’ (but *иглá* ‘needle’, **игóлка**, **игóлочка**).

107 Neuter diminutives

(1) -ико

This suffix is used with very few nouns: **колёсико** from *колесó* ‘wheel’, **личико** from *лицó* ‘face’, **плечико** from *плечó* ‘shoulder’ (pl. **плéчки** also ‘coat-hanger’).

(2) -ко

Stress is unpredictable in diminutives with this ending, cf. **ведёрко** from *ведрó* ‘bucket’, **озерко** from *озеро* ‘lake’. **К** and **ц** mutate to **ч**: **облачко** from *облако* ‘cloud’, **яйчко** from *яйцó* ‘egg’.

(3) -цо/це; -ецо

The suffixes **-цо/-це** appear after a single consonant, **-ецо** after a double consonant: **зёркальце** from *зёркало* ‘mirror’, **письмецо** from *письмó* ‘letter’. Stress is as in the source noun except for **словцо** from *слóво* ‘word’ and **деревице/деревицо** from *дерево* ‘tree’.

108 Other diminutive suffixes

(1) **-ашка** expresses slight disparagement or endearment, depending on context: **морда́шка** from морда ‘mug’ (face), **старика́шка** from старик ‘old man’.

(2) **-ишко** (inanimate)/**-ишка** (animate) express disparagement or irony: **воры́шка** from вор ‘thief’, **домы́шко** from дом ‘house’:

У меня́ до́ма **коньячи́шко** есть (Shukshin)

I've got a nice little bottle of brandy at home (nuance of affection)

(3) **-онка/-ёнка** express disparagement: **книжо́нка** from кни́га ‘book’, **лошадё́нка** from ло́шадь ‘horse’ (however, **сестре́нка** from сестра́ ‘sister’ denotes affection).

(4) **-ушка/-юшка** and **-енька/-онька** express affection: **до́ченька** from дочь ‘daughter’, **избу́шка** from изба́ ‘hut’.

(5) **-ышек, -ышко**: **ко́лышек** ‘tent-peg’ from кол ‘stake’, **го́рлышко** ‘neck of bottle’ from го́рло ‘throat’, **зе́рнышко** from зерно́ ‘grain’.

109 Augmentative suffixes

The suffixes **-ина**, **-ище** and **-ища** are attached to the stems of nouns to denote largeness. Augmentatives may also express emotive nuances: **идио́тина** ‘a blithering idiot’.

(1) **-ина**

(i) **-ина** is affixed to the stems of masculine and feminine nouns: **зверы́на** (from зверь) ‘an enormous beast’, **ла́пина** (from ла́па) ‘a massive paw’.

(ii) The suffix is stressed if attached to the stem of a noun which has mobile stress in declension (**домы́на** ‘a vast house’) and is unstressed if attached to the stem of a noun which has fixed stress in declension (**ры́бина** ‘a large fish’).

(iii) Velar consonants undergo mutation: **дурачи́на** (from дура́к) ‘a great fool’, **оплеу́шина** (from оплеу́ха) ‘a hefty slap in the face’.

(2) **-ище/-ища**

(i) These suffixes are far more productive than **-ина**. **-ище** is affixed to the stems of masculine and neuter nouns, **-ища** to those of feminine nouns:

арбузице (from арбу́з) ‘an enormous melon’, **бороди́ца** (from борода́) ‘a massive beard’.

(ii) Stress position depends on the same principles as those described for -ина: **велика́нице** (from велика́н) (fixed stress in declension) ‘an enormous giant’, **голоси́це** (from го́лос) (mobile stress in declension) ‘a mighty voice’.

(iii) Velar consonants undergo mutation: **волчи́це** (from волк) ‘a large wolf’, **ручи́ца** (from рука́) ‘a mighty hand’.

The Pronoun

110 Personal pronouns

(1) The personal pronouns **я** 'I', **ты** 'you' (informal), **он** 'he, it', **она́** 'she, it', **оно́** 'it', **мы** 'we', **вы** 'you' (formal and plural), **они́** 'they' decline as follows:

<i>Nom.</i>	я	ты	он	он-а́	он-о́
<i>Acc./Gen.</i>	мен-я́	теб-я́	его́	её	его́
<i>Dat.</i>	мн-е	теб-е́	ему́	ей	ему́
<i>Instr.</i>	мн-ой	тоб-о́й	им	ей/е́ю	им
<i>Prep.</i>	обо мн-е	о теб-е́	о нём	о ней	о нём
<i>Nom.</i>	м-ы	в-ы	он-и́		
<i>Acc./Gen.</i>	н-ас	в-ас	их		
<i>Dat.</i>	н-ам	в-ам	им		
<i>Instr.</i>	н-а́ми	в-а́ми	и́ми		
<i>Prep.</i>	о н-ас	о в-ас	о них		

Note

- (a) **Я** and **ты** have alternative instrumental forms: **мно́ю** and **тобо́ю**, which are used in verse and in some colloquial registers, and are also found in passive constructions (Это сделано **мно́ю/мно́й** 'That was done by me').
- (b) **Его́**, the accusative/genitive of **он/оно́**, is pronounced [jɪ'vo].

- (c) The alternative instrumental form of она́ (**ёю**) is preferred to **ей** in educated speech and is particularly important in passive constructions, avoiding possible confusion with the dative:

Революцией перестройку можно назва́ть в си́лу радика́льности поставле́нных **ёю** це́лей (*Izvestiia*)

‘Restructuring can be called a revolution by virtue of the radical nature of the goals set **by it**’

(**Ей** would imply a dative meaning: ‘the goals set **for it**’.)

- (2) The oblique cases of **он**, **она́**, **оно́**, **они́** take initial **н-** when governed by a preposition: от **него́** ‘from him’, к **ней** ‘to her’, с **ними́** ‘with them’ etc. However, some *compound* prepositions take a third-person pronoun *without* initial **н-**. They include:

(i) A number of derivative prepositions governing the dative: **благодаря́ им** ‘thanks to them’, **ему́** навстрéчу ‘to meet him’, на зло **ей** ‘to spite her’. Others include **вопреки́** ‘contrary to’, **наперекóр** ‘counter to’, **подо́бно** ‘similar to’, **согласно́** ‘in accordance with’.

(ii) Some which take the genitive: **вне́** ‘outside’, **в отноше́нии** ‘in relation to’. **Внутри́** ‘inside’ takes alternative forms with or without **н-**: **внутри́ их/них** ‘inside them’.

Note

When a declined form of the third-person plural pronoun combines with a declined form of **все** ‘all’, a pronoun with initial **н-** is the norm: смея́ться над все́ми **ними́** ‘to laugh at all of them’. **У/от неё́** ‘She has/from her’ has an alternative form **у/от ней**, used nowadays mainly in verse.

111 Use of personal instead of possessive pronouns

(1) Personal pronouns are more usual than possessive pronouns in referring to parts of the body, articles of clothing, location etc.: Он пожа́л **мне** ру́ку ‘He shook **my** hand’, Он пришёл **ко мне** в ко́мнату ‘He came to **my** room’, Пла́тье у **неё́** всё испáчкано ‘**Her** dress is all stained’. The reflexive pronoun (see 117) is used similarly: Он лёг у **себя́** в ко́мнате ‘He lay down in **his** room’ etc.

(2) Note also the idioms: **мне** пришло в голову ‘it occurred to me’ (lit. ‘came into **my** head’), Красотá здáния брóсилась **ему́** в глаза́ ‘He was struck by the beauty of the building’.

112 Use of the nominative pronoun with **это**

In contrast to English, nominative pronouns are used in such phrases as **Это я** ‘It’s me’, **Это он** ‘It’s him’, **Это мы** ‘It’s us’ etc.

113 The pronoun **я**

(1) **Я** ‘I’ combines with first-person singular forms of the present and future of verbs: я **читаю́** ‘I read’, я **прочитаю́** ‘I shall read’, я **буду́ чита́ть** ‘I shall be reading’. The gender of predicative adjectives, of other pronouns and of past verbs depends on the sex of the speaker:

Я дово́лен, я оди́н, я пришёл

‘I am pleased, I am alone, I have arrived’ (of a **male** speaker)

Я дово́льна, я одна́, я пришла́

‘I am pleased, I am alone, I have arrived’ (of a **female** speaker)

(2) Compare also the oblique cases: Оста́вьте меня́ **одного́** ‘Leave me by myself’ (of a male), Оста́вьте меня́ **одну́** ‘Leave me by myself’ (of a female).

Note

- (a) ‘You and I’ is rendered as **мы с ва́ми**, ‘he and I’ as **мы с ним** etc. (also, in relevant contexts, though less usually, ‘you and ourselves’, ‘he and ourselves’).
- (b) **Я** as a noun may be qualified by neuter modifiers: **моё второ́е я** ‘my alter ego’.
- (c) **Я** is often omitted in everyday speech (**Начну́** сейча́с! ‘I’ll begin at once!’) and in official applications and announcements (**Прошу́** предоста́вить мне о́тпуск ‘I apply to be granted leave’). In spoken Russian, pronouns in general are often omitted, since present and future verb forms alone are sufficient to express person and number (i.e. **пишу́** is first-person singular, **пи́нешь** second-person singular).

and so on), while past tense forms indicate gender and number. Thus, **Вы писали? Да, я писал** ‘Did you write?’, ‘Yes, I wrote’ could be rendered as **Вы писали? Да, писал** or **Писали? Писал**, depending on the degree of familiarity of the speech mode.

114 The pronoun **мы**

(1) **Мы** ‘we’ combines with first-person plural forms of the present or future tense of a verb (**мы говорим** ‘we speak’), with plural forms of the past tense (**мы говорили** ‘we were speaking’), and with plural adjectives and pronouns: **Мы один** ‘we are alone’.

(2) **Мы** can also be used to refer to the whole of a social or other group, or all society etc.: **Я подчёркиваю слово «мы», ибо имею в виду всё общество в целом** ‘I stress the word “we” since I have in mind society as a whole’.

(3) **Мы** also expresses the royal ‘we’ (**мы**, всероссийский император ‘we, Emperor of all the Russias’), the authorial ‘we’ (**Мы** пришёл к следующим выводам ‘We (i.e. I) have come to the following conclusions’) and the jocular paternal ‘we’ used by doctors (Ну, сегодня **нам** лучше? ‘Well, are we better today?’). **Мы** may also convey a nuance of mockery (**Мы** улыбаемся! ‘So we’re smiling!’) or contempt (**Видали мы** таких! ‘We’ve seen your type before!’).

115 The pronouns **ты** and **вы**

(1) **Ты**

(i) **Ты** ‘you’ (familiar) takes second-person singular forms of the present and future tenses of a verb (**ты говоришь** ‘you speak’ etc.). Like **я**, **ты** is of common gender: **Ты один** ‘You are alone’ (to a male), **Ты одна** ‘You are alone’ (to a female).

(ii) **Ты** is used in addressing a relation, a friend, a colleague of similar age and status, a child, God, nature, oneself, an animal etc. While **ты** is generally acknowledged as the ‘familiar’ form, older people are likely to restrict its use to a circle of close friends and colleagues, whereas young people are usually quicker to address members of their own age group as **ты**.

(iii) **Ты** may also be used in conveying generalized information or instruction (cf. English ‘you’), as in the following guidance for correct breathing in singing: **Ты** набира́ешь полную́ грудь во́здуха, а пото́м ма́ло-пوما́лу выпуска́ешь его́ изо рта ‘You fill your lungs with air and then expel it little by little through your mouth’.

(2) **Вы**

(i) **Вы** is used to address any group of more than one person, or an adult who is not a relation, friend or colleague of similar age and status. When writing to someone, **Вы** is usually spelt with a capital letter.

(ii) **Вы** combines with plural forms of the verb, whether the pronoun represents an individual or a group: вы чита́ете, вы чита́ли ‘you read, were reading’. When reference is to one person, the pronoun combines with the *singular* forms of long adjectives (Вы тако́й до́брый (to a male), Вы тако́я до́брая (to a female) ‘You are so kind’, Я счита́ю вас у́мным (to a male)/у́мной (to a female) ‘I consider you clever’), but with the *plural* forms of short adjectives and participles: Вы пра́вы ‘You are right’.

(3) **Ты** or **вы**

Usage may depend on social status, age difference, education and context of situation (e.g. teachers may address each other as **вы** in the presence of pupils or students but as **ты** in their absence). Any transition from **вы** to **ты** is normally initiated by the senior in age or rank. **Вы** is used as a mark of respect to adult strangers, and by academic staff to students and (desirably, though many school teachers prefer to use **ты**) to senior pupils. Subordinates have traditionally used the formal **вы** to their superiors, but have been addressed by them with the familiar **ты**. This practice is still widespread, despite condemnation in official circles of its perpetuation in, for example, the armed forces, the health service and industry.

116 The third-person pronouns (**он, она́, оно́, они́**)

(1) **Он, она́** may replace nouns denoting persons *or* things of masculine and feminine gender respectively:

Где брат ?	Вот он	‘Where is my brother?’	There he is’
Где стол ?	Вот он	‘Where is the table?’	There it is’
Где моя́ сестра́ ?	Вот она́	‘Where is my sister?’	There she is’

Где **кни́га**? Вот **о́на** ‘Where is the book?’ ‘There it is’

(2) **Оно́** replaces neuter nouns:

Где **крéсло**? Вот **оно́** ‘Where is the armchair?’ ‘There it is’

(3) **Они́** replaces plural nouns denoting persons or things:

Где **ма́льчики**? Вот **они́** ‘Where are the boys?’ ‘There they are’
 Где **кни́ги**? Вот **они́** ‘Where are the books?’ ‘There they are’
 Где **крéсла**? Вот **они́** ‘Where are the armchairs?’ ‘There they are’

(4) **Они́** may be used when the plural noun it replaces has been mentioned: Что делают **маляры́**? **Они́** красят дом ‘What are the painters doing?’ ‘They are painting the house’. In impersonal constructions, however, the third-person plural of the verb is used *without* a pronoun: Здесь **стро́ят** общежи́тие ‘They (identity unspecified) are building a hostel here’ (or ‘A hostel is being built here’). This is in marked contrast with English, in which the pronoun ‘they’ is used in both personal *and* impersonal constructions. Note also the phrases: Здесь **не ку́рят** ‘No smoking’, **говора́т** ‘they say, it is said’ etc.

(5) Verbs of yearning (**скуча́ть** ‘to miss’, **тоскова́ть** ‘to yearn’ etc.) and the verbs **стреля́ть** ‘to shoot’ and **удара́ть** ‘to strike’ take the preposition **по** + the prepositional case of first- and second-person pronouns (Скуча́ли по **вас** ‘They missed you’, Стреля́ли по **нас** ‘They were firing at us’) and *either* the dative *or* the prepositional of third-person pronouns (Скуча́ли по **нему́/по нём** ‘He was missed’). Such verbs take **по** + the *dative* of nouns (e.g. скуча́ть по **му́жу** ‘to miss one’s husband’).

(6) ‘He and Sergei/she and Sergei’ etc. may be rendered as **они́** с Серге́ем (also, in context, ‘they and Sergei’).

(7) The instrumental case of a third-person pronoun may be the equivalent of English ‘one’: Он стал вратарём, потому́ что реши́л **им** стать (Мака́ров) ‘He became a goalkeeper because he had made up his mind to become **one**’.

117 The reflexive pronoun **себя́**

(1) The reflexive pronoun **себя́** declines as follows:

<i>Nom.</i>	—
<i>Acc./Gen.</i>	себ- я
<i>Dat.</i>	себ- ё
<i>Instr.</i>	соб- ой /соб- ою
<i>Prep.</i>	о себ- ё

(2) The reflexive pronoun refers back to the subject of the clause or, more exactly, to the subject or agent of the nearest verb or adjective (it therefore has no nominative case, since it cannot *itself* be a subject). The same form is used for all persons (Она́ дово́льна **собой** ‘She is pleased with herself’, Мы дово́льны **собой** ‘We are pleased with ourselves’ etc.), there being no differentiation between singular and plural or between the genders.

(3) **Себя́** expresses more varied relationships than **-ся, -сь** (see also 285 and 286), e.g. the indirect object (Она́ купи́ла **себе́** кни́гу ‘She bought herself a book’) and government by preposition (Он смóтрит **на себя́** в зéркало ‘He looks at himself in the mirror’, Они́ разговáривают **между собой** ‘They are talking among themselves’).

(4) Счита́ть **себя́** гéнием means ‘to consider oneself a genius’, счита́ться гéнием ‘to be considered a genius’ (cf. лиша́ть **себя́** ‘to deprive oneself’ and лиша́ться ‘to be deprived’).

(5) Some verbs combine with **себя́** on a seemingly arbitrary basis: вести́ **себя́** ‘to behave’, представля́ть **собой** ‘to represent, be’, чу́вствовать **себя́** ‘to feel’.

(6) Ambiguity may arise when there are two verbs in a sentence: Ма́ть велéла сы́ну **нали́ть** себе́ ча́ю (ма́ть is the subject of the sentence, сы́н is the logical subject of **нали́ть**). The sentence should be taken to mean ‘The mother told her son to pour **himself** some tea’, but the following can be used to avoid confusion: Ма́ть велéла, чтóбы сын **нали́л себе́** ча́ю ‘The mother told her son to pour **himself** some tea’, cf. Ма́ть велéла, чтóбы сын **нали́л ей** ча́ю ‘The mother told her son to pour **her** some tea’.

(7) Russian is more consistent than English in the use of reflexive pronouns: Он разложи́л перед **собой** ка́рту ‘He spread out the map in front of **him**’, Она́ закры́ла за **собой** дверь ‘She closed the door behind **her**’, Возьми́те меня́ с **собой** ‘Take me with **you**’.

(8) The reflexive pronoun appears in a number of set phrases: так **себе́** ‘so-so’, Он хоро́ш **собой** ‘He is good-looking’, само́ **собой** разуме́ется ‘it goes without saying’.

(9) A reflexive pronoun may combine for emphasis with the emphatic pronoun **сам**: — **Я** тебя не понимаю. — **Я сам себя** не понимаю! ‘I don’t understand you’. ‘I don’t understand myself!’ (see 131 (1)).

118 The possessive pronouns **мой, твой, наш, ваш**

(1) The possessive pronoun **мой** declines as follows:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	мой	мо-я́	мо-ё́	мо-и́
<i>Acc.</i>	мой/мо-его́	мо-ю́	мо-ё́	мо-и́/мо-их
<i>Gen.</i>	мо-его́	мо-е́й	мо-его́	мо-их
<i>Dat.</i>	мо-ему́	мо-е́й	мо-ему́	мо-и́м
<i>Instr.</i>	мо-и́м	мо-е́й/-е́ю	мо-и́м	мо-и́ми
<i>Prep.</i>	о мо-ём	о мо-е́й	о мо-ём	о мо-и́х

Note

Твой ‘your’ (familiar) declines like **мой**.

(2) The possessive pronoun **наш** declines as follows:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	наш	на́ш-а	на́ш-е	на́ш-и
<i>Acc.</i>	наш/на́ш-его́	на́ш-у	на́ш-е	на́ш-и/на́ш-их
<i>Gen.</i>	на́ш-его́	на́ш-е́й	на́ш-его́	на́ш-их
<i>Dat.</i>	на́ш-ему́	на́ш-е́й	на́ш-ему́	на́ш-и́м
<i>Instr.</i>	на́ш-и́м	на́ш-е́й/-е́ю	на́ш-и́м	на́ш-и́ми
<i>Prep.</i>	о на́ш-ем	о на́ш-е́й	о на́ш-ем	о на́ш-и́х

Note

- Ваш** ‘your’ declines like **наш**.
- Like **мы** and **вы** (see 113 note (a)), **наш** and **ваш** can form compounds with other pronouns or nouns: **ва́ша с па́пой** маши́на ‘yours and Dad’s car’, **наш с то́ббй** до́м ‘our house’ (i.e. yours and mine).
- The colloquial phrase **наш брат** means ‘people like us’: Зна́ю, что не́редко руга́ют **на́шего бра́та** за рва́чество (*Russia Today*) ‘I know that our sort are often cursed for self-seeking’.
- Phrases of the type **на́ша** те́ма ‘our theme’ (i.e. ‘the present topic’) are used by authors and lecturers (cf. 114 (3)).
- The use of possessive instead of personal pronouns is characteristic of casual speech: Он сде́лал бо́льше **моего́** (= бо́льше, чем я) ‘He did more than me’.
- Ваш** is spelt with a capital letter in correspondence.

119 The possessive pronouns **его́, её́, их**

Его́ ‘his’, **её́** ‘her’, **их** ‘their’ are invariable:

его́ сестра́	‘his sister’
её́ кни́ги	‘her books’
их брат	‘their brother’
Я зна́ю его́ сестру́	‘I know his sister’
Я дово́лен её́ бра́том	‘I am pleased with her brother’

Note

- (a) **н-** is never affixed to the third-person possessives: cf. письмо́ от **него́** (personal pronoun) ‘a letter from him’ and письмо́ от **его́** (possessive pronoun) бра́та ‘a letter from his brother’ (see **110** (2)).
- (b) **Его́** is pronounced [jɪ'vo]. See also **110** (1) note (b).

120 The reflexive possessive pronoun **свой, своя́, своё, свои́**

- (1) The reflexive possessive pronoun **свой** declines like **мой** (see **118** (1)).
- (2) Like **себя́, свой** refers back to noun and pronoun subjects of any gender and either number (see **117** (2)): **Я** по́мню **свою́** шко́лу ‘I remember my school’, **Ты** по́мнишь **свою́** шко́лу ‘You remember your school’, **Де́ти** по́мнят **свою́** шко́лу ‘The children remember their school’.
- (3) In clauses which have a first- or second-person subject, **свой** can be used as an *alternative* to **мой, твой, наш** and **ваш** (**Я** говорю́ о **свое́й/моё́й** рабо́те ‘I am talking about my work’, **Ты** продаёшь **свой/твой** до́м ‘You are selling your house’, **Мы** мо́ем **свою́/на́шу** маши́ну ‘We are washing our car’), though **свой** is commoner.
- (4) Where there is a third-person subject, however, care must be taken to distinguish between **свой** and the possessive pronouns **его́, её́, их** (see **119**), when rendering ‘his’, ‘her’, ‘their’, in order to avoid ambiguity:

Он дово́лен **свои́м** ученико́м
‘He is pleased with **his** (own) pupil’

Он не лю́бит Джо́на, но он дово́лен **его́** ученика́ми
‘He does not like John, but he is pleased with **his** (John’s) pupils’

Note that in English ‘his’ is used in both examples, and context is relied upon to differentiate meaning. Russian **её** ‘her’ and **их** ‘their’ are similarly distinguished from **свой**:

Орло́вы лю́бят **свои́х** дете́й
‘The Orlovs love **their** children’

Он о́бнял её, она́ положи́ла свою́ го́лову ему́ на плече́ (Litvinova)
‘He embraced her, (and) she put her head on his shoulder’

Ивановы́ поги́бли в катастро́фе, и Орло́вы усынови́ли **их** дете́й
‘The Ivanovs died in an accident and the Orlovs adopted their children’

(5) It is important to remember to use the reflexive possessive pronoun even when it is distanced from the subject:

Он, пра́вда, нико́му не да́ёт **своего́** а́дреса (Trifonov)
‘It is true that he does not give **his** address to anyone’

Он бы́л сви́детелем собы́тий **своего́** вре́мени
‘He was a witness of the events of **his** time’

(6) **Свой** cannot qualify the *subject* of a clause in this type of construction:

Он говори́т, что **его́** друг бо́лен
‘He says that **his** friend (subject of new clause) is ill’

Врач и **её** помо́щник совеща́ются
‘The doctor and **her** assistant (joint subjects) are consulting’

(7) In a sentence with two verbs, **свой** refers back to the subject of the nearer of the two, cf:

Реда́ктор попро́сил журна́листа прочита́ть **свою́** статью́
‘The editor asked the journalist to read his (the journalist’s) article’

and

Реда́ктор попро́сил журна́листа прочита́ть **его́** статью́
‘The editor asked the journalist to read his (the editor’s) article’

To avoid possible ambiguity, an alternative construction can be used:

Реда́ктор попро́сил журна́листа, что́бы он прочита́л **его́** статью́
‘The editor asked the journalist to read his (the editor’s) article’

Note

When ownership is obvious from the context, Russian usually dispenses with a possessive pronoun: **Я мою́** ру́ки ‘I am washing **my** hands’ (it is

clear whose hands are being washed – mine), Он потерял **программу** ‘He has lost **his** (or ‘the’) programme’.

Пáрень опускаёт **ру́ки, го́лову**, закрывáет **глаза́** (Rasputin)
‘The lad lowers his hands, hangs his head, closes his eyes’

(8) Свой appears in the *nominative* case in phrases that denote possession: У меня **сво́я** машина ‘I have my own car’, У ру́сских — **сво́я** вы́страдавшая культу́ра (Solzhenitsyn) ‘Russians have acquired their own culture through suffering’. Note: **Сво́я** руба́шка ближе к телу ‘Charity begins at home’, Он у нас **сво́й** человек ‘He is one of us’.

121 Declension of the interrogative/relative pronouns

Кто ‘who’, **что** ‘what’, **како́й** ‘what’ (adjective), **ко́торый** ‘which’ and **чей** ‘whose’ function as both interrogative and relative pronouns. **Како́й** and **ко́торый** decline like hard-ending adjectives (see 145 and 146 (3) note (b)). **Кто**, **что** and **чей** decline as follows:

			<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	к т-о	ч т-о	че й	ч ь-я	ч ь-ё	ч ь-и
<i>Acc.</i>	к-о го́	ч т-о	че й/чь-его́	ч ь-ю	ч ь-ё	ч ь-и/чь-их
<i>Gen.</i>	к-о го́	ч-е го́	ч ь-его́	ч ь-ей	ч ь-его́	ч ь-их
<i>Dat.</i>	к-о му́	ч-е му́	ч ь-ему́	ч ь-ей	ч ь-ему́	ч ь-им
<i>Instr.</i>	к-е м	ч-е м	ч ь-им	ч ь-ей/-ёю	ч ь-им	ч ь-ими
<i>Prep.</i>	о к-о м	о ч-ё м	о ч ь-ём	о ч ь-ей	о ч ь-ём	о ч ь-их

122 Кто, что, како́й, ко́торый, чей as interrogative pronouns

(1) Кто

(i) **Кто** ‘who’ is used in both direct questions (**Кто** э́тот мужчи́на? ‘Who is that man?’, О **ком** вы говорите? ‘Who are you talking about?’) and indirect questions (Он спроси́л, **кому́** вы даёте уро́ки ‘He asked whom you give lessons to’).

(ii) **Кто** takes a masculine predicate even when only females are involved: Кто **вы́шел** за́муж? ‘Who (in a group of women) got married?’ However, feminine agreement is possible if the subject contains a reference to a

female exponent of an activity: Кто из лыжниц пришлá пёрвой? ‘Which of the skiers (female) came in first?’.

(iii) Russian is consistent in using **кто** for people: **Кто** у вас родился? Мáльчик йли дéвочка? ‘What is it, a boy or a girl?’, **Кем** ты хочешь быть? ‘What do you want to be?’, cf.:

А кем мы стáнем тепёрь: друзьями йли врагáми? (Gagarin)
‘And what will we become now, friends or enemies?’

(iv) **Кто** may be amplified to **кто такой/такáя/такíе?**: **Кто такой** этот пáрень? ‘Who is this fellow?’, **Кто такáя** эта дéвушка? ‘Who is that girl?’, **Кто такíе** эти молодíе лóуди? ‘Who are these young people?’, Кто вы **такой**? (to a male)/Кто вы **такáя**? (to a female) ‘Who are you?’.

(2) Что

Что ‘what’ is used to ask about the identity of a thing or an animal (**Что** это — волк йли собáка? ‘What is that, a wolf or a dog?’) or the nature of an action (**Что** он дéлает? ‘What is he doing?’). **Что** may be expanded to **что такое?** (Что это **такое?** ‘What is that?’) or be extended by a genitive adjective (Что **нóвого?** ‘What’s new?’, Что же тут **обíдного?** ‘What’s so offensive about that?’).

(3) Какóй

Какóй means ‘What, what kind of?’: **Какóй** у негó гóлос? ‘What kind of a voice does he have?’, **Какóю** кнйгу вы читáете? ‘What book are you reading?’. **Что за** may be used as a synonym of **какóй**: **Что сего́дня за** погóда? (= Какáя сего́дня погóда?) ‘What is the weather like today?’.

(4) Котóрый

(i) **Котóрый?** means ‘which?’ (in a sequence) and appears in the phrases **Котóрый** час? ‘What’s the time?’, В **котóром** часú? ‘At what time?’ (now largely replaced in the speech of young people by **Скóлько** врэмени? and **Во скóлько?**). **Котóрый** can also mean ‘umpteenth’: **Котóрый** раз спрашивáю ‘I am asking for the umpteenth time’.

(ii) However, **какóй** is now more commonly used in questions, the answers to which contain an ordinal numeral: **Какóй** ряд? ‘Which row?’ **Пяты́й** ‘Five’.

(5) Чей

Чей means ‘whose?’: **Чей** это дом? ‘Whose house is that?’, **Чью** дачу вы покупаете? ‘Whose country cottage are you buying?’.

123 Котóрый, какóй, чей, кто and что as relative pronouns

(1) Котóрый

(i) **Котóрый** ‘who, which’ is used with animate and inanimate noun antecedents (кто and что are normally used as relatives to *pronoun* antecedents; see (4) and (5) below).

(ii) **Котóрый** agrees with its antecedent in gender and number, but its *case* depends on the grammar of the relative clause:

Я познакóмился с молодым **человéком, за котóрого** она вышла замуж

‘I made the acquaintance of the young man (whom) she married’

Он вошёл в **кóмнату, котóрая** находíлась рядом с кúхней

‘He went into the room which was next to the kitchen’

(iii) The genitive forms **котóрого** (masculine and neuter), **котóрой** (feminine), **котóрых** (plural) mean ‘whose’, and *follow* the noun:

Вот **студéнт, работу котóрого** я проверяю

‘There is the student whose work I am correcting’

Прóдали **машíну, владельцы котóрой** обанкрóтились

‘They have sold the car whose owners have gone bankrupt’

Нельз́я не жалéть **детéй, родители котóрых** погíбли во врéмя блокады

‘You cannot but pity the children whose parents perished during the blockade’

(2) Какóй

Unlike **котóрый**, which relates to specific objects and persons, **какóй** relates to things and persons of a particular *type*, cf.:

Вокрúг видишь перемены, **какíе** возмо́жны то́лько здесь

‘All around you can see changes **of a kind which** are possible only here’

and

Вокруг видишь перемены, **которые** возможны только здесь
‘All around you can see changes **which** are possible only here’

Compare

Такое выражение отчаяния, **какое** бывает у людей только перед смертью (Simonov)
‘The **kind of** expression of despair **that** people have only at death’s door’

(3) Чей

The use of **чей** as a relative is a mark of a bookish or poetic style: писатель, **чьё** книгу ты изучаешь . . . ‘the writer whose book you are studying . . .’. Normal usage is: писатель, книгу **которого** ты изучаешь. . . .

(4) Кто

(i) **Кто** functions as relative pronoun to **тот** (**тот, кто** ‘he, the one who’), **те** (**те, кто** ‘those who’), **никто** ‘nobody’ (**никто, кто** ‘no one who’), **все** ‘everybody’ (**все, кто** ‘everyone who’), **первый** ‘the first’ (**первый, кто** пришёл ‘the first to come’), **единственный** ‘only’ (Он же **единственный, кто** на нас постоянно жалуется ‘He is the only one who constantly complains about us’).

(ii) **Кто** takes a masculine singular predicate: тот, кто **решил** задачу ‘he who solved the problem’. (‘She who’ may be rendered as **та** (жéнщина), **которая: Та, которая** полнее, одéта с большим вку́сом (Zalygin) ‘The one who is plumper is dressed with consummate taste’.)

(iii) When, however, there is a *plural* antecedent (**все** or **те**), **кто** may take *either* a singular *or* a plural verb: Все, кто **пришёл/пришли** на собрание, голосовали за меня ‘Everyone who came to the meeting voted for me’, cf.:

Среди тех, кто **остался**, был Ива́н Ка́рлович, наш сосед (Rybakov)
‘Among those who remained was Ivan Karlovich, our neighbour’

and

Те из нас, кто **читали** стихотворение, были в восторге
‘Those of us who read the poem were delighted’

(iv) **Тот, кто** may be abbreviated to **кто**, with **тот** transferring to the beginning of a separate clause: **Кто** это видел, **тот** не забудет ‘Anyone who has seen that will not forget it’.

(5) **Что**

(i) **Что** may function as relative pronoun to a full noun (sing. or pl.), e.g.:

Дом, что стоит на углу
‘The house that stands on the corner’

but **ко́рый** should be regarded as the norm (see (1) (i) above).

(ii) **Что** as a relative pronoun is used mainly with:

(a) **Всё** ‘everything’:

Я скажу вам **всё, что** знаю ‘I’ll tell you all I know’

(b) Substantivized adjectives such as **главное** ‘the main thing’, **первое** ‘the first thing’:

Первое, что броса́ется в глаза́ — автовокзал
‘The first thing that strikes you is the bus station’

(c) **То** ‘that’:

Всякая литературная ма́терия де́лится на три сфе́ры:

1. То́, что а́втор хоте́л вы́разить.
 2. То́, что он суме́л вы́разить.
 3. То́, что он вы́разил, сам э́того не жела́я.
- Тре́тья сфе́ра — са́мая интере́сная. (S. Dovlatov)

‘All literary material is divided into three spheres:

1. What the author wanted to express (i.e. ‘That which . . .’).
 2. What he managed to express.
 3. What he expressed without wanting this himself.
- The third sphere is the most interesting.’

Variants of **то, что** thus function as links between clauses:

Учи́тельницу огорчи́ло **то, что** де́ти не хоте́ли её слу́шать
‘The teacher was upset by **the fact that** the children did not want to listen to her’

Мы принима́ем **то, от че́го** вы отка́зались
‘We accept **what** you refused’

The construction is particularly important when the verb in the main clause governs an oblique case or prepositional phrase:

Он гордится **тем, что** он русский
‘He is proud **of being** Russian’

Началось **с того, что** Колька отнял у меня книжку (Soloukhin)
‘It all began **with** Kol’ka **taking away** my book’

То, что may be abbreviated to **что** for special emphasis, **то** transferring to the beginning of a separate clause:

Что нам просто кажется, **то** нашим предкам потом да мучкой досталось
‘**What** seems simple to us was achieved through the sweat and toil of our ancestors’

Что also functions as relative pronoun to a whole clause:

Он не приходил на вечер, **что** меня удивило
‘He did not come to the party, **which** surprised me’ (i.e. the fact that he did not come surprised me, *not* any particular noun)

124 Other functions of the interrogative/relative pronouns

(1) **Какóй** can also be used as an exclamation (**Какóй** позóр! ‘What a disgrace!’) and, with negatives, can express quantity (**Какíх** тóлько подарков ему не купили! ‘And the **presents** they bought him!’).

(2) **Кто** appears:

(i) In the phrase **не кто инóй, как** ‘none other than’: Это был **не кто инóй, как** мой брат ‘It was none other than my brother’.

(ii) In concessive constructions: С **кем** ни говори, все настроены легкомысленно ‘Whoever you speak to is in a carefree mood’.

(iii) In the meaning ‘some . . . others’ (also rendered as **одни . . . другие**): **Кто** за, **кто** прóтив ‘Some are for, others are against’.

(iv) In the reduplicated pronoun **кто-кто́**: **Кому-кому́**, а ему-то грех было не реагировать (Zalygin) ‘For him of all people it was sinful not to react’.

(3) **Что** appears:

(i) In the phrase **не что иное, как** ‘nothing but’: **Это не что иное, как вымогательство** ‘That is nothing but extortion’.

(ii) In concessive constructions: **Что бы он ни делал, он не забывал своих друзей** ‘Whatever he did, he never forgot his friends’.

(iii) In quantitative contexts: **Чего́ только не́ было в истории человечества (V. Putin)** ‘Everything imaginable has happened in the history of mankind.’

(iv) In the reduplicated pronoun **что-что́**: . . . **Уж что-что́, а это никто у неё не отнимет (Zalygin)** ‘That of all things no one will take away from her’.

125 Declension of the demonstrative pronouns **этот, тот, такой, сей** and **экий**

Такой́ declines like a hard-ending adjective (see 146 (3) note (b)). **Этот, тот** and **сей** decline as follows:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	этот	эт-а	эт-о	эт-и
<i>Acc.</i>	этот/эт-ого	эт-у	эт-о	эт-и/эт-их
<i>Gen.</i>	эт-ого	эт-ой	эт-ого	эт-их
<i>Dat.</i>	эт-ому	эт-ой	эт-ому	эт-им
<i>Instr.</i>	эт-им	эт-ой/-ою	эт-им	эт-ими
<i>Prep.</i>	об эт-ом	об эт-ой	об эт-ом	об эт-их
<i>Nom.</i>	тот	т-а	т-о	т-е
<i>Acc.</i>	тот/т-ого́	т-у	т-о	т-е/т-ех
<i>Gen.</i>	т-ого́	т-ой	т-ого́	т-ех
<i>Dat.</i>	т-ому́	т-ой	т-ому́	т-ем
<i>Instr.</i>	т-ем	т-ой/т-о́ю	т-ем	т-э́ми
<i>Prep.</i>	о т-ом	о т-ой	о т-ом	о т-ех
<i>Nom.</i>	сей	си-я́	си-е́	си-и́
<i>Acc.</i>	сей/с-его́	си-ю́	си-е́	си-и́/с-их
<i>Gen.</i>	с-его́	с-ей	с-его́	с-их
<i>Dat.</i>	с-ему́	с-ей	с-ему́	с-им
<i>Instr.</i>	с-им	с-ей/с-е́ю	с-им	с-и́ми
<i>Prep.</i>	о с-ём	о с-ей	о с-ём	о с-их

Note

- (a) Except for usage in certain set phrases (see 129 (1)), **сей** is regarded as archaic and is used for purposes of irony.
- (b) **Экий** declines as follows: m. nom. экий, acc. экий/экого, gen. экого, dat. экому, instr. эким, prep. об эком; f. nom. экая, acc. экую, gen. экой, dat. экой, instr. экой/-ою, prep. об экой; neut. экое, oblique cases as masculine; pl. nom. экие, acc. экие/эких, gen. эких, dat. эким, instr. экими, prep. об эких. It is found mainly in conversational registers, though now mainly regarded as archaic.

126 The demonstrative pronouns *этот* and *тот*(1) *Этот/тот*

- (i) **Этот** ‘this’ refers to something close to hand, **тот** ‘that’ to something further removed:

Это дерево такое же большо́е, как и **то**
‘This tree is just as big as that one’

- (ii) **Это** is used in the meaning ‘this, that is’, ‘these, those are’: **Это** мой дом ‘This is my house’, **Это** мои́ де́ти ‘Those are my children’. Verbs agree with the noun, *not* with *это*: **Это** **были́** мои́ кни́ги ‘Those were my books’, **Это** **была́** его́ же́на ‘That was his wife’.

Note

Что вы хоте́те **этим** сказа́ть? ‘What do you mean by **that**?’

- (iii) It is necessary to distinguish between

Этот дом	‘This house’
Эта карти́на	‘This picture’
Это окно́	‘This window’
Эти кни́ги	‘These books’

and

Это дом	‘This is a house’
Это карти́на	‘This is a picture’
Это окно́	‘This is a window’
Это кни́ги	‘These are books’

(2) *Тот*

- (i) **Тот** is sometimes used where English might use a definite article, especially when the pronoun is part of the antecedent to a relative clause:

Он часто говорил в **той** холодной манере, в какой начал разговор с Серпилиным (Simonov)
 ‘He often spoke in **the** cold manner with which he had begun his conversation with Serpilin’

Я смотрел в **ту** сторону, откуда должна была появиться лодка
 ‘I was looking in **the** direction from which the boat was expected to appear’

(ii) **Тот** can also mean ‘he, she, the latter’:

О приезде братьев Лиза узнала от Анки. **Та** прибежала к тётке, как только пришла телеграмма (Abramov)
 ‘Liza learnt of her brothers’ arrival from Anka. **She** (Anka) came running to her aunt as soon as the telegram arrived’

Note

The use of **она́** instead of **та** in this example would imply that the first-named (Liza) had come running. **Тот** thus has an important role to play in avoiding ambiguity.

(iii) **Тот** is used as a pronoun antecedent to a relative pronoun:

Аркадий пожал одним плечом, не **тем, на котором** лежала рука Ирүнчика (Zalygin)
 ‘Arkadii shrugged one shoulder, not **the one on which** Irunchik’s arm lay’

(iv) **Не тот** means ‘the wrong’ (cf. неправильный ‘incorrect’): Он взял **не ту** книгу ‘He took the wrong book’.

(v) **Тот же** (or **тот же самый**) means ‘the same’:

Гостиница оказалась **той же**, в которой останавливались прежде (Iakhontov)
 ‘The hotel turned out to be **the (same) one** they had stayed in before’

Note

(a) **Тот же** can also mean ‘just the same as’: Ведь ненависть — **та же** любовь, только с обратным знаком (Zalygin) ‘After all hatred is **just the same as** love, but from the reverse side’.

(b) В одно и **то же** время ‘at one and the same time’.

(vi) **То** combines with the conjunction **что**:

Она привыкла **к тому́, что** мужчины на неё заглядываются (Rybakov)
 ‘She was used to men feasting their eyes on her’

It also appears in many time phrases: в **то** время, как ‘while’, с **тех** пор ‘since then’, до **тех** пор ‘until then’, после **того** как ‘after’, до **того** как ‘before’ (see also 466).

127 Constructions of the type пример тому

Пример, причина and some other abstract nouns combine with the dative of the pronoun **то** (and occasionally **это**):

Примером **тому** является выступление артиста
‘The artist’s performance is an example of this’

Причиной **тому** является его упрямство
‘His obstinacy is the cause of this’

Да и фильм даёт наглядное **тому** свидетельство
‘And in fact the film bears graphic witness to this’

Примеров **этому** можно привести много (*Izvestiia*)
‘One can quote many examples of this’

Note

- (a) These nouns normally combine with the *genitive* of a dependent *noun*: пример **мужества** ‘an example of courage’, причина **несчастливого случая** ‘the cause of the accident’ (note also the use of the *genitive pronoun* where **причина** is defined by a prepositional phrase: Причина **этого** в демографическом взрыве ‘The cause of this is the population explosion’).
- (b) The dative reflexive pronoun appears in the expression знать **себе** цену ‘to know one’s worth’.

128 The demonstrative pronoun такой

(1) **Такой** ‘such’ combines with long adjectives: Погода **такая** хорошая (or **так** хороша) ‘The weather is so fine’.

(2) It can have a generalizing meaning: **Таких** марок, **какие** он собирает, очень мало ‘There are very few stamps **of the kind that** he collects’ (cf. 123 (2) ‘какой’).

Note

В **тако́м** слúчае ‘in **that** case’, Зада́м **тако́й** вопро́с ‘I shall ask **the following** question’, при **таки́х** обстоя́тельствах ‘in **the** circumstances’.

(3) **Тако́й же** means ‘the same, the same kind’: Ты **тако́й же**, как и все молодые люди твоего́ вóзраста ‘You’re just like all young people of your age’.

Note

Же is absent in the negative: Она́ не **така́я, как** была́ в дётстве ‘She’s not **the same as** she was in her childhood’.

129 The pronouns **сей** and **экий**

(1) **Сей** appears mainly in set phrases: по **сей** день ‘to this very day’, ни с того́ ни с **сего́** ‘for no particular reason’, **сию́** мину́ту ‘this instant’ (Иди́ сюда́ **сию́** мину́ту! ‘Come here this instant!’), до **сих** пор ‘hitherto’ etc.

На **сей** раз в турни́ре не уча́ствовал наш сильне́йший теннисист (*Sputnik*)

‘This time round our best tennis player did not take part in the championships’

(2) **Экий** ‘what a’ is a very colloquial form: **Экий** шалу́н ‘What a rogue’ (cf. also **этакий**: **этакая** неуда́ча ‘such a disaster’).

130 Declension of the determinative pronouns **сам, са́мый, весь, вся́кий, ка́ждый, вся́ческий**

Ка́ждый and **са́мый** are declined like hard-ending adjectives, **вся́кий** and **вся́ческий** like **ру́сский** (see 146 (3)). **Сам** and **весь** decline as follows:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	сам	сам-а́	сам-о́	са́м-и
<i>Acc.</i>	сам/сам-о́го	сам-у́/сам-оё	сам-о́	са́м-и/сам-и́х
<i>Gen.</i>	сам-о́го	сам-о́й	сам-о́го	сам-и́х
<i>Dat.</i>	сам-о́му	сам-о́й	сам-о́му	сам-и́м
<i>Instr.</i>	сам-и́м	сам-о́й/-о́ю	сам-и́м	сам-и́ми
<i>Prep.</i>	о сам-о́м	о сам-о́й	о сам-о́м	о сам-и́х

Note

- (a) The accusative feminine **самоё** is the traditional literary form, but **саму́** is now found in all styles. **Самоё**, though obsolescent and ‘bookish’, is still common with the reflexive pronoun **себя́**: уничтожа́ть **самоё себя́** ‘to destroy oneself’.
- (b) Unlike **сам**, the oblique cases of which take *end stress* (**самого́** etc.), **са́мый** is *stem stressed* throughout declension (**са́мого** etc.).

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	весь	вс-я	вс-ё	вс-е
<i>Acc.</i>	весь/вс-его́	вс-ю	вс-ё	вс-е/вс-ех
<i>Gen.</i>	вс-его́	вс-ей	вс-его́	вс-ех
<i>Dat.</i>	вс-ему́	вс-ей	вс-ему́	вс-ем
<i>Instr.</i>	вс-ем	вс-ей/-ёю	вс-ем	вс-ёми
<i>Prep.</i>	обо вс-ём	обо вс-ей	обо вс-ём	обо вс-ех

131 Сам and са́мый

(1) Сам

(i) **Сам** is an emphatic pronoun: Я **сам** это сделаю ‘I shall do it myself’, Она́ **сама́** встала ‘She got up by herself’.

(ii) **Сам** may precede or follow a noun: Спросите учителя **самого́/самого́** учителя ‘Ask the teacher himself’. Note gender distinction in Я пе́редал письмо́ тебе́ **самому́** ‘I passed the letter on to you personally’ (to a male), Я пе́редал письмо́ тебе́ **самой** ‘I passed the letter on to you personally’ (to a female).

(iii) **Сам** can also add emphasis to the reflexive pronoun **себя́**: Вы губите **самого́/саму́/самих** себя́ ‘You are ruining yourself/yourselves’. It can also qualify *inanimate* nouns:

Сам зако́н заставляет алиме́нтщиков иди́ти на обма́н (*Nedelia*)
‘The law **itself** compels alimony payers to resort to deception’

Note

Сам agrees with other pronouns which stand in apposition to it: **Ей** надо́ело **самой** носи́ть бельё в пра́чечную ‘**She** is sick of taking the washing to the laundry **herself**’.

(2) Са́мый

(i) **Са́мый** indicates precise location: Он подошёл к **са́мому** обры́ву ‘He went right up to the precipice’, в **са́мом** це́нтре го́рода ‘in the very

centre of the city'. Note also Пóезд идёт до **са́мой** Москвы 'The train goes all the way to Moscow', с **са́мого** начала 'from the very beginning' (for **са́мый** in superlative meaning, see also 185).

(ii) **Тот са́мый** means 'the very': Он купил **ту са́мую** книгу, кото́рую вы рекомендовали 'He bought **the very** book you recommended'. **Тот же са́мый** means 'the same': У нас **те же (са́мые)** интере́сы 'We have **the same** interests'.

132 Весь, це́лый, вся́кий, ка́ждый, любóй, вся́ческий

(1) Весь/це́лый

Весь means 'all, the whole' etc.: **весь** мир 'the whole world', **Мы** ёздили по **всей** стране 'We travelled all over the country', **все** рабо́чие 'all (the) workers'. **Це́лый** means 'a whole, whole', cf. Он съел **це́лое** я́блоко 'He ate **a whole** apple' and Он съел **всё** я́блоко 'He ate **the whole** apple', Голода́ли **це́лые** се́мьи '**Whole** families starved' and **Все** се́мьи голода́ли '**All the** families starved'. **Всё** also means 'everything' (**всё, что** я знаю́ 'everything I know'), while **все** can mean 'everyone', and takes a *plural* verb or adjective (Все **голосу́ют** 'Everyone votes'). Note the phrases **все** о́ни, **все** мы etc. 'all of them, all of us'.

(2) Вся́кий/ка́ждый/любóй/вся́ческий

(i) **Вся́кий** means 'all kinds of': Он торго́ует **вся́кими** това́рами 'He trades in all kinds of goods', **Вся́кое** (adjectival noun) быва́ет 'All kinds of things happen'. In combination with the preposition **без**, it may be rendered as 'any': без **вся́кого** сомне́ния 'without any doubt', без **вся́кого** труда́ 'without any trouble'. Note also во **вся́ком** слу́чае 'in any case, at any rate' (cf. the precautionary на **вся́кий** слу́чай 'just in case', 'to be on the safe side').

(ii) By comparison with **ка́ждый**, **вся́кий** expresses *totality* (**вся́кий** раз 'each and every time', **Вся́кому** ребёнку нужна́ ла́ска 'Every child needs affection'), while **ка́ждый** emphasizes *each one individually* (**ка́ждый** раз 'every time', **Ка́ждый** из ученико́в получи́л по кни́ге 'Each of the pupils received a book'). **Ка́ждый** is also used with numerals and with plural-only nouns: **ка́ждые** два дня́ 'every two days', **ка́ждые** су́тки 'every twenty-four hours', **ка́ждые** че́тверть часа́ 'every quarter of an hour'.

(iii) **Любо́й** has a strong nuance of *selectivity*: Запиши **любо́е** число́ меньше 50 ‘Write down **any** number less than 50’. Купи́те газе́ту в **любо́м** ки́оске ‘Buy the newspaper at any (but not every) kiosk’.

(iv) **Вся́ческий** is a synonym of **вся́кий** in the meaning ‘all kinds of’.

133 The negative pronouns **никто́, ничто́, никако́й, ниче́й**. The negative particle **не**

(1) **Никто́** ‘no one’, **ничто́** ‘nothing’, **никако́й** ‘none (whatsoever)’, **ниче́й** ‘nobody’s’ decline, respectively, like **кто, что, како́й** and **чей** (see 121).

(2) The negative particle **не** appears between a negative pronoun and the predicate: **Никто́ не** раба́тает ‘No one works’.

134 **Никто́**

(1) **Никто́** means ‘no one, nobody, not anybody’:

Никто́ не пришёл	‘No one has come’
Он никого́ не любит	‘He doesn’t like anybody’
Она́ никому́ не ве́рит	‘She doesn’t believe anyone’
Мы нике́м не дово́льны	‘We are not pleased with anyone’

Note

The presence of **нет** or **нельзя́** renders **не** superfluous: **Никого́ нет** ‘No one’s here’, **Никому́ нельзя́** входи́ть ‘No one may enter’.

(2) **Никто́** takes a masculine predicate even when reference is exclusively to females (cf. 122 (1) (ii)), unless a feminine noun appears as part of the subject: **Никто́** из учени́ц, да́же **Зо́я**, не нашла́сь что сказа́ть ‘None of the pupils, **not even Zoia**, could think of anything to say’.

(3) While English reverts to positive after the first negative, e.g. ‘No one **ever** says **anything** to **anyone**’, Russian can accumulate negatives: **Никто́** **никогда́** **ниче́го** **не** говори́т **никому́**.

(4) In prepositional constructions the prepositions appear between **ни** and the oblique form of **кто**:

Она́ ни с кем не игра́ет	‘She doesn’t play with anyone’
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Он **ни на ком** не собираётся жениться
'He doesn't mean to marry anyone'

В доме **ни у когó ни от когó** нет секретов (Rybakov)
'No one in the house has any secrets from anyone'

(5) 'Hardly anyone' is rendered as **почтí никтó**.

135 Ничтó

(1) **Ничтó** can act as a subject to adjectives (**Ничтó** не вечно 'Nothing is eternal') and to *transitive* verbs (**Ничтó** не интересуется егó 'Nothing interests him'). With intransitive verbs, however, **ничегó** is preferred: С вами **ничегó** не случится 'Nothing will happen to you'.

(2) The same rules of grammatical government and 'accumulation of negatives' apply to **ничтó** as to **никтó** (see 134):

Он **ничегó не** делает
'He does nothing'

Я **ничём не** доволен
'I am not satisfied with anything'

Никтó никогда ничемú не верит
'No one ever believes anything'

Prepositions appear between **ни** and the relevant form of **что**:

Никогда и **ни о чём** она́ Никола́я Демья́новича не проси́ла
(Trifonov)
'She had never asked Nikolai Dem'ianovich for anything'

(3) **Не** is omitted in certain set phrases: уйти **ни с чем** 'to come away empty-handed', погибнуть **ни за что** 'to die for nothing', Но это́ было **ни к чему́** сейча́с (Zalygin) 'But this was irrelevant at the moment'.

(4) 'Hardly anything' is rendered as **почтí ничегó/почтí ничтó**.

Note the idioms: **Ничегó!** 'Never mind!', Муж у неё **ничегó** 'Her husband is not a bad chap', **ни за что** на све́те 'not for anything in the world', **Ничегó не** поде́лаешь 'It can't be helped'.

136 Никакой and ничей

(1) **Никакой** ‘none’ is used mainly for emphasis: Нет **никакой** надежды ‘There is no hope at all’, **Никакие** угрозы не могут сломить наш дух ‘No threats can break our spirit’, Мы **ни перед какими** трудностями не останемся ‘We shall not baulk at any difficulties’.

(2) **Ничей** means ‘nobody’s’:

И дедушка тоже понимал, что **никому** решению, кроме собственного, Иосиф не подчинится (Рубakov)
‘And grandfather also realized that Joseph would bow to no one’s decision but his own’

Вы не действуете **ни в чьих** интересах
‘You are acting in nobody’s interest’

Note

- (a) Prepositions appear between **ни** and the relevant form of **какой** or **чей**.
(b) The particle **не** is omitted when **ничей** is used predicatively: Этот дом **ничей** ‘This house isn’t anybody’s’.

137 The ‘potential’ negative pronouns **некого**, **ничего**

(1) The ‘potential’ negative, both in English and in Russian, involves a negative + infinitive construction: **Ничего делать** ‘There is nothing to do’ (cf. Мы **ничего** не делаем ‘We are not doing anything’).

(2) Only oblique forms of **кто** and **что** appear in the construction (**некого**, **некому**, **некем**, **не [о] ком**; **ничего**, **ничему**, **ничем**, **не [о] чем**). (**Некто** and **нечто** mean, respectively, ‘someone’ and ‘something’; see 140.)

The case of the pronoun is determined by the infinitive: thus **писать** (+ instr. case) ‘to write with’ (**Ничем** писать ‘There is nothing to write with’); **спросить** (+ acc. case) ‘to ask’ (**Некого** спросить ‘There is no one to ask’).

(3) The **construction** comprises the following components:

не (always stressed) + relevant case of pronoun + infinitive
Ничем писать ‘There is nothing to write **with**’

Некому писать ‘There is no one to write **to**’

(4) There are two variants of the construction:

(i) The impersonal:

Ничего делать ‘There is nothing to do’

Некого послать ‘There is no one to send’

(ii) The personal:

Мне ничего делать ‘I have nothing to do’ (the logical subject of an infinitive appears in the dative, cf. **93** (1))

Ничего **мне** бояться, за аварию я не ответчик (Tendriakov)
‘I have nothing to fear, I am not responsible for the accident’

Ленинград! Туман и сырость! **Людям** ничем дышать (Rybakov)
‘Leningrad! Fog and damp! People have nothing to breathe’

(5) In prepositional constructions the preposition appears between **не** and the pronoun:

Ему **не к кому** обратиться за помощью
‘He has no one to turn to for aid’

Ей **не в чем** признаваться (Rybakov)
‘She has nothing to confess to’

(6) The construction may also be used in the past and future: **Мне** ничем **было** писать ‘I had nothing to write with’, **Мне** ничем **будет** писать ‘I won’t have anything to write with’:

Команде **не с кем** было играть (Vanshenkin)
‘The team had nobody to play against’

(7) The *positive* equivalent of the construction involves present **есть**, past **было**, future **будет**: **Есть** чем гордиться ‘There is something to be proud of’ (cf. **Ничем** гордиться ‘There is nothing to be proud of’):

Ребят оставить **было** с кем — как раз в это время прибежала Анка новое платье показывать (Abramov)
‘There **was** someone to leave the children with — Anka came running up at that very moment to show her new dress’

Note

Idiomatic usage in **Ничего** (**незачем**) обижаться ‘There’s no point in taking offence’, **ничего** и говорить ‘needless to say’, от **ничего**

делать ‘for want of something to do’, **Нé за что** ‘Don’t mention it’.

(8) In all the above examples, the case of the pronoun is determined by the infinitive: **Когó** послать? **Нéкого** послать ‘Whom to send? There is no one to send’.

However, in phrases of the type ‘There is no one to drive the car, look after the children’, ‘no one’ is the logical *subject* of the verb and therefore appears in the dative (see (4) (ii) above):

Нéкому о нём забóтиться (Рybakov)
‘There is no one to care for him’

Порядок навести **нéкому** (Рybakov)
‘There is no one to establish order’

Дóма **нéкому** обьяснить мáльчику уро́ки
‘There is no one at home to explain the homework to the boy’

138 The indefinite pronouns **кто́-то**, **кто́-нибудь**, **кто́-либо**; **что́-то**, **что́-нибудь**, **что́-либо**; **како́й-то**, **како́й-нибудь**, **како́й-либо**; **че́й-то**, **че́й-нибудь**, **че́й-либо**

The particles **-то**, **-нибудь** and **-либо** can be attached to **кто**, **что**, **како́й**, **че́й** to form indefinite pronouns (for declension, see 121; note that they can also be attached to **где**, **как**, **куда́**, **когда́**, **почему́**, see 395).

(1) **-то**

(i) **Кто́-то**

(a) **Кто́-то** ‘someone’ denotes one particular person whose identity, however, is unknown to or has been forgotten by the speaker. Since reference is to a definite event, **кто́-то** tends to be confined almost exclusively to the past or present tense (for use with the future, however, see (iv) below): **Кто́-то** стучит в дверь ‘Someone is knocking on the door’ (i.e. a definite person, but the speaker does not know who it is), **Кто́-то** позвонил из школы ‘Someone rang from the school’ (again, a definite person, but identity unknown (or possibly forgotten by the person who took the call)), Она́ помогáла **кому́-то** перейти́ доро́гу ‘She was helping someone to cross the road’ etc.

(b) **Кто́-то** can also be extended by an adjective: **кто́-то** **высо́кий** ‘someone tall’.

(c) **Кто́-то** takes a masculine predicate even when reference is to a female: Кто́-то звони́л. **Э́то была́ кака́я-то де́вушка** ‘Someone rang. It was some girl or other’.

(ii) **Что́-то**

(a) **Что́-то** ‘something’ likewise denotes a definite object or thing, details of which are unknown to the speaker: Он **что́-то** сказа́л, но я не расслы́шал, что́ и́менно ‘He said something, but I did not catch exactly what it was’, Она́ **что́-то** жуёт ‘She is chewing something’ (but the speaker does not know what it is), Он **че́м-то** недово́лен ‘He is displeased about something’, cf.:

На́дю о **че́м-то** спроси́л Михаи́л, она́ **что́-то** отве́тила — всё шёпотом (Rasputin)

‘Mikhail asked Nadia about **something**, she gave **some answer or other** — all in a whisper’

(b) **Что́-то** can also be extended by a neuter adjective: Он бормота́л что́-то **непоня́тное** ‘He was mumbling something incomprehensible’. Note also Э́то стои́т миллио́н **с че́м-то** ‘It costs something over a million roubles’.

(iii) **Како́й-то** and **че́й-то**

(a) **Како́й-то** and **че́й-то** are used in similar fashion to кто́-то and что́-то: Он изуча́ет **како́й-то** язы́к ‘He is studying some (definite but unspecified) language or other’, Она́ проверя́ла **чьё́-то** тетра́дь ‘She was correcting someone’s exercise book’.

(b) **Како́й-то** may sometimes render English ‘a’: Вас спра́шивала **кака́я-то** де́вушка ‘A girl (some girl or other) was asking for you’.

(iv) Forms with **-то** may be used in the future, but only if the identity of the person or thing referred to is already known: **Я** подарю́ тебе́ **что́-то** ко дню́ рожде́ния ‘I shall give you something for your birthday’ (meaning that I have already decided **what** to give. If I still have to make the choice, **что́-нибудь** must be used).

(2) **-нибудь**

(i) Unlike forms in **-то**, forms in **-нибудь** do not imply a particular person or thing, but someone or something indefinite, or one of an unspecified number, still to be decided or selected:

Я счастливее здесь, чем **в каком-нибудь другом месте**
 ‘I am happier here than **anywhere else**’

The hypothetical nature of forms in **-нибудь** accounts for their usage in **questions**, in the **future**, after **imperatives** and in **conditional** and **subjunctive** constructions:

(a) Questions:

— Ты **в когó-нибудь** влюбился? (Nikolaev)
 “‘Have you fallen in love with **someone**?’”

— Кóля! **Что-нибудь** случилось? (Iakhontov)
 “‘Kolia! Has **anything** (or **something**) happened?’”

(b) Future:

Он придумает **какое-нибудь** неотложное дело (Koluntsev)
 ‘He is bound to think up **some** urgent business **or other**’

(c) Imperative:

— Расскажите ещё **о чём-нибудь**, — попросила она ободряюще.
 — О чём же?
 — О чём хотите (Nosov)
 “‘Tell me about **something** else,” she asked encouragingly.
 “‘About what, then?’”
 “‘About anything you like’”

(d) Conditional and subjunctive.

Conditional

Разве **кто-нибудь** в этом случае поступил бы иначе? (Kuleshov)
 ‘Do you really think **anyone** would have behaved differently in the circumstances?’

Subjunctive

Он хóчет, чтóбы **кто-нибудь** ему помóг
 ‘He wants **someone** to help him’

(ii) **-нибудь** is also used, irrespective of tense, when reference is to different people or things on different occasions. Thus, Я часто приглашаю **кого-нибудь** сделать доклад, ‘I often invite **someone** to give a talk’ (different speakers on different occasions), Я всегда дарю ей **что-нибудь** ко дню рождения ‘I always give her **something** for her birthday’ (a different present on each birthday), cf.:

У нас в отделе всегда **кто-нибудь** висел на телефоне (Avdeenko)

‘In our department **someone** (i.e. different people on different occasions) was always on the phone’

Чудик обладал одной особенностью: с ним постоянно **что-нибудь** случалось (Shukshin)

‘Chudik had a peculiarity: **something** was always happening to him’

— Дядь, проведите на стадион, — просил я **какого-нибудь** доброго мужчину . . . (Makarov)

“‘Mister, take me into the stadium with you,” I would ask **some** kind man **or other** . . .’

Когда надо было перенести из склада **что-нибудь** тяжёлое, то помогал Кузьма (Rasputin)

‘Whenever **something** heavy had to be moved from the warehouse, Kuz’ma would help’

(iii) **Какой-нибудь** can also denote:

(a) Approximation:

За **каких-нибудь** 70–80 лет на грани исчезновения оказалось 600 видов млекопитающих (*Sel’skaia zhizn’*)

‘Over a period of **some** 70–80 years 600 species of mammals have found themselves on the verge of extinction’

(b) Inferior quality:

Дам тебе не **какой-нибудь** учебник, а хороший

‘I won’t give you just **any old** textbook, but a good one’

(3) -либо

Forms in **-либо** are similar in meaning to those in **-нибудь**, but imply an even greater degree of indefiniteness (‘anyone, anything you care to name’ etc.), functioning sometimes as a ‘bookish’ alternative to forms in **-нибудь**:

— Конечно, ты прав, — сказала она. — Менять **что-либо** поздно (Zalygin)

“‘You’re right, of course,” she said. “It’s too late to change **anything whatsoever**”

И происходит это . . . без **какой-либо** волокиты (*Nedelia*)

‘And this happens . . . without **any** red tape **at all**’

Разве любовь к своей команде оскорбляет **чьё-либо** достоинство (Makarov)

‘Does love for one’s team really offend **anyone’s** dignity’

See also 395 (3).

139 The indefinite pronouns **кòе-кто́, кòе-что́, кòе-како́й**

(1) **Кòе-кто́, кòе-что́** and **кòе-како́й** decline like **кто, что** and **како́й** respectively (see **121** and **146** (3) note (b)). Note that **кòе-** does *not* decline. Though both **кòе-кто́** and **кòе-что́** take singular predicates, they have plural meaning (**кòе-кто́** ‘one or two people’, **кòе-что́** ‘a thing or two; you know who; you know what’):

Кòе-кто́ на Западе задался целью заново «переписать» историю второй мировой войны (*Russia Today*)

‘**One or two people** in the West have set themselves the task of “rewriting” the history of the Second World War’

Надо **кòе к кому́** забежать

‘I need to pop in to see **a couple of people**’

Кòе на что́ смотрели сквозь пальцы (Rybakov)

‘**Some things** they turned a blind eye to’

(2) As the examples show, prepositions appear between **кòе** and the oblique case form. In constructions with **кòе-како́й**, however, prepositions may precede or follow **кòе**:

Он обратился ко мне **кòе с какими́** (or **с кòе-какими́**) предложениями
‘He approached me with **a number of** proposals’

140 **Некто́, нечто́**

Некто́ ‘someone, a certain’ appears only in the nominative (**некто́** Иванов ‘one Ivanov’) and **нечто́** ‘something’ only in the nominative/accusative. The pronouns are usually qualified, e.g. **некто́** в белых перчатках ‘someone in white gloves’, **нечто́** подобное ‘something similar’.

141 **Некоторый́**

Некоторый́ declines like a hard adjective. It appears in a number of set phrases (в/до **некоторой** степени ‘to a certain extent’, **некоторое** время ‘a certain time’, с **некоторого** времени ‘for some time now’), but usually takes plural form (**некоторые́** ‘some, certain’). By comparison with **несколько́** it is selective rather than merely quantitative:

У неё в группе **несколько** иностранных студентов; **некоторые** из них блестящие языковеды
 ‘There are **a few** foreign students in her group; **some** of them are brilliant linguists’

142 Нёкий

(1) The indefinite pronoun **нёкий** declines as follows:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	нёк-ий	нёк-ая	нёк-ое	нёк-ие
<i>Acc.</i>	нёк-ий/нёк-оего	нёк-ую	нёк-ое	нёк-ие/нёк-оих or нёк-их
<i>Gen.</i>	нёк-оего	нёк-оёй/нёк-оёй	нёк-оего	нёк-оих/нёк-их
<i>Dat.</i>	нёк-оёму	нёк-оёй/нёк-оёй	нёк-оёму	нёк-оим/нёк-им
<i>Instr.</i>	нёк-оим/нёк-им	нёк-оёй/нёк-оёй	нёк-оим/нёк-им	нёк-оими/нёк-ими
<i>Prep.</i>	онёк-оем	онёк-оёй	онёк-оем	онёк-оих/нёк-их

(2) The pronoun’s main function is to qualify surnames: **нёкий** Брагин ‘a certain Bragin’.

(3) The contracted forms **нёким, нёкой, нёких, нёкими** are now preferred by many users of the language: У **нёкой** Ивановой нет паспорта ‘A certain Ivanova has no passport’. However, the longer forms are still found:

Дом принадлежал **нёкоёму** Кислы́х (Granin)
 ‘The house belonged to a certain Kislykh’

ссылаясь на **нёкоего** представителя в ООН (*Pravda*)
 ‘with reference to a certain representative at the UN’

143 Other parts of speech which can also function as pronouns

Some other parts of speech can also function as pronouns. They include:

(1) **Данный** ‘present’: в **данный** момент ‘at the present moment’.

(2) **Один**:

(i) ‘A (certain)’: К вам заходил **один** студент ‘A student called to see you’.

(ii) ‘The same’: Они учились в **одной** школе ‘They went to the same school’.

(3) The reciprocal pronoun **дрѹг дрѹга** ‘each other’, the first part of which is invariable, while the second part is governed by the verb or adjective. Only singular forms are involved, never plural:

Онѹ любѹют **дрѹг дрѹга** (Uvarova)
‘They love each other’

Онѹ сигнѹлили **дрѹг дрѹгу** фонарѹми (Aitmatov)
‘They were signalling to each other with lanterns’

Prepositions appear centrally, between **дрѹг** and the declined form:

Онѹ сѹли на своѹ кровѹти **дрѹг прѹтив дрѹга** (Iakhontov)
‘They sat down opposite each other on their beds’

This does not apply, however, to some secondary prepositions: **вблизи** дрѹг дрѹга ‘near each other’, **благодарѹ** дрѹг дрѹгу ‘thanks to each other’, **вопреки** дрѹг дрѹгу ‘contrary to each other’, **навстрѹчу** дрѹг дрѹгу ‘to meet each other’.

Дрѹг дрѹга also functions as a possessive:

Знѹли о снѹжном челѹвѹке по рассказѹм **дрѹг дрѹга** (Povoljaev)
‘They knew of the yeti from each other’s stories’

The Adjective

144 Introduction

(1) Adjectives may be attributive, either preceding the noun (e.g. ‘The **black** cat purred’) or following it and separated from it by a comma (‘A cat, **wet** with the rain, sat on the step’). Adjectives may also be predicative, following the noun and linked to it by a verb: ‘The cat **is wet**’.

(2) Adjectives also have comparative forms (‘My car is **newer** than yours’) and superlative forms (‘His house is the **oldest** in the street’).

(3) Most adjectives in Russian have *two* forms, a long (attributive) form (e.g. **краси́вый, краси́вая, краси́вое, краси́вые** ‘beautiful’) and a short (predicative) form (e.g. **краси́в, краси́ва, краси́во, краси́вы** ‘am, is, are beautiful’). This is also true of comparatives.

Note

Subsequently, ‘is, are’ are used to designate the short form.

The Long Form of the Adjective

145 The long adjective: hard endings

(1) Most long adjectives in Russian have **hard** endings, that is, the first vowel of the ending is **а, о** or **ы**, e.g.

<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
но́в- ый	но́в- ая	но́в- ое	но́в- ые ‘new’

Hard-ending adjectives decline as follows:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	но́в- ый	но́в- ая	но́в- ое	но́в- ые
<i>Acc.</i>	но́в- ый /но́в- ого	но́в- ую	но́в- ое	но́в- ые /но́в- ых
<i>Gen.</i>	но́в- ого	но́в- ой	но́в- ого	но́в- ых
<i>Dat.</i>	но́в- ому	но́в- ой	но́в- ому	но́в- ым
<i>Instr.</i>	но́в- ым	но́в- ой /но́в- ою	но́в- ым	но́в- ыми
<i>Prep.</i>	о но́в- ом	о но́в- ой	о но́в- ом	о но́в- ых

Note

- (a) The instrumental feminine form in **-ою** survives mainly in poetry.
- (b) End-stressed adjectives (e.g. **молодо́й**) decline like **но́вый** except in the masculine nominative singular and inanimate accusative singular, which have the ending **-о́й**.
- (c) **-го** in adjectival endings is pronounced [və] ([vo] under stress).

146 ‘Mixed’ declension

- (1) The ‘mixed’ declension involves adjectives whose final consonant is a velar consonant (**г, к** or **х**), a palatal sibilant (**ж, ч, ш** or **щ**) or **ц**.
- (2) Endings are determined by the spelling rules (see **16** (1) and (2)):
 - (i) **и** replaces **ы** after **г, к, х, ж, ч, ш** and **щ**;
 - (ii) unstressed **о** is replaced by **е** after **ж, ч, ш, щ** and **ц**.
- (3) Declension of **ру́сский** ‘Russian’:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	ру́сск- ий	ру́сск- ая	ру́сск- ое	ру́сск- ие
<i>Acc.</i>	ру́сск- ий /ру́сск- ого	ру́сск- ую	ру́сск- ое	ру́сск- ие /ру́сск- их
<i>Gen.</i>	ру́сск- ого	ру́сск- ой	ру́сск- ого	ру́сск- их
<i>Dat.</i>	ру́сск- ому	ру́сск- ой	ру́сск- ому	ру́сск- им
<i>Instr.</i>	ру́сск- им	ру́сск- ой / -ою	ру́сск- им	ру́сск- ими
<i>Prep.</i>	о ру́сск- ом	о ру́сск- ой	о ру́сск- ом	о ру́сск- их

Note

- (a) Adjectives in **-гий** and **-хий** (e.g. **до́лгий** ‘long’, **ти́хий** ‘quiet’) decline like **ру́сский**.

- (b) End-stressed adjectives have **-ой** in the masculine nominative singular and inanimate accusative singular, e.g. **другой** ‘other’, **какой** ‘which’, **сухой** ‘dry’.

(4) Declension of **хороший** ‘good’:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	хорош- ий	хорош- ая	хорош- ее	хорош- ие
<i>Acc.</i>	хорош- ий/-его	хорош- ую	хорош- ее	хорош- ие/хорош-их
<i>Gen.</i>	хорош- его	хорош- ей	хорош- его	хорош- их
<i>Dat.</i>	хорош- ему	хорош- ей	хорош- ему	хорош- им
<i>Instr.</i>	хорош- им	хорош- ей/-ею	хорош- им	хорош- ими
<i>Prep.</i>	о хорош- ем	о хорош- ей	о хорош- ем	о хорош- их

Note

- (a) Adjectives in **-жий** (e.g. **свежий** ‘fresh’), **-чий** (e.g. **горячий** ‘hot’) and **-щий** (e.g. **настоящий** ‘real’) decline like **хороший**.
- (b) Adjectives in **-цый** (e.g. **кучый** ‘dock-tailed’) decline like **хороший** except in the masculine nominative singular and inanimate accusative singular, which end in **-ый**, the masculine and neuter instrumental singular (**кучым**) and the whole of the plural (**кучые, кучых** etc.). See 2 (ii) above.

(5) Declension of **большой** ‘big’:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	больш- ой	больш- ая	больш- ое	больш- ие
<i>Acc.</i>	больш- ой/-ого	больш- ую	больш- ое	больш- ие/больш-их
<i>Gen.</i>	больш- ого	больш- ой	больш- ого	больш- их
<i>Dat.</i>	больш- ому	больш- ой	больш- ому	больш- им
<i>Instr.</i>	больш- им	больш- ой/-ою	больш- им	больш- ими
<i>Prep.</i>	о больш- ом	о больш- ой	о больш- ом	о больш- их

Note

Чужой ‘someone else’s’ declines like **большой**.

147 Soft-ending adjectives

- (1) Soft-ending adjectives comprise some forty adjectives in **-ний** and the adjective **карий** ‘hazel’ (eye colour).

Declension of **последний** ‘last’:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	последн- ий	последн- ья	последн- ее	последн- ие
<i>Acc.</i>	последн- ий/-его	последн- юю	последн- ее	последн- ие/ последн-их
<i>Gen.</i>	последн- его	последн- ей	последн- его	последн- их
<i>Dat.</i>	последн- ему	последн- ей	последн- ему	последн- им
<i>Instr.</i>	последн- им	последн- ей/-ею	последн- им	последн- ими
<i>Prep.</i>	о последн- ем	о последн- ей	о последн- ем	о последн- их

(2) Adjectives in **-ий** subdivide into those which express:

(i) **Time**: весённый ‘spring’, вечерний ‘evening’, всегдашний ‘customary’, вчерашний ‘yesterday’s’, давний ‘long-standing’, давнишний ‘of long standing’, древний ‘ancient’, завтрашний ‘tomorrow’s’, зимний ‘winter’, летний ‘summer’, недавний ‘recent’, нынешний ‘present-day’, осенний ‘autumn’, поздний ‘late’, прежний ‘former’, прошлогодний ‘last year’s’, ранний ‘early’, сегодняшний ‘today’s’, субботний ‘Saturday’s’, теперешний ‘present-day’, тогдашний ‘of that time’, утренний ‘morning’.

(ii) **Location**: ближний ‘near’, верхний ‘upper, top’, внешний ‘external’, внутренний ‘internal’, дальний ‘far’, домашний ‘domestic’, задний ‘back’, здешний ‘of this place’, крайний ‘extreme’, нижний ‘lower, bottom’, передний ‘front’, соседний ‘neighbouring, next’, тамошний ‘of that place’.

Note

- (a) **Ближний** and **дальний** express relative distance: **ближний** угол ‘the near corner’, **дальний** угол ‘the far (*not* ‘the distant’) corner’, **Ближний** Восток ‘the Near East’ (i.e. ‘the Middle East’), **Дальний** Восток ‘the Far East’. Note that the counterpart to **дальний** родственник ‘distant relative’ is **родственник** ‘relative’ or **близкий** родственник ‘close relative’.
- (b) **Последний** ‘last’ and **средний** ‘middle’ can refer to both time and space.
- (c) Some soft endings relate only to compound adjectives: **новогодний** ‘new year’ (cf. годово́й ‘annual’ from год ‘year’), **односторонний** ‘unilateral’.

(iii) **Others**: дочерний ‘daughter’s, daughterly’, замужняя ‘married’ (of a woman), искренний ‘sincere’, лишний ‘superfluous’, порожний ‘empty’, синий ‘(dark) blue’, сыновний ‘filial’.

148 Formation of adjectives from nouns: the suffixes **-н-**, **-ск-** and **-ов-/-ев-**

(1) Unlike English, in which most nouns can also function as adjectives (e.g. ‘steel’ (noun) becomes ‘steel’ (adjective) in ‘**steel** bridge’), adjectives in Russian derive from nouns mainly through suffixation.

(2) The commonest suffix is **-н-**: thus, **чайный** from чай ‘tea’ (чайная чашка ‘tea cup’), **комнатный** from комната ‘room’ (комнатная температура ‘room temperature’), **местный** from место ‘place’ (местный наркоз ‘local anaesthetic’). **Г, к, х, ц** and **л** undergo mutation before suffix **-н-**:

г: ж	юг ‘south’	ю ж ный ‘southern’
к: ч	река́ ‘river’	реч н ой ‘river’ (adjective)
х: ш	возду х ‘air’	возду ш ный ‘air’ (adjective)
ц: ч	улица́ ‘street’	улич н ый ‘street’ (adjective)
л: ль	шко́ла ‘school’	шко́ль н ый ‘school’ (adjective)

(3) The suffix **-ск-** is associated mainly with adjectives derived from the names of:

(i) People, thus: **мужско́й** ‘male’, **граждáнский** ‘civic’ etc.

Note

Adjectives from some animate nouns have the suffix **-еск-**, e.g. **челове́ческий** ‘human’ from человек ‘human’. Adjectives derived from some proper names take the infix **-ов-**: **го́рьковский** from Го́рький ‘Gorky’.

(ii) Towns, rivers etc. (note also **городско́й** from го́род ‘town’, **се́льский** from село́ ‘village’): **донско́й** from Дон ‘the Don’, **москóвский** from Москв́а ‘Moscow’.

Note

(a) Some town names ending in a vowel have adjectives in **-инский**: **алма-ати́нский** from Алма́-Ата́ ‘Alma Ata’ (now also Алма́ты), **баки́нский** from Баку́ ‘Baku’, **я́лтинский** from Ялта́ ‘Yalta’ (note also **куби́нский** ‘Cuban’, cf. **куба́нский** from **куба́нь** ‘the (river) Kuban’).

(b) Adjectival stress differs in some cases from noun stress: **астраха́нский** from А́страхань ‘Astrakhan’, **новгоро́дский** from Но́вгород ‘Novgorod’.

(c) Consonant mutation occurs in adjectives derived from the names of some towns, rivers, mountain ranges etc.: **во́лжский** from Во́лга ‘the

Volga', **пра́жский** from Пра́га 'Prague', **ри́жский** from Рига 'Riga', **ура́льский** from Ура́л 'the Urals'.

(iii) Nationalities and languages: **ру́сский/росси́йский** 'Russian', **по́льский** 'Polish', including more recent formations such as **зимбабвийский** 'Zimbabwean'. Note that **латви́йский** 'Latvian' refers to the country (e.g. **латви́йское** побере́жье 'the Latvian coastline'), whereas **латы́шский** 'Latvian' refers to the people (e.g. **латы́шский** язы́к 'the Latvian language').

(iv) Organizations: **ду́мский** 'Duma' (adj.), **заводско́й** from завод 'factory', **на́товский** from НА́ТО 'NATO' etc.

(v) Months: **октя́брьский** 'October' etc. Note the absence of a soft sign in **январьский** 'January' and the infix **-ов-** in **августовский** 'August', **ма́ртовский** 'March'.

(4) The suffix **-ов-/-ев-** is used to form adjectives from the names of many trees (e.g. **бу́ковый** from бук 'beech'), fruits and vegetables (e.g. **оре́ховый** from оре́х 'nut'), growing areas (e.g. **полево́й** from по́ле 'field'), metals and alloys (e.g. **цинково́й** from цинк 'zinc'), certain other substances (e.g. **рези́новый** from рези́на 'rubber'), animals (e.g. **слоно́вый** from слон 'elephant'), suits of cards (e.g. **пи́ковый** from пи́ки 'spades'), colours (e.g. **ро́зовый** 'pink' from ро́за 'rose'), the names of some young people (e.g. **подро́стковый/ подро́стко́вый** from подро́сток 'adolescent'), synthetic materials (e.g. **нейло́новый** from нейло́н 'nylon'), nouns in **-инг** (e.g. **ли́зингово́й** from ли́зинг 'leasing'), and other nouns (e.g. **звучово́й** from звук 'sound', **ра́ковый** from рак 'cancer' etc.).

149 Adjectival endings with specific meanings

Some adjectival endings have specific meanings. These include:

(1) **-ивый, -ливый, -чивый**

Adjectives with these endings denote characteristics: **лени́вый** 'lazy', **терпели́вый** 'patient', **разговóрчивый** 'talkative' etc.

(2) **-мый**

Adjectives with this ending denote potential qualities (cf. English **-ble**): **преодоли́мый** 'surmountable', **раствори́мый** 'soluble'. Such adjectives are of participial derivation (see also 344).

(3) -атый

Adjectives with this ending denote possession of the object denoted by the root noun: **перна́тый** ‘feathered’, **рога́тый** ‘horned’.

(4) -астый

Adjectives with this ending denote possession of a prominent physical feature: **груда́стый** ‘busty’, **скула́стый** ‘high-cheek-boned’ etc.

(5) -истый

Adjectives with this ending denote abundance of the feature denoted by the root noun: **тени́стый** ‘shady’. They can also denote similarity: **золоти́стый** ‘golden’ (of colour etc.) (cf. **золото́й** ‘(made of) gold’).

(6) -чий

Adjectives with this ending denote various states: **вися́чий** ‘hanging’ (**вися́чий** мост ‘suspension bridge’), **сидя́чий** ‘sedentary’ etc. The adjectives are of participial origin.

150 Nouns with more than one adjective

Nouns with two or more derivative adjectives subdivide as follows:

(1) Different meanings of the same noun are involved. Thus, мир ‘world’ has the adjective **мирово́й** (мирова́я война́ ‘world war’), while мир ‘peace’ has the adjective **ми́рный** (ми́рный догово́р ‘peace treaty’).

(2) The adjectival endings express different qualities or properties of a noun. Thus, both **дру́жеский** ‘friendly’ and **дру́жный** ‘concerted, harmonious’ derive from друг ‘friend’, as does the official **дру́жественный** (Перегово́ры проходи́ли в дру́жественной обстановке ‘The talks were held in a cordial atmosphere’).

151 Possessive adjectives

Possessive adjectives fall into two categories:

(1) The type **во́лчий** ‘wolf’s’.

(i) **Во́лчий** is declined as follows:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	во́лчий	во́лчь-я	во́лчь-е	во́лчь-и
<i>Acc.</i>	во́лчий/во́лчь-его	во́лчь-ю	во́лчь-е	во́лчь-и/их
<i>Gen.</i>	во́лчь-его	во́лчь-ей	во́лчь-его	во́лчь-их
<i>Dat.</i>	во́лчь-ему	во́лчь-ей	во́лчь-ему	во́лчь-им
<i>Instr.</i>	во́лчь-им	во́лчь-ей/-ею	во́лчь-им	во́лчь-ими
<i>Prep.</i>	о во́лчь-ем	о во́лчь-ей	о во́лчь-ем	о во́лчь-их

(ii) **Most** adjectives in this category derive from the names of animals, birds, fish etc.: **ли́сий** ‘fox’s’, **ры́бий** ‘fish’s’ and so on. Some derive from the names of human beings. Consonant mutation operates as follows:

г: ж	бог	божий	‘god’s’
д: ж	медве́дь	медве́жий	‘bear’s’
к: ч	соба́ка	соба́чий	‘dog’s’
	охо́тник	охо́тничий	‘hunter’s’
х: ш	черепа́ха	черепа́ший	‘tortoise’s’
ц: ч	овца́	ове́чий	‘sheep’s’
	деви́ца	деви́чий	‘maiden’ (e.g. деви́чья фами́лия ‘maiden name’)

(iii) A number of the adjectives appear in set phrases: волк в **ове́чьей** шку́ре ‘wolf in sheep’s clothing’, вид с **пти́чьего** полёта ‘bird’s eye view’.

Note

Тре́тий ‘third’ also declines like **во́лчий**.

(2) The type **ма́мин** ‘Mum’s’.

(i) **Ма́мин** declines as follows, combining adjective and noun endings:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	ма́мин	ма́мин-а	ма́мин-о	ма́мин-ы
<i>Acc.</i>	ма́мин/ма́мин-ого	ма́мин-у	ма́мин-о	ма́мин-ы/-ых
<i>Gen.</i>	ма́мин-ого	ма́мин-ой	ма́мин-ого	ма́мин-ых
<i>Dat.</i>	ма́мин-у	ма́мин-ой	ма́мин-у	ма́мин-ым
<i>Instr.</i>	ма́мин-ым	ма́мин-ой/-ою	ма́мин-ым	ма́мин-ыми
<i>Prep.</i>	о ма́мин-ом	о ма́мин-ой	о ма́мин-ом	о ма́мин-ых

(ii) Possessive adjectives of this type are formed by adding the suffixes **-ин**, **-нин** or **-ов** to the stems of nouns (ма́ма ‘Mum’ etc.): **ба́бушкин** ‘grandma’s’, **бра́тнин** ‘brother’s’, **де́дов** ‘granddad’s’, **дя́дин** ‘uncle’s’, **же́нин** ‘wife’s’, **ки́син/ко́шкин** ‘pussy’s’, **ма́мин** ‘Mum’s’, **му́жнин** ‘husband’s’,

нянин ‘nanny’s’, **отцов/папин** ‘Dad’s’, **сестрин** ‘sister’s’, **тётин** ‘auntie’s’. They are used mainly within the family circle:

От **маминых** завтраков он решил бежать (Tendriakov)
‘He decided to escape from Mum’s breakfasts’

(iii) They also derive from the familiar forms of first names: **Кóлин** ‘Kolia’s’:

Я считаю, что **Наташина** мама права (*Rabotitsa*)
‘I consider that Natasha’s Mum is right’

(iv) The endings also appear in phrases deriving from mythology, the Bible etc. (**ахиллесова** пятá ‘Achilles’ heel’), geographical terms (**Бéрингов** проли́в ‘Bering Straits’), other phrases (**крокоди́ловы** слéзы ‘crocodile tears’) etc.

(v) Some forms in **-ин**, mostly denoting animals, have acquired long adjectival endings and decline like **но́вый**: **лебеди́ный** ‘swan’s’, **лошади́ный** ‘horse’s’ (**лебеди́ная** пéсня ‘swan song’, **лошади́ная** си́ла ‘horse power’).

152 Diminutive adjectives in **-енький/-онький**

(1) Most diminutive adjectives end in **-енький** (e.g. **но́венький** from **но́вый** ‘new’) and (after velar consonants) **-онький** (**высо́конький** from **высо́кий**, **лёго́нький** from **лёгкий** ‘light, easy’, **тихо́нький** from **тихий** ‘quiet’). The stress falls on the syllable preceding **-енький/-онький**.

(2) Diminutive adjectives may express smallness: **блédненькое** ли́чко ‘a pale little face’, **А́лька** передёрнула **у́зенькими** плечáми (Koluntsev)
‘A spasm convulsed Al’ka’s narrow little shoulders’.

(3) Like diminutive nouns (see **104–108**), diminutive adjectives may also express emotive nuances of sympathy, scorn etc.: **моло́денький** студéнт ‘a nice young student’, **глу́пенький** мальчо́нка ‘a stupid little kid’.

(4) Diminutive endings may also impart a meaning of intensity to an adjective, e.g. **прóстенький** ‘very plain’, **чи́стенький** ма́льчик ‘spotlessly clean little boy’, cf.:

Михаи́л принёс две **холо́дненькие** буты́лки моско́вского пивка́ (Abramov)
‘Mikhail brought two **ice-cold** bottles of Moscow beer’

153 Diminutive adjectives in -оватый/-еватый

(1) The diminutive suffix **-оват(ый)/-еват(ый)** denotes incompleteness: **дороговáтый** ‘rather dear’, **кисловáтый** ‘rather sour’, **синевáтый** ‘bluish’.

Note

These diminutives cannot be formed from all adjectives. Thus, they are formed from старýй ‘old’ and глупýй ‘stupid’ (старовáтый, глуповáтый), but not from their opposites молодóй ‘young’ and умный ‘clever’.

(2) Such diminutives may acquire an evaluative nuance: **дороговáтая кварти́ра** ‘a rather expensive apartment’, **холодновáтая погóда** ‘weather somewhat on the cold side’.

(3) Maximum colloquial expressiveness is achieved by the addition of **-енький**: **глуховáтенький** ‘somewhat hard of hearing’.

154 Indeclinable adjectives

(1) Most indeclinable adjectives are loan words and *follow* the noun. Some denote colour (e.g. **ха́ки** ‘khaki’):

Два но́вых пла́тья: откры́тое, **беж** . . . и цве́та **бордо́** (Zalygin)
‘Two new dresses, an open-necked beige . . . and a deep red’

(2) Others denote:

(i) Food and drink:

ко́фе мо́кко	‘mocha coffee’
карто́фель фри	‘French fries’

(ii) Styles of clothing:

пальто́ демисезо́н	‘spring or autumn coat’
брю́ки клёш	‘bell-bottom trousers’
ю́бка ми́ни (also ми́ни-ю́бка or ми́ни)	‘mini-skirt’
пальто́ регла́н	‘Raglan coat’

(iii) Languages (these adjectives *precede* the noun):

ко́ми за́ймствовани́я	‘Komi loans’
урду́ язы́к	‘Urdu’
хи́нди язы́к	‘Hindi’

Compare, however, язы́к **эспера́нто** ‘Esperanto’.

(iv) Various other meanings:

вес брутто	‘gross weight’
вес нётто	‘net weight’
час пик	‘rush hour’

Note

Some indeclinable adjectives also function as nouns: **джерси** ‘jersey material’, **макси** ‘maxi clothes’.

155 Attributive use of the long adjective

(1) The long adjective usually precedes the noun and agrees with it in gender, case and number:

	‘new house’		‘new book’		‘new armchair’	
	<i>Masculine</i>		<i>Feminine</i>		<i>Neuter</i>	
<i>Nom.</i>	нóв- ый	дом	нóв- ая	кни́га	нóв- ое	крéсло
<i>Acc.</i>	нóв- ый	дом	нóв- ую	кни́гу	нóв- ое	крéсло
<i>Gen.</i>	нóв- ого	до́ма	нóв- ой	кни́ги	нóв- ого	крéсла
<i>Dat.</i>	нóв- ому	до́му	нóв- ой	кни́ге	нóв- ому	крéслу
<i>Instr.</i>	нóв- ым	до́мом	нóв- ой/-ою	кни́гой	нóв- ым	крéслом
<i>Prep.</i>	о нóв- ом	до́ме	о нóв- ой	кни́ге	о нóв- ом	крéсле

Plural

<i>Nom.</i>	нóв- ые	дома́	нóв- ые	кни́ги	нóв- ые	крéсла
<i>Acc.</i>	нóв- ые	дома́	нóв- ые	кни́ги	нóв- ые	крéсла
<i>Gen.</i>	нóв- ых	домо́в	нóв- ых	книг	нóв- ых	крéсел
<i>Dat.</i>	нóв- ым	дома́м	нóв- ым	кни́гам	нóв- ым	крéслам
<i>Instr.</i>	нóв- ыми	дома́ми	нóв- ыми	кни́гами	нóв- ыми	крéслами
<i>Prep.</i>	о нóв- ых	дома́х	о нóв- ых	кни́гах	о нóв- ых	крéслах

Note

- (a) The animate accusative/genitive rule is applied: Знаю **нового учителя, новых учителей** ‘I know the new teacher, the new teachers’ (see 47).
- (b) An adjective or pronoun qualifying a masculine animate noun in **-а/-я** takes masculine endings, while the noun takes feminine endings: Я знаю **вашего дядю** ‘I know your uncle’, дом **вашего дяди** ‘your uncle’s house’, Верю **вашему дяде** ‘I trust your uncle’, Я доволен **вашим дядей** ‘I am pleased with your uncle’, о **вашем дяде** ‘about your uncle’.

(2) The long adjective may also follow the noun, separated from it by a comma and agreeing with it in gender, case and number:

Он лежál на **травé, мо́крой** от росы́
 ‘He was lying on the grass, (which was) wet with the dew’

Note

In certain contexts (e.g. in restaurant menus, with generic nouns) the long attributive adjective may follow the noun: ко́фе **натурáльный** ‘real coffee’, Тури́зм — де́ло **поле́зное** ‘Tourism is a healthy pursuit’.

156 Use of the long adjective with predicative meaning

(1) In predicative position, the long adjective denotes characteristics which are inherent in or completely identified with the noun (cf. the predicative *short* form (see 166–174)), e.g.

Э́та ко́мната — **больша́я**
 ‘This room is **large** (is a **large one**)’

(2) When linked to the noun by the past or future tense of the verb **быть**, the long predicative adjective appears:

(i) In the nominative case (the more *colloquial* variant):

Лес был **те́плый** и **споко́йный** (Aksenov)
 ‘The forest was warm and serene’

И я бу́ду тогда́ **ста́рая, некраси́вая**, в морщи́нках (Kovaleva)
 ‘And by that time I shall be old, ugly, wrinkled’

(ii) In the instrumental case (more typical of *written* styles):

Перестро́йка была́ **нелёгкой**, но она́ произошлá (Kovaleva)
 ‘Restructuring was not easy, but it occurred’

— Бу́ду я когда́-нибудь **бога́тым?** (Rubina)
 ‘“Will I ever be rich?”’

(3) When linked to the noun by the conditional, subjunctive, infinitive or imperative mood of the verb **быть**, the instrumental case of the adjective is the norm:

Éсли бы он был **высо́ким**, он поступи́л бы в мили́цию
 ‘If he were tall he would join the police’

Главное, чтобы эти встречи были **регулярными**
'The main thing is that these meetings should be regular'

Эти догадки могут быть **правильными** или **ошибочными** (Rybakov)
'These conjectures may be right or wrong'

Будь всегда **вежливым!**
'Always be polite!'

(4) After other verbs which take a predicate (**выглядеть** 'to look', **казаться** 'to seem', **притворяться** 'to pretend', **чувствовать** себя 'to feel' etc.), the adjective also appears in the instrumental case:

Улицы выглядели **грязными**
'The streets looked dirty'

Мой расчёт оказался **точным** (Nikolaev)
'My calculation turned out to be accurate'

Минфин РФ запретил крупному бизнесу притворяться **малым**
(V. Putin)
'The Russian Federation Finance Ministry has forbidden large-scale business from pretending to be small-scale'

(5) An adjectival complement to intransitive and transitive verbs also appears in the instrumental:

Он начал **первым**
'He began first, was the first to begin'

Он оставил сейф **открытым**
'He left the safe open'

Я никогда не видел её **такой красивой** (Kazakov)
'I had never seen her looking so lovely'

157 Some uses of singular and plural adjectives

(1) A plural adjective is used to qualify two or more singular nouns if it relates to all the nouns named:

Маргарита с грохотом бросила **железные** совок и лопатку (Rubina)
'With a clatter Margarita threw down an iron trowel and spade'

Note

A *singular* adjective or pronoun may be used, however, if it is obvious that it relates to all the nouns named. The adjective or pronoun in such circumstances agrees with the first of the nouns: написать **свою́** фами́лию, и́мя и о́тчество ‘to write one’s surname, first name and patronymic’.

(2) A singular adjective is also used if it relates only to the *first* of the nouns named: **ка́менный** дом и гара́ж ‘a stone house and a garage’ (cf. **ка́менные** дом и гара́ж ‘a stone house and (a stone) garage’).

(3) Phrases comprising numeral and noun are qualified by a plural adjective: **ка́ждые** два дня ‘every two days’. Adjectives which fulfil an emphatic role (e.g. **до́брый**, **по́лный**, **це́лый**) appear in the genitive plural: **по́льных** три ме́сяца ‘a full three months’, **це́лых** две тарелки ‘two whole plates’ (cf. also опозда́л на **це́лых** по́лчасá ‘he was a whole half hour late’).

(4) Singular adjectives and nouns are used in the following phrases: **в ра́зное вре́мя** ‘at various times’, **вса́кого ро́да** ‘all kinds of’ (**вса́кого ро́да** това́ры ‘all kinds of goods’), **ра́зного ро́да** ‘of various kinds’.

158 Adjectival nouns

(1) An adjectival noun has the form of an adjective but functions as a noun (**бе́лые** ‘the Whites’).

(2) Most adjectival nouns result from the omission of a word that can be understood from the context, e.g. **столо́вая** (ко́мната) ‘dining room’.

(3) Adjectival nouns decline like adjectives (**в ва́нной** (from ва́нная) ‘in the bathroom’), behave like adjectives when governed by numerals (**два моро́женных** ‘two ice-creams’ (see 194 (2) (v))) and can themselves be qualified by adjectives: **ру́сское моро́женое** ‘Russian ice-cream’.

(4) Most **masculine** adjectival nouns denote people: **рядо́вой** ‘private soldier’, **уче́ный** ‘scientist’, **часово́й** ‘sentry’ etc.

(5) **Feminine** adjectival nouns denote:

(i) Lines: **крива́я** ‘curve’, **пряма́я** ‘straight line’ (ли́ния ‘line’ understood).

(ii) Rooms and other accommodation: **закýсочная** ‘snack-bar’, **кладовáя** ‘store-room’, **пра́чечная** ‘laundry’, **убо́рная** ‘lavatory’.

(6) **Neuter** adjectival nouns denote:

(i) The names of dishes: **пе́рвое** ‘first course’, **сла́дкое** ‘sweet’ etc. (блюдо ‘dish’ understood).

(ii) Time: **про́шлое** ‘the past’, **насто́ящее** ‘the present’, **бу́дущее** ‘the future’ (время ‘time’ understood).

(iii) Abstracts: **ста́рое и но́вое** ‘the old and the new’.

(iv) Classes of animal: **живо́тное** ‘animal’, **млекопита́ющее** ‘mammal’, **насеко́мое** ‘insect’ (существо ‘being’ understood).

(v) Grammatical terms: **прилагáтельное** ‘adjective’, **существи́тельное** ‘noun’, **числи́тельное** ‘numeral’ (имя ‘noun, nomen’ understood).

(7) **Plural** adjectival nouns denote money: **наличны́е** ‘cash’, **све́рхурочны́е** ‘overtime’, **чаевы́е** ‘gratuities’ (cf. де́ньги ‘money’).

Note

- (a) Many adjectival nouns are formed on a seemingly *ad hoc* basis: Она́ поступи́ла в **архитекту́рный** (институ́т) ‘She has enrolled at the school of architecture’. Note also **борза́я** (соба́ка) ‘borzoi’, **выходно́й** (день) ‘day off’, **сбо́рная** (кома́нда) ‘combined team, international team’ etc.
- (b) Some adjectival nouns function *only* as nouns (**вселённая** ‘the universe’, **запята́я** ‘comma’, **мостова́я** ‘roadway’), whereas others function as nouns or adjectives (cf. **рабо́чий** ‘worker’ and **рабо́чий** день ‘working day’ etc.).

The Short Form of the Adjective

159 Endings of the short form of the adjective

(1) Most adjectives have long forms and short forms (compare, however, 160).

(2) The short form derives from the long form by the removal of the whole of the masculine ending and the final vowel of the feminine, neuter and plural endings, e.g. **сурóв-ый** ‘severe’:

	<i>Long form</i>	<i>Short form</i>
<i>Masculine</i>	сурóв- ый	сурóв
<i>Feminine</i>	сурóв- ая	сурóв- а
<i>Neuter</i>	сурóв- ое	сурóв- о
<i>Plural</i>	сурóв- ые	сурóв- ы

See also **161** on the use of buffer vowels.

160 Adjectives which have long forms only

(1) Some adjectives which denote **inherent characteristics** have long forms only. They include:

- (i) Adjectives of colour (except for **си́ний** ‘blue’).
- (ii) Adjectives with the suffix **-ск-**, e.g. **ру́сский** ‘Russian’.

Note

Many adjectives in **-ический**, e.g. **драматический** ‘dramatic’, have synonyms in **-ичный**, e.g. **драматичный**, which *do* have short forms.

- (iii) Adjectives in **-ний** (except for **искренний** ‘sincere’ and **си́ний** ‘blue’).
- (iv) Adjectives of time (e.g. **ме́сячный** ‘month’s’) and place (e.g. **ме́стный** ‘local’).
- (v) Adjectives which denote materials or substances: **деревя́нный** ‘wooden’, **желе́зный** ‘iron’ etc.
- (vi) Possessive adjectives of the type **во́лчий** ‘wolf’s’ (see **151** (1)).
- (vii) Ordinal numerals: **пе́рвый** ‘first’, **второ́й** ‘second’ etc.

(2) Some adjectives have short forms in certain meanings only. For example, **глухо́й** has short forms in the meaning ‘deaf’, but not in the meanings ‘blank’ (**глуха́я** стена́ ‘blank wall’), ‘remote’ (**глуха́я** провинция ‘remote province’) and ‘voiceless’ (**глухо́й** со́гласный ‘voiceless consonant’). **Ви́дный** has a short form in the meaning ‘visible’ (see **161** (1)) but not in the meaning ‘prominent’.

161 The buffer vowels -e-, -o- and -ë- in the masculine short form

A buffer vowel is introduced between two or more final consonants in the *masculine* short form of many adjectives.

(1) The commonest of the buffer vowels is **-e-**:

<i>Long-form masculine</i>		<i>Short forms</i>
ва́жный	‘important’	ва́жен , важна́, ва́жно, важны́/ва́жны
ви́дный	‘visible’	ви́ден , видна́, ви́дно, видны́
голо́дный	‘hungry’	го́лоден , голодна́, го́лодно, голодны́/ го́лодны
дли́нный	‘long’	дли́нен , длинна́, дли́нно, длинны́/ дли́нны
слы́шный	‘audible’	слы́шен , слышна́, слы́шно, слышны́/ слы́шны

Compare:

Сейча́с зага́р не **мо́ден** (Koluntsev)
Now a suntan is not fashionable

The buffer vowel **-e-** may replace a soft sign or the semi-consonant **й**:

больно́й	‘sick’	бо́лен , больна́, больно́, больны́
дово́льный	‘pleased’	дово́лен , дово́льна, дово́льно, дово́льны
спокóйный	‘calm’	спокóен , spokóйна, spokóйно, спокóйны

(2) The buffer vowel **-o-** splits clusters of consonants ending in **к, г**:

до́лгий	‘long’	до́лог , долга́, до́лго, до́лги
ле́гкий	‘light, easy’	ле́гок , легка́, легко́, легко́
у́зкий	‘narrow’	у́зок , узка́, у́зко, узки́/узки

— По моёй статье́ предельный срок достато́чно **до́лог** (Koluntsev)
“The maximum term for my offence is fairly long”

Note

However, **-e-** replaces a *soft sign* in such clusters: го́рький ‘bitter’, short form **го́рек**. It also appears in unstressed position between **ж, ч, ш** and **к**: тя́жкий ‘severe’, short form **тя́жек**.

The following adjectives also take **-o-**:

злой	‘wicked’	зол , зла, зло, злы
пóльный	‘full’	пóлон , полна́, полно́, полны́
смешно́й	‘funny’	смешо́н , смешна́, смешно́, смешны́

(3) The buffer vowel **-ë-** affects a small number of adjectives:

о́стрый	‘sharp, sharp-witted’	остёр , остра́, остро́, остры́
си́льный	‘strong’	силён , сильна́, си́льно, си́льны́
у́мный	‘clever’	умён , умна́, умно́, умны́
хи́трый	‘cunning’	хитёр , хитра́, хитро́, хитры́

Note

Some adjectives with a stem ending in more than one consonant do *not* take a buffer vowel in the masculine short form. They include бо́дрый ‘cheerful’ (**бодр**), до́брый ‘kind’ (**добр**), го́рдый ‘proud’ (**горд**), ме́ртвый ‘dead’ (**ме́ртв**), пе́стрый ‘multicoloured’ (**пе́стр**).

162 Some special short forms

The following short forms should be specially noted.

(1)	большо́й	‘big’	вели́к , велика́, велико́, велики́
(2)	достóйный	‘worthy’	достóин , достóйна, достóйно, достóйны
(3)	и́скренний	‘sincere’	и́скренен , и́скренна, и́скренне (the commoner alternative)/и́скренно, и́скренни/и́скренны
(4)	ма́ленький	‘small’	мал , мала́, малó, малы́
(5)	си́ний	‘blue’	синь , синя́, си́не, си́ни
(6)	солёный	‘salted’	со́лон , солонá, со́лоно, солоньы́/со́лоны

Note

(a) **Рад**, ра́да, ра́до, ра́ды ‘glad’ has no long form (however, ра́достный means ‘glad, joyful’: ра́достное собы́тие ‘a joyful event’).

- (b) Какóв, каковá, каковó, каковы́ are used predicatively in the meaning ‘what, what kind of’ (**каковá** смéртность от рáка? ‘What is the mortality rate from cancer?’) and такóв, такová, таковó, таковы́ in the meaning ‘such’ (**Таковó** нáше мнéние ‘Such is our opinion’). However, **как** and **так** are used to modify short adjectives: Он **так** добр/Она́ **так** добра́ ‘He is so kind/She is so kind’.
- (c) For meanings of **вели́к** and **мал**, see **169**.

163 Masculine short forms of adjectives in -енный

- (1) The masculine short form of adjectives in unstressed **-енный** ends in **-ен**, e.g. бессмы́сленный ‘senseless’, short form **бессмы́слен**:

Разговóр был **бессмы́слен** (Trifonov)
‘The conversation was senseless’

- (2) Adjectives in stressed **-éнный** have masculine short forms in **-éнен**, e.g. откровéнный ‘candid’, short form **откровéнен**:

А взгляд егó, пожа́луй, сли́шком **откровéнен** (Koluntsev)
‘But I suppose his glance is too frank’

Note

- (a) Some adjectives in unstressed **-енный** have alternative masculine short forms in **-ен** and **-енен**, e.g. естéственный ‘natural’, **естéствен/естéственен**, the form in **-ен** usually being preferred.
- (b) Some ‘high style’ adjectives in **-éнный** have masculine short forms in **-éн**, e.g. благословéнный ‘blessed’:

Благословéн ма́стер, достíгший верши́ны мастерствá
‘Blessed is the craftsman who has achieved the summit of craftsmanship’

164 Stress patterns

- (1) Very many adjectival short forms have fixed stem stress throughout:

краси́в, краси́ва, краси́во, краси́вы ‘(is, are) beautiful’

- (2) Short forms with mobile stress subdivide into the following:

- (i) End stress in feminine, neuter and plural:

хоро́ш, хороша́, хорошо́, хороши́ ‘(is, are) good’

Similarly **бóлен** ‘ill’, **горя́ч** ‘hot’, **лёгок** ‘light, easy’, **пóлон** ‘full’, **смешо́н** ‘funny’, **тяжё́л** ‘heavy’, **умё́н** ‘clever’.

Note

Some adjectives of this type (e.g. свеж ‘fresh’) have alternative end or stem stress in the plural (**свежи́/све́жи**); others (e.g. широ́к ‘wide’) have alternative end or stem stress in the neuter *and* plural (**широ́ко** or **широко́**, **широки́/широ́ки**).

(ii) End stress in the feminine:

жив, **жива́**, **живо́**, **живы́** ‘(is, are) alive’

Similarly **цел** ‘whole’ and, with alternative *end* stress in the plural, **бле́ден** ‘pale’, **го́лоден** ‘hungry’, **ми́л** ‘dear’, **слы́шен** ‘audible’, **стро́г** ‘strict’.

(iii) End stress in the feminine and plural:

ви́ден, **видна́**, **ви́дно**, **видны́** ‘(is, are) visible’

Similarly **силё́н/си́лен** ‘strong’.

165 Divergence in stress between masculine, neuter and plural long and short forms

(1) A handful of adjectives switch from medial or end stress in the long form to initial stress in the masculine, neuter and plural short forms, with end stress in the feminine: **весёлый** ‘merry’, **вёсел**, **весела́**, **вёсело**, **вёселы́**; **голо́дный** ‘hungry’, **го́лоден**, **голодна́**, **го́лодно**, **го́лодны/голодны́**; **дешёвый** ‘cheap’, **дёшев**, **дешевá**, **дёшево**, **дёшевы́**; **дорого́й** ‘dear’, **до́рог**, **дорога́**, **до́рого**, **до́роги**; **корóткий** ‘short’, **кóроток**, **коротка́**, **кóротко**, **кóротки/коротки́**; **молодо́й** ‘young’, **мо́лод**, **молода́**, **мо́лодо**, **мо́лоды**.

(2) **Счастли́вый** ‘happy’ has initial stress in all short forms: **сча́стлив**, **сча́стлива**, **сча́стливо**, **сча́стливы**.

166 The short form: usage. Introductory comments

(1) Both long and short forms may be used predicatively (see 156).

(2) However, there is usually a distinction in meaning, the long form denoting inherent permanent characteristics (Он **злой** ‘He is wicked’) and the short form relating to temporary states (Он **голоден** ‘He is hungry’) or to specific contexts or circumstances (Он **прав** ‘He is right’ (i.e. about a particular matter)).

(3) Usage depends to a considerable extent on the capacity or incapacity of a particular adjective to denote both permanent and temporary states. Thus, Он **больной** ‘He is (chronically) sick’ may be contrasted with Он **боле́н** ‘He is (temporarily) ill’. In adjectives, however, where no such distinction is possible, long and short forms are virtually synonymous: Он **умный**/Он **умен** ‘He is clever’.

(4) The difference between the two forms of the adjective may be stylistic, the short form reflecting a more ‘bookish’ style:

Психоло́гия личности о́чень **сложна́**
‘The psychology of the personality is very complex’

and the long form being the ‘colloquial’ variant:

Психоло́гия личности о́чень **сло́жная**

167 Use of the short form to denote temporary state

While the long form implies *complete identification* of the quality expressed by the adjective with the person or thing it qualifies, the short form indicates a temporary state or condition, cf.

Река́ **бу́рная**
‘The river is a turbulent one’ (an inherent characteristic)

and

Сего́дня река́ **споко́йна**
‘Today the river is calm’ (the short form denoting a temporary state)

Similarly Он о́чень **весёлый, бо́дрый** ‘He is very jolly, cheerful’ (i.e. by nature), but Ты был **бодр** и **вёсел** и шути́л всю доро́гу (Koluntsev) ‘You were cheerful and jolly and joked the whole way’, where the short forms refer to a person’s mood *on a particular occasion*.

168 Short forms: pairs of opposites

Many short forms comprise pairs of opposites and describe alternative states: hungry/full, healthy/ill etc.:

- (1) **голоден, голодна́, голодно, голодны́/голодны** ‘(is, are) hungry’
сыт, сыта́, сыто, сыты ‘(is, are) full, replete’
- (2) **здоров, здорова, здорово, здоровы** ‘(is, are) healthy’
болен, больна́, больно́, больны́ ‘(is, are) sick’

Note

- (a) Unlike **здоров** and **болен**, which denote *temporary* states, **Он здоровый** ‘He has a strong constitution’ denotes an *inherent* characteristic and **Он больно́й** ‘He is chronically sick, an invalid’ denotes a chronic state.
- (b) The colloquial forms **здоров, здорова́, здорово́, здоровы́** mean ‘strong, good at’: **Ему́ удало́сь наконёц вы́толкнуть её. — Ну, здорова́!** (Shukshin) ‘He finally managed to shove her out. “Gosh, she’s strong!”’
- (3) **сча́стлив, сча́стлива, сча́стливо, сча́стливы** ‘(is, are) happy’
несча́стен, несча́стна, несча́стно, несча́стны ‘(is, are) unhappy’
- (4) **жив, жива́, живо́, живы́** ‘(is, are) alive’
ме́ртв, ме́ртва́, ме́ртво, ме́ртвы ‘(is, are) dead’

Note

Он живо́й means ‘he is lively’ (an *inherent* characteristic).

- (5) **прав, права́, пра́во, пра́вы** ‘(is, are) right’
непра́в, неправа́, непра́во, непра́вы ‘(is, are) wrong’

Compare **Наше де́ло пра́вое** ‘Our cause is just’.

Note

Она́ хоро́шая ‘She is good’ but **Она́ хороша́ (собо́й/собо́ю)** ‘She is good-looking’; **Он — плохо́й** ‘He is bad’ but **Он плох** (здоровьем) ‘He is poorly’.

169 Adjectives of dimension

The short form of an adjective of dimension relates the dimension to a particular set of circumstances, while the long form completely identifies the dimension with the noun it qualifies, cf.

- (a) **Эта ко́мната большо́яя**
 ‘This room is big/a big one’

- (b) Эта ко́мната **велика́**
'This room is **too** big' (i.e. for a particular purpose)

Э́тот пиджа́к **широ́к**
'This jacket is too big' (for a particular person)

Пла́тье ей **мало́**
'The dress is too small for her'

Compare Ю́бка **дли́нна** 'The skirt is too long', Рукава́ **коро́ткі** 'The sleeves are too short', Дверь **ни́зка** 'The door is too low', Костю́м **свобо́ден** 'The suit is too loose-fitting', Сапоги́ **тесны́** 'The boots are too tight', Брю́ки **узкі́** 'The trousers are too tight', Но́ша **тяже́ла** для ребёнка 'The burden is too heavy for the child' (cf. Но́ша **тяже́лая** 'The burden is a heavy one').

Note

- (a) The idea of excess may be reinforced by the adverb **сли́шком** 'too':
Не **сли́шком** ли вы **мо́лоды** для нас? (Rubina) 'Don't you think you are too young for us?'
- (b) The short form of adjectives of dimension can also be used *without* a relative nuance: **Широ́к** круг интере́сов у на́ших чита́телей (*Iunyi naturalist*) 'Our readers' range of interests **is broad**'.

170 Delimitation of meaning by the oblique case of a noun or pronoun

(1) When the meaning of a predicative adjective is 'delimited' by the oblique case of a noun or pronoun, the short form must be used. Compare

Како́е имее́т значе́ние, **симпати́чен** он **ей** и́ли нет? (Koluntsev)
'What does it matter if she likes him or not?'

where the quality denoted by **симпати́чен** is valid only for *her* (**ей**), with

Он о́чень **симпати́чный**
'He is very good-looking/attractive'

where the *long* form denotes an inherent trait.

(2) The short form can be 'delimited' by any of the oblique cases.

- (i) Genitive:

Автóбус пóлон **нарёду**
‘The bus is full **of people**’

Note

Он пóльный means ‘He is overweight’.

(ii) Dative:

Я **вам** благодарён
‘I am grateful **to you**’

(iii) Instrumental:

Я дово́лен **ва́ми**
‘I am pleased **with you**’

Этот край богат **нефтью и пушнёной** (*Sputnik*)
‘This territory is rich **in oil and furs**’

171 Delimitation by a prepositional phrase

(1) The short form is also used when the quality expressed by the adjective is delimited by a **prepositional phrase**. Thus, while either long or short form may be used in

Лéкция была́ **интерéсная/интерéсна**
‘The lecture was interesting’

the short form *must* be used in

Лéкция была́ интересна **по фóрме**
‘The lecture was interesting in form’

since the adjective is ‘delimited’ by the phrase **по фóрме**. Compare:

Мы **безорúжны** перед мóщью совре́менной ра́диоаппарату́ры
(*Izvestia*)
‘We are powerless in the face of the might of modern radio technology’

Ра́ньше она́ была́ **равноду́шна** к лы́жам (Koluntsev)
‘She used to be indifferent to skiing’

(2) Common prepositional phrases include **глух на** (лёвое у́хо) ‘deaf in’ (the left ear), **гото́в к** ‘ready for’, **гото́в на** + acc. ‘ready for’ (in the

meaning ‘desperate’), **добр к** ‘kind to’, **знако́м с** + instr. ‘familiar with’, **похо́ж на** + acc. ‘similar to’, **серди́т на** + acc. ‘angry with’, **си́лён в** (матема́тике) ‘good at’ (mathematics), **скло́нен к** ‘inclined to’, **сле́п на** (пра́вый глаз) ‘blind in’ (the right eye), **согласе́н на** (усло́вия) ‘agreeing to’ (conditions), **согласе́н с** ‘in agreement with’, **способе́н к** ‘good at’, **способе́н на** (обма́н) ‘capable of’ (deception), **характе́рен для** ‘characteristic of’, **хро́м на** (пра́вую но́гу) ‘lame in’ (the right leg).

Note

Used predicatively, the long forms of some of these adjectives denote inherent characteristics: Она́ **до́брая** ‘She is kind’, Он **си́льный** ‘He is strong’, Он **способный** ‘He is a capable person’.

172 Delimitation by a subordinate clause or an infinitive

The short form predicative is also used when the adjective is delimited:

(1) By a subordinate clause:

Я **сча́слив**, что вас встречаю
‘I am happy to meet you’

(2) By an infinitive, either:

(i) *with* **чтобы**

Он доста́точно **уме́н, что́бы** **поне́ять**, где раска́яние, а где игра́
(Koluntsev)
He is intelligent enough to understand where remorse ends and play-
acting begins

or:

(ii) *without* **чтобы**

Ты не **способе́н** **поне́ять**, чего́ мне сто́ило прийт́и сюда́ (Koluntsev)
“‘You are incapable of understanding what it has cost me to come here’”

173 The short form as predicate to infinitives, verbal nouns and nouns with certain qualifiers

The short form is also used as predicate to the following.

(1) Infinitives and verbal nouns:

Пить/Употре́бление наркоти́ков **вре́дно**
‘Drinking/Use of drugs is **harmful**’

(2) Nouns qualified by **всякий/каждый** ‘each, every’, **какой?** ‘what kind of?’, **любой** ‘any’, **такой** ‘such’ etc. (including the short form):

Любой совет **полезен**
‘Any advice is useful’

Такого рода комплименты **бесмысленны**
‘Compliments of that kind are meaningless’

Память о национальных трагедиях так же **священна**, как память о победах (D. Medvedev)

‘Memory of national tragedies is just as sacred as memory of victories’

174 The short form in generalized statements

The short form appears in many generalized sayings, proverbs etc.:

Жизнь трудна́	‘Life is hard’
Любовь слепá	‘Love is blind’
Мир тесен!	‘It’s a small world!’

175 Position of the short form of the adjective

The short form of the adjective normally follows the noun:

Все великие истины **просты́** ‘All great truths are simple’

but may, for greater emphasis, precede it (see **484** (1) (i)):

Известна́ зависимость дорожных происшествий от возраста шофёра
‘The connection between road accidents and the age of the driver **is well known**’

The Comparative Degree of the Adjective

176 The comparative degree. Introductory comments

Most English adjectives have either

a comparative in -er (e.g. ‘harder’)

or

a comparative with ‘more’ (e.g. ‘more comfortable’).

By contrast, most Russian adjectives have two comparatives, each with a specific function.

177 The attributive comparative with **бóлее**

(1) The attributive form of almost all comparatives comprises **бóлее** + long adjective, e.g. **бóлее краси́вый** дом ‘a more beautiful house’.

(2) **Бóлее** is *invariable*, while the adjective agrees with the noun it qualifies:

(i) In gender and number:

бóлее	краси́вый	дом	‘a more beautiful house’
бóлее	краси́вая	де́вушка	‘a more beautiful girl’
бóлее	краси́вое	де́рево	‘a more beautiful tree’
бóлее	краси́вые	де́ти	‘more beautiful children’

(ii) In case:

Нет **бóлее краси́вого са́да**
‘There is no more beautiful garden’

Он подошёл к **бóлее краси́вой де́вушке**
‘He went up to the more beautiful girl’

(3) Comparatives with **бóлее** may also be used predicatively:

Первичные па́рторганизации ста́ли **бóлее крупны́ми** (*Pravda*)
‘The primary party organizations became larger’

However, predicative forms in **-ее** or **-е** should be regarded as the norm (see 179–181).

(4) **Ме́нее** ‘less’ is used to form a ‘reverse’ comparative:

Э́то **ме́нее краси́вый** дом ‘This is a less beautiful house’

178 One-word attributive comparatives

Six adjectives have attributive comparatives consisting of one word:

хоро́ший	‘good’	лу́чший	‘better’
плохо́й	‘bad’	ху́дший	‘worse’

ста́рый	‘old’	ста́рший	‘older, senior’
молодо́й	‘young’	мла́дший	‘younger, junior’
большо́й	‘big’	больш́ий	‘bigger’
ма́ленький	‘small’	ме́ньший	‘smaller’

Note

- (a) Ста́рший and мла́дший are used only with animate nouns and collectives, and usually imply seniority and juniority: **мла́дший/ста́рший** сын ‘younger/elder son’, **мла́дший/ста́рший** класс ‘junior/senior class’, **мла́дший/ста́рший** лейтена́нт ‘junior/senior lieutenant’ etc. The context may be amplified to resolve possible ambiguity: ста́рший **по возрасту/по служебному положению** ‘older in years/senior in rank’, мла́дший **по возрасту/по должности** ‘younger in years/junior in position’. For inanimate nouns, **более ста́рый** is used:

На эстра́де стоя́ло ста́рое пиани́но и лежа́ла ещё **более ста́рая** штанга (Kuleshov)

‘On the stage were an old piano and an even older lifting weight’

- (b) **Мла́дший** and **ста́рший** can also mean ‘youngest’ and ‘eldest’, **лу́чшее** and **ху́дший** ‘best’ and ‘worst’ (see **185** (3) notes (a) and (b)).
- (c) Some forms of **большо́й** ‘big’ and **больш́ий** ‘bigger’ are distinguished only by stress: **больша́я** часть ‘a large part’, **большая** часть ‘the greater part’ etc.

179 Predicative comparative forms in -ee

- (1) The predicative comparative of most adjectives is formed by adding the ending **-ee** to the stem of the adjective:

краси́в-ее	‘(is, are) more beautiful’
удобн-ее	‘(is, are) more comfortable’

- (2) Comparatives in **-ee** are invariable, that is, they are used as predicates to nouns of any gender and either number:

сад краси́вее	‘the garden is more beautiful’
карти́на краси́вее	‘the picture is more beautiful’
де́рево краси́вее	‘the tree is more beautiful’
цветы́ краси́вее	‘the flowers are more beautiful’

(3) Adjectives which have end-stressed **-á** in the feminine short form have end stress **-ée** in the comparative (see **164** (2)):

новее	‘(is, are) newer’
сложнее	‘(is, are) more complex’
тяжелее	‘(is, are) heavier’

Note

Здоровее, ‘(is, are) healthier’, despite feminine short form здоро́ва.

(4) An alternative comparative form in **-ей** is confined mainly to conversational styles, verse and the more casual prose styles:

Клубы делают жизнь своих членов **полезней** (*Sputnik*)
‘The clubs make the lives of their members more useful’

(5) The following types of adjective either have *no* comparative short forms or have forms which are very rarely used:

(i) Adjectives which denote concepts which cannot be manifested to a greater or lesser degree, e.g. **босой** ‘barefoot’, **братский** ‘fraternal’, **деревянный** ‘wooden’.

(ii) Adjectives of colour.

(iii) Some others, e.g. **внешний** ‘external’, **гордый** ‘proud’.

(6) Some adjectives with no short-form comparative (e.g. **драматический** ‘dramatic’) have synonyms which *do* have short forms (**драматичнее** ‘is, are more dramatic’, from драматичный).

(7) If an adjective *does* have a short-form comparative, the use of its long form in predicative meaning is regarded as ‘bookish’ (Эта книга **более полезная** ‘The book is more useful’ (**полезнее** is the preferred form)) and may distinguish high style (Показатели **более высокие** ‘Indices are higher’) from neutral style (Дом **выше** ‘The house is taller’. See **180** (1)).

180 Comparative short forms in -e

The final consonants of some adjectives undergo mutation in the comparative short form (note, however, that in some adjectives with suffix **-к-** it is

the *preceding* consonant that mutates, e.g. *гладкий: гла́же*). The resultant comparatives end in a single unstressed *-e*:

в: вл дешёвый 'cheap' дешёв́ле '(is, are) cheaper'
(However, *но́вый* 'new', comparative *нов́ее* '(is, are) newer'.)

г: ж доро́гой 'dear' доро́же '(is, are) dearer'
стро́гий 'strict' стро́же '(is, are) stricter'
ту́гой 'tight' ту́же '(is, are) tighter'

д: ж гла́дкий 'smooth' гла́же '(is, are) smoother'
молодо́й 'young' моло́же '(is, are) younger'
ре́дкий 'rare' ре́же '(is, are) rarer'
твёрдо́й 'hard' твёр́же '(is, are) harder'

(However, *худо́й* 'thin', comparative *худ́ее* '(is, are) thinner'.)

Note

'Is, are younger' is also rendered as *мла́дше*, mainly in a family context: cf. *Она́ мла́дше/моло́же сестры́* 'She is younger than her sister' and *Она́ моло́же начальника́* 'She is younger than the boss'

з: ж	близкий	'near'	бли́же	'(is, are) nearer'
	ни́зкий	'low'	ни́же	'(is, are) lower'
	у́зкий	'narrow'	у́же	'(is, are) narrower'
к: ч	гро́мкий	'loud'	гро́мче	'(is, are) louder'
	жа́ркий	'hot'	жа́рче	'(is, are) hotter'
	кре́пкий	'strong'	кре́пче	'(is, are) stronger'
	ле́гкий	'light, easy'	ле́гче	'(is, are) lighter, easier'
	ме́лкий	'shallow'	ме́льче	'(is, are) shallower'
	мя́гкий	'soft'	мя́гче	'(is, are) softer'
	ре́зкий	'sharp'	ре́зче	'(is, are) sharper'
с: ш	высо́кий	'high'	вы́ше	'(is, are) higher'
ск: щ	плос́кий	'flat'	плос́че	'(is, are) flatter'
ст: щ	густо́й	'thick'	гу́ще	'(is, are) thicker'
	просто́й	'simple'	про́ще	'(is, are) simpler'
	то́лстый	'thick'	то́лще	'(is, are) thicker'
	ча́стый	'frequent'	ча́ще	'(is, are) more frequent'
	чи́стый	'clean'	чи́ще	'(is, are) cleaner'
т: ч	бога́тый	'rich'	бога́че	'(is, are) richer'
	коро́ткий	'short'	коро́че	'(is, are) shorter'
	круто́й	'steep'	кру́че	'(is, are) steeper'

(However, святой ‘holy’, comparative **святее** ‘is, are holier’.)

х: ш	сухой	‘dry’	суше	‘(is, are) drier’
	тихий	‘quiet’	тише	‘(is, are) quieter’

Note

- (a) Though горький ‘bitter’ has the short-form comparative **горче**, **более горький** ‘(is, are) more bitter’ is normally used in both attributive and predicative meanings.
- (b) Adjectives which have no short-form comparative or a little-used comparative also form the predicate with **более**: **ветхий** ‘ancient’, **гордый** ‘proud’, **зыбкий** ‘shaky’, **липкий** ‘sticky’, **старый** ‘old’ (of objects) etc.

(2) Irregular short forms include a number which end in **-ше**:

большой	‘big’	больше	‘(is, are) bigger’
долгий	‘long’	дольше	‘(is, are) longer’
маленький	‘small’	меньше	‘(is, are) smaller’
старый	‘old’	старше	‘(is, are) older’
тонкий	‘thin’	тоньше	‘(is, are) thinner’
хороший	‘good’	лучше	‘(is, are) better’

Объём товарного хлеба был на 40% **больше**
 ‘The volume of marketable grain was 40 per cent greater’

Больше and **меньше** can take either singular or plural verbs: Все больше трудовых конфликтов требуют вмешательства властей ‘More and more labour conflicts require the intervention of the authorities’ (*Kommersant*”).

Note

Дальше ‘further’ and **раньше** ‘earlier’ are used only as adverbs. **Далее** is used in legal contracts indicating ‘hereinafter’.

(3) Other irregular short forms end in **-же, -ще, -е**:

глубокий	‘deep’	глубже	‘(is, are) deeper’
плохой	‘bad’	хуже	‘(is, are) worse’
поздний	‘late’	позже	‘(is, are) later’ (also позднее)
сладкий	‘sweet’	слаще	‘(is, are) sweeter’
широкий	‘wide’	шире	‘(is, are) wider’

Note

Unlike **позднее**, **позже** (here used as an adverb) also has an absolute meaning: ‘Операцию ребята провели точно’ — скажет **позже** главный

геолог (*Komsomol'skaia pravda*) “‘The lads carried out the operation precisely”, the chief geologist was to say later’ (i.e. afterwards). **Позднее** usually has the meaning of ‘in the future’.

181 The short-form comparative in predicative meaning

The short-form comparative’s main function is predicative:

Его́ го́лос **гро́мче**
‘His voice **is louder**’

Моя́ маши́на была́ **нове́е**
‘My car **was newer**’

Её́ воспомина́ния бу́дут **интересе́нее**
‘Her reminiscences **will be more interesting**’

Живы́е цветы́ ста́ли ещё́ **свеже́е**
‘The live flowers **became fresher** still’

182 Constructions with the comparative

(1) Than

‘Than’ is rendered in one of the following ways:

(i) By **чем**, preceded by a comma. Both items for comparison must be in the same case:

Я вы́ше, **чем** он
‘I am taller than he is’

У меня́ бо́лее све́тлые глаза́, **чем** у вас
‘I have lighter eyes than you do’

or:

(ii) By the genitive of comparison. This construction is possible only when the first item for comparison is in the *nominative* case:

Я вы́ше **его́**
‘I am taller than he is’

Я ста́рше **свое́й** сестры́
‘I am older than my sister’

Note

Only the **чем** construction is possible with attributive adjectives:

Э́то бо́лее краси́вый дом, **чем** наш
'This is a more attractive house than ours'

and when the second item for comparison has the form of a third-person possessive pronoun (его́, её, их)

Мой дом краси́вее, **чем** его́
'My house is more beautiful than his'

(2) Quantification of a difference

A difference is quantified in one of the following ways:

(i) By the preposition **на** + accusative case:

Он ста́рше меня́ **на три го́да**
'He is three years older than me'

(ii) (Less usually) with an instrumental:

Он **тремя́ годáми** ста́рше меня́
'He is three years older than me'

(3) Expression of comparison through a multiple

Comparison may also be expressed through a multiple (constructions with **в** + accusative):

Он **в два ра́за (вдво́е)** ста́рше меня́
'He is twice as old as I am'

(4) The 'gradational' comparative

Constructions of the type 'the bigger the better' are rendered by **чем . . . , тем**:

Чем бо́льше, **тем** лу́чше
'The bigger the better'

Note

Тем лу́чше 'So much the better'.

(5) The expression of 'much' + comparative

‘Much’ in combination with a comparative is expressed by **намного**, **гораздо**, **куда** or **много**:

Его работа **намного** лучше/**гораздо** лучше, чем моя
‘His work is much better than mine’

(6) As . . . as possible

‘As . . . as possible’ is rendered by **как можно** + comparative:

Купи бутылку **как можно более дешёвого** вина
‘Buy a bottle of the cheapest wine you can get’

Note

This construction, however, is commoner with *adverbs* than with *adjectives*, in combination with which it can sound somewhat stilted (cf. also use of the *short* form in: Купи вина **подешёвле** ‘Buy some cheaper wine’. See **183** (2)).

(7) Repeated comparatives (e.g. ‘smaller and smaller’)

Repeated comparatives normally combine with **всё**:

Всё ближе и ближе роковой момент (Makarov)
‘The fateful moment gets nearer and nearer’

Note

Unlike English, Russian may omit the second comparative: **всё ближе** ‘nearer and nearer’. However, the repetition of the comparative lends greater expressiveness. Cf. **всё большее** (и большее) признание ‘greater and greater recognition’.

183 The short-form comparative in attributive meaning

In colloquial registers the short-form comparative is sometimes used attributively:

У тебя нет человека **ближе** (Aksenov)
‘There is no person closer to you’

This is particularly common with short forms prefixed **по-**:

Покажите платё **подешёвле**
‘Show me a slightly cheaper dress’

184 Other functions of the short-form comparative

(1) Short-form comparatives can function as introductory words:

Интереснее говорить, чем слушать
‘It is more interesting to speak than to listen’

(2) Many short-form comparatives also function as adverbs (see 398):

Он едет **быстрее** ‘He is driving faster’
Она работает **больше** ‘She works harder’

Вожак всё **ниже и ниже** опускал голову к земле (Astaf’ev)
‘The leader of the herd hung his head lower and lower to the ground’

Note

In such cases the distinction between comparative adjective and comparative adverb is syntactic only, cf.: Эта книга **интереснее**, чем та ‘This book is **more interesting** (adj.) than that one’ and Эта книга написана **интереснее**, чем та ‘This book is written **in a more interesting way** (adv.) than that one’.

(3) Short-form comparatives are also used impersonally: **ветренее** ‘it is windier’, **прохладнее** ‘it is cooler’, **светлее** ‘it is lighter’, **темнее** ‘it is darker’, **теплее** ‘it is warmer’, **холоднее** ‘it is colder’.

Note

Adverbs of the type **более внимательно** ‘more attentively’ (for standard **внимательнее**) are rarely used.

The Superlative Degree of the Adjective

185 The superlative degree with **самый**

(1) The superlative degree is formed by combining **самый** with the positive adjective:

самый красивый дом	‘the most beautiful house’
самая красивая машина	‘the most beautiful car’
самое красивое здание	‘the most beautiful building’
самые красивые дети	‘the most beautiful children’

(2) **Сáмый** agrees with the adjective and noun in gender, number and case:

Он провёл пять лет в одном из **сáмых красíвых европéйских** городов

‘He spent five years in one of the most beautiful European cities’

Она живёт в **сáмом большóм** доме на нашей улице

‘She lives in the largest house in our street’

(3) **Сáмый** also combines with the comparatives **лúчий** and **хúдший**:

сáмые лúчие пожелáния

‘the very best wishes’

сáмое хúдшее, что мóжно себе предстáвить

‘the worst thing one can imagine’

Note

(a) **Лúчий** and **хúдший** (see 178 note (b)) also function as superlatives in their own right: **лúчая** из жéнщин ‘the best of women’; в **хúдшем** слúчае ‘in the worst case, if the worst comes to the worst’.

(b) **Стáрший** and **млáдший** may also function as comparatives or superlatives: **стáрший** брат ‘elder/eldest brother’, **млáдшая** сестрá ‘younger/youngest sister’. Outside the family or other hierarchy, however, ‘youngest’ and ‘oldest’ are rendered as **сáмый стáрый**, **сáмый млóдой**:

Мáсло в — кстáти, **сáмый млóдой** из полковóх начáльников (Bogomolov)

‘Maslov, incidentally, is the youngest of the regimental commanders’ (cf. **сáмый млáдший** ‘the most junior’)

(c) The phrases **сáмое бóльшее** ‘at most’, **сáмое мéньшее** ‘at the very least’: **сáмое бóльшее** 30 человек ‘30 people at most’.

(4) Superlatives with **сáмый** may also express an extreme manifestation of the quality denoted by the adjective:

Сáмые ширóкие кругí учёных

‘The very widest circles of scientists’

186 Вы́сший and нѝзший

Вы́сший and **нѝзший** are used mainly in technical and set expressions: **вы́сший/нѝзший балл** ‘top/bottom mark’, **вы́сший/нѝзший сорт** ‘superior/inferior brand’, **вы́сшая матемáтика** ‘higher mathematics’, **вы́сшее учебное заведение** ‘higher teaching establishment’, **в вы́сшей стéпени** ‘to the highest degree’.

Note

‘Highest’ and ‘lowest’ in the literal sense are rendered as **са́мый вы́сокий/нѝзкий**: **са́мый вы́сокий/нѝзкий** потоло́к ‘the highest/lowest ceiling’.

187 The superlative in -ейший and -айший

(1) Superlatives in **-ейший** are formed from a limited range of adjectives, mainly with monosyllabic roots: **важне́йший** ‘most important’, **крупне́йший** ‘largest, very large’, **мале́йший** ‘slightest’, **нове́йший** ‘latest, most recent’, **си́льнейший** ‘strongest’, **сложне́йший** ‘most complex’:

Нет ни **мале́йшего** сомне́ния
‘There is not the slightest doubt’

Нове́йшие достиже́ния нау́ки
‘The latest achievements of science’

Чисте́йший вздор
‘The most arrant nonsense’

(2) However, a number of superlatives derive from roots of more than one syllable: **вы́годнейший** ‘most favourable’, **интересе́нейший** ‘most interesting’ etc.

(3) The ending **-айший** is affixed to stems ending in a velar consonant, following mutation of **г** to **ж** (**строжа́йший** from стрóгий ‘strict’, **дража́йший** from дорого́й ‘dear’), **к** to **ч** (**высоча́йший** from вы́сокий ‘high’, **кратча́йший** from крáткий ‘short’, **легча́йший** from лёгкий ‘light’, **мельча́йший** from ме́лкий ‘small’, **редча́йший** from ре́дкий ‘rare’) and **х** to **ш** (**тиша́йший** from тѝхий ‘quiet’). Note also **ближа́йший** ‘nearest’ from бли́зкий ‘near’.

(4) Most superlatives in **-ейший** and **-айший** express an extreme manifestation of the quality denoted by the adjective:

Вернейшее средство
‘A **most reliable** remedy’

С помощью лазеров проводятся **тончайшие** операции (*Russia Today*)
‘The **most delicate** of operations are carried out with the help of lasers’

Распад Советского Союза было **крупнейшей** геополитической катастрофой 20-ого века (V. Putin)
‘The collapse of the Soviet Union was one of the major geopolitical disasters of the 20th century’

(5) However, forms in **-ейший** and **-айший** may also be true superlatives:

Ближайшая остановка
‘The nearest stop’

Величайший поэт
‘The greatest poet’ (or ‘A very great poet’)

Кратчайшее расстояние
‘The shortest distance’

Note

Дальнейший ‘further’ has comparative, not superlative, meaning.

(6) Forms in **-ейший/-айший** are often characteristic of high style: cf. **глубочайшие** мысли ‘the most profound thoughts’ and **самые глубокие** скважины ‘the deepest bore-holes’ (neutral style).

188 The superlative with **наиболее**

The superlative with **наиболее** is characteristic of a ‘bookish’ style. **Наиболее** is indeclinable and combines mainly with adjectives with roots of more than one syllable (**наиболее вероятный** исход ‘the most likely outcome’, **наиболее влиятельный** человек ‘the most influential person’, **наиболее желательный** результат ‘the most desirable result’) and with a number of adjectives with monosyllabic roots (**наиболее точный** ‘the most accurate’ etc.).

Note also **наименее** ‘the least’: **наименее точный** метод ‘the least accurate method’.

189 Other superlatives

(1) Other superlatives include **наибольший** ‘the greatest’, **наивысший** ‘the highest’, **наилучший** ‘the very best’, **наименьший** ‘the smallest’. These forms are characteristic of newspaper style: **наибольшая** выгода ‘the greatest benefit’, **наилучшее** решение ‘the best solution’, **наименьший** риск ‘the smallest risk’.

(2) The prefix пре- is used to form colloquial superlatives of the type **преспokoйный** ‘as cool as a cucumber’.

The Numeral

Cardinal, Collective and Indefinite Numerals

190 The cardinal numeral

The cardinal numerals are as follows:

0	ноль/нуль		
1	один, одна, одно; одни	50	пятьдесят
2	два/две	60	шестьдесят
3	три	70	сёмьдесят
4	четыре	80	восьмьдесят
5	пять	90	девяно́сто
6	шесть	100	сто
7	семь	200	двѣсти
8	восьмь	300	триста
9	девя́ть	400	четы́реста
10	деся́ть	500	пятьсо́т
11	одинна́дцать	600	шестьсо́т
12	двена́дцать	700	семьсо́т
13	трина́дцать	800	восемьсо́т
14	четы́рнадцать	900	девя́тьсо́т
15	пятна́дцать	1,000	ты́сяча
16	шестна́дцать	2,000	две ты́сячи
17	семна́дцать	5,000	пять ты́сяч
18	восемна́дцать	1,000,000	миллио́н

19	девятна́дцать	2,000,000	два миллио́на
20	два́дцать	5,000,000	пять миллио́нов
30	три́дцать	1,000,000,000	миллиа́рд/ биллио́н
40	со́рок	1,000,000,000,000	триллио́н

Note

- (a) Each of the numerals 5–20 and 30 ends in a soft sign. The construction of the numerals 11–19 is based on the model **один-на-дцать** ‘eleven’ (lit. one-on-ten) etc., that of 20 and 30 on the model **два-дцать** and **три-дцать** (lit. two tens and three tens), **-дцать** being a contraction of **десять** ‘ten’. Of the numerals 11–19, only **одиннадцать** ‘eleven’ and **четы́рнадцать** ‘fourteen’ are *not* stressed on the penultimate **а**.
- (b) **Пятьдеся́т** and **шестьдеся́т** have end stress, **се́мьдеся́т** and **во́семьдеся́т** initial stress. All four numerals have a soft sign in the middle, but not at the end.
- (c) 300–900 subdivide formally into **три́ста** ‘three hundred’, **четы́реста** ‘four hundred’ (**три**, **четы́ре** + gen. sing. of **сто**) and **пятьсо́т** ‘five hundred’ through to **девятьсо́т** ‘nine hundred’ (**пять** etc. + gen. pl. of **сто**). The form **двэ́сти** ‘two hundred’ is a residue of the dual number.
- (d) Compound numerals are formed by placing simple numerals in sequence: **два́дцать четы́ре** ‘twenty-four’, **шестьсо́т пятьдеся́т два** ‘six hundred and fifty-two’, **со́рок четы́ре ты́сячи се́мьсо́т девяно́сто о́дин** ‘forty-four thousand seven hundred and ninety-one’ etc.
- (e) The inversion of numeral and dependent noun indicates approximation: **лет пять** ‘about five years’. Prepositions are placed between inverted noun and numeral: **лет че́рез пять** ‘in about five years’ time’.

191 Declension of cardinal numerals

The cardinal numerals decline as follows.

- (1) **Ноль/нуль** ‘nought, zero, nil’

Ноль/нуль declines like a masculine soft-sign noun with end stress in declension (see 57 (2) (ii)).

(2) **Одѝн/одна́/одно́/одни́** ‘one’

Одѝн/одна́/одно́/одни́ decline like *этот* but with stressed endings, cf. **125**:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Nom.</i>	одѝн	одн-а́	одн-о́	одн-ѝ
<i>Acc.</i>	одѝн/одн-огó	одн-у́	одн-о́	одн-ѝ/ одн-ѝх
<i>Gen.</i>	одн-огó	одн-о́й	одн-огó	одн-ѝх
<i>Dat.</i>	одн-ому́	одн-о́й	одн-ому́	одн-ѝм
<i>Instr.</i>	одн-ѝм	одн-о́й/-о́ю	одн-ѝм	одн-ѝми
<i>Prep.</i>	об одн-о́м	об одн-о́й	об одн-о́м	об одн-ѝх

(3) **Полторá** (m. and n.)/**полторы́** (f.) ‘one and a half’

There is only one oblique case form: **полту́тора**, the genitive, dative, instrumental and prepositional of *полторá* and *полторы́*.

(4) **Два** (m. and n.)/**две** (f.) ‘two’, **три** ‘three’, **четыре** ‘four’

<i>Nom.</i>	дв-а/дв-е	тр-и	четы́р-е
<i>Acc.</i>	дв-а, дв-е/дв-ух	тр-и/тр-ѐх	четы́р-е/четы́р-ѐх
<i>Gen.</i>	дв-ух	тр-ѐх	четы́р-ѐх
<i>Dat.</i>	дв-ум	тр-ѐм	четы́р-ѐм
<i>Instr.</i>	дв-умя́	тр-емя́	четы́рь-мя́
<i>Prep.</i>	о дв-ух	о тр-ѐх	о четы́р-ѐх

(5) **Оба** (m. and n.)/**обе** (f.) ‘both’

<i>Nom.</i>	о́б-а	о́б-е
<i>Acc.</i>	о́б-а/о́б-их	о́б-е/о́б-е-их
<i>Gen.</i>	о́б-о-их	о́б-е-их
<i>Dat.</i>	о́б-о-им	о́б-е-им
<i>Instr.</i>	о́б-о-ими	о́б-е-ими
<i>Prep.</i>	об о́б-о-их	об о́б-е-их

Note the phrase *дѝти о́бобо́го по́ла* ‘children of both sexes’.

(6) **Пять** ‘five’ (declension of numerals ending in a soft sign)

<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	пять	шесть	семь
<i>Gen./Dat.</i>	пят-ѝ	шест-ѝ	сем-ѝ
<i>Instr.</i>	пять-ю́	шесть-ю́	семь-ю́
<i>Prep.</i>	о пят-ѝ	о шест-ѝ	о сем-ѝ

<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	вóсемь	два́дцать
<i>Gen./Dat.</i>	восьм- ѣ	двадцат- ѣ
<i>Instr.</i>	восьмь- ю́ /восемь- ю́	двадцать- ю́
<i>Prep.</i>	о восьм- ѣ	о двадцат- ѣ

Note

- (a) 5–20 and 30 decline like soft-sign feminine nouns, 5–10, 20 and 30 with end stress in declension, 11–19 with medial stress in declension.
- (b) Instrumental *восемью́* is characteristic of colloquial styles, *восемью́* of written styles.

(7) 50–80

Each of the numerals 50–80 declines like *two* feminine soft-sign nouns. The stress in oblique cases falls on the second syllable:

<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	пятьдеся́т	шестьдеся́т
<i>Gen./Dat.</i>	пяти́десят- и	шести́десят- и
<i>Instr.</i>	пяти́юдесять- ю	шести́юдесять- ю
<i>Prep.</i>	о пяти́десят- и	о шести́десят- и
<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	се́мьдесят	вóсьмьдесят
<i>Gen./Dat.</i>	семи́десят- и	восьми́десят- и
<i>Instr.</i>	семи́юдесять- ю	восьми́юдесять- ю
<i>Prep.</i>	о семи́десят- и	о восьми́десят- и

(8) **Сорок** ‘forty’, **девяно́сто** ‘ninety’, **сто** ‘hundred’

Each of these numerals has one oblique case ending only: **-а**.

<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	сорок	девяно́ст- о	ст- о
<i>Gen./Dat./Instr.</i>	сорок- а́	девяно́ст- а	ст- а
<i>Prep.</i>	о сорок- а́	о девяно́ст- а	о ст- а

(9) 200–900

<i>Nom.</i>	двѣст-и	три́ст- а	пятьсо́т
<i>Acc.</i>	двѣст-и	три́ст- а	пятьсо́т
<i>Gen.</i>	двухсо́т	трѣхсо́т	пятисо́т
<i>Dat.</i>	двумст- а́м	трѣмст- а́м	пятист- а́м
<i>Instr.</i>	двумяст- а́ми	трѣмяст- а́ми	пятьюст- а́ми
<i>Prep.</i>	о двухст- а́х	о трѣхст- а́х	о пятист- а́х

(10) **Ты́сяча** ‘thousand’, **миллио́н** ‘million’, **миллиа́рд** ‘thousand million’, **биллио́н** ‘billion’, **триллио́н** ‘trillion’

Ты́сяча ‘thousand’ declines like second-declension *да́ча* ‘country cottage’, **миллио́н**, **миллиа́рд**, **биллио́н** and **триллио́н** like hard-ending masculine nouns of the first declension. However, **ты́сяча** has two forms of the instrumental: **ты́сячью** and **ты́сячей** (see 197 note (a)). The numerals also appear in multiples: *две ты́сячи* ‘two thousand’, *пять ты́сяч* ‘five thousand’, *двэ́сти пятьдеся́т одна́ ты́сяча* ‘251,000’, *четы́ре миллио́на* ‘four million’, *шесты́десят миллио́нов* ‘sixty million’, *два́дцать два миллиа́рда* ‘twenty-two thousand million’ and so on.

For declension of compound numerals see 198.

192 Ноль/нуль. Meanings and usage

(1) **Ноль/нуль** ‘nought, zero, nil’ governs the genitive case of singular and plural nouns.

(2) The two forms are often stylistically and phraseologically differentiated. Thus:

(i) **Нуль** tends to be used in mathematics, in technical terminology and in indicating temperature:

нуль гра́дусов Це́льсия	‘zero degrees Celsius’ (n.b. gen. pl.)
ни́же нуля́	‘below zero’

(ii) **Ноль** is used:

(a) In colloquial contexts:

Игра́ ко́нчилась со счётом 5:0 (пять:**ноль**)
‘The game ended 5:0’

Её телефо́н: 231-00-45 (двэ́сти три́дцать о́дин **ноль но́ль** со́рок пять)
‘Her telephone number is 231 00 45’

(Also, in colloquial contexts, **ноль гра́дусов** ‘zero degrees’.)

(b) In decimals (see 205 (1)).

(c) In giving precise indications of the time:

шесть **ноль-но́ль**
‘six hundred hours’ (six o’clock precisely)

(iii) Either numeral may be used to indicate the figure 0, though **нуль** is preferred in technical registers.

(iv) **Нуль** is used in the phrases начинать с **нуля** ‘to start from scratch’ and сводиться к **нулю** ‘to come to nothing’, **ноль** in **ноль внимания** ‘no attention whatsoever’. Either is possible in стрижка под **ноль/нуль** ‘a close haircut’.

193 The numeral **один, одна, одно, один**

(1) The numeral 1 agrees with the noun in gender, number and case:

один стол	‘one table’	одно окно	‘one window’
одна карта	‘one map’	одни часы	‘one clock’

Он поднял штангу **одной** рукой
‘He lifted the weight with one hand’

Note

- (a) The numeral is omitted in some time expressions: час дня ‘one o’clock in the afternoon’.
- (b) In counting, **раз** usually replaces **один**: **Раз** . . . два . . . три . . . ‘**One** . . . two . . . three . . .’.
- (c) The animate accusative/genitive rule applies: Вижу **одного** мальчика ‘I see one boy’.

(2) The agreement of compound numerals ending in **один, одна, одно** is as follows:

(i) They take a singular noun: сорок один **стул** ‘forty-one **chairs**’, cf.:

Был день её рождения, и я принёс **двадцать одну свечу** (Gagarin)
‘It was her birthday and I brought twenty-one candles’

(ii) They take a singular predicate:

В этом году **был задержан восемьдесят один нарушитель** правил пожарной безопасности в лесу (*Russia Today*)
‘This year eighty-one people have been arrested for breaches of forest fire safety precautions’

В прошлом году **погиб 271 человек** (*Nedelia*)
‘271 people died last year’

У нас прожиточный минимум очень низкий — **11281 рубль** (V. Putin)
‘In Russia the subsistence minimum is very low — 11,281 roubles’

(iii) Long adjectives and participles also appear in the singular:

Всегó у Чóсера двáдцать **один рассказ, изложенный** простым языком (Прорр)

‘Chaucer has twenty-one tales in all, told in simple language’

(iv) However, *relative pronouns* normally appear in the plural:

Двáдцать один мáльчик, **которые** бежáли по úлице

‘Twenty-one boys who were running down the street’

(3) The plural form **одни́** is used with plural-only nouns (see 49): **одни́** сáнки ‘one sledge’, **одни́** носилки ‘one stretcher’ (also **двáдцать одни́** сáнки, носилки ‘twenty-one sledges, stretchers’).

Note

Compare also the colloquial **одни́** сли́вки ‘one cream’ (= one portion, packet of cream), heard in shops and buffets.

(4) Other meanings of **один, одна́, одно́, одни́** include:

(i) ‘Alone, by oneself’: Она́ **одна́** ‘She is all by herself’, Ему́ скúчно **одному́** ‘He is bored by himself’.

Note

Compare the use of the nominative in Я был **один** ‘I was alone’ and the use of the instrumental in Я был **одним** из его́ друзéй ‘I was one of his friends’.

(ii) ‘Only, nothing but’: Я **один (одна́)** зная́ ‘Only I know/I alone know’:

—Наверное, óстров. Тут **одни́** островá (Gagarin)

“‘It’s probably an island. There are nothing but islands here’”

(iii) ‘A’, ‘a certain’, ‘some’: У меня́ есть **один** знакомый, который родился в России ‘I have a friend who was born in Russia’, **Одни́** мой знакомые недавно переехали в другой гóрод ‘Some of my friends recently moved to another town’.

(iv) ‘The same’: Мы учились в **одной** шкóле ‘We went to the same school’.

(v) **Одни́ . . . други́е . . . трéтьи** render ‘some . . . others . . . others still’: **Одни́** молчáт, **други́е** красне́ют, **трéтьи** возмущáются ‘Some are silent, others blush, others still get indignant’.

Note

In some cases, potential ambiguity can be resolved only by context: Здесь растёт **одна** ель ‘One fir-tree grows here’ or ‘Only fir-trees grow here’.

See also **143** (2).

194 Полтора́/полторы́; два/две, три, четы́ре; оба/обе

The numerals **полтора́/полторы́; два/две, три, четы́ре; оба/обе** take the genitive singular of the noun, when the numerals themselves are in the nominative or inanimate accusative (for usage after *declined* forms of these numerals, see **196**).

(1) **Полтора́** (m. and n.)/**полторы́** (f.) ‘one and a half’:

полтора́ часá	‘an hour and a half’
полторы́ мину́ты	‘a minute and a half’

(i) Other numerals which include a half are expressed as follows: два **с полови́ной** часá ‘two and a half hours’, пять **с полови́ной** часо́в ‘five and a half hours’ etc.

(ii) Полтора́- also appears in the compound numeral **полтора́ста** ‘150’ (oblique case **полу́тора**ста).

(2) **Два** (m. and n.)/**две** (f.) ‘two’, **три** ‘three’, **четы́ре** ‘four’ (nom. and inan. acc.):

два ма́льчика	‘two boys’	три сту́ла	‘three chairs’
два окна́	‘two windows’	четы́ре страны́	‘four countries’
две гору́	‘two mountains’		

(i) **Ряд** ‘row’, **час** ‘hour’, **шаг** ‘step’, **шар** ‘sphere, globe’ have *end* stress in the genitive singular after два, три, четы́ре: два **часá** ‘two o’clock’, два **шара́** ‘two globes’, три **ряда́** ‘three rows’, четы́ре **шага́** ‘four steps’ (cf. *stem* stress with other forms: около **ча́са** ‘about an hour’).

(ii) The accusative plural of the noun is used as an alternative to the genitive singular in certain set expressions: отпустить на все четы́ре **стороны́/сто́роны** ‘to give complete freedom of movement’.

(iii) Nouns governed by the numerals **два/две, три, четы́ре** appear in the genitive *plural* if the noun *precedes* the numeral and is linked to it by a form of the verb ‘to be’ or other copula: **Стака́нов** **бы́ло** то́лько два

(Rasputin) ‘There were only two glasses’. Compare usage with 1: **Больниц** в городе **две**, а **школ** только **одна́** ‘There are two hospitals in the town, and only one school’.

(iv) Compound numerals ending in **два/две**, **три**, **четы́ре** also take the genitive singular of the noun when the numerals themselves are in the nominative or inanimate accusative case:

сорок два дня	‘forty-two days’
пятьдесят две мину́ты	‘fifty-two minutes’
сто три окна́	‘one hundred and three windows’
девяно́сто четы́ре челове́ка	‘ninety-four people’

(v) **Два/две**, **три**, **четы́ре** take the *genitive plural* of an adjective qualifying a masculine or neuter noun and the *nominative plural* of an adjective qualifying a feminine noun:

два больши́х стака́на/окна́	‘two large glasses/windows’
три бе́дные де́вушки	‘three poor girls’

Note

- (a) A *genitive plural* adjective is preferred with a feminine noun after 2–4 when there is a stress difference between the genitive singular and nominative plural of the noun (три **высо́ких** горы́ ‘three high mountains’ (cf. nom. pl. **го́ры**)), when a distributive phrase is governed by the preposition **по** (по три **спе́лых** гру́ши ‘three ripe pears each’) and in fractions and decimals (see **205** (1)).
- (b) Pre-positive adjectives appear in the *nominative plural*: **ка́ждые** три мину́ты ‘every three minutes’, **последние** два дня ‘the last two days’. See, however, **157** (3).
- (c) Adjectival nouns behave like adjectives after 2–4: два **учёных** ‘two scientists’, три **гости́ные** ‘three living-rooms’, четы́ре **живо́тных** ‘four animals’. See **158**.

(3) **Оба** (m. and n.)/**обе** (f.) ‘both’:

(i) **оба/обе** behave like **два/две** ‘two’, taking a genitive singular noun and a plural adjective:

оба кру́глых стола́/окна́	‘both round tables/windows’
обе кру́глые тарелки	‘both round plates’

(ii) **оба** may also denote a male–female pair: И ста́ли о́ни оба смотре́ть друг на дру́га . . . Не вы́держала она́ его́ взгля́да (Shcherbakov) ‘And

they both began looking at each other, . . . she could not withstand his gaze’.

Note

- (a) Accusative plural *стороны* is possible as an alternative to genitive singular *стороны́* in the phrase *в обе стороны/стороны: переводить в обе стороны/стороны* ‘to translate both ways’.
- (b) Два **ряда́** ‘two rows’ but оба **ряда** ‘both rows’.

195 Numerals five and above

The nominative and accusative of the numerals 5–999 take the *genitive plural* of the adjective and noun:

пять месяцев	‘five months’
восемь часов	‘eight o’clock, eight hours’
пятнадцать минут	‘fifteen minutes’
двадцать важных писем	‘twenty important letters’
сорок пять дней	‘forty-five days’
семьдесят школ	‘seventy schools’
сто семь грамм/граммов	‘one hundred and seven grams’
триста просторных комнат	‘three hundred spacious rooms’

Note

- (a) See **193** (2) (i) and **194** (2) (iv) for usage after compound numerals ending in 1–4.
- (b) 5–999 take the genitive plural **человек**, not *людей*: *семь человек* ‘seven people’ (if the noun is qualified by an adjective, however, *людей* is preferred: *пять незнакомых людей* (or *лиц* or *человек*) ‘five unknown people’). Cf. also dat. *пяти человекам* ‘to five people’, instr. *с пятью людьми* ‘with five people’, etc.

196 Agreement of oblique cases of numerals полтора́/полторы́ to 999 with oblique plural forms of nouns

- (1) Declined numerals from 1½ to 999 combine with nouns and adjectives in the same case of the *plural*:

(i) **Genitive**

около **полутора часо́в** 'about an hour and a half'
 больше **трёх дней** 'more than three days'

В течение **двух–трёх месяцев** после этого Лужина звали Антошей (Nabokov)
 'For two or three months after this they called Luzhin Antosha'

(ii) **Dative**

Она́ учи́т **трём язы́кам**
 'She teaches three languages'

Он обрати́лся к **четырёхста́м но́вым избира́телям**
 'He addressed four hundred new voters'

(iii) **Instrumental**

Куда́ она́ мо́гла де́ться с **четырьмя детьми́**? (Rybakov)
 'Where could she have got to with four children?'

Он обеща́л ограни́читься **десятью сигарета́ми** в день (Avdeenko)
 'He promised to limit himself to ten cigarettes a day'

(iv) **Prepositional**

В **двух шага́х** от ка́мня сто́ял челове́к (Gagarin)
 'At two paces from the stone stood a man'

в **пятидеся́ти ю́жных городáх**
 'in fifty southern towns'

(2) The **animate accusative/genitive rule** (see 47) applies to the numerals 2–4 and to 'both', the numeral appearing in the genitive (**двух, трёх, четырёх; обих/обеих**), adjectives and nouns in the genitive *plural*:

Она́ приня́ла на ку́рсы **трёх молодых студéнтов**
 'She accepted three young students on to the course'

Она́ пригласи́ла **четырёх медсестёр**
 'She invited four nurses'

Она́ лю́бит **обих братьев и обеих сестёр**
 'She loves both her brothers and both her sisters'

Note

(a) The animate accusative/genitive rule does *not* apply to *compound* numerals ending in **два/две, три** or **четыре**: Она́ приня́ла на

- курсы **двадцать три студента** ‘She accepted twenty-three students on to the course’.
- (b) Application of the animate accusative/genitive rule varies where animals, birds, quasi-animates etc. are concerned: Он поймал **двух птичек** (or **две птички**) ‘He caught two small birds’, Он принёс **двух кукол** (or **две куклы**) ‘He brought two dolls’ (cf. alternative accusative forms of существó ‘being’: **двух существ** or **два существа**).
- (c) The animate accusative/genitive rule does *not* apply to the numerals 5–999: Я встретил **пять/сорок/сто** моряков ‘I met five/forty/a hundred sailors’.

197 Ты́сяча ‘thousand’, миллио́н ‘million’, миллиа́рд ‘a thousand million’, биллио́н ‘billion’, триллио́н ‘trillion’

Ты́сяча (pronounced ты́ща in colloquial speech), **миллио́н** and **миллиа́рд** etc. take the *genitive plural* of the noun, regardless of their own case (see, however, note (a) below):

ты́сяча **рублёй**
‘a thousand roubles’

с **тремя́ ты́сячами** рублёй
‘with three thousand roubles’

забо́титься о **миллио́нах** дете́й
‘to care for millions of children’

Ассигно́вания равня́ются **семи́ миллиа́рдам** до́лларов
‘Subsidies amount to seven thousand million dollars’

Note

- (a) In its capacity as a noun of quantity, **ты́сяча** has instrumental **ты́сячей** + genitive plural (с ты́сячей **друзе́й** ‘with a thousand friends’), while in its capacity as a numeral it has instrumental **ты́сячью** + instrumental plural: с **ты́сячью** **рабо́чими** ‘with a thousand workers’. **Ты́сячей** is regarded as the more literary form, **ты́сячью** as the more colloquial. While **ты́сячей** is the preferred instrumental in its function as a noun of quantity, **ты́сячью** is making inroads in this area also. In combination with *одной*, however, **ты́сячей** is always used: с *одной* **ты́сячей** солда́т ‘with one thousand soldiers’.
- (b) Ты́сяча, миллио́н, миллиа́рд take genitive plural **челове́к**: ты́сяча **челове́к** ‘a thousand people’. However, **люде́й** is preferred

when qualified by an adjective (ты́сяча **че́стных** люде́й ‘a thousand honest people’) and with **ты́сячи** ‘thousands’ (ты́сячи люде́й ‘thousands of people’) (emphasizing mass rather than precise quantity).

- (c) **Ты́сяча** may be written in figures as ‘1.000’, ‘1000’, or ‘1 000’ (commas are reserved for decimals, see **205** (1)).
- (d) **Ты́сяча** observes feminine singular agreement: Пя́тьдеся́т о́днá ты́сяча из них **бо́льнá** наркóманей (*Izvestiia*) ‘Fifty-one thousand of them are addicted to drugs’.

198 Declension of compound numerals

(1) In **written** Russian, all parts of a compound numeral are declined, the noun agreeing with the final element of the compound:

К трёмста́м три́дцати́ шестí часáм прибáвить ещё сто шестьдеся́т четы́ре (Koluntsev)
‘Add another one hundred and sixty-four hours **to three hundred and thirty-six**’

(2) In colloquial speech, however, it is common to decline either:

(i) the **final elements** of the numeral only:

представíteли **пя́тьдеся́т о́днóй** страны́
‘representatives of **fifty-one countries**’ (cf. written norm **пяти́десяти** о́днóй страны́)

с четы́реста **пяти́десятью** **двумя́** рублѝми
‘with four hundred and fifty-two roubles’ (cf. written norm **с четы́рмяста́ми . . .**)

с шестьсо́т **се́мьдеся́т** **се́мью** иллюстра́циями
‘with six hundred and seventy-seven illustrations’ (cf. written norm **с шестьюста́ми се́мьюдеся́тью . . .**)

or:

(ii) the **first and final** elements only:

с **пяти́ю ты́сячами** **пятьсо́т се́мьдеся́т** **четы́рмя́** рублѝми
‘with five thousand five hundred and seventy-four roubles’ (cf. written norm **с пяти́ю ты́сячами** **пятьюста́ми се́мьюдеся́тью** **четы́рмя́** рублѝми)

199 Cardinals as numerical ‘labels’

(1) Cardinal numerals are widely used as indeclinable numerical ‘labels’ in addresses, both with нóмер ‘number’:

в кварти́ре нóмер **два́дцать семь**
 ‘in flat number 27’

and without нóмер

Мичу́рина, **два́дцать семь**, кварти́ра **восемна́дцать** (Shukshin)
 ‘Flat 18, 27 Michurin Street’

Она́ занима́ется у подро́ги в до́ме **четы́рнадцать** (Trifonov)
 ‘She is studying at her friend’s house at number 14’

(2) Cardinal numerals are also used with series of air/spacecraft (Салю́т-4 (**четы́ре**) ‘Saliut-4’, ТУ-104 (**сто четы́ре**) ‘TU-104’, ИЛ-62 (**шестьдеся́т два**) ‘IL-62’), with the names of major international events, where the cardinal numeral denotes the year of occurrence (Олимпиа́да-88 (**во́семьдесят во́семь**) ‘the 1988 Olympics’), with the names of airports (Шереме́тьево-о́дин ‘Sheremetovo-1’), flight numbers (рейс **сто три́дцать семь** ‘flight number 137’), ticket numbers (**два́дцать четы́ре ты́сячи сто се́мьдесят** (ticket number) ‘24170’) and receipt numbers (**се́мьна́дцать два́дцать пять** ‘1725’). Telephone numbers are read in one group of three digits and two groups of two: **сто пятьдеся́т во́семь двена́дцать ноль четы́ре** (158-12-04).

Note

In other contexts (e.g. the numbers of trains, carriages, seats) the more colloquial **ordinal** is the norm: **во́сьмо́й** ваго́н ‘carriage number 8’, три́дцать **пя́тое** ме́сто ‘seat number 35’, се́мьдесят **второ́й** по́езд ‘train number 72’. Compare **два́дцатьи́й** ряд, се́редина ‘row 20, centre’, в **пя́той** пала́те ‘in ward 5’ (rooms are numbered with cardinals or ordinals: ко́мната **пя́тая/пять** ‘room 5’).

(3) Numerals may be left undeclined in measuring speed: е́хать со ско́ростью **три́дцать** км/ч (киломе́тров в час) ‘to travel at a speed of thirty kilometres per hour’ (or **три́дцати́ киломе́тров в час** or **три́дцать киломе́тров в час**).

200 Collective numerals

(1) The collective numerals:

(i) Constitute a series from 2 to 10: **дво́е** ‘two’, **трё́е** ‘three’, **че́тверо** ‘four’, **пя́теро** ‘five’, **ше́стеро** ‘six’, **се́меро** ‘seven’, **во́сьмеро** ‘eight’, **де́вятеро** ‘nine’, **де́сятеро** ‘ten’. Collectives above **се́меро** ‘seven’ are little used now. The collectives decline as follows (**се́меро**, **во́сьмеро**, **де́вятеро**, **де́сятеро** decline like **ше́стеро**):

<i>Nom.</i>	дво́-е	трё́-е	че́твер-о
<i>Acc.</i>	дво́-е/-и́х	трё́-е/-и́х	че́твер-о/-и́х
<i>Gen.</i>	дво-и́х	трё-и́х	четвер-и́х
<i>Dat.</i>	дво-и́м	трё-и́м	четвер-и́м
<i>Instr.</i>	дво-и́ми	трё-и́ми	четвер-и́ми
<i>Prep.</i>	о дво-и́х	о трё-и́х	о четвер-и́х
<i>Nom.</i>	пя́тер-о	ше́стер-о	
<i>Acc.</i>	пя́тер-о/-и́х	ше́стер-о/-и́х	
<i>Gen.</i>	пя́тер-и́х	ше́стер-и́х	
<i>Dat.</i>	пя́тер-и́м	ше́стер-и́м	
<i>Instr.</i>	пя́тер-и́ми	ше́стер-и́ми	
<i>Prep.</i>	о пя́тер-и́х	о ше́стер-и́х	

(ii) They take the genitive plural of adjectives and nouns when they themselves are in the nominative/inanimate accusative.

(2) Collective numerals are used in four main constructions:

(i) With nouns used only in the plural (see 49). This applies especially to **дво́е** ‘two’, **трё́е** ‘three’ and **че́тверо** ‘four’, which, unlike the cardinal numerals **два**, **три**, **четы́ре**, govern genitive *plural* forms:

дво́е часо́в	‘two clocks’
трё́е носи́лок	‘three stretchers’
трё́е похоро́н	‘three funerals’

Через че́тверо **су́ток** по́езд бу́дет в Москве́ (Trifonov)
 ‘In four days’ time the train will be in Moscow’

Above four, collective numerals are the norm with plural-only nouns:

пя́теро сане́й	‘five sledges’
ше́стеро воро́т	‘six gates’

and cardinals a colloquial variant (пять сане́й etc.)

Note

- (a) The collectives can be used with ‘paired’ objects (e.g. **двѳе лыж** ‘two pairs of skis’, **трѳе нѳжниц** ‘three pairs of scissors’), but constructions with **пѳра** ‘pair’ are preferred: **три пѳры нѳжниц** etc.
- (b) Compare also the colloquial **двѳе сливок** ‘two creams’ (= portions, packets of cream), heard in shops and buffets, **двѳе щей** ‘two cabbage soups’, **трѳе духѳв** ‘three types *or* bottles of perfume’ etc.
- (c) Collectives cannot appear in compound numerals. Thus, **день**, not **сѳтки**, is used in rendering ‘22 days’ (**двадцѳть два дня**). Paraphrases with **штѳка** ‘item’, **количѳство** ‘quantity’ and **пѳра** ‘pair’ are also found: **Прѳдано пѳтысѳт сѳрок три штѳки сѳнок** *or* **Прѳданы сѳнки в количѳстве пѳтысѳт сорокѳ трѳх** ‘Five hundred and forty-three sledges have been sold’, **сѳрок три пѳры санѳй/часѳв** ‘43 sledges/clocks’.
- (d) *Cardinal* numerals, *not* collectives, are used with the *oblique cases* of plural-only nouns: на **четырѳх** (not ***четверыѳх**) сѳнках ‘on four sledges’.

(ii) The collectives can be used with *animate masculine nouns*: **двѳе друзѳй** (= два дрѳга) ‘two friends’, **трѳе мѳльчиков** (= три мѳльчика) ‘three boys’. As with animate forms in general (see below), the use of the collective numeral emphasizes the cohesiveness of the group, by contrast with the individualizing nature of the cardinals. Usage is particularly common:

- (a) With nouns in **-а/-я** (e.g. **мужчѳна**, **судѳя**, **юноша**) (**пѳтеро мужчѳн** ‘five men’, **трѳе судѳй** ‘three judges’, **двѳе юношей** ‘two youths’), including nouns of common gender (**двѳе сирѳт** ‘two orphans’ (две сирѳты is preferred, however, if both orphans are female)).
- (b) With **люди** ‘people’ and **лицѳ** ‘person’: **трѳе людѳй** ‘three people’, **пѳтеро незнакѳмых лиц** ‘five strangers’.
- (c) With adjectival nouns: **двѳе прохѳжих** ‘two passers-by’, **трѳе больныѳх** ‘three patients’, **чѳтверо знакѳмых** ‘four acquaintances’, **сѳмеро отдыѳающѳих** ‘seven holiday-makers’.

Note that either cardinals *or* collectives may be used in oblique cases:

Он выѳгрузил в Берѳзове **шѳстерыѳх** (or **шѳсть**) пассажѳров (Zalygin)

‘He off-loaded six passengers in Berezovo’

The use of collective numerals with *feminine* animate nouns (e.g. *чѣтверо жѣнщин* ‘four women’) is a mark of substandard colloquial Russian, cf. standard **чѣтыре жѣнщины**.

The collectives are not normally used with nouns denoting high rank: thus, **два миністра** ‘two ministers’ rather than *двое министров*; similarly, **два профѣссора** ‘two professors’, **чѣтыре генерала** ‘four generals’.

(iii) The collectives are used with *дѣти* ‘children’: **двое дѣтѣй** ‘two children’, **трое дѣтѣй** ‘three children’, **чѣтверо дѣтѣй** ‘four children’, **пѣтеро дѣтѣй** ‘five children’ (colloquially also *два ребѣнка* ‘two children’ etc.). The series rarely proceeds beyond **сѣмеро** ‘seven’, cf.

Супрѣги Никітины, у котѣрых **сѣмеро** дѣтѣй (*Sputnik*)
‘The Nikitins, who have seven children’

and

Она вспоминаѣет свою мать, у котѣрой было **дѣвять** дѣтѣй (*Russia Today*)
‘She recalls her mother, who had nine children’

In oblique cases, either cardinal or collective numerals may be used, cf.

Мать **чѣтырѣх** дѣтѣй . . . (Rybakov)
‘The mother of four children’

and

Пѣтерых дѣтѣй выростила (Trifonov)
‘She raised five children’

Note

The collective numerals are also used:

- (a) With **ребѣта**: **пѣтеро** ребѣт ‘five kids’, с пѣтерыми/пѣтью ребѣтами ‘with five kids’, cf. У него пѣтеро **ребѣтишек** ‘He has five kiddies’.
- (b) With **внѣки** ‘grandchildren’: За столѣм — **чѣтверо дѣтѣй** и **трое внѣков** (Kovaleva) ‘At the table are four children and three grandchildren’.
- (c) With **близнецы**: **трое/чѣтверо** близнецѣв ‘triplets/quadruplets’.
- (d) Colloquially, with the young of animals: **трое щенѣт/три щенка** ‘three puppies’.

(iv) The collective numerals are also used when an animate noun is absent from the construction: Нас было **двое** ‘There were two of us’, **Трое** стояли

на углу ‘Three people were standing on the corner’, **Эти пятеро** остались ‘These five stayed’, **Мы трое** протестовали ‘We three protested’, **Комната на троих** ‘A room for three’. Reference is to:

(a) Groups of males:

Их шестеро против наших **троих** (*Russia Today*)
‘There are six of them against our three’

(b) Females:

Их четверо; все они машинистки высокого класса
‘There are four of them; they are all first-class typists’

(c) Mixed company:

Нас четверо: мой приятель с девушкой, Лилия и я (Kazakov)
‘There are four of us: my friend and his girl-friend, Lilia and I’

(v) The collectives are also used in some idioms: **есть, работать за троих**, ‘to eat, work enough for three’ etc., **на своих двоих** (colloquial) ‘on foot’.

201 Indefinite numerals

(1) Indefinite numerals include **достаточно** ‘enough’, **мало** ‘few’, **много** ‘many, much’, **немало** ‘not a few’, **немного** ‘not many, a few’, **несколько** ‘several’, **сколько** ‘how many’, **столько** ‘so many’.

(2) All the indefinite numerals may govern the genitive singular and plural: **достаточно продуктов** ‘sufficient provisions’, **мало солдат** ‘not many soldiers’, **много времени** ‘much time’, **сколько сахара?** ‘how much sugar?’, **столько денег** ‘so much money’.

(3) **Столлько** and **сколько** often relate to each other, standing in adjacent clauses:

Старайтесь давать хомяку **столько** корма, **сколько** он в состоянии съесть (*Iunyi naturalist*)
‘Try to give the hamster as much food as it is able to eat’

(4) **Несколько**, **сколько**, **столько** take genitive plural человек (**несколько человек** ‘a few people’), while **мало**, **много**, **немало**, **немного** take genitive plural людей (**много людей** ‘many people’ etc.).

Note

Скóлько люде́й is used in emotive contexts: **Скóлько люде́й** получи́ли в послéдние го́ды но́вые кварти́ры! ‘How many people have received new apartments in recent years!’, cf. the matter-of-fact **Скóлько** челове́к поги́бло? ‘How many people died?’

(5) **Не́сколько** is distinguished from the ‘selective’ pronoun **не́которые** ‘some, certain’ (see also 141). Compare В за́ле сидéло **не́сколько** пасса́жиров ‘In the hall sat several passengers’ and **Не́которые** из них бы́ли недовóльны ‘Some of them were dissatisfied’.

(6) **Не́сколько**, **скóлько** and **стóлько** decline like plural adjectives, agreeing with oblique cases of plural nouns:

Мóжно одновре́менно соедини́ться с **не́сколькими** абоне́нтами
(*Izvestiia*)

‘It is possible to link up with several subscribers simultaneously’

(7) **Ма́ло** implies negative quantity (У него́ **ма́ло** де́нег ‘He has not got much money’), while **немно́го** can imply negative *or* positive (У него́ **немно́го** де́нег ‘He has not got much money’ (negative)/‘He does have a little money’ (positive)). Since **ма́ло** does not decline, paraphrase is sometimes necessary: в ре́дких слúчаях ‘in a few cases’, с óчень ма́леньким ко́личеством му́ки ‘with very little flour’ etc.

(8) **Мно́го** (or **мно́гое**, pl. **мно́гие**) declines both in the singular (**Мно́гое** бы́ло скры́то от меня́ ‘Much was concealed from me’, **Я мно́гому** научи́лся у него́ ‘I learnt a lot from him’) and in the plural (**Мно́гие** так дúмают ‘Many people think that’, У **мно́гих** рек пра́вый бе́рег вы́ше ле́вого ‘The right bank of many rivers is higher than the left’).

Note

(a) While **мно́го** means ‘a lot’ and is often used with passive or static verbs (На собра́нии бы́ло **мно́го** учителе́й ‘There were a lot of teachers at the meeting’), **мно́гие** implies ‘not all, a considerable proportion’, and is more common with verbs which denote action on the part of the subject (**Мно́гие** учителя́ голосова́ли за предложе́ние ‘Many teachers voted for the proposal’). **Мно́го** is commoner with inanimate nouns, unless the intention is to individualize, cf. Снесено́ **мно́го** зда́ний ‘Many buildings have been demolished’ and **Мно́гие** дома́ восстано́влены в пре́жнем сти́ле ‘Many houses have been restored in their original style’, **Мно́гие** берёзы уже́ без ли́стьев ‘Many birches are already without leaves’.

- (b) The animate accusative/genitive rule is not normally applied to indefinite numerals: thus, Я встрѣтил **нѣсколько** (rather than **нѣскольких**) студѣнтов.

202 Agreement of the predicate with a subject which contains a numeral

(1) It is difficult to formulate hard and fast rules for the agreement of a verb predicate with a subject which contains a numeral. In some instances the predicate appears in the *singular*, in others it appears in the *plural*.

(2) Factors which affect choice include word order, with a preference for the *singular* when the verb *precedes* the noun:

Егѡ **опередѣло** нѣсколько лыжников
'He was overtaken by several skiers'

and for the *plural* when the verb *follows* the noun:

Нѣсколько лыжников **опередѣли** егѡ
'Several skiers overtook him'

(3) **Мнѡго** and **мáло** almost invariably take a *singular* predicate: Там **было** мáло нарѡду 'There were not many people there', Во врѣмя пожáра **погѣбло** мнѡго книг 'Many books perished during the fire'.

(4) With cardinal and collective numerals, **нѣсколько** 'several' and **скѡлько** 'how much', the choice of a *singular* or *plural* predicate depends on a number of factors. Prime among these is the nature of the verb predicate.

(i) If this denotes state (**быть** 'to be', **существовать** 'to exist' etc.), then a *singular* predicate is preferred:

У неѣ **было** три брáта
'She had three brothers'

Нас **было** двѡе
'There were two of us'

Нам **предстоѣт** нѣсколько трѹдных встреч с родѣтелями
'We face a number of difficult meetings with parents'

(ii) A *singular* is also preferred with verbs which do not denote action on the part of the subject:

В бою **поги́бло** со́рок солда́т
‘Forty soldiers perished in the battle’

Во вре́мя налёта **уби́то** две же́нщины
‘Two women were killed during the raid’

Издаётся 80 журна́лов
‘80 journals are published’

Зарегистр́ровано бо́лее 130 ты́сяч люде́й (*Izvestiia*)
‘More than 130,000 people have been registered’

in expressions of time

Ей ско́ро **испо́лнится** два́дцать лет
‘She will soon be twenty’

Прошл́о три го́да
‘Three years have passed’

До прихо́да почто́вого авто́буса **остава́лось** часа́ полтора́ (Abramov)
‘About an hour and a half remained to the arrival of the post bus’

in expressing approximate quantity

Кварти́ры **полу́чает** око́ло трёхсо́т семе́й
‘About three hundred families receive apartments’

and where a distributive phrase in **по** functions as subject (see also 448):

У ка́ждой двéри **сто́яло** по солда́ту
‘At each door stood a soldier’

(iii) A *plural* predicate will be used, however, if the numeral phrase is qualified by a demonstrative or other plural form (Э́ти пять лет **прошл́и** незамéтно ‘These five years have passed by imperceptibly’, Э́ти три до́ма **продо́аны** неда́вно ‘These three houses have been sold recently’), or by a relative clause (cf. Со́рок мину́т **истекло́** ‘Forty minutes have expired’ and Со́рок мину́т, **о кото́рых вы проси́ли, истекл́и** ‘The forty minutes that you requested have expired’).

(iv) A *plural* predicate is also preferred if the verb denotes action on the part of the subject:

Вошл́и трóе в шинéлях
‘Three people came in wearing greatcoats’

Нéсколько человек **кíнулись** вслед бежавшему (Nikitin)
'Several people dashed off after the running man'

Note also use with fractions and decimals: В движéнии за сохранéние национальнóй самобýтности и охрáну прирóды **учáствуют** соотвётственно 3,5 и 3,1 процéнта (*Komsomol'skaia pravda*) '3.5 and 3.1 per cent respectively participate in the movement for the preservation of national identity and nature conservation'. Compare the use of the *plural* of an *active* verb in Сейчáс пóлгорода **хóдят** в таких шмóтках (*Komsomol'skaia pravda*) 'Now half the town wears such gear' and the use of the *singular* of a *passive reflexive* verb in Пóлдома **ремóнтируется** 'Half the house is being repaired'.

(v) A *plural* predicate is especially common where attention is drawn to separate activity on the part of individual members of a subject group:

Сóрок демонстрáнтов **разошлись**
'The forty demonstrators dispersed'

Егó три сестры **вышли** зáмуж
'His three sisters got married'

Note

This factor may affect even indefinite numerals like **мнóго**: Мнóго фашистских самолётов **бомбили** испáнский гóрод Гёрника 'Many Fascist aircraft bombed the Spanish town of Guernica'.

(vi) A *plural* predicate is also used with **óба/óбе**: Óба сына **верну́лись** 'Both sons returned'.

(vii) *The plural* is normal if the predicate is a *short adjective*:

Нéсколько статéй в éтом сбóрнике **интерéсны**
'Several articles in this collection are interesting'

Ordinal Numerals

203 Formation of ordinal numerals

Apart from **пёрвый** 'first' and **вторóй** 'second', ordinal numerals derive from cardinals (see 190). They are as follows:

1st	пёрвый	51st	пятьдeсят пёрвый
2nd	второй	60th	шестидесятый
3rd	третий	61st	шестьдeсят пёрвый
4th	четвёртый	70th	семидесятый
5th	пятый	71st	сёмьдeсят пёрвый
6th	шестой	80th	восьмидесятый
7th	сeдьмой	81st	восьмьдeсят пёрвый
8th	восьмой	90th	девянóстый
9th	девятый	91st	девянóсто пёрвый
10th	дeсятый	100th	сóтый
11th	одиндaдцaтый	200th	двухсóтый
12th	двенáдцaтый	300th	трёхсóтый
13th	тринáдцaтый	400th	четырёхсóтый
14th	четы́рнадцaтый	500th	пятисóтый
15th	пятнáдцaтый	600th	шестисóтый
16th	шестнáдцaтый	700th	семисóтый
17th	семнáдцaтый	800th	восьмисóтый
18th	восемнáдцaтый	900th	девятисóтый
19th	девятнáдцaтый	1,000th	ты́сячный
20th	двaдцáтый	1,001st	ты́сячa пёрвый
21st	двáдцaть пёрвый	1,002nd	ты́сячa вторóй
22nd	двáдцaть вторóй	2,000th	двухты́сячный
30th	тридцáтый	3,000th	трёхты́сячный
31st	тридцáть пёрвый	5,000th	пятиты́сячный
40th	сороковóй	1,000,000th	миллиóнный
41st	сóрок пёрвый	10,000,000th	дeсятимиллиóнный
50th	пятидeсятый		

Note

- Ordinal numbers decline like hard adjectives in **-ый/-ой**, except for **третий** (see **151** (1) note).
- Девятый** ‘ninth’, **десятый** ‘tenth’, **двадцáтый** ‘twentieth’, **тридцáтый** ‘thirtieth’ have medial stress, cf. the initially stressed cardinals from which they derive.
- Note the central **-и-** in 50th to 80th: **пятидeсятый** ‘fiftieth’ etc.
- In abbreviations, the final letter of the ending is used (**1-я** пятилётка ‘the first five-year plan’, **3-й** день ‘the third day’, **20-е** годы ‘the twenties’), unless the penultimate letter of the ending is a consonant, in which case the final *two* letters are used (**5-го** ряда ‘of row 5’).
- In compounds, only the final component has the form of an ordinal and declines: пятьсóт **четвёртый** билет ‘the five hundred **and fourth** ticket’, в двáдцaть **пёрвом** рядóу ‘in row 21’.

- (f) Roman numerals are used in denoting centuries (в **XX** (двадцáтом) вéке ‘in the 20th century’), Communist Party congresses (**XXII** (двадцáть вторóй) съезд ‘XXII Congress’), major international events (e.g. sessions of the General Assembly of the UNO), international congresses (**IX** (девяты́й) Конгрéсс МАПРЯЛ ‘the **IX** Congress of MAPRIAL’) and monarchs (Пётр I (Пéрвый) ‘Peter the First’).

204 Ordinal numerals: usage

- (1) Like adjectives, ordinal numerals agree in gender, case and number with the noun they qualify:

в пýтом рядý ‘in row five’

- (2) For use in time expressions see **206**.

- (3) Ordinals are used with pages, chapters, TV channels etc.:

урóк пýдесяты́й ‘lesson **fifty**’
на страни́це семна́дцáтой ‘on page **seventeen**’
в т́дцáть седьмо́й глаvé ‘in chapter **thirty-seven**’
по вторóй прогáмме ‘on channel **two**’

and to denote clothes and footwear sizes

ту́фли т́дцáть четвё́ртого разме́ра
‘size **thirty-four** shoes’

See also **199** (2) note.

- (4) Ordinals cannot be extended by a superlative, as they can in English. Instead, prepositional phrases with **по** are used:

вторáя река́ **по** дли́не ‘the second **longest** river’
т́ретьи́й го́род **по** вели́чинé ‘the third **largest** town’

Special Functions of Numerals

205 Cardinals and ordinals in fractions and decimals

- (1) Both cardinals and ordinals are used in **fractions** and **decimals**. In Russian *commas* are used instead of decimal points:

(i) **Fractions**

одна пя́тая (часть or до́ля understood)	‘one-fifth’
две пя́тых	‘two-fifths’
пять восьми́х	‘five-eighths’

Note the use of the genitive plural of the ordinal after 2–4 (cf. **194** (2) (v) note (a)).

(ii) **Decimals**

0,1 (одна де́сятая/но́ль це́лых и одна де́сятая)	0.1 <i>or</i> 1/10
0,05 (пять со́тых/но́ль це́лых и пять со́тых)	0.05
1,375 (одна це́лая и три́ста се́мьдесят пять ты́сячных)	1.375
2,4 (две це́лых и четы́ре де́сятых/два и четы́ре де́сятых)	2.4
57,365 (пятьдеся́т се́мь це́лых, три́ста ше́стьдесят пять ты́сячных)	57.365

Note

- (a) 1, 2 and compounds of 1, 2 take the gender of a following noun: двадцать **оди́н** и одна де́сятая ме́тра ‘21.1 metres’, две и четы́ре де́сятых то́нны ‘2.4 tons’.
- (b) Decimals/fractions are followed by the genitive singular of the noun:

12,5% (двена́дцать и пять де́сятых **проце́нта**)
 ‘12.5%’ (twelve point five per cent)

even if the decimal or fraction is declined:

Су́мма равня́ется пяти́ се́дьми́м **насле́дства**
 ‘The sum equals five-sevenths of the inheritance’

- (c) Треть ‘a third’, че́тверть ‘a quarter’ and полови́на ‘a half’ are commonly used instead of fractions: две **трети́**/две **трети́х** ‘two-thirds’, три **че́тверти**/три **че́твертых** ‘three-quarters’, три с **че́твертью** ‘three and a quarter’, два и **пять де́сятых** **проце́нта**/два с **полови́ной** **проце́нта** ‘two and a half per cent’.
- (d) Temperatures are read as follows: три́дцать ше́сть и ше́сть ‘36.6’ (normal body temperature).

(2) По́л- combines with the genitive singular of many nouns to denote half of something: **по́лго́да** ‘six months’, **по́лме́тра** ‘half a metre’, **по́лчасá** ‘half an hour’.

Note

- (a) A hyphen separates **пòл-** from the noun component when the latter begins with an **л** or a vowel or has proper-noun status: **пòл-лїтра** ‘half a litre’, **пòл-яблока** ‘half an apple’, **пòл-Варшáвы** ‘half Warsaw’.
- (b) In oblique cases **пòл-** becomes **полу-**, while the noun component declines in the usual way:

<i>Nom./Acc.</i>	пòлчас-á
<i>Gen.</i>	получáс-а
<i>Dat.</i>	получáс-у
<i>Instr.</i>	получáс-ом
<i>Prep.</i>	о получáс-е

- (c) In colloquial speech, **-у-** is omitted in the declension of some compounds: **в пол [у]стакáне** воды ‘in half a glass of water’, **бóлее пол[у]миллиóна** ‘more than half a million’. The better-established of these oral forms have found their way into the written language as alternatives to forms with **полу-**: **Емý нет и пòлгòда/полугòда** ‘He is not even six months old’. **Пòл-** also appears in certain set phrases: **на пòлпути́** ‘half-way’, **на пòлстáвки** ‘on half-pay’, **к пòлпéрвого** ‘by half past twelve’ etc.
- (d) Compounds in **пòл-** are qualified by plural adjectives (**пéрвые пòлчасá** ‘the first half-hour’), while oblique cases are qualified by singular adjectives (**пòсле пéрвого** **полугòда** ‘after the first six months’).
- (e) **Полу-** is also used as an adjective and noun prefix: **полукрýг** ‘semi-circle’, **полуфина́л** ‘semi-final’, **получасовóй** ‘half-hour’ (adj.), **полушáрие** ‘hemisphere’.

206 Telling the time

(1) Numerals are used to answer the questions **котóрый час?/скóлько врéмени?** ‘what is the time?’ and **в котóром часý?/во скóлько?** ‘at what time?’

(i) On the hour, the question **Котóрый час?/Скóлько врéмени?** ‘What is the time?’ is answered as

час, два часá, три часá, четýре часá, пять часóв
 ‘one, two, three, four, five o’clock’

up to **двенáдцать часóв** ‘twelve o’clock’.

(ii) The 24-hour clock may be used in official contexts: **семнадцать часoв** ‘five p.m.’. Otherwise one distinguishes (apart from **двенадцать часoв нoчи** ‘twelve o’clock at night’ and **двенадцать часoв дня** ‘twelve noon’):

час/два часа/три часа ночи	‘one/two/three o’clock in the morning ’
четыре часа through to одиннадцать часoв утра	‘four o’clock through to eleven o’clock in the morning ’
час/два часа/три часа/четыре часа/пять часoв дня	‘one/two/three/four/five o’clock in the afternoon ’
шесть часoв through to одиннадцать часoв вечера	‘six o’clock through to eleven o’clock in the evening ’

Note

- (a) Четыре часа **ночи** ‘four a.m.’ and пять часoв **вечера** ‘five p.m.’ are also found.
 (b) **Полдень** ‘midday’, **полночь** ‘midnight’.
 (c) Approximation is expressed by the preposition *около*: *около двух часoв* ‘about two o’clock’, *около полуночи* ‘about midnight’, *около девяти вечера* ‘about nine p.m.’.

(iii) Between the hour and half-hour, the time is rendered as ‘five, ten minutes’ etc. of the *next* hour (expressed as an ordinal numeral):

пять минут	} шестого	five	} past five
десять минут		ten	
четверть		quarter	
двадцать минут		twenty	
двадцать пять минут		twenty-five	
половина		half	

(Literally, ‘five minutes of the sixth’, ‘ten minutes of the sixth’ etc.)

Note

- (a) In spoken Russian **половина** can be replaced by **пол-**: **полшестого** ‘half past twelve’, **полдевятого** ‘half past eight’.
 (b) Минут may be omitted in multiples of five (**двадцать пять (минут) шестого** ‘twenty-five (minutes) past five’); otherwise минуты/минут must be included (**две минуты третьего** ‘two minutes past two’).
 (c) Ordinal numerals are used to denote unspecified times between hours: **второй час** ‘between one and two’ (usually closer to one

than two), **начало пятого** ‘just after four’ (lit. ‘the beginning of the fifth’) etc.:

Куда ж уходить? **Второй час**. На метро опоздала (Trifonov)
 “‘What’s the hurry? It’s **past one**. You’ve missed the last train on the Underground”

(iv) After the half-hour the time is rendered as ‘without five, ten minutes’ etc. one (o’clock), two (o’clock), three (o’clock), the hours being expressed as *cardinal* numerals:

без двадцати пяти (минут)	} четыре }	25 (minutes) to	} four
без двадцати (минут)		20 (minutes) to	
без четверти		quarter to	
без десяти (минут)		ten (minutes) to	
без пяти (минут)		five (minutes) to	
без двух минут		two minutes to	

(Literally ‘without 25 minutes four’ etc.)

Note

Neuter agreement in **было** три часа/десять минут первого/половина шестого/без пяти минут три ‘it was three o’clock/ten past twelve/half past five/five to three’ etc.

(2) **В котóром часу?/во скóлько?** ‘At what time?’

(i) The construction **в** + accusative case is used up to the half-hour:

в час дня	‘at 1 p.m.’
в пять минут шестого	‘at five past five’

(ii) After the half-hour, however, **в** is omitted:

без четверти семь	‘at quarter to seven’
без десяти два	‘at ten to two’

It is also omitted when the time phrase is governed by another preposition or a comparative:

Вторую тóню мы заканчиваем **около двух часов** но́чи (Nikolaev)
 ‘We complete the second haul **at about 2 o’clock** in the morning’

Он ложился всегда **не позже одиннадцати** (Iakhontov)
 ‘He always went to bed **no later than 11 o’clock**’

(iii) **В** + prepositional case is used to denote unspecified times between hours (**в начале** седьмого ‘at just gone six’, **во втором часу** ‘between one and two’):

Однако **в одиннадцатом часу́** он сам занервничал (Trifonov)
 ‘However, **after it had gone ten** he began to get the jitters himself’

and for times on the half-hour:

В половине первого (colloquially в полпервого) пояс тёща побежала на Сокол, к метро — встречать (Trifonov)
 ‘**At half past midnight** mother-in-law rushed off to Sokol to meet them off the Underground’

Note

The time may be given, both colloquially and in official contexts, using cardinals only: в три пятнадцать ‘at three fifteen’, cf.:

Телевизионный репортаж по второй программе смотрите в **семнадцать часов двадцать пять минут** (radio)
 ‘Watch TV coverage on channel 2 at 5.25 p.m.’

207 Giving the date

(1) The questions **Какое (было, будет) число́?** ‘What is (was, will be) the date?’ are answered by an ordinal numeral in the neuter nominative and the name of a month in the genitive:

Сегодня первое февраля́	‘Today it is 1 February’
Вчера́ было двадцать пятое марта́	‘Yesterday was 25 March’
Скоро́ будет семнадцатое июня́	‘Soon it will be 17 June’

(2) The question **Какого́ числа́?** ‘On what date?’ is answered by a genitive:

Международный же́нский день — **восьмого́ марта́**
 ‘International Women’s Day is **on 8 March**’

(3) The question **Какой́ год?** ‘Which year is it?’ is answered as follows:

Сейчас **двухты́сячный год** ‘Now it is **the year 2000**’ etc.

(4) The question **В како́м годѹ?** ‘in which year?’ is answered as follows:

в ты́сяча девятисо́том годѹ	‘in 1900’
в ты́сяча девятьсо́т пятидеся́том годѹ	‘in 1950’
в двухты́сячном годѹ	‘in the year 2000’
в две ты́сячи пятна́дцатом годѹ	‘in 2015’

Note

- (a) Only the final component of the numeral declines (see **203** note (e)).
 (b) If any detail other than the year itself is added, the year appears in the genitive case:

в мае тысяча девятьсот девяносто **восьмого** года
 ‘in May **1998**’

в воскресенье третьего сентября тысяча девятьсот тридцать **девятого** года
 ‘on Sunday 3 September 1939’

- (c) Plural forms may be involved: **в 1957–1963 годах** во всех республиках появились законы об охране природы (*Izvestiia*) ‘**Over the period 1957–63** laws on nature conservation appeared in all republics’.
 (d) Note the use of **г.** (singular) and **гг.** (plural) in abbreviations: **в 1995 г.** ‘in 1995’, **в 1957–1963 гг.** ‘in 1957–63’.
 (e) In denoting decades, **в** is used with the accusative *or* prepositional case: **В пятидесятые годы/пятидесятых годах XX** века ‘In the 1950s’. Compare: В 90-х годах в Японии планируют выпустить новую семью компьютеров (*Nedelia*) ‘The Japanese are planning to manufacture a new family of computers **in the 1990s**’ (see also **429** (2) (ii) note (c)).

208 Age

(1) The question **Сколько вам (ему, ей etc.) лет?** ‘How old are you (is he, she etc.)?’ is answered as follows:

Ему двадцать один год	‘He is twenty-one’
Ей сорок два года	‘She is forty-two’
Мне восемнадцать лет	‘I am eighteen’

Ребёнку ещё **нет двух лет** (ещё не исполнилось два года/двух лет)

‘The child is not yet two’ (has not had its second birthday)

The numeral may be used alone in more relaxed speech: **Мне** двадцать пять (лет) ‘I am 25’. Note also the following:

«Нашей Лёночке **четвёртый** год» (*Russia Today*)
 “‘Our Lenochnka is **in her fourth year**’”

Галке **шёл 17-й** год (Rasputin)
 ‘Galka was **in her seventeenth year**’

Ему **уже за сорок** or Ему **40 с чем-то**
 ‘He is **in his forties**’

Ей ещё **нет двадцати**
 ‘She is in her **late teens**’

(2) To answer the question **В каком возрасте?/Сколько лет?** ‘At what age?’ it is possible to use **в** + accusative:

Он умер **в семьдесят лет** ‘He died at the age of 70’

Alternatively, a genitive construction may be used:

Он умер (**в возрасте**) **семидесяти лет**
 ‘He died at the age of 70’

209 Quantitative nouns

Quantitative nouns include:

(1) The series **единица** ‘one’, **двойка** ‘two’, **тройка** ‘three’, **четвёрка** ‘four’, **пятёрка** ‘five’, **шестёрка** ‘six’, **семёрка** ‘seven’, **восьмёрка** ‘eight’, **девятка** ‘nine’, **десятка** ‘ten’. Their functions are as follows:

(i) The first five of the nouns figure in the five-point marking scale: **единица** ‘fail’, **двойка** ‘two’ (unsatisfactory), **тройка** ‘three’ (satisfactory), **четвёрка** ‘four’ (good), **пятёрка** ‘five’ (very good). Colloquially, cardinal numerals can also be used: **учиться на пять** ‘to get very good marks’.

(ii) The series can denote playing cards (**семёрка бубён, пик** ‘seven of diamonds, spades’, **десятка червёй, треф** ‘ten of hearts, clubs’) as well as the numbers of buses etc. (Он приехал **на девятке** ‘He arrived on the no. 9’).

(iii) They also denote various other groups or objects consisting of several units: **тройка** ‘sleigh drawn by three horses’, ‘three-piece suit’, ‘three-man commission’; **четвёрка** ‘a rowing four’; **пятёрка** ‘group of five persons’; **Большая восьмёрка** ‘the G-8 countries’ etc.

(2) The series **пятёрка** ‘a five’, **десяток** ‘a ten’ (also **полтора́ десятка** ‘fifteen’, **два десятка** ‘a score’), **сотня** ‘a hundred’ (**несколько сотен** ‘several hundreds’): **пятёрка яиц** ‘five eggs’, **десяток сигарет** ‘ten cigarettes’, **десятки людей** ‘dozens of people’, **продавать яйца сотнями** ‘to sell eggs in hundreds’ etc.

210 Numerals in arithmetic

Numerals are used in operating the four arithmetical processes (**четыре арифметических действия**):

(1) Multiplication (**Умножение**)

одíножды три — три	‘once three is three’
двáжды три — шесть	‘two threes are six’
трíжды три — девять	‘three threes are nine’
четырежды три — двенадцать	‘four threes are twelve’
пятью три — пятнадцать	‘five threes are fifteen’
шестью три — восемнадцать	‘six threes are eighteen’
восьмью три — двадцать четыре	‘eight threes are twenty-four’ etc.

Note

Stress in **пятью**, **шестью** etc. differs from the normal end stress of the instrumental **пятью́**, **шестью́**.

(2) Division (**деление**)

двадцать вóсемь (разделítь) на четы́ре – бóдет семь
twenty-eight divided by four is seven

(3) Addition (**Сложение**)

к пяти прибáвить два — бóдет семь	} ‘five plus two is seven’
сложítь пять с двумя — бóдет семь	
пять плóс два — бóдет семь	
пять да два — семь	

(4) Subtraction (**Вычитание**)

(в́ычесть) два из пяти — бóдет три	} ‘five minus two is three’
пять м́инус два — бóдет три	

Note

Два **в квадрáте** — четы́ре ‘The square of two is four’, Два **в кúбе** — вóсемь ‘Two cubed is eight’, **Кóрень квадратный** из четырёх — два ‘The square root of four is two’.

211 Numerals in compound nouns and adjectives

(1) With the exception of 1, 90, 100 and 1,000 (see (2) below), numeral components of compound nouns and adjectives appear in the *genitive* case of the cardinal:

двухлётный	‘two-year old’
пятилётка	‘five-year plan’
сорокапятка (colloquial)	‘forty-five’ (gramophone record)
двадцатипятиминутная пáуза	‘a 25-minute break’

Note

A number of more abstract or technical terms take **дву-/тре-/четверо-** instead of **двух-/трёх-/четырёх-**: **двусложный** ‘disyllabic’, **двусторонний** ‘bilateral’, **двуязычный** ‘bilingual’ (note also **двоюродный брат** ‘cousin’); **треугольник** ‘triangle’; **четверонóгий** ‘quadruped’.

(2) 1, 90, 100 and 1,000 assume the forms **одно-**, **девяносто-**, **сто-** and **тысяче-** in compound nouns and numerals:

одноэта́жный дом	‘single-storey house’
девяно́стотна́дцатимину́тная игра́	‘a ninety-minute game’
сто́метрóвка	‘hundred metres race’
стопя́тидесятиле́тие	‘one hundred and fiftieth anniversary’
ты́сячелéтие	‘millennium’

The Verb

Conjugation

212 Infinitive-preterite stem and present-future stem

(1) Each Russian verb has:

(i) An *infinitive (infinitive-preterite) stem*, from which the past tense, the future imperfective, past participles and most perfective gerunds are formed.

(ii) A *present-future stem*, from which the present tense, the future perfective, the imperative, present participles, imperfective gerunds and some perfective gerunds are formed.

In some verbs the two stems coincide, in others they differ.

(2) The present-future stem of a verb is derived by removing the last two letters of the third-person plural of the verb:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Third-person plural</i>	<i>Present-future stem</i>
ПОНИМА́ТЬ 'to understand'	ПОНИМА́-ЮТ	ПОНИМА́-
ГОВОРИ́ТЬ 'to say'	ГОВОР-Я́Т	ГОВОР-
СКАЗА́ТЬ 'to tell'	СКА́Ж-УТ	СКАЖ-

213 The conjugation of the verb

Each Russian verb conjugates in accordance with one of two patterns: the first (or **-е-**) conjugation and the second (or **-и-/я-**) conjugation. The following endings are added to the present-future stems of verbs:

<i>First-conjugation endings</i>	<i>Second-conjugation endings</i>
-ю	-ю
-ешь	-ишь
-ет	-ит
-ем	-им
-ете	-ите
-ют	-ят

Note

- (a) In first-conjugation verbs **у** replaces **ю** after a consonant (except after **л** and **р** in certain verbs, for example, verbs in **-отъ**, **слать** ‘to send’ and **стлатъ** ‘to spread’).
- (b) **ë** replaces **е** under stress.
- (c) **у** and **а** replace **ю** and **я** respectively after **ж**, **ч**, **ш** or **щ** (see **16** (1)).

214 The first conjugation

- (1) The first conjugation contains:
 - (i) Most verbs in **-ать/-ять**.
 - (ii) Many verbs in **-еть**.
 - (iii) All verbs with a monosyllabic infinitive in **-ить**, **почить**, compounds of **-шибить**.
 - (iv) All verbs in **-отъ**, **-уть**, **-ыть**, **-сть**, **-зть**, **-ти**, **-чь**.
- (2) First-conjugation verbs subdivide into:
 - (i) Those with stems ending in **vowels**.
 - (ii) Those with stems ending in **consonants**.

215 First-conjugation verbs with stems ending in a vowel

First-conjugation verbs with vowel stems comprise most verbs of the first conjugation in **-ать/-ять** (including all verbs in **-авать, -евать, -ивать, -овать, -увать, -ывать**), many in **-еть** and some in **-ить, -уть, -ыть**.

(1) Verbs in -ать/-ять

знать 'to know'	гулять 'to stroll'
я зна́ю	гуля́ю
ты зна́ешь	гуля́ешь
он зна́ет	гуля́ет
мы зна́ем	гуля́ем
вы зна́ете	гуля́ете
они́ зна́ют	гуля́ют

Note

- (a) Most vowel stems in **-ать/-ять** conjugate like **знать** and **гулять**. See, however, verbs in **-авать** and **-овать/-евать** ((2) and (3) below) and note that *stem*-stressed verbs in **-ять** lose **я** in conjugation (**се́ять** 'to sow': я се́ю, ты се́ешь), except for **ка́шлять** 'to cough': я ка́шляю, ты ка́шляешь.
- (b) **Смеяться** 'to laugh' conjugates **смею́сь, смеёшься, смеётся, смеёмся, смеётесь, смеются**.

(2) Verbs in -авать

дава́ть 'to give'	
я да-ю́	мы да-ём
ты да-ёшь	вы да-ёте
он да-ёт	они́ да-ю́т

Note

Compounds of **дава́ть, -знава́ть** (e.g. **узнава́ть** 'to recognize') and **-ставáть** (e.g. **вставáть** 'to get up') conjugate like **дава́ть**.

(3) Verbs in -овать/-евать

ГОЛОСОВА́ТЬ 'to vote'	КОВА́ТЬ 'to forge'	ПЛЕВА́ТЬ 'to spit'
я голосо́у-ю	ку-ю́	плю-ю́
ты голосо́у-еши́	ку-ёши́	плю-ёши́
он голосо́у-ет	ку-ёт	плю-ёт
мы голосо́у-ем	ку-ём	плю-ём
вы голосо́у-ете	ку-ёте	плю-ёте
они́ голосо́у-ю́т	ку-ю́т	плю-ю́т

Note

(a) All verbs in **-овать** with more than two syllables conjugate like **голосова́ть** (some are stem stressed, e.g. **требова́ть** 'to demand', *требую, требуешь*).

(b) Note the conjugation of the following:

воева́ть 'to wage war'	вою́ю, вою́ешь
горева́ть 'to grieve'	гори́ю, гори́ешь
жева́ть 'to chew'	жу́ю, жу́ешь
клева́ть 'to peck'	клю́ю, клю́ешь
снова́ть 'to dart'	снужу́, снужу́ешь
сова́ть 'to thrust'	сужу́, сужу́ешь

(c) **Застре́вать** 'to get stuck', **затева́ть** 'to undertake', **здоровáться** 'to greet', **зева́ть** 'to yawn', **подозрева́ть** 'to suspect', **преодолева́ть** 'to overcome' and secondary imperfectives in **-дева́ть**, **-пева́ть**, **-спева́ть** conjugate like **знать**.

(4) Verbs in **-еть**

красне́ть
'to blush'

я красне́-ю	мы красне́-ем
ты красне́-еши́	вы красне́-ете
он красне́-ет	они́ красне́-ю́т

Note

(a) Verbs in **-еть** which are derived from adjectives (e.g. **худе́ть** 'to slim' from **худой** 'slim') and nouns (e.g. **сироте́ть** 'to be orphaned' from **сирота́** 'an orphan') conjugate like **красне́ть**, as do **владе́ть** 'to own', **гре́ть** 'to heat', **жале́ть** 'to pity', **зре́ть** 'to ripen', **име́ть** 'to have', **мле́ть** 'to grow numb', **преодоле́ть** 'to overcome', **сме́ть** 'to dare', **спе́ть** 'to ripen', **тле́ть** 'to decay', **уме́ть** 'to know how to'.

(b) **Петь** ‘to sing’ conjugates пою́, поёшь, поёт, поём, поёте, пою́т.

(5) Verbs in -ить

бить ‘to strike’	брить ‘to shave’	гнить ‘to rot’
я бь-ю	б ^р е-ю	гни-ю́
ты бь-ёшь	б ^р е-е ^{шь}	гни-ёшь
он бь-ёт	б ^р е-е ^т	гни-ёт
мы бь-ём	б ^р е-е ^м	гни-ём
вы бь-ёте	б ^р е-е ^{те}	гни-ёте
они́ бь-ю́т	б ^р е-ю́т	гни-ю́т

Note

(a) **Вить** ‘to weave’, **лить** ‘to pour’, **пить** ‘to drink’ and **шить** ‘to sew’ conjugate like **бить** (with ‘zero vowel’ in the present-future stem).

(b) **Почить** ‘to rest’ conjugates like **гнить**, but with stress on **-и́-**: почи́ю, почи́ешь.

(6) Verbs in -ыть

мыть ‘to wash’	
я мо́-ю	мы мо́-ем
ты мо́-ешь	вы мо́-ете
он мо́-ет	они́ мо́-ют

Similarly, **выть** ‘to howl’, **крыть** ‘to roof’, **ныть** ‘to gnaw’ and **рыть** ‘to dig’.

(7) Verbs in -уть

Дуть ‘to blow’: ду́ю, ду́ешь, ду́ет, ду́ем, ду́ете, ду́ют. Likewise **обуть** ‘to put shoes on someone’ and **разуть** ‘to take shoes off someone’.

216 First-conjugation verbs with consonant stems I

(1) Present-future and infinitive stems coincide

(i) Verbs in -ать, e.g. **ждать** ‘to wait’:

я жд-у	мы жд-ём
ты жд-ёшь	вы жд-ёте
он жд-ёт	они́ жд-ут

Similarly:

врать ‘to lie’	вру, врёшь
жаждать ‘to thirst for’	жажду, жаждешь
жрать ‘to devour’	жру, жрёшь
орать ‘to yell’	ору́, орёшь
рвать ‘to tear’	рву, рвёшь
ржать ‘to neigh’	ржу, ржёшь
сосать ‘to suck’	сосу́, сосёшь
стонать ‘to groan’	стону́, стонёшь
ткать ‘to weave’	тку, ткёшь

Note

The absence of velar/sibilant mutation in the conjugation of **ткать** is abnormal, cf. mutation in **лгать** ‘to lie’: **лгу**, **лжёшь**, **лжёт**, **лжём**, **лжёте**, **лгут**.

(ii) Verbs in **-(н)уть**:

гнуть ‘to bend’	гну, гнёшь
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Likewise, all other verbs in **-нуть** (some with stem stress (**мёрзнуть** ‘to freeze’: **мёрзну**, **мёрзнешь**) and a few with mobile stress, see **219** (3) (iv)).

(iii) Verbs in **-оть**:

колóть ‘to chop’	колю́ ко́лешь, ко́лют
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Likewise, all other verbs in **-оть**: **борóться** ‘to struggle’, **мо́лоть** ‘to grind’ (**молю́**, **меле́шь**), **по́лоть** ‘to weed’, **по́роть** ‘to rip’.

(2) Present-future stem and infinitive stem differ

(i) Through the presence of a mobile vowel in conjugation:

брать ‘to take’	беру́, берёшь (likewise драть ‘to flay’)
звать ‘to call’	зову́, зовёшь
стлать ‘to spread’	стелю́, стеле́шь, стéлют

(ii) **-в-** appears in conjugation:

жить ‘to live’	живу́, живёшь
плыть ‘to swim’	плыву́, плывёшь (likewise слыть ‘to have the reputation of being’)

(iii) **-д-** appears in conjugation:

быть ‘to be’	б ^у ду, б ^у дешь
ехать ‘to travel’	е ^д у, е ^д ешь

(iv) **-м-** or **-н-** appears in conjugation:

взять ‘to take’	возьм ^у , возьм ^е шь
деть ‘to put’	д ^е ну, д ^е нешь
жать ‘to press’	ж ^м у, ж ^м ешь
жать ‘to reap’	ж ^н у, ж ^ш ешь
застрять ‘to get stuck’	застр ^а ну, застр ^а нешь
мять ‘to crumple’	м ^н у, м ^н ешь
начать ‘to begin’	нач ^н у, нач ^н ешь
понять ‘to understand’	пойм ^у , пойм ^е шь
распять ‘to crucify’	расп ^н у, расп ^н ешь
снять ‘to take off’	сним ^у , сним ^е шь
стать ‘to become’	ст ^а ну, ст ^а нешь
стыть ‘to go cold’	ст ^ы ну, ст ^ы нешь

Note

Compounds of **-нять** with prefixes ending in a vowel (except for **принять** ‘to accept’: прим^у, прим^ешь) conjugate like **понять** ‘to understand’; those with prefixes ending in a consonant conjugate like **снять** ‘to take off’.

(v) Mobile vowel lost in conjugation (verbs in **-ереть**):

тереть ‘to rub’	тру, тр ^е шь (likewise compounds of -мереть, -переть)
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(vi) Others (**реветь**, **слать** and compounds of **-шибить**):

ошибиться ‘to err’	ошиб ^у сь, ошиб ^е шься
реветь ‘to roar’	рев ^у , рев ^е шь
слать ‘to send’	шлю, шл ^е шь, шлют

217 First-conjugation verbs with consonant stems II: verbs in **-ать** with consonant mutation throughout conjugation

(1) Verbs of this type:

(i) Undergo consonant mutation throughout conjugation.

(ii) Switch stress from the ending to the *stem* after the first-person singular, except for:

- (a) **Алка́ть** ‘to crave’, **колеба́ться** ‘to hesitate’, **колыха́ть** ‘to sway’, which have stem stress *throughout* conjugation.
 (b) Verbs with stem stress in the infinitive, e.g. **ма́зать** ‘to daub’.

(2) The following consonant mutations operate:

Д: Ж	Т: Ч	Т: Щ	З: Ж	С: Ш
глода́ть ‘to gnaw’	шепта́ть ‘to whisper’	клевета́ть ‘to slander’	вяза́ть ‘to tie’	писа́ть ‘to write’
я глож- ý	шепч- ý	клевец- ý	вяж- ý	пиш- ý
ты глож- ешь	шепч- ешь	клевец- ешь	вяж- ешь	пиш- ешь
он глож- ет	шепч- ет	клевец- ет	вяж- ет	пиш- ет
мы глож- ем	шепч- ем	клевец- ем	вяж- ем	пиш- ем
вы глож- ете	шепч- ете	клевец- ете	вяж- ете	пиш- ете
они́ глож- ут	шепч- ут	клевец- ут	вяж- ут	пиш- ут
Г: Ж	К: Ч	Х: Ш	СК: Щ	Б: бл/м: мл/ п: пл
двига́ть ‘to move’	пла́кать ‘to weep’	маха́ть ‘to wave’	иска́ть ‘to seek’	дрема́ть ‘to doze’
я движ- у	плач- у	маш- ý	ищ- ý	дремл- ю
ты движ- ешь	плач- ешь	маш- ешь	ищ- ешь	дремл- ешь
он движ- ет	плач- ет	маш- ет	ищ- ет	дремл- ет
мы движ- ем	плач- ем	маш- ем	ищ- ем	дремл- ем
вы движ- ете	плач- ете	маш- ете	ищ- ете	дремл- ете
они́ движ- ут	плач- ут	маш- ут	ищ- ут	дремл- ют

Note

- (a) Двига́ть ‘to move’ conjugates дви́жу, дви́жешь in figurative meanings (Им **дви́жет** самолю́бие ‘He is motivated by self-esteem’) and in technical contexts (Пру́жина **дви́жет** меха́низм ‘A spring activates the mechanism’), but дви́гаю, дви́гаешь in literal meaning (Он **дви́гает** ме́бель ‘He moves the furniture’). Note also the distinction between Пóезд **дви́гается** ‘The train moves off’ and Пóезд **дви́жется** ‘The train is in motion’.
- (b) Other verbs of this type include **алка́ть** ‘to crave’ (áлчу, áлчешь), **бормота́ть** ‘to murmur’ (бормочу́, бормочешь), **брызга́ть** ‘to spray, sprinkle’ (брызжу́, брызжешь in intransitive meanings (Фонтáн **брызжет** ‘The fountain plays’); брызгаю́, брызгаешь in transitive meanings (Он **брызгает** во́лосы духáми ‘He sprays his

hair with perfume’)), **грохотать** ‘to rumble’ (грохочу́, грохóчет), **казаться** ‘to seem’ (кажусь, кáжешься) (likewise compounds of **-казать**), **капать** ‘to drip’ (ка́плю, ка́плешь; also ка́паю, -аешь), **клокотать** ‘to gurgle’ (клоко́чет), **колебаться** (колеблюсь, колеблешься) ‘to hesitate’, **колыхать** ‘to sway’ (колы́шу, колы́шешь), **лепетать** ‘to babble’ (лепечу́, лепéчешь), **лизать** ‘to lick’ (лижу́, ли́жешь), **мазать** ‘to daub’ (ма́жу, ма́жешь), **метать** ‘to throw’ (мечу́, ме́чешь), **мурлыкать** ‘to purr’ (мурлычу́, мурлы́чешь; also мурлы́каю, -аешь), **пахать** ‘to plough’ (пашу́, па́шешь), **плескать** ‘to splash’ (плещу́, плéщешь), **плясать** ‘to dance’ (пляшу́, пля́шешь), **полоскать** ‘to rinse’ (полощу́, поло́щешь), **прятать** ‘to hide’ (прячу́, пря́чешь), **резать** ‘to cut’ (ре́жу, ре́жешь), **роптать** ‘to grumble’ (ропщу́, ро́пщешь), **рыскать** ‘to rove’ (ры́щу, ры́щешь), **скакать** ‘to gallop’ (скачу́, ска́чешь), **скрежетать** ‘to grind’ (скрежещу́, скреже́щешь), **сыпать** ‘to sprinkle’ (сыплю́, сы́плешь), **тесать** ‘to hew’ (тешу́, те́шешь), **топтать** ‘to trample’ (топчу́, то́пчешь), **трепать** ‘to touse’ (треплю́, трéплешь), **трепетать** ‘to tremble’ (трепещу́, трепéщешь), **тыкать** ‘to prod’ (ты́чу, ты́чешь), **хлопотать** ‘to busy oneself’ (хлопочу́, хлопóчешь), **чесать** ‘to scratch’ (чешу́, че́шешь), **щебетать** ‘to twitter’ (щебечу́, щебéчешь), **щекотать** ‘to tickle’ (щечочу́, щекóчешь), **щипать** ‘to pinch’ (щиплю́, щиплешь).

218 First-conjugation verbs with consonant stems III: verbs in -ти, -сть/-зть, -чь

(1) Verbs in -ти

Verbs in **-ти** subdivide in accordance with the following stem consonants:

-б-	-д-	-з-
гребти́ ‘to row’	идти́ ‘to go’	везти́ ‘to convey’
я греб-у́	ид-у́	вез-у́
ты греб-ёшь	ид-ёшь	вез-ёшь
он греб-ёт	ид-ёт	вез-ёт
мы греб-ём	ид-ём	вез-ём
вы греб-ёте	ид-ёте	вез-ёте
они́ греб-у́т	ид-у́т	вез-у́т

-с- нести́ 'to carry'	-т- мести́ 'to sweep'	-ст- расти́ 'to grow'
нес- у́	мет- у́	раст- у́
нес- ёшь	мет- ёшь	раст- ёшь
нес- ёт	мет- ёт	раст- ёт
нес- ём	мет- ём	раст- ём
нес- ёте	мет- ёте	раст- ёте
нес- у́т	мет- у́т	раст- у́т

Other verbs include:

блюсти́ 'to conserve'	блюду́, блюдёшь
брести́ 'to wander'	бреду́, бредёшь
вести́ 'to lead'	веду́, ведёшь
обрести́ 'to acquire'	обрету́, обретёшь
паст́и 'to tend'	пасу́, пасёшь
плести́ 'to plait'	плету́, плетёшь
ползти́ 'to crawl'	ползу́, ползёшь
скрести́ 'to scour, claw'	скребу́, скребёшь
трясти́ 'to shake'	трясу́, трясе́шь
цвести́ 'to flower'	цвету́, цветёшь

(2) Verbs in -сть/-зть

Verbs in **-сть/-зть** subdivide in accordance with the following stem consonants:

-д- класть 'to place'	-н- клясть 'to curse'	-т- честъ 'to consider'	-з- лезть 'to climb'
я клад- у́	клян- у́	чт- у	лэз- у
ты клад- ёшь	клян- ёшь	чт- ёшь	лэз- ешь
он клад- ёт	клян- ёт	чт- ёт	лэз- ет
мы клад- ём	клян- ём	чт- ём	лэз- ем
вы клад- ёте	клян- ёте	чт- ёте	лэз- ете
они́ клад- у́т	клян- у́т	чт- ут	лэз- ут

Other verbs include the following:

грызть 'to gnaw'	грызу́, грызёшь
красть 'to steal'	краду́, крадёшь
пасть 'to fall'	паду́, падёшь
сесть 'to sit down'	сяду́, сядёшь

Note

Честь ‘to consider’ is now obsolete as an independent verb, but appears as a component of compound-prefixed verbs such as учёсть ‘to take into account’.

(3) Verbs in -чь

Verbs in **-чь** subdivide into **г**-stems (with mutation to **ж** before **е/ё**) and **к**-stems (with mutation to **ч** before **е/ё**).

-г-	-к-
беречь ‘to look after’	печь ‘to bake’
я берёг- у́	пек- у́
ты береж- ёшь	печ- ёшь
он береж- ёт	печ- ёт
мы береж- ём	печ- ём
вы береж- ёте	печ- ёте
они́ берёг- у́т	пек- у́т

Other verbs include the following:

влечь ‘to pull, draw’	влеку́, влечёшь, влеку́т
жечь ‘to burn’	жгу, жжёшь, жгут
лечь ‘to lie down’	лягу, ляжешь, лягут
мочь ‘to be able’	могу́, можешь, могут
напрячь ‘to strain’	напрягу́, напряжёшь, напрягу́т (similarly other compounds of -прячь)
пренебречь ‘to disdain’	пренебрегу́, пренебрежёшь, пренебрегу́т
сечь ‘to cut’	секу́, сечёшь, секу́т
стричь ‘to cut’ (hair)	стригу́, стрижёшь, стригу́т
течь ‘to flow’	течёт, теку́т

Note

Достичь (= **достигнуть**) ‘to achieve’: достигну, достигнешь. Both infinitives are standard forms. **Достичь** has a colloquial nuance and is commoner in the press; **достигнуть** is regarded as more ‘bookish’.

219 Mobile stress in the conjugation of first-conjugation verbs

(1) Stress change in the conjugation of verbs of more than one syllable usually involves a shift of stress from the *ending* in the first-person singular

to the *stem* in the other forms of the present tense or future perfective: **я пишу́** ‘I write’, **ты пишешь** ‘you write’; **я приму́** ‘I shall accept’, **ты примешь** ‘you will accept’ etc.

(2) Verbs with stem-stressed infinitives (e.g. **прятать** ‘to hide’) are not subject to stress change in conjugation.

(3) Stress change takes place in the conjugation of the following types of first-conjugation verbs with *consonant* stems:

(i) Verbs in **-ать** with end stress in the infinitive and consonant mutation throughout conjugation (see 217). Note that **алка́ть**, **колеба́ть[ся]** and **колыха́ть** take stem stress *throughout* conjugation.

(ii) **Стлать** ‘to spread’ (see 216 (2) (i)) and **стонáть** ‘to groan’ (see 216 (1) (i)).

(iii) Verbs in **-оть** (see 216 (1) (iii)).

(iv) Compounds of **-гляну́ть**, e.g. **загляну́ть** ‘to peep in’ (загляну́, заглянешь), **обману́ть** ‘to deceive’, **тону́ть** ‘to drown’, **тяну́ть** ‘to pull’ (see 216 (1) (ii)).

(v) **Приня́ть** ‘to accept’ and compounds of **-нять** with prefixes ending in a consonant (see 216 (2) (iv) note).

(vi) **Мочь** ‘to be able’ (see 218 (3)).

220 Second conjugation: present-future stems

(1) The present-future stems of verbs in the second conjugation end in a *consonant* (with very few exceptions, which include **бо-яться** ‘to fear’, **сто-ить** ‘to cost’, **сто-ять** ‘to stand’, **стро-ить** ‘to build’).

(2) Second-conjugation verbs include:

(i) All verbs in **-ить** (except for those with monosyllabic infinitives (see 215 (5), 216 (2) (ii)), **почи́ть** ‘to rest’ and compounds of **-шибить** (see 216 (2) (vi)).

(ii) Many verbs in **-еть**.

(iii) Some verbs in **-ать**.

(iv) Two verbs in **-ять**: **бо́яться** ‘to fear’, **сто́ять** ‘to stand’.

221 Present-future endings in the second conjugation

Second-conjugation verbs conjugate as follows:

Verbs in -ить	Verbs in -еть	Verbs in -ать	Verbs in -ять
говори́ть 'to speak'	смотре́ть 'to look'	стуча́ть 'to knock'	стоя́ть 'to stand'
я говор- ю́	смотре- ю́	стуч- у́	сто- ю́
ты говор- и́шь	смотре- и́шь	стуч- и́шь	сто- и́шь
он говор- и́т	смотре- и́т	стуч- и́т	сто- и́т
мы говор- и́м	смотре- и́м	стуч- и́м	сто- и́м
вы говор- и́те	смотре- и́те	стуч- и́те	сто- и́те
они́ говор- я́т	смотре- я́т	стуч- а́т	сто- я́т

(1) **ю** is replaced by **у** and **я** by **а** after **ж, ч, ш** or **щ** (see 16 (1)).

(2) Second-conjugation verbs in **-еть** include many verbs which denote sounds, and some others: **верте́ть** 'to spin' (верчу́, вёртишь), **виде́ть** 'to see' (вижу́, видишь), **висе́ть** 'to hang' (вишу́, висишь), **гляде́ть** 'to glance' (гляжу́, глядишь), **горе́ть** 'to burn' (горю́, горя́шь), **греме́ть** 'to thunder' (гремлю́, греми́шь), **гуде́ть** 'to buzz' (гуди́т), **звене́ть** 'to ring' (звеню́, звени́шь), **кипе́ть** 'to boil' (киплю́, кипи́шь), **лете́ть** 'to fly' (лечу́, лети́шь), **свисте́ть** 'to whistle' (свищу́, свисти́шь), **сиде́ть** 'to sit' (сижу́, сиди́шь), **скрипе́ть** 'to creak' (скриплю́, скрипи́шь), **смотре́ть** 'to look' (смотрю́, смотри́шь), **терпе́ть** 'to endure' (терплю́, терпи́шь), **храпе́ть** 'to snore' (храплю́, храпи́шь), **хрипе́ть** 'to wheeze' (хриплю́, хрипи́шь), **шипе́ть** 'to hiss' (шиплю́, шипи́шь), **шуме́ть** 'to make a noise' (шумлю́, шуми́шь). For consonant changes see 222 and for stress changes see 223.

(3) Second-conjugation verbs in **-ать** include:

(i) Many verbs associated with sound, with stems ending in **ж, ч, ш** or **щ**: **бренча́ть** 'to strum' (бренчу́, бренчи́шь); likewise **визжа́ть** 'to scream, squeal', **ворча́ть** 'to growl', **дребезжа́ть** 'to jingle' (third person only), **жужжа́ть** 'to buzz', **звуча́ть** 'to sound' (third person only), **крича́ть** 'to shout', **молча́ть** 'to be silent', **мыча́ть** 'to moo, bellow', **пища́ть** 'to squeak', **рыча́ть** 'to roar', **слы́шать** 'to hear', **стуча́ть** 'to knock', **треща́ть** 'to crackle'.

(ii) A number of other verbs: **гна́ть** 'to drive' (гоню́, гони́шь), **держа́ть** 'to hold' (держу́, держи́шь), **дрожа́ть** 'to tremble' (дрожу́, дрожи́шь), **дыша́ть** 'to breathe' (дышу́, дыши́шь), **лежа́ть** 'to lie' (лежу́, лежи́шь), **спать** 'to sleep' (сплю́, спи́шь).

(4) **Бояться** ‘to fear’ conjugates боюсь, бойшься.

222 Consonant change in the conjugation of second-conjugation verbs

A consistent feature of the second conjugation is the mutation of the consonant in the first-person singular of the present tense and future perfective of verbs in **-ить** and **-еть**. This is regular for all second-conjugation verbs with stems ending in **-б-, -в-, -д-, -з-, -с-, -т-, -ф-** (verbs in **-ить** only), **-м-, -п-** and **-ст-** (verbs in **-ить** and **-еть**).

б: бл любить ‘to love’	в: вл ста́вить ‘to stand’	д: ж гла́дить ‘to iron’	з: ж ла́зить ‘to climb’
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я люблю́	ста́влю	гла́жу	ла́жу
ты люби́шь	ста́вишь	гла́дишь	ла́зишь
он люби́т	ста́вит	гла́дит	ла́зит
мы люби́м	ста́вим	гла́дим	ла́зим
вы люби́те	ста́вите	гла́дите	ла́зите
они́ любя́т	ста́вят	гла́дят	ла́зят

с: ш проси́ть ‘to ask’	т: ч плати́ть ‘to pay’	ф: фл графи́ть ‘to rule’ (paper)
--	--	--

я про́шу	плачу́	графи́ю
ты про́сишь ...	пла́тишь ...	графи́шь ...

м: мл корми́ть ‘to feed’	шуме́ть ‘to make a noise’	топи́ть ‘to heat’	храпе́ть ‘to snore’
я кормлю́	шумлю́	топлю́	храплю́
ты ко́рмишь ...	шуми́шь ...	то́пишь ...	храпи́шь ...

ст: щ мсти́ть ‘to avenge’	свисте́ть ‘to whistle’
я мщу́	сви́щу
ты мсти́шь ...	свисти́шь ...

Note

The mutation **т: щ** affects only certain perfective verbs (e.g. **прекрати́ть** ‘to cease’ (прекращу́, прекрати́шь)).

For other verbs affected by consonant changes see **221** (2) and **223** (3) (i), (ii).

223 Stress change in the second conjugation

(1) Many second-conjugation verbs with end-stressed infinitives shift stress from the ending in the first-person singular to the stem in the rest of the conjugation, e.g. **кури́ть** ‘to smoke’ (курю́, ку́ришь, ку́рит). Verbs with *stem*-stressed infinitives (e.g. **ве́рить** ‘to believe’) do not undergo stress change in conjugation.

(2) Verbs in **-ить**, **-еть** and **-ать** which undergo stress change in conjugation include the following types:

вари́ть ‘to boil’	смотре́ть ‘to look’	держáть ‘to hold’
я вари́ю	смотре́ю	держу́
ты ва́ришь	смот́ришь	де́ржишь
он ва́рит	смот́рит	де́ржит
мы ва́рим	смот́рим	де́ржим
вы ва́рите	смот́рите	де́ржите
они́ ва́рят	смот́рят	де́ржат

(3) Other verbs which undergo stress change include the following (those which also undergo *consonant* change (see **222**) are indicated with an asterisk):

(i) Verbs in **-ить**:

* броди́ть	‘to wander’	дружи́ть	‘to be friends’
* буди́ть	‘to awaken’	души́ть	‘to stifle’
* води́ть	‘to lead’	жени́ться	‘to marry’
* вози́ть	‘to convey’	* заблуди́ться	‘to get lost’
вскочи́ть	‘to jump up’	* кати́ть	‘to roll’
* гаси́ть	‘to cancel’	клони́ть	‘to incline’
* грузи́ть	‘to load’	* колоти́ть	‘to hammer’
* дави́ть	‘to press, crush’	* копи́ть	‘to accumulate’
дари́ть	‘to present’	* корми́ть	‘to feed’
дели́ть	‘to share’	* коси́ть	‘to scythe’
дрази́ть	‘to tease’	* крести́ть	‘to christen’

* купи́ть	‘to buy’	* серди́ть	‘to anger’
* лепи́ть	‘to mould, sculpt’	служи́ть	‘to serve’
лечи́ть	‘to give treatment’	compounds of	* -станови́ть
* лови́ть	‘to catch’	* ступи́ть	‘to step’
compounds of	-ложи́ть ‘to lay’	* суди́ть	‘to judge’
* люби́ть	‘to like’	суши́ть	‘to dry’
мани́ть	‘to entice’	тащи́ть	‘to drag’
compounds of	-мени́ть ‘to change’	* топи́ть	‘to heat’
моли́ть	‘to pray’	* торопи́ть	‘to hasten’
* молоти́ть	‘to thresh’	точи́ть	‘to sharpen’
мочи́ть	‘to wet’	* трудо́ться	‘to labour’
* носи́ть	‘to carry’	туши́ть	‘to extinguish’
пили́ть	‘to saw’	урони́ть	‘to drop’
* плати́ть	‘to pay’	учи́ть	‘to teach’
получи́ть	‘to receive’	хвали́ть	‘to praise’
провали́ться	‘to fail’	* ходи́ть	‘to go, walk’
* проглоти́ть	‘to swallow’	хорони́ть	‘to bury’
* проси́ть	‘to request’	цени́ть	‘to value’
* простуди́ться	‘to catch cold’	* черти́ть	‘to draw’
* пусти́ть	‘to let go’	* шути́ть	‘to joke’
* руби́ть	‘to chop’	* яви́ть	‘to display’
* свети́ть	‘to shine’		

Note

Коси́ть ‘to squint’ has fixed end stress in conjugation.

Some verbs have alternative stress in conjugation:

до́ит	ог дои́т	‘milks’
зу́брит	ог зубри́т	‘swots’
кρόшит	ог кроши́т	‘crumbles’
кру́жит	ог кружи́т	‘circles’
по́ит	ог пои́т	‘waters’

(ii) Verbs in **-еть**:

* верте́ть ‘to spin’	я верчу́	ты ве́ртишь
смотре́ть ‘to look’	я смотрю́	ты смóтришь
* терпе́ть ‘to endure’	я терплю́	ты те́рпишь

(iii) Verbs in **-ать**:

гна́ть ‘to drive’	я гоню́	ты го́нишь
держáть ‘to hold’	я держу́	ты де́ржишь
дыша́ть ‘to breathe’	я дышу́	ты ды́шишь

224 Irregular verbs

A number of verbs conform to none of the above patterns, or combine elements of both conjugations. They include

бежа́ть 'to run'	есть 'to eat'	хоте́ть 'to want'	да́ть 'to give'
я бегу́	ем	хочу́	дам
ты бежи́шь	ешь	хоче́шь	дашь
он бежи́т	ест	хоче́т	даст
мы бежи́м	е́дим	хоти́м	дади́м
вы бежи́те	е́дите	хоти́те	дади́те
они́ бегу́т	е́дят	хотя́т	даду́т

as well as **читать** 'to honour' (чту, читаешь, читит, читим, чита́йте, чтут/чтят).

225 Deficiencies in the conjugation of certain verbs

(1) The following verbs have no first-person singular: **затми́ть** 'to eclipse', **очути́ться** 'to find oneself', **победи́ть** 'to win', **убеди́ть** 'to convince', **чуди́ть** 'to behave eccentrically'. However, paraphrases can be used: **могу́ очути́ться** 'I may find myself', **я смогу́ победи́ть** 'I shall win', **мне уда́стся его́ убеди́ть** 'I shall convince him', **я не ду́маю чуди́ть** 'I have no intention of behaving eccentrically'. A paraphrase (e.g. **говори́ю де́рзости**) is also required for the first-person singular of **дерзи́ть** 'to be impertinent' (since **держу́**, as the first-person singular of **держáть** 'to hold', is not available).

(2) Some doubt remains about the first-person singular of **пылесоси́ть** (colloquial) 'to Hoover'; **пылесосу́** is recorded, but the paraphrase **убира́ю пылесосом** 'I Hoover' is often preferred.

(3) Some verbs have no first- or second-person singular or plural. They include **звуча́ть** 'to sound', **знача́ть** 'to mean' ('I mean', 'you mean' etc. are rendered as **хочу́ сказа́ть**, **хочешь сказа́ть**), **означа́ть** 'to signify', **течь** 'to flow'.

(4) The first and second persons of some other verbs (e.g. **горе́ть** 'to burn', **кипе́ть** 'to boil') appear in figurative meanings only: **горе́ю** желáнием уехать 'I am burning with a desire to leave', **киплю́** негодовáнием 'I am boiling with indignation'.

(5) **Кўшать** ‘to eat’ should not be used in the first-person singular or plural, while in the second-person singular and plural it can sound cloying, and the third-person forms are addressed mainly to children. ‘To eat’ is best rendered by the verb **есть** (see 224), except in the imperative, where **кўшай!**, **кўшайте!** are preferred. (Note, however, a mother’s strict instruction to her child: **Ешь** всё по порядку! ‘Eat everything in the right order!’ See 229 (2).)

(6) **Слы́хать** ‘to hear’ is used only in the infinitive and past tense (there are, however, no such restrictions on **слы́шать** ‘to hear’).

(7) **Мочь** ‘to be able’ and **хотеть** ‘to want’ are not normally found in the imperfective future. Instead, the perfectives **смо́чь**, **захотеть** are used, or, in the case of **мочь**, the paraphrase **быть в состоянии** ‘to be capable of’.

226 The verb ‘to be’

(1) The verb **быть** ‘to be’ has no present tense in Russian:

Я русский	‘I am Russian’
Это мой муж	‘This is my husband’

(2) A dash may be used for emphasis:

Я русский, а он — нет	‘I am Russian and he is not’
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A dash also appears in definitions:

Москва́ — столица́ Росси́и	‘Moscow is the capital of Russia’
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(3) ‘It is’ has no equivalent in many impersonal expressions:

Интересно слу́шать ра́дио	‘It is interesting to listen to the radio’
Темне́ет	‘It is getting dark’
Холо́дно	‘It is cold’

(4) The declarative ‘**there is/are**’ either has no equivalent in Russian or may be rendered by a dash:

На стене́ — карти́на	‘There is a picture on the wall’
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Alternatively, На стене́ **есть** карти́на. See (5).

(5) **Есть**, a relic of a former verb conjugation, may be used for emphasis. **Есть** is particularly common:

(i) In questions (and positive answers to questions):

— Папи́рсы **е́сть**?

— **Е́сть!**

“‘Are there any cigarettes?’”

“‘Yes, there are’”

(ii) In contexts where the verb is heavily emphasized:

— Кем же ты хóчешь бы́ть?

— Кем **е́сть** — рядо́вым матро́сом

“‘What do you want to be, then?’”

“‘What **I am**, an ordinary rating’”

— Ну́жно справедли́вое реше́ние

— На́ше реше́ние **и е́сть** справедли́вое

“‘We need an equitable solution’”

“‘Our solution **is** equitable’”

Зако́н **е́сть** зако́н

‘The law is the law’

(iii) When ‘to be’ means ‘to exist’:

Е́сть такие́ люди́, кото́рые не лю́бят икры́

‘There are people who do not like caviar’

(iv) **Е́сть** is also found in definitions:

Пряма́я ли́ния **е́сть** кратча́йшее расто́яние ме́жду двумя́ то́чками

‘A straight line is the shortest distance between two points’

(6) In the press and other official contexts the verb **явля́ться** ‘to be’ also appears in definitions (for case usage see **102** (3) and (4)):

Це́лью перегово́ров **явля́ется** подписа́ние догово́ра

‘The aim of the talks is the signing of a treaty’

Равнопра́вие **явля́ется** осно́вой на́шего о́бщества

‘Equality is the basis of our society’

(7) To point something out, **во́т** is used, the equivalent of English ‘here is, are; there is, are’:

Во́т моя́ тетра́дь

‘Here is/there is my exercise book’

(8) A more specific verb is often used as an equivalent of ‘to be’:

Наступа́ет па́уза

‘There **is** a pause’

Раздаются аплодисменты	‘There is applause’
сидеть в тюрьме	‘to be in prison’
служить в армии	‘to be in the army’
состоять членом	‘to be a member’
стоять на якорё	‘to be at anchor’
Простираются леса́	‘There are forests’
учиться в университете	‘to be at university’

(9) **Быва́ть** denotes repetition or frequency:

Я ча́сто **быва́ю** в Москвё
‘I am often in Moscow’

В на́шем ресторáne **быва́ют** гриб́ы
‘You can sometimes get mushrooms in our restaurant’

227 Formation of the imperative

(1) The *familiar* imperative is used in issuing commands to persons one normally addresses as **ты** (see 115). The *formal* imperative, which is used in addressing people whom one would normally address as **вы** (see 115), is made by adding **-те** to the familiar imperative.

(2) The familiar imperative is formed from imperfective and perfective verbs by adding **-й, -и** or **-ь** to the present-future stem (see 212).

(i) Imperative in **-й**

The letter **-й(те)** is added to present-future stems ending in a vowel.

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Third-person plural</i>	<i>Stem</i>	<i>Imperative</i>
петь	по-ю́т	по-	по́й(те)
постро́ить	постро́-ят	постро́-	постро́й(те)
рабо́тать	рабо́та-ю́т	рабо́та-	рабо́тай(те)

Note

- (a) The imperatives of **дава́ть** ‘to give’ and compounds of **-дава́ть, -знава́ть** and **-ставáть** are as follows: **дава́й(те)** ‘give’, **встава́й(те)** ‘get up’, etc.
- (b) **Бить** ‘to hit’ has the imperative **бей(те)**; **вить** ‘to weave’, **лить** ‘to pour’, **пить** ‘to drink’, **шить** ‘to sew’ form their imperatives in the same way.
- (c) Perfective compounds in **-éхать** (e.g. **приéхать**) have the same imperative as imperfective compounds in **-езжа́ть** (e.g. **приезжа́ть**): **приезжа́й(те)!** ‘come!’

(ii) Imperative in -и

The letter **-и(те)** is added to the present-future stem of verbs with *final* or *mobile* stress in conjugation and with a present-future stem ending in a *consonant*.

(a) Final stress throughout conjugation:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Third-person plural</i>	<i>Stem</i>	<i>Imperative</i>
вести́	вед-у́т	вед-	веди́(те)
взять	возь-му́т	возьм-	возьми́(те)
говори́ть	говори́т	говори-	говори́(те)

(b) Mobile stress in conjugation:

держáть	дэ́рж-ат	дэ́рж-	держи́(те)
получи́ть	полу́ч-ат	полу́ч-	получи́(те)
шепта́ть	ше́пч-ут	ше́пч-	шепчи́(те)

(iii) Imperative in -ь

A soft sign is added to the present-future stem of verbs which are *stem-stressed throughout conjugation* and whose present-future stem ends in a *single consonant*.

ве́рить	ве́р-ят	ве́р-	верь(те)
зажа́рить	зажа́р-ят	зажа́р-	зажари́(те)
ма́зать	ма́ж-ут	ма́ж-	мажь(те)
пла́кать	пла́ч-ут	пла́ч-	плачь(те)
поста́вить	поста́в-ят	поста́в-	поста́вь(те)

Note

- (a) Apart from many stem-stressed second-conjugation verbs (**знако́мить** 'to acquaint' (imper. **знако́нь**), **мно́жить** 'to multiply' (imper. **множь**) etc.), this category contains a number of first-conjugation verbs with consonant stems and stress on the stem throughout conjugation: **бы́ть** 'to be' (imper. **бу́дь**), **де́ть** 'to put' (imper. **де́нь**), **лезть** 'to climb' (imper. **лезь**), **ма́зать** 'to daub' (imper. **мажь**), **пря́тать** 'to hide' (imper. **прячь**), **рэ́зать** 'to cut' (imper. **режь**), **сесть** 'to sit down' (imper. **сядь**), **ста́ть** 'to stand' (imper. **стань**). Note **лечь** 'to lie down', imper. **ляг** — a soft sign may not appear after a velar consonant (except in nouns of foreign origin: **Кья́нти** 'Chianti').
- (b) Stem-stressed **по́мнить** 'to remember' has imperative **по́мни**, since the stem ends in *two* consonants.
- (c) The third-person imperative is expressed by the particle **пусть** and the third-person singular or plural of the present tense or perfective future: **пусть (она́) напи́шет** 'let her write'; **пусть (они́) приходи́т** 'let them

come’ (as they wish to) implies an invitation, whereas *пусть (они) придут* ‘let them come’ (as they hope to) suggests authorization. The form **пускай** implies an action that would nevertheless have been carried out: *пускай (он) работает* ‘let him work’ (and continue to work). The first-person plural imperative ‘let us’ is expressed by **давай(те)** and the perfective future first-person plural of the verb: *давайте познакомимся* ‘let’s get acquainted’. The imperfective infinitive can also be also used: *давайте работать!* ‘let’s work!’ (and keep working).

228 Stress in the imperative

With the exception of a number of monosyllabic imperatives, where the stress necessarily falls on the single syllable (**жди!** ‘wait!’, **пой!** ‘sing!’, **не смейся!** ‘don’t laugh!’), stress in the imperative falls on the same syllable as in the first-person singular.

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>First-person singular</i>	<i>Imperative</i>
гнать	гоню́	гони́!
дыша́ть	дышу́	дыши́!
звать	зову́	зови́!
писа́ть	пишу́	пиши́!
получи́ть	получу́	получи́!
сказа́ть	скажу́	скажи́!
смотре́ть	смотрю́	смотри́!

229 Verbs with no imperative or a little-used imperative

(1) **Видеть** ‘to see’ and **слышать** ‘to hear’ do not have imperatives. However, **слушай!** ‘listen!’ and **смотри!** ‘look!’ are commonly used.

(2) **Есть** ‘to eat’ has the imperative **ешь!** However, it is usually replaced by the imperative of **кушать**, since the latter has a courteous nuance absent in the rather familiar **ешь!** (see 225 (5)).

(3) **Ехать** ‘to go, travel’ has no imperative, and **(по)езжай-те** is used in its place.

230 Formation of the past tense

(1) The past tense of verbs with infinitives in **-ть** and **-сть** is formed by replacing **-ть** or **-сть** by **-л** to give the masculine past:

курить	он курил	‘he was smoking’
писать	он писал	‘he was writing’
сказать	он сказал	‘he said’
упасть	он упал	‘he fell’
покраснеть	он покраснел	‘he blushed’

(2) The feminine, neuter and plural are formed by adding **-а**, **-о** and **-и** respectively to the masculine:

он писал/упал	(masculine)
она писала/упала	(feminine)
оно писало/упало	(neuter)
мы, вы, они писали/упали	(plural)

(3) The past agrees with the subject of the verb in *number* (singular or plural) and *gender* (masculine, feminine or neuter):

я писал	‘I was writing’ (male subject)
я писала	‘I was writing’ (female subject)
ты писал	‘you were writing’ (male subject)
ты писала	‘you were writing’ (female subject)
он писал	‘he was writing’
она писала	‘she was writing’
оно писало	‘it was writing’
мы, вы, они писали	‘we, you, they were writing’

Note

Учѐсть ‘to take into account’, past учѐл, учла́, учло́, учли́ (similarly other compounds of -честь).

231 Verbs with no -л in the masculine past tense

Some types of verb have no -л in the masculine past tense.

(1) Verbs in -ереть

терѐть ‘to rub’: **тѐр** тѐрла тѐрло тѐрли

Similarly, **заперѐть** ‘to lock’ (он запер/она заперла/они заперли ‘he/she/they locked’), **умерѐть** ‘to die’ (он умер/она умерла/они умерли ‘he/she/they died’).

(2) Verbs in -ну-

The suffix **-ну-** is optional in the masculine past of *imperfective* stem-stressed verbs which indicate a change in state:

гаснуть ‘to be extinguished’: **гас/гаснул**, гасла, гасло, гасли

Similarly:

в́язнуть	‘to stick fast’	крéпнуть	‘to get stronger’
гíбнуть	‘to perish’	мёркнуть	‘to grow dim’
гло́хнуть	‘to go deaf’	па́хнуть	‘to smell’
до́хнуть	‘to die’ (of animals)	слéпнуть	‘to go blind’
кíснуть	‘to turn sour’	со́хнуть	‘to become dry’

Note

(a) Some imperfectives in **-нуть** are now often replaced by secondary imperfectives:

га́снуть	погаса́ть	‘to be extinguished’
гíбнуть	погиба́ть	‘to perish’
ме́рзнуть	замерза́ть	‘to freeze’
со́хнуть	просыха́ть	‘to become dry’
ту́хнуть	потуха́ть	‘to be extinguished’

(b) Stem-stressed *perfective* verbs in **-нуть** which indicate a change in state (**замёрзнуть** ‘to freeze’, **привы́кнуть** ‘to get used to’ etc.) do *not* have optional **-ну-** in the masculine past: он **замёрз**, **привы́к** etc.

(c) Verbs in **-ну-** which denote instantaneous actions (e.g. **пры́гнуть** ‘to jump’) retain the suffix in all past forms: он **пры́гнул** ‘he jumped’.

(3) Verbs in **-ти**

Verbs in **-ти** (except for those with present-future stems in **-д** and **-т**, e.g. **вести́** ‘to lead’, past **вёл**, **велá**, **велó**, **вели́**; **мести́** ‘to sweep’, past **мёл**, **мелá**, **мелó**, **мели́**).

б- stems	з- stems	с- stems	ст- stems
грести́	вести́	нести́	расти́
‘to row’	‘to convey’	‘to carry’	‘to grow’
грёб	вёз	нёс	рос
грёблá	везлá	неслá	рослá
грёблó	везлó	неслó	рослó
грёбли́	везли́	несли́	росли́

Note

Пастí ‘to tend, graze’ (past **пас**, **паслá**), **ползти́** ‘to crawl’ (**полз**, **ползлá**), **скрести́** ‘to scour, claw’ (**скрёб**, **скреблá**), **трясти́** ‘to shake’ (**тряс**, **тряслá**).

(4) Verbs in **-зть**

These include **грызть** ‘to gnaw’ (past **грыз**, **грызла**, **грызло**, **грызли**) and **лезть** ‘to climb’.

(5) Verbs in -чь

г-stems	к-stems
берёчь	печь
‘to look after’	‘to bake’
берёт	пёк
берегла́	пекла́
берегло́	пекло́
берегли́	пекли́

The past of other verbs in **-чь** is as follows:

влечь ‘to pull, draw’	влёк, влекла́, влекло́, влекли́
достичь ‘to achieve’	достиг, достигла, достигло, достигли
жечь ‘to burn’	жёг, жгла, жгло, жгли
лечь ‘to lie down’	лёг, легла́, легло́, легли́
мочь ‘to be able’	мог, могла́, могло́, могли́
напрячь ‘to strain’	напряг, напрягла́, напрягло́, напрягли́
пренебречь ‘to disdain’	пренебрёт, -брегла́, -брегло́, -брегли́
сечь ‘to cut’	сёк, секла́, секло́, секли́
стеречь ‘to guard’	стерёт, стерегла́, стерегло́, стерегли́
стричь ‘to cut’ (hair)	стриг, стригла́, стригло́, стригли́
течь ‘to flow’	тёк, текла́, текло́, текли́

(6) Compounds of -шибить

Perfective compounds of **-шибить** (e.g. **ушибить** ‘to bruise’) have past tense -шиб, -шибла, -шибло, -шибли.

232 Mobile stress in the past tense of verbs

Most past-tense forms from verbs in **-ть** have the same stress as the infinitive. There are, however, a number of verbs which have:

(1) End stress in the feminine past

Most of them are monosyllabic verbs and their prefixed derivatives:

(i) Unprefixed verbs

быть 'to be': был, **была́**, было, были

Similarly **брать/взять** 'to take', **вить** 'to twine', **гнать** 'to drive', **дать** 'to give', **драть** 'to flay', **ждать** 'to wait', **жить** 'to live', **звать** 'to call', **лить** 'to pour', **пить** 'to drink', **плыть** 'to swim', **рвать** 'to tear', **слыть** 'to have the reputation of being', **спать** 'to sleep', **ткать** 'to weave'.

Note

- (a) **Дать** 'to give' has alternative neuter stress *дало* or *дало́*.
 (b) **Не** is stressed when combined with the masculine, neuter and plural past forms of **быть** (*не́ был, не́ была́, не́ было, не́ были*) and *may* be stressed when combined with the masculine, neuter and plural forms of the verbs **жить** and **дать**: *не́ жил, не́ жила́, не́ жило, не́ жили* or *не́ жи́л, не́ жи́ла́, не́ жи́ло, не́ жи́ли*; *не́ дал, не́ дала́, не́ дало, не́ дали* or *не́ да́л, не́ да́ла́, не́ да́ло, не́ да́ли*.

(ii) Prefixed verbs

(a) **Собрать** 'to collect': собра́л, **собрала́**, собра́ло, собра́ли.
 Similarly, **взорва́ть** 'to blow up', **добы́ть** 'to acquire', **избра́ть** 'to elect', **разда́ть** 'to distribute', **сдать** 'to surrender', **сня́ть** 'to take off', **убра́ть** 'to clear away' etc.

(b) **Заня́ть** 'to occupy': за́нял, **заняла́**, за́няло, за́няли.

Similarly, **заперё́ть** 'to lock' (за́пер, заперла́), **нача́ть** 'to begin', **отперё́ть** 'to unlock', **подня́ть** 'to pick up', **пони́ять** 'to understand', **приня́ть** 'to accept', **умерё́ть** 'to die' (у́мер, умерла́) etc.

Note

Задать 'to set' has alternative stem and prefix stress in the masculine, neuter and plural past: за́дал, задала́, за́дало, за́дали, or зада́л, задала́, задало, задали́. Similarly **нали́ть** 'to pour', **обня́ть** 'to embrace', **отда́ть** 'to give back', **подня́ть** 'to raise', **поли́ть** 'to water', **продáть** 'to sell', **прожи́ть** 'to live, spend' (a certain time), **созда́ть** 'to create' etc. **Переда́ть** 'to hand over' has the past forms *пе́редал, передала́, пе́редало, пе́редали*.

(2) End stress in the feminine, neuter and plural

This affects:

(i) A number of reflexive verbs, e.g.

собрáться 'to assemble': собра́лся, **собрала́сь, собралóсь, собрали́сь**

Similarly, **браться/взяться** ‘to get down to’, **дождаться** ‘to wait until’, **оторваться** ‘to be torn away from’, **создаться** ‘to be created’, **удаться** ‘to succeed’ (план удался ‘the plan succeeded’, мне удалось ‘I succeeded’).

(ii) All verbs in **-ти**:

блюсти́ ‘to conserve’	блюл, блюла́, блюло́, блюли́
бредти́ ‘to wander’	брёл, брела́, брело́, брели́
везти́ ‘to convey’	вёз, везла́, везло́, везли́
вести́ ‘to lead’	вёл, вела́, вело́, вели́
грести́ ‘to row’	грёб, грела́, грело́, грели́
идти́ ‘to go’	шёл, шла́, шло́, шли́
мести́ ‘to sweep’	мёл, мела́, мело́, мели́
нести́ ‘to carry’	нёс, несла́, несло́, несли́
обрести́ ‘to acquire’	обрёл, обрела́, обрело́, обрели́
паст́и ‘to tend’	пас, пасла́, пасло́, пасли́
плести́ ‘to weave’	плёл, плела́, плело́, плели́
ползти́ ‘to crawl’	полз, ползла́, ползло́, ползли́
расти́ ‘to grow’	рос, росла́, росло́, росли́
скрести́ ‘to scour’	скрёб, скрела́, скребло́, скребли́
трясти́ ‘to shake’	тряс, трясла́, трясло́, трясли́
цвести́ ‘to flower’	цвёл, цвела́, цвело́, цвели́

(iii) Most verbs in **-чь** (see 231 (5)).

(3) Reflexive endings stressed throughout

начаться ‘to begin’: начался́, началась́, началось́, начались́

Similarly, **заняться** ‘to occupy oneself’ (with alternative masculine занялся́).

233 Formation of the future (imperfective and perfective)

(1) The imperfective future

The compound future (imperfective) consists of the relevant form of the future tense of **быть** and the imperfective infinitive:

я бúду отды́хать	‘I shall rest’
ты бúдешь отды́хать	‘you will rest’
он, она́, оно́ бúдет отды́хать	‘he, she, it will rest’
мы бúдем отды́хать	‘we shall rest’

вы бу́дете отды́хать	‘you will rest’
они́ бу́дут отды́хать	‘they will rest’

Note

- (a) **Бу́ду** is also used as a future in its own right: Лётом он **бу́дет** в Санкт-Петербу́рге ‘In the summer he will be in St Petersburg’.
- (b) In some contexts it implies suspicion (Вы кто **бу́дете**? ‘Who might you be?’), approximation (Ему́ **бу́дет** 50 лет ‘He must be about 50’) and is used in arithmetic (шестью́ шесть **бу́дет** 36 ‘six sixes are 36’ (see **210**)).

(2) The perfective future

The perfective future is expressed by conjugating a perfective verb. The same endings are used as those used with imperfective verbs in rendering the present tense:

я пишú (impf.) письмó	‘I am writing a letter’
я напишú (pf.) письмó	‘I shall write a letter’
она́ читаёт (impf.) статью́	‘She is reading the article’
она́ прочитаёт (pf.) статью́	‘She will read the article’

See **215–223** for conjugation patterns, **238–253** for the formation of aspects and **263–268** for differentiation of imperfective and perfective usage in the future.

234 The buffer vowel -o- in conjugation

In many verbs the vowel **-o-** appears between a prefix ending in a consonant and a verb form which begins with two or more consonants or with a consonant + soft sign. This may affect:

(1) *All perfective forms:*

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Future</i>	<i>Imperative</i>
со́врать ‘to lie’	со́врал	со́врú	со́врй(те)
ото́слать ‘to send away’	ото́слал	ото́шлю́	ото́шлий(те)

(2) The **future, imperative and feminine, neuter and plural past:**

сже́чь ‘to burn’	сже́г	сожгу́	сожги́(те)
	сожгла́		
	сожгло́		
	сожгли́		

(3) The **infinitive** and **past tense** only:

разобрать 'to discern'	разобрал	разберу́	разбери́(те)
отозвать 'to recall'	отозвал	отзову́	отзови́(те)
разогнать 'to disperse'	разогнал	разгоню́	разгони́(те)

(4) The **future** and **imperative** only:

сжать 'to compress'	сжал	сожму́	сожми́(те)
отпереть 'to unlock'	отпер	отпру́	отпри́(те)

(5) The **future** only (compounds of -бить, -вить, -лить, -пить, -шить):

разбить 'to smash'	разбил	разобью́	разбей́(те)
сшить 'to sew'	сшил	сошью́	шей́(те)

Aspect

235 The aspect. Introductory comments

(1) The Russian verb system is dominated by the concept of **aspect**.

(2) Most Russian verbs have *two* aspects, an **imperfective** and a **perfective**, formally differentiated in one of the following ways:

(i) By prefixation: imperfective писать/perfective написать.

(ii) By internal modification: imperfective забыва́ть/perfective забы́ть 'to forget'; imperfective пуска́ть/perfective пусти́ть 'to let go'.

(iii) By derivation from entirely different roots: imperfective говори́ть/perfective сказа́ть 'to say'.

(iv) In a few instances, by stress: imperfective насыпа́ть/perfective насы́пать 'to pour'; imperfective среза́ть/perfective среза́ть 'to cut down'.

Note

Where aspect is differentiated by stress, the imperfectives are conjugated like **знать** and the perfectives like first-conjugation verbs with consonant stems (type II; see 217).

(3) *Both* aspects are used in the past and future, the imperative and the infinitive. However, only the *imperfective* is used in the present tense.

(4) Most verbs thus have five finite forms, e.g. imperfective **пить**/perfective **выпить** ‘to drink’:

	<i>Past</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Future</i>
<i>Impf.</i>	я пил	я пью	я буду пить
<i>Pf.</i>	я выпил	—	я выпью

(5) The fundamental distinction between the aspects is that the **imperfective**:

(i) focuses on **an action in progress**:

Он **пил/пьёт/будет пить** молоко
‘He **was, is, will be drinking** milk’

(ii) denotes **frequency** of occurrence:

Он **часто пил, пьёт, будет пить** молоко
‘He often **drank, drinks, will drink** milk’

The **perfective**, by contrast, emphasizes **successful completion and result**:

Я **выпил** молоко ‘I **have drunk** the milk’
Я **выпью** молоко ‘I **shall drink** the milk’

(Note, as a *result*, there is, will be no milk left.)

Note

The perfective past can render *both* perfect *and* pluperfect tenses. Thus, Он написал письмо can mean, in context, either ‘**He has** written a letter’ or ‘**He had** written a letter’.

(6) The aspects may also distinguish attempted action (imperfective) from successfully completed action (perfective). Compare:

Он **уговаривал** (impf.) меня остаться
‘He **tried to persuade** me to stay’

Он **уговорил** (pf.) меня остаться
‘He **persuaded** me to stay’

Note

Aspectival usage is dealt with in **255–283**.

236 Verbs with one aspect only

(1) While most verbs have two aspects, some have an imperfective only:

госпóдствовать	‘to dominate’
завísеть	‘to depend’
изобíловать	‘to abound’
наблюдáть	‘to observe’
находíться	‘to be situated’
нуждáться	‘to need’
отрицáть	‘to deny’
повиновáться	‘to obey’
подлежáть	‘to be subject to’
полагáть	‘to assume’
предвídеть	‘to foresee’
предсто́ять	‘to be imminent’
предчу́ствовать	‘to have a premonition’
преобладáть	‘to prevail’
преслédовать	‘to persecute’
принадлежáть	‘to belong’
противорéчить	‘to contradict’
содержáть	‘to contain’
состо́ять	‘to consist’
сочу́ствовать	‘to sympathize’
сто́ить	‘to cost’
учáствовать	‘to participate’

Note

Утвержда́ть has no perfective in the meaning ‘to affirm’ but has perfective **утверди́ть** in the meaning ‘to fix, establish’.

(2) Other verbs are perfective only (many though not all of these denote precipitate action):

восприя́нуть	‘to cheer up’
встрепену́ться	‘to start’ (with surprise)
гря́нуть	‘to burst out, ring out’
очути́ться	‘to find oneself’
пона́добиться	‘to be needed, come in handy’
хлы́нуть	‘to gush’

237 Bi-aspectual verbs

(1) Some verbs are bi-aspectual, that is, imperfective and perfective are represented by one verb form (though some also have alternative

imperfectives: **образовáть** (impf. and pf.) ‘to form’, alternative impf. **образовывáть**). There are many bi-aspectuals in **-овáть** and **-изировáть**. (Some of these have alternative perfectives, e.g. bi-aspectual **финансировáть** ‘to finance’, pf. also **профинансировáть**, similarly **инструкти́ровать/проинструкти́ровать** ‘to brief’, **координи́ровать/скоордини́ровать** ‘to coordinate’, **реставри́ровать/отреставри́ровать** ‘to restore’.)

(2) Among the commonest bi-aspectuals are **атаковáть** ‘to attack’, **велéть** ‘to order, bid’, **воздействовáть** ‘to have an effect on’, **гармонизи́ровать** ‘to harmonize’, **жени́ться** ‘to marry’ (of a man marrying a woman — the perfective **пожени́ться** is used only when both partners are joint subjects of the verb: **Они́ пожени́лись** ‘They got married’), **использовáть** ‘to use’, **иссле́довать** ‘to research’, **казни́ть** ‘to execute’, **коллективизи́ровать** ‘to collectivize’, **конфисковáть** ‘to confiscate’, **крестить** ‘to christen’ (alternative pf. **окрестить**), **миновáть** ‘to pass by’, **насле́довать** ‘to inherit’ (alternative pf. **унасле́довать**), **обещáть** ‘to promise’ (alternative pf. **пообещáть**), **оборудовáть** ‘to equip’, **ра́нить** ‘to wound’, **роди́ться** ‘to be born’ (alternative impf. **рожда́ться**), **сочета́ть** ‘to combine’.

(3) Thus, for example, **иссле́дую** can mean both ‘I research’ and ‘I shall/will research’. Ambiguity may be resolved by contrastive adverbs, as follows:

Положе́ние **постепенно́** стабилизи́руется
‘The situation is gradually stabilizing’

Положе́ние **скоро́** стабилизи́руется
‘The situation will soon stabilize’

Note

Imperfective **бежа́ть** ‘to run’ is also perfective in the meaning ‘to escape’; imperfective **приве́тствовать** ‘to greet’ is also perfective in the past tense; in the past tense, bi-aspectual **организовáть** ‘to organize’ (impf. also **организовывáть**) is perfective only.

238 Formation of the aspects

Most pairs of verbal aspects arise in one of the following ways:

(1) Through the addition of a **prefix** to the imperfective to make the perfective:

чита́ть (impf.) **про**чита́ть (pf.) ‘to read’

(2) Through **internal modification** involving:

(i) The insertion of a syllable into the stem infinitive:

завязáть (pf.)	завя́зывать (impf.)	‘to tie’
сосредотóчить (pf.)	сосредотóчивать (impf.)	‘to concentrate’
разб́ить (pf.)	разбивáть (impf.)	‘to smash’

(ii) A change in conjugation, an *imperfective* first-conjugation verb in **-а-/-я-** being paired with a *perfective* second-conjugation verb in **-и-/-е-**:

бросáть (impf.)	бро́сить (pf.)	‘to throw’
загора́ть (impf.)	загорéть (pf.)	‘to acquire a tan’

239 Formation of the perfective by prefixation

(1) An imperfective verb may become perfective through the addition of a **prefix**:

писа́ть (impf.)	написа́ть (pf.)	‘to write’
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(2) The conjugation of a perfective verb gives it **future** meaning:

Я напишу́ это письмо́
 ‘I shall write this letter’ (= get it written)

(3) While the choice of perfective prefixes appears in most cases to be arbitrary, some prefixes are associated with particular meanings; for example, **на-** is associated with verbs of printing, writing and drawing (**напечатать**, **написа́ть**, **нарисова́ть**), **у-** with verbs of perception (**увидеть**, **узна́ть**, **услы́шать**), and so on.

(4) All common prefixes (except for **в-** and **до-**) participate in the process of perfectivization:

<i>Imperfective</i>	<i>Perfective</i>	
кипя́тиТЬ	вскипя́тиТЬ	‘to boil’
учи́ТЬ	вы́учиТЬ	‘to learn’
плати́ТЬ	заплати́ТЬ	‘to pay’
купа́ТЬ	искупа́ТЬ	‘to bathe’
писа́ТЬ	написа́ТЬ	‘to write’
сироте́ТЬ	осироте́ТЬ	‘to be orphaned’
редакти́роваТЬ	отредакти́роваТЬ	‘to edit’
ночевáТЬ	переночевáТЬ	‘to spend the night’
смотре́ТЬ	посмотре́ТЬ	‘to look’

ждать	подождать	‘to wait’
грозить	пригрозить	‘to threaten’
читать	прочитать	‘to read’
будить	разбудить	‘to awaken’
петь	спеть	‘to sing’
видеть	увидеть	‘to see’

240 Functions of the perfective prefixes

(1) The perfective prefixes tend to be semantically neutral, that is, they change the *aspect* of a verb but *not* its meaning. Thus, both **будить** and **разбудить** mean ‘to awaken’, but **будить** describes the progress of the action, without any reference to result, whereas the perfective **разбудить** stresses the result:

Я его **будил**, **будил** и, наконец, **разбудил**
 ‘I tried and tried to wake him, and finally woke him’

(2) The *imperfective* verb describes:

(i) A past, present or future action in progress:

Он **учил** урок/**учит** урок/**будет учить** урок
 ‘He **was learning/is learning/will be learning** the lesson’

(ii) Repeated actions:

Она **платила/платит/будет платить** регулярно
 ‘She **paid/pays/will pay** regularly’

(3) The *perfective* focuses on the *completion* of a single action in the past or future. Usually, a result is implied:

Она **написала** письмо
 ‘She has written a letter’ (it is ready to send)

Она **прочитала** книгу
 ‘She has read the book’ (now *you* can read it, or it can be returned to the library)

Она **заплатит** за электричество
 ‘She will pay the electricity’ (the account will be settled)

(4) Often the perfective denotes the *culmination of a process*:

Она **приготовила** ужин ‘She cooked dinner’

In this example the culmination of the action, expressed by the perfective **пригото́вила**, will have been preceded by a process of indeterminate length (она́ гото́вила́ у́жин ‘she **was cooking** dinner’), the completion of which is denoted by the perfective.

241 Semantic differentiation of aspects

In some verbs it is possible to detect at least a minor measure of semantic differentiation between imperfective and perfective. Thus, the imperfective past of **ви́деть** ‘to see’ contains a nuance (‘to associate with’)

Я ви́дел егó вчера́ ‘I saw him yesterday’

which the perfective **увиде́ть** contains in the future, but *not* in the past. Compare

Я уви́дел егó вчера́
‘I caught sight of him (but *not* ‘saw, associated with him’) yesterday’

and

Я уви́жу егó за́втра
‘I shall see him (i.e. ‘meet, associate with him’) tomorrow’

Я уви́жу егó, как то́лько он войде́т
‘I shall catch sight of him as soon as he comes in’

242 Submeanings of perfectives

Apart from the resultative meaning (see **240** (3)), the perfective has a number of submeanings.

(1) **The inceptive**, denoting the beginning of an action. This meaning is often conveyed by the prefix **за-**:

заболе́ть	‘to fall ill’
заговори́ть	‘to start speaking’
закури́ть	‘to light up’
замолча́ть	‘to fall silent’
запе́ть	‘to burst into song’
запла́кать	‘to burst into tears’
засмея́ться	‘to burst out laughing’
зацвести́	‘to blossom’

Note

- (a) Only some of these verbs have imperfectives: **заболевать**, **закуривать**, **запевать**, **зацветать**. Where a verb has no imperfective, a paraphrase may be possible: **заливаться смехом** ‘to burst out laughing’, **обливаться слезами** ‘to burst into tears’.
- (b) The meaning of inception also adheres to the perfective aspects of unidirectional verbs of motion (он **пошёл** ‘he set out’) (see also 326) and to the perfectives **полюбить**, **понравиться**: Вы любите литературу? Да, я **полюбил** её ещё в школе (Vasilenko) ‘Do you like literature?’ ‘Yes, **I took a liking to it** when still at school’. Compare Вам **понравится** фильм ‘You **will like** the film’.
- (c) Inception can also be expressed by the prefixes **вз-/вс-** and **раз/рас-**: **встревожиться** ‘to get alarmed’, **рассердиться** ‘to get angry’.
- (2) The **instantaneous** or **semelfactive** submeaning:

Он **услышал** мой гблос
‘He heard, caught the sound of my voice’

Note

Instantaneous meanings are often expressed by perfectives with the suffix **-ну-**:

Он **чиркнул** спичкой ‘He struck a match’

Other semelfactives include **крикнуть** ‘to shout’, **махнуть** ‘to wave’, **плюнуть** ‘to spit’ etc.

- (3) The submeaning of **limited duration** (prefix **по-**):

поговорить	‘to have a chat’
посидеть	‘to sit for a while’
поспать	‘to have a nap’

Note

- (a) **По-** can impart the meaning of limited duration to verbs which form their ‘neutral’ perfectives with other prefixes:

написать (neutral pf.)	пописать ‘to write for a while’
прочитать (neutral pf.)	почитать ‘to read for a while’

- (b) See 249 for imperfective submeanings.

243 Formation of verbal aspects by internal modification

Many aspectual pairs are created as the result of internal modification, in particular through suffixation. This may involve:

(5) Of two adjacent vowels in a compound perfective, the second is replaced by **-ива-** in the imperfective: pf. отта́ять ‘to thaw out’, impf. отта́ивать (there are exceptions, e.g. pf. зате́ять ‘to undertake’, impf. затева́ть).

245 Vowel mutation in secondary imperfective verbs

(1) The vowel **e** becomes **ë** under stress in the secondary imperfective, thus (based on root verb **чеса́ть** ‘to scratch’):

причеса́ться (pf.)/приче́сываться (impf.) ‘to comb one’s hair’

Similarly,

завоева́ть (pf.)/завоёвыва́ть (impf.) ‘to conquer’

(2) In similar circumstances, **o** becomes **a** in the secondary imperfective:

зарабо́тать (pf.)/зараба́тывать (impf.) ‘to earn’
раскопа́ть (pf.)/раска́пывать (impf.) ‘to excavate’

Note

The **o**: **a** mutation does *not* affect verbs in **-овать**: pf. образова́ть ‘to form’, impf. образóвывать.

246 Secondary imperfectives based on second-conjugation verbs

(1) A process similar to that described in **244** is used to form secondary imperfectives from second-conjugation verbs, but with the following differences:

- (i) The suffix **-ив-** is used instead of **-ыв-**.
- (ii) Consonant mutation operates, e.g. **с**: **ш** in

краси́ть (impf.)	→	о́красить (neutral pf.) ‘to paint’
↓		
перекраси́ть (pf. with new meaning ‘to repaint’)	→	перекраси́вать (impf. ‘to repaint’)

Note that **o** mutates to **a** in stressed position:

рассмо́т্রে́ть (pf.)/рассма́тривать (impf.) ‘to scrutinize’
пригово́ри́ть (pf.)/приговáráивать (impf.) ‘to sentence’

Similarly pf. заподóзрить ‘to suspect’, impf. заподáзривать; pf. закóнчить ‘to conclude’, impf. закáнчивать; pf. оспóрить ‘to dispute’, impf. оспáривать; подготóвить ‘to prepare, train’, impf. подготáвливать; pf. приспособóбить ‘to adapt’, impf. приспособáбливать.

Note

- (a) In some secondary imperfectives, **o** and **a** are stylistically differentiated, **o** being characteristic of literary style, **a** of a more conversational style: thus pf. сосредотóчить ‘to concentrate’/impf. сосредотóчивать or сосредотáчивать. Similarly, pf. обуслóвить, ‘to condition’, impf. обуслóвливать/обуслáвливать.
- (b) Some imperfectives retain **o**: pf. опорóчить ‘to discredit’, impf. опорóчивать; pf. отсрóчить ‘to defer’, impf. отсрóчивать; pf. подытóжить, ‘to sum up’, impf. подытóживать; pf. приурóчить ‘to time’, impf. приурóчивать; pf. уполномóчить ‘to authorize’, impf. уполномóчивать; pf. упрóчить ‘to consolidate’, impf. упрóчивать.

(2) Of two adjacent vowels in a compound perfective, the second is replaced by **-ива-** in the imperfective. The mutation **o**: **a** operates (pf. успоко́бить ‘to reassure’, impf. успока́ивать):

pf. приклéить ‘to stick to’	impf. приклéивать
pf. устрóбить ‘to arrange’	impf. устрáивать

247 Consonant mutation in secondary imperfectives based on second-conjugation verbs

Standard consonant mutations are observed in deriving secondary imperfectives from second-conjugation perfective verbs.

б: бл	приспособóбить ‘to adapt’	impf. приспособáбливать
в: вл	выздоровéть ‘to recover’	impf. выздорáвливать
д: ж	проследíть ‘to track’	impf. прослéживать
з: ж	заморóзить ‘to freeze’	impf. заморáживать
м: мл	вскормíть ‘to rear’	impf. вскармливать
п: пл	затопíть ‘to heat’	impf. затáпливать
с: ш	взвéсить ‘to weigh’	impf. взвéшивать
ст: щ	вырастíть ‘to grow’	impf. выра́щивать
т: ч	оплатíть ‘to pay’	impf. опла́чивать

Note

- (a) Absence of mutation in pf. захватíть ‘to seize’, impf. захвáтывать, pf. проглóтитъ ‘to swallow’, impf. проглáтывать, pf. сбросíть ‘to drop, throw down’, impf. сбрасýвать.

- (b) ‘Reverse mutation’ (ч: к) in pf. вы́скочить ‘to jump out’, impf. вы́скакивать, pf. перекрича́ть ‘to shout down’, impf. перекри́кивать.

248 Secondary imperfectives based on monosyllabic verbs

(1) Secondary imperfectives derive from the compound prefixed perfectives of many monosyllabic verbs by the insertion of the suffix **-ва-** after the root vowel of the perfective. Thus:

бить (impf.) → побить (neutral pf.) ‘to hit’
 ↓
 забить (pf. with new meaning ‘to score’) → забива́ть (impf.) ‘to score’

Similarly,

pf. зажить ‘to heal’	impf. зажива́ть
pf. надеть ‘to put on’	impf. надева́ть
pf. налить ‘to pour’	impf. налива́ть
pf. открыть ‘to open’	impf. открыва́ть

Note

The initial consonant of the syllable inserted into compounds of monosyllabic verbs in the formation of secondary imperfectives is often identical with that which appears in the first-person singular of the conjugation of the stem verb.

<i>Perfective</i>	<i>Imperfective</i>	<i>First-person singular of stem verb</i>
зажечь ‘to ignite’	зажига́ть	жгу (from жечь ‘to burn’)
пересечь ‘to intersect’	пересека́ть	секу́ (from сечь ‘to cut’)
сгребсти́ ‘to rake together’	сгребáть	гребу́ (from грести́ ‘to row’)
сжать ‘to compress’	сжима́ть	жму (from жать ‘to squeeze’)
учесть ‘to take into consideration’	учи́тывать	чту (from честь ‘to consider’)

Note also pf. разъе́сть ‘to corrode’, impf. разъеда́ть (cf. **-д-** in, for example, еда́ ‘food’).

- (2) The suffix **-ы-** or **-и-** is inserted between two initial consonants in the stem verb to form the imperfective:

pf. вы́звать ‘to call out, cause’	impf. вызы́вать
pf. вы́рвать ‘to tear out’	impf. вырыва́ть
pf. отосла́ть ‘to send away’	impf. отсыла́ть
pf. собра́ть ‘to collect’	impf. собира́ть

249 Submeanings of some prefixed imperfectives

Some imperfective verbs with the prefixes **пере-**, **по-** or **при-** have the following submeanings, as distinct from the standard imperfective meanings of duration and frequency:

(1) Reflexives with the prefix **пере-** denote joint action (mostly imperfective only): **переписа́ваться** ‘to correspond’, **пересту́киваться** ‘to communicate by knocking’, **перешёптыва́ться** ‘to exchange whispers’.

Note

Some verbs of this type have perfectives: **перегля́дываться** (impf.)/**перегляну́ться** (pf.) ‘to exchange glances’, **перемигива́ться** (impf.)/**перемигну́ться** (pf.) ‘to wink at each other’.

(2) Verbs in **по-** with the iterative ending **-ивать/-ывать** denote the intermittent performance of a short-lived action, e.g. **посвистыва́ть** ‘to whistle every now and again’. The mutations **е: ё** and **о: а** operate: **поблещива́ть** ‘to glint’ (cf. **блесте́ть** ‘to shine’), **посма́тривать** ‘to steal glances at’ (cf. **смотре́ть** ‘to look’). Compare:

Голова́ у меня́ **побаливае́т**
‘I keep getting headaches’

Шпиль **поблещивае́т** на со́лнце
‘The spire glints in the sun’

Ма́слов флегматично **позёвыва́л** (Iakhontov)
‘Maslov kept yawning in a phlegmatic sort of way’

Бе́режно, **постáнывая** и **покрáхтывая**, он опуска́ется вниз
(Rasputin)
‘He descends cautiously, groaning and wheezing intermittently’

Note

- (a) Verbs in this category have no perfective.
 (b) Other verbs of this type include **погла́живать** from **гла́дить** ‘to stroke’, **подёргивать** from **дёрга́ть** ‘to tug’, **пока́шливать** from **ка́шлять** ‘to cough’, **помáргивать** from **морга́ть** ‘to blink’,

посиживать from **сидеть** ‘to sit’, **постукивать** from **стучать** ‘to knock’, **почитывать** from **читать** ‘to read’.

(3) Verbs in **при-** with the suffix **-ва-** or **-ива-/ыва-** may denote actions accompanying other actions: **припевать** ‘to sing along’, **приплясывать** ‘to skip up and down’, **притопывать** ‘to stamp one’s feet’ (e.g. in time to music).

Note

Verbs in this category have no perfectives.

250 The differentiation of aspect by conjugation

(1) Many aspectual pairs consist of a first-conjugation imperfective in **-ать/-ять** and a second-conjugation perfective in **-ить** (or **-еть**). This affects:

(i) A number of unprefixated verbs (imperfectives first):

бросáть	бро́сить	‘to throw’
конча́ть	ко́нчить	‘to finish’
лиша́ть	лиши́ть	‘to deprive’
реша́ть	реши́ть	‘to decide, resolve’

(ii) More especially, prefixed verbs:

включа́ть	включи́ть	‘to switch on’
выполня́ть	вы́полнить	‘to fulfil’
выступа́ть	вы́ступить	‘to appear, perform’
загора́ть	загоре́ть	‘to get sun-tanned’

Note

Покупа́ть, купи́ть ‘to buy’ (prefixed imperfective/unprefixated perfective).

(2) In many pairs the imperfective has *end* stress and the perfective *stem* stress: **доверя́ть**, **дове́рить** ‘to trust’; **измеря́ть**, **изме́рить** ‘to measure’; **наруша́ть**, **нару́шить** ‘to disrupt’; **позволя́ть**, **позво́лить** ‘to allow’; **улучша́ть**, **улучи́ть** ‘to improve’ etc.

(3) The usual consonant mutations apply to many verbs of this type:

б: бл	pf. употреби́ть	‘to use’	impf. употребля́ть
в: вл	pf. оста́вить	‘to leave’	impf. оставля́ть
д: ж	pf. заряди́ть	‘to load’	impf. заряжа́ть
д: жд	pf. награди́ть	‘to reward’	impf. награжда́ть

з: ж	pf. отразить	‘to reflect’	impf. отражать
п: пл	pf. прикрепить	‘to attach, fasten’	impf. прикреплять
с: ш	pf. пригласить	‘to invite’	impf. приглашать
ст: ск	pf. пустить	‘to let go’	impf. пускать
ст: щ	pf. угостить	‘to treat’	impf. угощать
т: ч	pf. заметить	‘to notice’	impf. замечать
т: щ	pf. запретить	‘to ban’	impf. запрещать

Note

- (a) Double perfectivization (impf. first) in **вешать, повесить** ‘to hang’, **кусать, укусить** ‘to bite’, **ронять, уронить** ‘to drop’, **сажать, посадить** ‘to seat’ and **стрелять, выстрелить** ‘to shoot’.
- (b) Some prefixed derivatives of **менять** ‘to change’ are imperfective, with a perfective in **-менить: заменять/заменить** ‘to replace’, **изменять/изменить** ‘to alter’, **отменять/отменить** ‘to cancel’. Others acquire perfective meaning, with an imperfective in **-менивать: обменивать/обменять** ‘to exchange’, **разменивать/разменять** ‘to change’ (money to smaller denominations).

251 Aspectival pairs with different roots

The verbs in some aspectival pairs derive from different roots. These include (impf. first) the following:

бить	ударить	‘to strike’
брать	взять	‘to take’
говорить	сказать	‘to say’
класть	положить	‘to put, place’
ловить	поймать	‘to catch’

252 Verbs which are reflexive in the imperfective aspect only

Some verbs are reflexive in the imperfective aspect only. These include:

- (1) Some verbs of sitting, lying and standing:

ложиться	лечь	‘to lie down’
пересаживаться	пересесть	‘to change seats, trains etc.’
присаживаться	присесть	‘to sit down for a while’
садиться	сесть	‘to sit down’
становиться	стать	‘to (go and) stand’

(2) **Лопаться/лопнуть** ‘to burst, snap’ and **рúшиться/рúхнуть** ‘to collapse’.

253 Compounds of -ложить

Some perfective compounds of **-ложить** have imperfectives in **-кладывать**, while others have imperfectives in **-лагать**. Those with imperfectives in **-кладывать** have a more literal meaning (**прокладывать**, проложить доро́гу ‘to lay a road’); those with imperfectives in **-лагать** are more abstract (**предлагать**, предложить ‘to propose’). The distinction is well marked in verbs which have both types of imperfective, with differing meanings: **вклады́вать**, вложить письмо́ в конве́рт ‘to place a letter into an envelope’, **влагáть**, вложить ду́шу во что́-нибудь ‘to put one’s heart into something’.

254 Meanings of verbal prefixes

Prefixes are important elements in Russian word formation. As many as sixteen prefixes may be attached to certain root verbs, each prefix imparting a different meaning: thus **вяза́ть** ‘to tie’, **завяза́ть** ‘to knot’, **отвяза́ть** ‘to untie from’, **привяза́ть к** ‘to tie to’ and so on. Most prefixes are associated with particular prepositions, as follows.

<i>Prefix</i>	<i>Preposition</i>		<i>Meaning</i>
в-	в	+ acc.	into
вы-	из	+ gen.	out of
до-	до	+ gen.	as far as
за-	за	+ acc.	behind
из-	из	+ gen.	out of
на-	на	+ acc.	on to
от-	от	+ gen.	detaching
пере-	через	+ acc.	across
под-	к	+ dat.	approach
	под	+ acc.	under
при-	к	+ dat.	attaching
с-	с	+ gen.	down from
	с	+ instr.	together with

Note

(a) Prefixed verbs in some meanings also have non-prepositional government, or government through other prepositions.

- (b) Prefixes also impart meanings to parts of speech other than verbs: cf. **перелётный** 'migratory', **приложение** 'supplement', **съезд** 'congress' etc. See also 28.
- (c) Some prefixes have alternative spellings (**вз-/вс-**; **из-/ис-**; **раз-/рас-**), **вс-**, **ис-** and **рас-** combining with stems which begin with unvoiced consonants (**к, п, с, т, ф, х, ц, ч, ш, щ**), **вз-**, **из-** and **раз-** combining with other stems.
- (d) Compare also prefixes with verbs of motion (see 331).
- (e) Imperfectives are listed first in aspectival pairs.

(1) В(о)-

(i) Direction into:

включать/включить в список	'to include in a list'
вмешиваться/вмешаться в спор	'to interfere in an argument'

(ii) Movement upwards (mainly with verbs of motion, e.g. **влезать/влезть** на дерево 'to climb a tree'):

вставать/встать из-за стола́	'to get up from a table'
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(2) Вз(о)-/вс-; воз-/вос

(i) Movement upwards:

взбираться/взобраться на́ гору	'to climb a hill'
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(ii) Disruption:

взрывать/взорвать мост	'to blow up a bridge'
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(3) Вы-

(i) Movement out of:

вырывать/вырвать страни́цу из дневника́	'to tear a page out of a diary'
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(ii) Achievement through the action of the root verb:

выпрашивать/выпросить отпуск	'to get leave on request'
-------------------------------------	---------------------------

(iii) Exhaustiveness of action (reflexive verbs):

высказываться/высказаться	'to have one's say'
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высыпаться/выспаться

‘to have a good sleep’

Note

As a perfective prefix, **вы-** is always stressed; as an imperfective prefix it is stressed only in **выглядеть** ‘to look’.

(4) До-

(i) Completion of action already begun:

доживать/дожить до старости

‘to live to a ripe old age’

дописывать/дописать письмо

‘to finish writing a letter’

(ii) Achievement of hard-won result:

договариваться/договориться

‘to come to an agreement’

дозваниваться/дозвониться (к) другу

‘to get through to one’s friend’

(5) За-

(i) Movement behind:

закладывать/заложить руки за спину

‘to put one’s hands behind one’s back’

(ii) Process covering an area:

засаживать/засадить сад деревьями

‘to plant a garden with trees’

(iii) Absorption in an action (often detrimental (reflexives)):

засиживаться/засидеться в гостях

‘to outstay one’s welcome’

зачитываться/зачитатьсь

‘to get absorbed in reading’

(iv) Acquisition:

завоевывать/завоевать ‘to conquer’**зарабатывать/заработать** ‘to earn’**захватывать/захватить** ‘to seize’

(v) Fastening, securing:

завя́зывать/завя́зать га́лстук	‘to fasten a tie’
закрыва́ть/закры́ть	‘to close’
застёгивать/застегну́ть пальто́	‘to fasten a coat’

(vi) To spoil by excess:

закáрмливать/закорми́ть щенка́	‘to overfeed a puppy’
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(6) Из(о)-/ис-

(i) Extraction, selection:

избира́ть/избра́ть	‘to elect’
исключа́ть/исключи́ть	‘to exclude, expel’

(ii) Action affecting whole area:

изорва́ть (pf. only) руба́шку	‘to tear a shirt all over’
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(7) На-

(i) Action directed on to:

нажима́ть/нажа́ть (на) кно́пку	‘to press a button’
накле́ивать/наклеи́ть ма́рку на конве́рт	‘to stick a stamp on an envelope’

(ii) Action performed to point of satisfaction:

наеда́ться/нае́сться	‘to eat one’s fill’
насмотре́ться (pf. only)	‘to have a good look’

(iii) Quantity, accumulation:

наруба́ть/наруби́ть дров	‘to chop some firewood’
нарва́ть (pf. only) цвето́в	‘to pick some flowers’

(8) Над(о)-

(i) Superimposition:

надстра́ивать/надстро́ить эта́ж	‘to add a storey’
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(ii) Detaching part of surface:

надкусывать/надкусить 'to take a bite out of a pear'
грушу

(9) Недо- (opposite of 13 (v))

Shortfall:

недооценивать/недоценить 'to underrate'
недосаливать/недосолить 'not to put enough salt in the
кашу porridge'

(10) О-/об-/обо-

(i) Action affecting many:

опрашивать/опросить 'to canvas student opinion'
студентов

(ii) Detailed comprehensive action:

обсуждать/обсудить 'to discuss'
осматривать/осмотреть 'to examine'

(iii) Action directed over whole area:

оклеивать/оклеить 'to wall-paper'
стены обоями
окружать/окружить 'to surround'

(iv) Error:

оговариваться/оговориться 'to make a slip of the tongue'
ошибаться/ошибиться 'to make a mistake'

(v) Endowment with/acquisition of a quality or state:

облегчать/облегчить 'to lighten, relieve'
оглушать/оглушить 'to deafen'

Note

In some verbs the prefix appears only in the perfective: **вдоветь/овдověть** 'to be widowed', **слепнуть/ослѣпнуть** 'to go blind'.

(vi) Outdoing:

обгоня́ть/обогна́ть	‘to overtake’
обы́грывать/обыгра́ть	‘to outplay’

(vii) Deception:

обма́нывать/обману́ть	‘to deceive’
обсчи́тывать/обсчита́ть покупа́теля	‘to short-change a customer’

(11) Обез-/обес-

Deprivation (bookish styles):

обесце́нивать/обесце́нить	‘to devalue’
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(12) От(о)-

(i) Moving, receding a certain distance:

отстава́ть/отста́ть от други́х	‘to lag behind the others’
отступа́ть/отступи́ть	‘to retreat, digress’

(ii) Detachment:

отруба́ть/отруби́ть ве́тку от де́рева	‘to lop a branch off a tree’
отрыва́ть/оторва́ть листóк	‘to tear off a sheet’

(iii) Reversal of action:

отвыка́ть/отвы́кнуть от ку́рения	‘to get out of the habit of smoking’
отменя́ть/отмени́ть	‘to cancel’

(13) Пере-

(i) Movement across:

перепры́гивать/перепры́гнуть (через) кана́ву	‘to jump across a ditch’
переставля́ть/переста́вить ме́бель	‘to move furniture round’

(ii) Redoing:

перекра́шивать/перекра́сить 'to repaint'
переодева́ться/переоде́ться 'to change one's clothes'

(iii) Division:

перепи́ливать/перепи́лить 'to saw through'

(iv) Action affecting many objects:

пересма́тривать/пересмотрéть все фíльмы
 'to see all the films'

(v) Excess:

перегружа́ть/перегрузи́ть 'to overload a vehicle'
 маши́ну

(vi) Reciprocal action:

перепи́сываться (impf. only) 'to correspond'

(vii) Outdoing:

перекри́кивать/перекрича́ть 'to shout down a crowd'
 толпу́

(14) Под(о)-

(i) Movement or position under:

подкла́дывать/подложи́ть поду́шку под го́лову
 'to place a pillow under one's head'

подпи́сывать/подписа́ть 'to sign'

(ii) Approach:

пододвига́ть/пододви́нуть стул к стене́
 'to move a chair up to the wall'

(iii) Addition of substance or material:

подсыпа́ть/подсы́пать 'to add some sugar to one's tea'
 са́хару в чай

(iv) Furtive, underhand action:

поддѣлывать/поддѣлать 'to forge, counterfeit'
подслушивать/подслушать 'to eavesdrop'

(v) Supplementary action:

подвѣнчивать/подвинтѣть кран немного
'to tighten up a tap'

(15) Пре- (mainly in bookish styles)

(i) Transformation:

преобразовывать/преобразовѣть 'to transform'

(ii) Termination:

прекращѣть/прекратѣть 'to curtail'

(iii) Excess:

преувеличивать/преувеличить 'to exaggerate'
превышать/превысить 'to exceed'

(16) Пред(о)-

Anticipation:

предвѣдѣть (impf. only) 'to foresee'
предполагѣть/предположить 'to presume'
предупреждать/предупредѣть 'to warn, prevent'

(17) При-

(i) Approach, arrival:

приближаться/приблизиться 'to approach'
приземляться/приземлиться 'to land'

(ii) Attachment:

привязывать/привязѣть собаку к дереву
'to tie a dog to a tree'

прикреплять/прикрепить фотографию к бланку
'to attach, pin a photograph to a form'

(iii) Addition:

прибавля́ть/приба́вить	‘to add’
припи́сывать/приписа́ть не́сколько строк	‘to add a few lines’

(iv) Limited action:

привстава́ть/привста́ть	‘to half rise’
приоткрыва́ть/приоткры́ть дверь	‘to open a door slightly’

(v) Accustoming:

привыка́ть/привы́кнуть к дисципли́не	‘to get used to discipline’
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(18) Про-

(i) Through, past:

пропуска́ть/пропусти́ть	‘to miss, let past’
просма́тривать/просмотрéть	‘to look through’

(ii) Harmful error:

пролива́ть/проли́ть	‘to spill’
просьпа́ть/проспа́ть	‘to oversleep, sleep in’

(19) Раз(о)-/рас-

(i) Separation, dispersal, disintegration, distribution:

раздвига́ть/раздвину́ть занаве́ски	‘to part the curtains’
размеща́ть/разместíть раке́ты	‘to deploy missiles’
распи́ливать/распили́ть ство́л	‘to saw up a tree trunk’

(ii) Reversal of an action:

разв́язывать/разв́язать	‘to untie’
раздева́ться/разде́ться	‘to get undressed’
разду́мывать/разду́мать	‘to change one’s mind’

(20) C(o)-

(i) Removal:

сверга́ть/све́ргнуть ‘to overthrow an autocracy’
самодержавие

снима́ть/сня́ть ‘to take off one’s coat’
пальто́

(ii) Descent:

спуска́ться/спусти́ться ‘to descend to the sea bed’
на морское́ дно

(iii) Joining:

скрепля́ть/скрепи́ть ‘to staple together’

скла́дывать/сложи́ть ‘to fold’

(iv) Joint feeling or action:

сочу́вствовать (impf. only) ‘to sympathize’

(21) Y-

(i) Removal:

удаля́ть/удали́ть ‘to remove a tumour’
опухоль

(ii) Imparting a quality:

улучша́ть/улучши́ть ‘to improve’

упроща́ть/упрости́ть ‘to simplify’

255 The imperfective and perfective aspects

See also 235.

(1) The imperfective

(i) The imperfective may describe an action:

(a) In progress:

Он **за́втракал** (impf.) ‘He was having breakfast’

- (b) Progressing towards the completion of a goal, represented by a perfective:

Он долго **вспомина́л** (impf.) мою фами́лию, и наконец **вспомни́л** (pf.) её

'He took a long time to recall my name, and finally he **did** recall it'

- (ii) Imperfectives may describe a number of actions occurring simultaneously or in an indeterminate order:

Говори́ли (impf.) мы сразу́, **перебива́ли** (impf.) друг друга́, **смея́лись** (impf.) (Shukshin)

'We were all speaking at once, interrupting each other, laughing'

Note

- (a) The imperfective here does not *move* events, but describes actions as they *develop*, focusing on *circumstances* rather than completion. The imperfective therefore tends to be associated with conjunctions which imply development or continuity of action: **по мере́ то́го как** 'in proportion as', **чем . . . тем**, 'the . . . the' (with comparatives), **в то вре́мя как/пока́** 'while' etc. Compare:

В то вре́мя пока́ он **собира́лся** (impf.), я **успе́ла** (pf.) **убра́ть** (pf.) всю посу́ду в шкаф

'While he was getting ready I managed to clear all the crockery away into the cupboard'

Here the completed action ('I managed to clear all the crockery away into the cupboard' (pf.)) is set against the background of an action in progress ('while he was getting ready' (impf.)).

- (b) In the following example two processes are seen developing in parallel and are therefore rendered by imperfectives:

И чем больше́ Коси́хин его́ **слу́шал** (impf.), тем грустнее́ ему́ **станови́лось** (impf.) (Iakhontov)

'And the more Kosikhin listened to him, the sadder he became'

- (iii) The idea of continuity of action can be reinforced by an adverb which either:

- (a) Emphasizes action in progress:

Он рассказыва́л (impf.) **подробно́**

'He related his story in detail'

or:

(b) Denotes the passage of time, thus underlining the durative meaning:

Он читáл (impf.) «Войну́ и мир» **три часа́**
 ‘He read *War and Peace* for three hours’

Attention here is drawn to the *time* involved in the action, *not* its completion or result; hence the use of the *imperfective* aspect.

Note

For frequentative meanings see **256** (2) (ii), **257** (3), **266**, **269** (2), **274**, **276** (2) (i).

(2) The perfective aspect

(i) Unlike the imperfective, the perfective emphasizes **result**:

Он **дал** (pf.) ученика́м по учебнику
 ‘He **gave** each pupil a textbook’ (as a result, they have a copy, can prepare their homework, take a full part in the class work etc.)

(ii) The perfective **moves** events, advances the action step by step, unlike the imperfective, which describes an action in progress:

Воше́дший **снял** (pf. 1) плащ, **сел** (pf. 2) за стол и **по́днял** (pf. 3) дневни́к
 ‘The man who had come in **removed** his coat, **sat down** at the table and **picked up** the diary’

Here emphasis is laid on the completion in sequence of a series of actions: perfective 1 is completed before perfective 2 takes place, perfective 2 is completed before perfective 3 takes place, and so on, each perfective moving events a stage further.

(iii) Verbs of different aspect may coexist in the same sentence, the imperfectives **describing the scene** and the perfectives **advancing the action**:

Она́ **сняла́** (pf.) пальто́, **стоя́ла** (impf.) спиной́ ко мне и **шелесте́ла** (impf.) бума́гами (Kazakov)
 ‘She took off her coat and stood with her back to me, rustling the papers’

(iv) An imperfective describing an action in progress can be succeeded by a perfective which denotes successful completion of that action:

Он до́лго **догоня́л** (impf.) меня́ и, наконец, **догна́л** (pf.)
 ‘He chased me for a long time and finally caught me up’

This exemplifies the comparison which has been made between the use of imperfectives and the filming of a scene, and between the use of some perfectives and a **snapshot**.

(v) The perfective tends to combine with conjunctions which imply the completion or the suddenness of an action (**до того как** ‘before’, **как только** ‘as soon as’, **после того как** ‘after’ etc.), and with adverbs which imply immediacy or unexpectedness (**внезапно** ‘suddenly’, **сразу** ‘immediately’, **чуть не** ‘almost, within an ace of’ etc.).

(vi) Unlike the imperfective past, which is totally rooted in past time, the perfective may have implications for the present. This occurs when a **present state** results from a past perfective action or process (the so-called ‘pure perfect’):

Я забыл (pf.)	‘I have forgotten, I forget ’
Он опоздал (pf.)	‘He is late ’ (but has arrived; cf. Он опаздывает (impf.) ‘He is late’ (and has not yet arrived))
Я привык к этому (pf.)	‘I am used to this’
Он умер (pf.)	‘He is dead ’ (has died)

256 Aspect in the present tense

(1) The present tense has only one form, the imperfective.

(2) The present tense is used:

(i) To denote actions in progress:

Сейчас я **пишú** письмо
‘At the moment I am writing a letter’

(ii) To denote habitual actions:

По воскресеньям он **лóвит** рыбу в реке
‘On Sundays he fishes in the river’

(iii) To make general statements:

земля **вращáется** вокруг Солнца
‘The Earth revolves around the Sun’

(iv) To denote capabilities and qualities:

Зóлото не **ржáвее**
'Gold does not tarnish'

Note

Except for verbs of motion (see **315–325**), the present tense does not distinguish durative from habitual actions, thus: Я **готóвлю** úжин 'I **am preparing/prepare** supper'.

(v) To express intention to perform an action in the not too distant future. The verb involved is often a simple or compound verb of motion in the first-person singular or plural:

Сегóдня вéчером **идú** в кино
'I am going to the cinema this evening'

Бúдущей зимóй **уезжáем** за гóраницу
'We are going abroad next winter'

Note

Other verbs found in this meaning include **возвращáться** 'to return', **встречáть** 'to meet', **начинáть** 'to begin' etc.

(vi) As a 'historic present'. The use of the present tense with past meaning brings the action more graphically before the mind's eye of the reader or listener. It is a device commonly found in literary works and is much more widely used in Russian than in English:

Приходíл он к нам чáсто. **Сидít**, бывáло, и **расскáзывает**
'He would often come to see us. He **would sit** and **tell** us stories'

(vii) To describe an action or state that *began* in the past and *continues* into the present (the 'continuous present'):

Я **рабóтаю** здесь с прóшлого гóда
'I **have been working/have worked** here since last year'

Note

The use of the past tense in such contexts would be rendered by an English pluperfect: Она́ **былá** зáмужем у́жé 10 лет 'She **had been** married for ten years'.

(viii) In reported speech (see also **265**).

(a) In reporting a statement, the same tense is used as in direct speech. Thus the statement Я **люблю** её ‘I love her’ is reported as:

Я сказа́л, что **люблю** её
‘I said I loved her’

or

Он сказа́л, что **любит** её
‘He said he loved her’

(b) This contrasts with English, where a past tense in the main clause (‘he said’) generates a past tense in the subordinate clause: ‘He said he *loved* her’. To use a past tense here in Russian would imply that the direct statement had contained a past tense. Thus, Он сказа́л, что **любил** её means ‘He said he **had loved** her/**used to love** her’.

(c) The construction extends to reported knowing, asking, hoping etc., and can be introduced by **думать** ‘to think’, **знать** ‘to know’, **надёяться** ‘to hope’, **обещать** ‘to promise’, **спросить** ‘to ask’ etc.:

Ей каза́лось, что ма́льчик **спит**
‘She thought the child **was asleep**’

Он писа́л, что **проводит** ле́то в Волгогра́де
‘He wrote that he **was spending** the summer in Volgograd’

(d) The same principles of tense sequence apply, though *less rigidly*, to verbs of perception, cf. use of the *present* tense in

Шу́рка слы́шал, как в темноте́ **бе́гает** ёж (Vasil’ev)
‘Shurka heard a hedgehog running about in the dark’

and the *past* tense in

Слы́шно бы́ло, как **мурлы́кал** Ку́стик (Belov)
‘You could hear Kustik purring’

Бы́ло ви́дно, что он не **боя́лся** холо́дной воды́ (Fadeev)
‘It was obvious that he was not afraid of cold water’

In such contexts, the present tense is said to be more ‘vivid’ than the past.

257 Aspect in the past tense

(1) The durative meaning

(i) Past durative meanings, that is, descriptions of actions as they develop, are invariably rendered by the **imperfective** aspect:

Мы **составляли** (impf.) телеграмму в Москву
 ‘We **were composing** a telegram to send to Moscow’

(ii) Passage of time may be indicated by an appropriate adverb or adverbial phrase:

Четверть века он собирал (impf.) всё, что относилось (impf.) к истории края (Granin)
 ‘He spent **a quarter of a century** collecting everything that related to the history of the area’

(2) Endeavour contrasted with successful completion

(i) An action in progress (impf.) can be contrasted with its successful completion (pf.):

Мы долго **решали** (impf.) задачу — и наконец **решили** (pf.) её
 ‘We **spent a long time solving** the task and finally **solved it**’

(ii) The imperfective denotes an *attempt* which may either:

(a) Fail:

Он **убеждал** (impf.) меня, что без согласия родителей мы всё равно не сможем быть счастливы (*Russia Today*)
 ‘He **tried to convince me** that we could not be happy anyway without our parents’ consent’

(b) Succeed, achievement being expressed by a perfective:

Я **пробивался** (impf.) к нему ровно неделю и наконец **пробился** (pf.)
 ‘I spent exactly a week **trying to force my way** into his office, and finally **succeeded in doing so**’

(iii) Some aspectual pairs consist of *imperfectives* which denote attempt to achieve and *perfectives* which denote successful achievement:

<i>Imperfective</i>		<i>Perfective</i>	
добиваться	‘to try to achieve’	добиться	‘to achieve’
доказывать	‘to contend’	доказать	‘to prove’
ловить	‘to try to catch’	поймать	‘to catch’
решать	‘to tackle’	решить	‘to solve’
сдавать	‘to take’ (an examination)	сдать	‘to pass’ (an examination)
уверять	‘to try to assure’	уверить	‘to assure’
уговаривать	‘to try to persuade’	уговорить	‘to persuade’

(3) Repeated actions in the past

(i) Repeated actions are normally expressed by the **imperfective**:

Он **звонил** (impf.) нам по вечерам
 ‘He used to ring us in the evenings’

Бывало is sometimes added to emphasize repetition:

Он, **бывало**, звонил (impf.) нам по вечерам
 ‘He was in the habit of ringing us in the evenings’

(ii) Frequency may also be stressed by an adverb or adverbial phrase of time: **всегда** ‘always’, **иногда** ‘sometimes’, **никогда** ‘never’, **раз в неделю** ‘once a week’, **часто** ‘often’:

Потом он **чаще всего**, не разогревая, съедал (impf.) оставленный матерью обед (Vanshenkin)
 ‘Then, **more often than not**, he would eat the lunch left by his mother, without heating it up’

Note

Secondary imperfectives (here, **съеда́ть**) are often preferred to *primary* imperfectives (cf. **есть** ‘to eat’) in frequentative constructions, in view of the durative connotations which adhere to primaries, cf. Он **сидел** (primary impf.) над статьёй не менее трёх часов ‘He **pored** over the article for no less than three hours’, a reference to one durative action, and Он **просиживал** (secondary impf.) над статьёй не менее трёх часов ‘He **would pore** over the article for not less than three hours at a time’, a reference to a **series** of actions.

(iii) When reference is made to the **number of times** an action occurs:(a) The **imperfective** is preferred when the actions are repeated at irregular and spaced-out intervals:

Три ра́за они **покидали** (impf.) борт стáнции и **выходили** (impf.) в откры́тый ко́смос (*Russia Today*)
 ‘Three times they left the space station and walked in space’

Неско́лько раз я **прогоня́л** (impf.) его́. Он **сади́лся** (impf.) в отдале́нии, немно́го **пережида́л** (impf.) и снова́ **бежа́л** (impf.) за мной (Kazakov)
 ‘Several times I chased him away. He would sit down at a distance, bide his time and run after me again’

(b) The **perfective** is preferred when a series of identical actions, repeated in swift succession, can be interpreted as **components of one multiple action**:

Вы́лез (pf.) из-под кры́ши крупный воробей, **чирикнул** (pf.) **дважды** и улетёл (pf.) (Belov)
 ‘A large sparrow emerged from under the eaves, **chirped twice** and flew off’

Приблизившись к нему́, она́ доста́ла (pf.) из сумочки пистолёт и **три ра́за вы́стрелила** (pf.) в упóр
 ‘Approaching him she took a pistol from her bag and **fired three times** at point-blank range’

Note

The imperfective is preferred for verbs of *beginning*, however, even when a number of actions occur in swift succession:

Он **начина́л** (impf.) письмо́ **раз двена́дцать**, рвал (impf.) листы́, **изне́рвничался** (pf.), **испихова́лся** (pf.) (Shukshin)
 ‘He began the letter about a dozen times, kept tearing up the sheets, got all hot and bothered, almost blew a fuse’

258 Use of the imperfective past to express a ‘statement of fact’

— Вы звони́ли (impf.) ему́?	‘Have you rung him?’
— Да, звони́л (impf.)	‘Yes, I have’
— Я где-то ви́дел (impf.) вас	‘I have seen you somewhere’
— Вы чита́ли (impf.) «Це́мент»?	‘Have you read <i>Cement</i> ?’
— Да, чита́л (impf.)	‘Yes, I have’

(1) The imperfective is used in the above examples to denote an action in isolation, with no emphasis on its completion or non-completion, the circumstances in which it occurred, or other detail. The statements and responses show that a phone call has been made, that two people have met before, that *Cement* is one of the books read by a particular person. These are bald statements of fact, with no fleshing-out of the context and no stress on the achievement of a result. This ‘submeaning’ of the imperfective is known as **констата́ция фа́кта** ‘statement of fact’. It is

particularly common in the past tense and is usually set in the vaguest of contexts:

- Этот человек вам знаком?
 “Do you know that man?”
 — Да, я однажды **встречал** (impf.) его
 “Yes, I met him once”

(2) The ‘statement of fact’ is common:

(i) In the imprecise context of an interrogative or in a situation where, for example, a check is being made to see whether a particular action has been carried out:

- Вы **провётривали** (impf.) комнату?
 ‘Have you aired the room?’

(ii) In enquiring about someone’s whereabouts:

- Вы не **видели** (impf.) Лёну?
 ‘Have you seen Lena?’

(iii) In delivering a reminder:

- Но ведь я **говорил** (impf.) вам об этом!
 ‘But I told you about this!’

(3) As the context is firmed up, however, or a result emphasized, the perfective comes into contention. Compare:

(i) Use of the *imperfective* in:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Я писал (impf.) ей | ‘I wrote to her’ |
| Я рассказывал (impf.) вам об этом | ‘I told you about that’ |
| Я звонил (impf.) ему | ‘I have rung him’ |
| Мы уже встречались (impf.) | ‘We have already met’ |
| Я читал (impf.) « <i>Чапаяева</i> » в школе | ‘I read <i>Chapaev</i> at school’ |

(ii) Use of the *perfective* as the context is filled in:

- Я написал (pf.) ей **письмо**
 ‘I wrote her **a letter**’
- Я **только что** сказал (pf.) вам об этом
 ‘I have **only just** told you about this’
- Я позвонил (pf.) ему, **чтобы напомнить ему** о вечере
 ‘I rang him to **remind him about the party**’

Я встрéтил (pf.) егó в **прошлом году на Чёрном море**
 ‘I met him **last year on the Black Sea**’

(4) It will be clear from the above examples that the imperfective is preferred where a fact is placed in a contextual vacuum, and that the perfective is preferred when the context is filled in, in terms of **what** action was carried out, **when, where** or **for what purpose**, or if the result or completion of an action is stressed. Thus, the question — Вы **прочитáли** (pf.) «Накануне»? can be rendered as ‘Have you **finished** *On the Eve*?’ — completion of the action is important since, say, the person asking the question is waiting to read the novel. The answer to this question might be **Прочитáл** (pf.), **возьмите, пожалуйста** ‘Yes, I have; here you are’. The perfective would also be used if someone had been *told* to read the novel: Вы **прочитáли** (pf.) «Накануне»? ‘**Did you read** *On the Eve*?’ (i.e. as you were told to).

259 Use of the imperfective past to denote an action and its reverse

(1) The imperfective past may be used to denote an action and its reverse:

Она **брала́** (impf.) кнйгу в библиотеке
 ‘She had a book out of the library’ (*and has now returned it*)

Similarly, **открывáл** (impf.) can mean ‘opened **and closed again**’:

У меня в комнате так холодно сегодня. Наверное, кто-то **открывáл** (impf.) здесь **окно́**
 ‘It is so cold in my room today. Someone has probably **had the window open** in here’

The implication of this example is that the window has been opened but is now shut again. By contrast, Кто-то **открыл** (pf.) окно́ means that the window is still open ‘Someone has opened the window’, or refers to the single act of opening ‘Someone opened the window’.

(2) Other imperfective past forms of this type include:

включáл	‘switched on’ (and off again)
вставáл	‘got up’ (and sat or lay down again)
выключáл	‘switched off’ (and on again)
давáл	‘gave’ (and received back again)
закрывáл	‘closed’ (and opened again)
клат	‘put down’ (and took up again)

ложился	‘lay down’ (and got up again)
надевал	‘put on’ (and took off again)
поднимался	‘ascended’ (and came down again)
спускался	‘descended’ (and went up again):

Он **вставал** (impf.) ночью
‘He got up in the night’ (and went back to bed again)

Ребёнок **просыпался** (impf.), но сейчас он опять спит
‘The child woke up, but now he is asleep again’

(3) In fact, the imperfective past of *any* verb denoting an action which has an opposite action may be used in this way:

Один из них **поднял** (pf.) руку. Их лица понравились мне, и я остановился. Тот, кто **поднимал** (impf.) руку, просунул в машину смуглое лицо (Strugatskiis)
‘One of them **raised his arm**. I liked the look of them and stopped. The one who **had raised his arm** thrust a dark-skinned face through the car window’

Here, the perfective denotes a *one-way* action (**поднял** руку ‘raised his arm’) and the imperfective a *two-way* action, the action and its reverse (**поднимал** руку ‘raised his arm **and lowered it again**’).

260 Aspectival usage when emphasis is on the identity of the person performing the action

(1) If we examine the examples

Кто мыл (impf.) посуду?	‘Who washed the dishes?’
Кто убирал (impf.) комнату?	‘Who tidied the room?’

then it is clear that the washing up has been done and the room tidied. Emphasis centres *not* on the *action*, but on the identity of the person who *performed* it. In such circumstances the *imperfective* is preferred:

Таня, это ты **разбирала** (impf.) книги в шкафу?
‘Tanya, was it you who sorted the books in the cupboard?’

Use of the imperfective may also imply that something (usually untoward) happened while the action was being carried out (e.g. papers were mislaid).

Вы не знаете, кто **открывал** (impf.) окно? На подоконнике лежали мои бумаги.

‘Do you know who opened the window? My papers were lying on the window-sill.’

(2) The *perfective* is preferred, however:

(i) When the **quality** of the action is stressed:

Кто **так хорошо** убрал (pf.) книги в шкаф?

‘Who made such a good job of tidying the books into the cupboard?’

or when the result is specially emphasized:

В комнате так чисто. Интересно, кто **убрал** (pf) её?

‘The room is beautifully clean. I wonder who tidied it?’

(ii) When the verb denotes ‘discovery’:

Кто **изобрёл** (pf.) радио?

‘Who invented radio?’

Кто **открыл** (pf.) Америку?

‘Who discovered America?’

Кто **нашёл** (pf.) ключи?

‘Who found the keys?’

(iii) When the action involved is not deliberate or has an untoward result:

Кто **разбил** (pf.) чашку?

‘Who broke the cup?’

(3) The *imperfective* is also used when attention is directed to the **place** or **time** of an action rather than to the action itself:

Где вы **покупали** (impf.) «Вечёрку»?

‘Where did you buy the evening paper?’

— Я показal (pf.) ему чертёж

“‘I showed him the blueprint”

— Когда ты **показывал** (impf.)?

“‘When did you show it to him?’”

In these examples the questioner is interested in the place and time of the actions, **not** in their completion, which is in any case clear from the context (as in the first example) or explicitly stated (as in the second).

261 Use of the imperfective past to denote a forthcoming event

The imperfective past is used to indicate that an action was due to take place:

Поезд **отходил** (impf.) в пять часѡв
‘The train **was due to leave** at five o’clock’

Он много рабѡтал, потому что в воскресенье **выступал** (impf.) перед большой аудиторией
‘He worked hard, because on Sunday he **was to appear** in front of a large audience’

262 Negated verbs in the past

(1) Both aspects may be used to indicate non-performance of an action in the past, but while the negative imperfective indicates that the action **did not take place at all**, the negative perfective indicates that it took place but **was not successful**, thus:

Он не **решал** (impf.) задачу
‘He **did not** do the sum’ (perhaps because he was off school)

Он не **решил** (pf.) задачу
‘He **could not** do the sum’ (he tried but failed)

(2) The aspects may similarly be used to distinguish an action which has not yet begun (impf.) from one which has begun but is not yet completed (pf.):

Я ещё не **читал** (impf.) эту статью
‘I haven’t **read** this article yet’

Я ещё не **прочитал** (pf.) эту статью
‘I haven’t **finished** this article yet’

(3) The imperfective past is also used to negate a statement or supposition expressed by a perfective:

— Почему вы ушли из цирка, почему вас **увѡлили**? (pf.)

— Меня не **увѡльняли** (impf.), я ушла сама (*Ogonek*)

“‘Why did you leave the circus, why were you dismissed?’”

“‘I was not dismissed, I left of my own accord’”

(4) The imperfective past is also used to denote the continuation of a negative state:

Он долго **не соглашался** со мной (impf.)
'He **took a long time to agree** with me'

(5) The **perfective** past is used when an expected event did not take place:

Меня никто не **встретил** (pf.)
'No one met me' (despite, for example, a promise or understanding that someone would)

Compare Меня никто не **встречал** (impf.), 'No one met me' — a simple statement of fact with no implication that the reverse was expected.

Мы не **посмотрели** (pf.) фильм
'We **didn't see** the film' (though, for example, it is just the kind of film we might have been expected to see)

Compare: Мы не **смотрели** (impf.) фильм 'We **haven't seen** the film'.

(6) The perfective past is also used when an expected or desired result has not yet materialized:

Он ещё не **пришёл** (pf.) 'He has not arrived yet'

263 Aspect in the future

(1) The imperfective future focuses on the progress of an action, while the perfective future stresses expected result or successful attainment. Compare the two future forms, the first imperfective and the second perfective, in the following example:

Буду читать (impf.) статью, надеюсь, что **прочитаю** (pf.)
'I shall **read/be reading** the article and hope I shall **get it finished**'

(2) The imperfective is used when emphasis is placed on the way in which an action is carried out, *not* on its result or successful implementation:

Как бы **будете отправлять** (impf.) книги, простой или заказной бандеролью?
'How will you be sending the books, as ordinary printed matter or registered?'

(3) A perfective future may refer to a completed action within the framework of an action in progress, e.g.

Когда я **бúду проходить** (impf.) мимо аптеки, **куплю** (pf.) таблетки от кашля

‘When I pass the chemist’s I shall buy some cough drops’

Note

- (a) Perfectives often appear in sequence, each perfective advancing the action a stage further: Я **свяжусь** (pf.) со своими друзьями, всё **узнаю** (pf.), и **позвоню** (pf.) (Soloukhin) ‘I shall contact my friends, get all the facts and give you a ring’.
- (b) A negated perfective future may be used to denote the impossibility of an action: Раскалённое железо го́лой рукой **не возьмёшь** ‘You cannot take hold of red-hot iron with your bare hands’.

264 The ‘logical’ future

Unlike English, where the future tense is not used after conjunctions such as ‘after’, ‘as soon as’, ‘before’, ‘until’, ‘when’ etc., Russian uses an imperfective or perfective future to express future meaning in such contexts:

Когда вы **бúдете ремонтировать** (impf.) машину, не забудьте (pf.) поменять свёчи

‘When you **are overhauling** the car, don’t forget to change the plugs’

Как только он **придёт** (pf.), поставим (pf.) чайник

‘As soon as he **arrives** we shall put the kettle on’

265 The future in reported speech

An imperfective or perfective future in **direct** speech

— В этом году я не **бúду отдыхать**

‘This year I won’t be having a holiday’

— Я **приду́**, если **успею**

‘I shall come if I have time’

is expressed as a future in **reported** speech:

Он сказа́л, что в этом году не **бúдет отдыхать**

‘He said he **wouldn’t** be having a holiday this year’

Она обеща́ла, что **приде́т**, е́сли **успе́ет**
 ‘She promised she **would** come if she **had** time’

Compare **256** (2) (viii).

266 Use of the future to express repeated actions

(1) Repeated actions in the future are usually expressed using the imperfective aspect:

Ле́том я **бу́ду** регуля́рно **загора́ть** (impf.)
 ‘In summer I shall sun-bathe regularly’

(2) A perfective future may be used to stress the sequential nature of actions:

Когда́ пито́мцы **окре́пнут** (pf.), их выпуска́ют (impf.) в тайгу́
 (*Sputnik*)
 ‘When our small charges (baby sable) **grow strong enough** they are released into the taiga’

The use of two imperfectives in this example would imply that the actions occur simultaneously, that the sable are released while they are still in the process of growing strong. The perfective (**окре́пнут**) shows that the actions are sequential: first the sable get strong, then they are released. Compare:

У меня́ был кро́хотный но́мер с телеви́зором, кото́рый **включáлся** (impf.), когда́ в автома́т **опу́стишь** (pf.) сто ие́н (*Granin*)
 ‘I had a tiny room with a television set which switched on when one inserted one hundred yen’

In this example, too, the perfective (**опу́стишь**) indicates that the actions are sequential (first the money is inserted, then the set switches on), *not* simultaneous.

(3) The ‘historic perfective future’ may be used for graphic effect in past frequentative contexts, in literary and other written styles, to denote repeated quick movements:

Она́ то **вздохне́т** (pf.), то **о́хнет** (pf.)
 ‘She would now sigh, now moan’

Быва́ло serves to stress the past frequentative nature of the action:

Быва́ло, он загля́нет (pf.) к нам
 ‘He was in the habit of looking in to see us’

(4) The perfective future can also appear in frequentative contexts in combination with temporal adverbs such as **всегда́** ‘always’:

Он вам **всегда́** помо́жет (pf.)
‘He will always give you a hand’

Note

The meaning of the perfective future in such contexts is ‘potential’ rather than frequentative, since its use does not imply a repeated action (cf. genuine repetition in **Ка́ждый** день она́ **бу́дет** ему́ **помога́ть** (impf.) ‘She will help him every day’), but rather constant readiness to perform an action if the need should arise, the element of repetition being expressed in terms of one typical action.

267 The perfective future in warnings

In colloquial Russian the first-person singular of the perfective future may be used to express a warning:

Я тебе́ поспо́рю! (pf.)	‘I’ll give you argue!’
Я тебе́ погуля́ю! (pf.)	‘I’ll give you gallivanting around!’
Я тебе́ это́ припо́мню! (pf.)	‘I won’t let you forget this!’

268 Aspect in questions

(1) Questions about intended actions are more often than not couched in the imperfective:

Что вы **бу́дете** **де́лать?** (impf.)
‘What are you going to do?’

Что вы **бу́дете** **зака́зывать?** (impf.)
‘What are you going to order?’

Вы **бу́дете** **пить** (impf.) чай и́ли ко́фе?
‘Will you have tea or coffee?’

unless special emphasis is laid on successful completion:

Вы **найдёте** (pf.) э́тот дом?
‘Will you find the house?’

(2) Answers, however, can be in either aspect, depending on the context:

Я буду дочитывать (impf.) книгу/**дочитаю** (pf.) книгу
‘I shall be finishing off the book/shall get the book finished’

Я буду пить (impf.) кофе/**выпью** (pf.) чашечку кофе
‘I shall have coffee/have a small cup of coffee’

Compare:

— Ладно, я уйду. А ты что **будешь делать** (impf.)?

— **Уложу** (pf.) Светланку спать, а потом **буду реветь** (impf.)
(Zalygin)

“All right, I’ll leave. And what are you going to do?”

“I shall put Svetlanka to bed and then cry my eyes out”

(3) The answer to the question Что вы будете заказывать? ‘What are you going to order?’ is likely to be perfective, however, since the *result* of the action is of particular importance (the diner will presumably get the dish he or she orders):

Я возьму (pf.) бульон ‘I will have clear soup’

Note

In colloquial Russian *negative* forms of the verb are frequently used in making requests: вы на следующей **не выходите?** (impf.) ‘Are you getting out at the next stop?’ Quite often the perfective future is used: Вы не **скажете** (pf.), сколько сейчас времени? ‘You couldn’t tell me the time, could you?’; Вы не **разрешите** (pf.) позвонить от вас? ‘Would you mind if I used your phone?’

269 Some uses of the imperfective imperative

The imperfective imperative is used to express:

(1) General injunctions:

Берегите (impf.) природу! ‘Conserve nature!’

(2) Frequentative instructions:

Всегда относй (impf.) ‘Always return your books on time’
книги в срок

(3) Instructions to continue an action:

Пишите (impf.) дальше! ‘Carry on writing!’

270 Use of the imperative in the context of a single action

(1) The **perfective** imperative is used to order the implementation of a single action:

Закройте (pf.) окно! ‘**Shut** the window!’

Note

The addition of the particle **-ка** adds a nuance of familiarity to the command: **Запиши-ка!** (pf.) ‘Do jot it down!’

(2) The negated **imperfective** imperative is used to **forbid** an action:

Не закрывайте (impf.) окно! ‘**Don’t shut** the window!’

(3) Both aspects can appear in one sentence, the imperfective forbidding and the perfective ordering an action:

Если всё же что-то загорелось, **не теряйтесь** (impf.), **постарайтесь** (pf.) сохранить хладнокровие (*Rabotnitsa*)
‘If something really has caught fire, **don’t panic**, try to retain your composure’

(4) If a perfective imperative has been ineffectual, then an imperfective may be used to impart a sense of urgency:

Запиши (pf.) мой телефон. . . . **Записывай** (impf.), пожалуйста, я очень тороплюсь!
‘**Make a note** of my telephone number. . . . **Would you mind writing it down**, please, I am in a terrible hurry!’

271 Use of the imperative to exhort and invite

(1) The imperfective imperative is also used:

(i) In exhortations:

— **Вставай** (impf.), сказала она “‘Do get up,” she said’

(ii) In expressing wishes:

Поправляйтесь! (impf.) ‘Get well soon!’

(iii) In conveying an invitation, in social or other conventional situations:

Проходите (impf.), пожалуйста!
‘Pass down the aircraft, please!’ (flight attendant to passengers)

Берите! (impf.) ‘Take one/some!’

Кладите (impf.) сахар! ‘Have some sugar!’

Раздевайтесь! (impf.) ‘Take off your hat and coat!’

Садитесь! (impf.) ‘Sit down!’

Снимайте (impf.) пальто! ‘Take off your coat!’

(2) In a more formal or professional relationship, however, the **perfective** may be preferred:

Нюра, **сними** (pf.) с больного пижаму, хладнокрѳвно сказа́ла Ве́ра Ива́новна (Aksenov)

“‘Niura, remove the patient’s pyjamas,” said Vera Ivanovna coolly’ (doctor to nurse)

«Я тебе покажу́ фанта́зию! **Сядь** (pf.) как сле́дует!» (Trifonov)

“‘I’ll give you imagination! Sit properly!’” (mother to child)

Note

- (a) The first-person plural of an imperfective or perfective verb may also be used to express wishes or appeals: **бу́дем наде́яться** (impf.), что ‘let’s hope that’, **Попробуем** (pf.) ‘Let’s have a go’. The addition of **дава́й/дава́йте** lends emphasis: **Дава́йте** бу́дем чита́ть (impf.) Пу́шкина! ‘Let’s read Pushkin!’, **Дава́й** сыгра́ем! (pf.) ‘Let’s have a game!’
- (b) The negative optative is usually expressed by an imperfective: **Не бу́дем зажига́ть** (impf.) све́та, ла́дно? — сказа́ла она́ (Kazakov) “‘Do you mind if we leave the light off?’” she said’, **Не бу́дем преувели́чивать** (impf.) ‘Let’s not exaggerate’, **Дава́йте не бу́дем спо́рить** (impf.) ‘Let’s not argue’.

272 A command arising naturally from context

The imperfective imperative is preferred when an instruction is the expected or desired norm in particular circumstances. For example, a student at an examination knows the procedure: he selects a slip of paper with a question

on it, prepares his answer and is invited to speak. The examiner's instructions are therefore expressed in the imperfective:

Берите (impf.) билет! **Отвечайте!** (impf.)
'Take a slip! Answer!'

Similarly, standard recommendations and requests from a shop assistant will be in the imperfective:

Платите (impf.) в кассу! 'Pay at the cash-desk!'

while non-predictable statements will be in the perfective:

Возьмите (pf.) эту кофточку! Она вам идёт
'Take this blouse! It suits you'

273 Negative commands/warnings

(1) A negative command usually appears in the imperfective aspect (see 270 (2)). When the imperative implies a **warning**, however, rather than a command, tempered with a nuance of apprehension that the action might occur inadvertently, then the **perfective** is preferred:

Не заболéй! (pf.)	'Mind you don't fall ill!'
Не поскользнься! (pf.)	'Mind you don't slip!'
Не пролéй (pf.) молоко!	'Mind you don't spill the milk!'
Не простудись! (pf.)	'Mind you don't catch a cold!'
Не уроните (pf.) вазу!	'Mind you don't drop the vase!'

Note

(a) These commands forbid actions which would not normally be performed deliberately, but might occur inadvertently or as the result of carelessness. It is in these circumstances that the negative perfective imperative is used, sometimes combined with **смотри(те)** 'Mind!':

Смотри, не забудь! (pf.)	'Mind you don't forget!'
Смотри, не обрежься! (pf.)	'Mind you don't cut yourself!'
Смотри, не опоздай! (pf.)	'Mind you're not late!'
Смотри, не упади! (pf.)	'Mind you don't fall!'

(b) Other perfective verbs whose negative imperatives may be used to express warnings include **испачкаться** 'to get dirty', **опрокинуть** 'to overturn, capsized', **потеряться** 'to get lost', **промахнуться** 'to miss the target', **проспать** 'to oversleep'. Compare «Умоляю, девочки, **не заразитесь** (pf.), будьте осторожнее!» (*Rabotnitsa*)

‘I implore you, girls, don’t get infected, be more careful!’ Из соседней комнаты, где шумели гости, тётя просила: “Ради Бóга, **не потеряй** ничего!” (Nabokov) ‘From the next room, where the guests were making a din, my aunt could be heard asking: “For heaven’s sake, don’t lose anything!”’

Не пропади!

‘Mind you don’t get lost!’

(2) The imperfective is used, however, when reference is to a protracted period rather than a single occurrence:

Смотри **не забывай** (impf.) нас! ‘Mind you don’t forget us!’

274 Use of the perfective imperative with repeated actions

While a repeated action is usually associated with an imperfective imperative (see **269** (2)), the perfective is used when reference is made to the number of times an action is repeated in swift succession (cf. **257** (3) (iii) (b)):

Прослушайте (pf.) плёнку **два раза/несколько раз**
‘Listen to the tape twice/several times’

275 Use of the future and the infinitive to express preperemptory commands

(1) Future perfectives may be used to express categorical commands:

Пойдёшь к маме, **возьмёшь** у неё ключи от шкафа и **принесёшь** посуду
‘You will go to mother, get the keys of the cupboard from her and bring the crockery’

(2) A strict imperative may also be rendered by use of the infinitive:

Сидеть смирно! ‘Sit quietly!’

276 Aspect in the infinitive. Introductory comments

(1) The perfective infinitive is used to denote the completion of a single action:

Мне надо **позвонить** (pf.) домой
‘I need to ring home’

(2) The imperfective infinitive denotes:

(i) A repeated action:

Их надо **кормить** (impf.) три раза в день
‘They have to be fed three times a day’

(ii) A continuous action:

Помогли ей **воспитывать** (impf.) девочку
‘They helped her to bring up the little girl’

(3) An imperfective infinitive may simply name an action, with no implication of result or completion, while the perfective stresses intention to achieve a result. Compare

Мне сегодня нужно **разбирать** (impf.) книги
‘I must **spend some time sorting out** the books today’

and

Мне сегодня нужно **разобрать** (pf.) книги
‘I must **get the books sorted out** today’

277 Use of the infinitive to denote habitual actions

(1) The imperfective infinitive combines with verbs and other forms that imply habitual processes, tendencies, preferences etc.:

Рыбка **научилась** открывать (impf.) холодильник (*Iunyi naturalist*)
‘Rybka (an otter) learned how to open the fridge’

Я **привык** вставать (impf.) рано ‘I am used to rising early’
Он **умеет** рисовать (impf.) ‘He knows how to draw’

(2) Other words that combine with an imperfective infinitive include **надоест** ‘to be bored with’, **отвыкнуть** ‘to get out of the habit of’, **предпочитать** ‘to prefer’, **привычка** ‘habit’, **разучиться** ‘to forget how to’ (Я **разучился** играть (impf.) на пианино ‘I have forgotten how to play the piano’).

(3) Though **любить** ‘to like’ almost invariably combines with the imperfective infinitive, the perfective is possible in the meaning of ‘intermittent repetition’. Compare

Он любит **отдыхать** (impf.) в саду
‘He likes to relax in the garden’

Он любит **отдохнуть** (pf.) в саду
'He likes relaxing in the garden now and then'

Note

Бояться 'to fear' is used with the perfective infinitive when it expresses apprehension that something might happen inadvertently: **Боюсь заблудиться** 'I am afraid of getting lost'. In the case of deliberate actions, use of aspect depends on context, cf: **Боюсь купаться** (impf.) в озере 'I am scared of bathing in the lake' and **Боюсь признаться** (pf.) 'I am afraid to confess'.

(4) The perfective infinitive also appears in a frequentative context when the element of frequency relates to another word in the sentence, and *not* to the infinitive. Thus, in

Я всегда рад **помочь** (pf.) тебе
'I am always glad to help you'

the meaning of frequency expressed by **всегда** 'always' is 'absorbed' by the adjective **рад** 'glad'. The construction: adverb of frequency + adjective or verb + *perfective* infinitive reflects standard practice:

Вы всегда можете (impf.) **взять** (pf.) у меня словарь
'You can always get a dictionary from me'

Иногда мне удавалось (impf.) **подставить** (pf.) ему ножку (Granin)
'Sometimes I succeeded in tripping him up'

Его неоднократно пытались (impf.) **отпугнуть** (pf.) (*Izvestiia*)
'Several times they had tried to scare it (a tiger) off'

278 Use of the imperfective infinitive after verbs of beginning, continuing and concluding

The imperfective infinitive is mandatory after:

(1) Verbs of beginning:

начинать/начать	'to begin'
приниматься/приняться	'to get down to'
стать (pf. only)	'to begin'

Они принялись **выдвигать** (impf.) ящики (Nagibin)
'They set to work pulling out the drawers'

(2) Verbs of continuing:

продолжа́ть	‘to continue’
Он продолжа́л укла́дываться (impf.)	‘He continued packing’

Note

Perfective **продо́лжить** usually takes a direct object, *not* an infinitive: **продо́лжить** провер́ку ‘to continue the check’.

(3) Verbs of concluding:

броса́ть/бро́сить	‘to give up’
конча́ть/ко́нчить	‘to finish’
перестава́ть/переста́ть	‘to cease’
прекраща́ть/прекрати́ть	‘to desist’

Ли́дия Миха́йловна перестала **приглаша́ть** (impf.) меня́ за стол (Rasputin)
‘Lidiia Mikhailovna stopped inviting me for meals’

279 Inadvisable and advisable actions

(1) The imperfective infinitive combines with adverbs, impersonal expressions and other words which imply the inadvisability or deny the necessity of an action: **бесполе́зно** ‘it’s useless’, **вре́дно** ‘it is harmful’, **доста́точно** ‘that’s enough’, **заче́м?** ‘why?’, **не на́до** ‘you should not’, **не ну́жно** ‘it is not necessary’, **не сле́дует** ‘you ought not to’, **не сто́ит** ‘there is no point in’, **не́чего** ‘there is no point’, **смешно́** ‘it is ridiculous’, **сты́дно** ‘it is disgraceful’:

Да и заче́м **меня́ть** (impf.) ку́зов? (*Sputnik*)
‘And anyway, why change the bodywork?’

Не ну́жно **вызыва́ть** (impf.) врача́
‘There is no need to call the doctor’

В ка́ждый дом **заходи́ть** (impf.) нет смы́сла (Rasputin)
‘There’s no point in calling into every house’

Нехорошо́ **обижа́ть** (impf.) стари́ка (Nagibin)
‘It’s not nice to hurt an old man’s feelings’

Note

Не до́лжен combines with the imperfective infinitive to denote inadvisability (Вы не должны́ **подава́ть** (impf.) заявле́ние ‘You shouldn’t apply’)

and with the perfective infinitive to denote supposition (Он не должен **опоздать** (pf.) ‘He is not likely to be late’) (see also **313** (1)).

(2) **Perfective** infinitives may be used to denote advisability:

Не следует ли **послать** (pf.) поздравление?
‘Don’t you think we should send our congratulations?’

Почему не **спросить?** (pf.) ‘Why not ask?’

(3) **Нельзя** combines with the imperfective infinitive in the meaning of inadmissibility and the perfective in the meaning of impossibility:

Нельзя **входить** (impf.)
‘You can’t go in’ (i.e. it is forbidden)

Нельзя **войти** (pf.)
‘You can’t get in’ (because, for example, the door is locked)

280 A request to perform/not to perform an action

(1) A **perfective** infinitive is used after a verb denoting a request or intention to perform a single completed action:

Она попросила меня **уйти** (pf.) ‘She asked me to leave’
Он обещал **помочь** (pf.) мне ‘He promised to help me’

Other verbs denoting request or intention include **решать/решить** ‘to decide’, **советовать/посоветовать** ‘to advise’, **убеждать/убедить** ‘to convince’, **уговаривать/уговорить** ‘to persuade’.

(2) An **imperfective** infinitive is used, however, if **не** appears between the verb and the infinitive:

Она решила **не уходить** (impf.)
‘She decided not to go away’

Он обещал **не приглашать** (impf.) Танию на вечер
‘He promised not to invite Tania to the party’

Note

- (a) A negated **perfective** infinitive in such contexts expresses, not a request or undertaking to abstain from certain actions, but apprehension that an undesired action might inadvertently take place: Стараясь не **сделать** (pf.) ошибок ‘I am trying not to make any mistakes’.

- (b) Verbs such as **отговáривать/отговорить** ‘to dissuade’ and **раздúмывать/раздúмать** ‘to change one’s mind’ contain a built-in negative meaning and combine with an imperfective infinitive:

Он отговорил меня **спра́шивать** (impf.)
‘He dissuaded me from asking’

Он раздúмал **éхать** (impf.)
‘He changed his mind about going’ (decided not to go)

281 Use of the infinitive after **не хочú**

- (1) Infinitives of either aspect are used after **не хочú** ‘I don’t want to’, **нет желáния** ‘I have no wish to’, **я не дúмаю** ‘I do not mean to’, the imperfective being preferred after a categorical negative:

Я и не дúмал **откáзываться** (impf.)
‘I didn’t dream of refusing’

Note

The imperfective infinitive is virtually compulsory after the impersonal reflexive **не хотётся**: Домóй **уходить** (impf.) не хóчется (Abramov) ‘We don’t feel like going home’.

- (2) The use of a *perfective* infinitive after **не хочú** etc. may denote that an action *has* taken place, but *unintentionally*:

Я не хотёл его **обидеть** (pf.)
‘I did not mean to offend him’

282 Use of the infinitive with **пора́**

- (1) In the meaning ‘it is time to’, **пора́** combines with the **imperfective** infinitive:

Пора́ **начинáть** (impf.) ‘It is time to begin’

- (2) In the meaning ‘it is necessary to’ it combines with the **perfective** infinitive:

Но ведь пора́ **поня́ть** (pf.), что чúда не бúдет (*Nedelia*)
‘It is high time we realized that there isn’t going to be any miracle’

283 Use of infinitives after verbs of motion

(1) The imperfective infinitive is used after verbs of motion to describe actions involving processes:

Сóня пошла **ста́вить** (impf.) чайник (Greкова)
‘Sonia went to put on the kettle’

Она́ ведёт ребёнка в поликлинику **проверя́ть** (impf.) зрѐние
‘She is taking the child to the polyclinic to have his eyes tested’

(2) If, however, result is emphasized rather than process, then the perfective is preferred:

Пошёл **почини́ть** (pf.) часы́
‘He has gone to get the clock mended’

Reflexive Verbs

284 Reflexive verbs: conjugation

In conjugating a reflexive verb, the ending **-ся** is affixed to verb forms ending in a consonant or the semi-consonant **-й**, and to all active participles; **-сь** is affixed to forms ending in a vowel. The reflexive verb is thus conjugated as follows:

МЫ́ТЬСЯ ‘to wash’	ВЕРНУ́ТЬСЯ ‘to return’
я мо́юсь	верну́сь
ты мо́ешься	вернёшься
он мо́ется	вернётся
мы мо́емся	вернёмся
вы мо́етесь	вернётесь
они́ мо́ются	вернут́ся

Past tense

мы́лся, мы́лась	верну́лся, верну́лась
мы́лось, мы́лись	верну́лось, верну́лись

Imperative

мо́йся, мо́йтесь	верни́сь, верни́тесь
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For active participles, see **340** (2) and **342** (2).

285 The ‘true’ reflexive

(1) The number of ‘true’ reflexives, in which the agent ‘turns the action back’ upon himself or herself, is relatively small. The category contains a number of verbs which relate to personal grooming:

бриться/по-	‘to shave’ (oneself)
готовиться/при-	‘to get ready, prepare oneself’
гримироваться/за-	‘to put on make-up’
завиваться/завиться	‘to have one’s hair waved’
краситься/вы-, по-	‘to dye one’s hair’
краситься/на-	‘to make up one’s face’
купаться/вы-, ис-	‘to bathe’ (oneself)
мываться/по-, вы-	‘to wash’ (oneself)
обуваться/обуться	‘to put on one’s shoes’
одеваться/одеться	‘to dress oneself’
переодеваться/переодеться	‘to change’ (one’s clothes)
причёсываться/причесаться	‘to do one’s hair, have one’s hair done’
пудриться/на-, по-	‘to powder one’s face’
раздеваться/раздеться	‘to get undressed’
разуваться/разуться	‘to take off one’s shoes’
умываться/умыться	‘to wash one’s hands and face’

(2) Other ‘true’ reflexives include the following:

(i) **Бросаться/броситься** ‘to rush’, **защищаться/защититься** ‘to defend oneself’, **подниматься/подняться** ‘to ascend’, **приклоняться/приклониться** ‘to lean’, **спускаться/спуститься** ‘to descend’.

(ii) A number of verbs which are reflexive only in the **imperfective**:

ложиться/лечь	‘to lie down’
пересаживаться/пересесть	‘to change places, trains etc.’
садиться/сесть	‘to sit down’
становиться/стать	‘to (go and) stand’

Note

Усаживаться/усесться ‘to settle down’ is reflexive in both aspects.

286 Semi-reflexive verbs

Semi-reflexive verbs describe an action which the agent performs **for** rather than to himself or herself: **запасаться/запасться** ‘to stock up with’, **укладываться/уложиться** ‘to pack’ etc.

287 Intransitive reflexives

A reflexive ending may transform a transitive into an intransitive verb. Compare transitive **возвращать**

Он возвращает книгу в библиотеку	‘He returns the book to the library’
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with intransitive **возвращаться** in

Он возвращается домой	‘He returns home’
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Other examples include:

Земля вращается	‘The Earth rotates’
Колесо вёртится	‘The wheel spins’
Война кончается/кóнчилась	‘The war ends/ended’
Стул ломается/сломáлся	‘The chair breaks/broke’
Дом находится на берегу	‘The house is situated on the shore’
Фильм начинается/начался	‘The film begins/began’
Урок продолжается	‘The lesson continues’
Болезнь распространяется/распространилась	‘The disease is spreading/spread’
Положение улучшается/улучшилось	‘The situation improves/improved’

Note

- (a) All the verbs in the above list can be used transitively without the reflexive endings: Учитель **вращает** глобус ‘The teacher rotates the globe’ etc.
- (b) While English uses many verbs both transitively *and* intransitively (‘She *grows* tulips’/‘Tulips *grow*’; ‘She *stops* the bus’/‘The bus *stops*’), Russian always distinguishes transitive from intransitive, either by using different verbs (Она **выращивает** тюльпаны/Тюльпаны **растут**) or by affixing a reflexive ending to convert a transitive into an intransitive verb (Она **останавливает** автобус/Автобус **останавливается**).

288 Reflexive verbs with passive meaning

(1) Reflexive suffixes impart **passive** meaning to many imperfective transitive verbs. There is usually a third-person subject:

Как это **делается**? ‘How is that done?’

Симфония **исполняется** (оркестром)
‘The symphony is performed (by an orchestra)’

(2) The possibility of indicating the **agent** of an action (usually in the form of an instrumental) distinguishes the passive from the intransitive construction. Compare:

Passive:

Книги **возвращаются** в библиотеку **учениками**
‘The books **are returned** to the library **by the pupils**’

Intransitive:

Он*и* **возвращаются** домой ‘They return home’

Likewise, Колёса движутся **водой** ‘The wheels are moved by water power’ (passive), Толпа движется по улице ‘The crowd moves down the street’ (intrans.).

Note

In general, only **imperfective** verbs function as reflexive passives: Проект **обсуждался** министрами ‘The project was being discussed by the ministers’, Как **пишется** это слово? ‘How is this word spelt?’ The **perfective** passive is normally rendered by a participle (see 359 (3)).

289 Reciprocal meanings

(1) A small number of reflexives denote reciprocal or joint action:

Он*и* часто **встречаются** ‘They often meet’
Мы **собираемся** ‘We gather’
Скоро **увидимся** ‘We shall see each other soon’

(2) Others include:

делится/по- ‘to share’
здороваться/по- ‘to say hello’

мири́ться/по-, при-	‘to make it up’
обнима́ться/обня́ться	‘to embrace’
объединя́ться/объедини́ться	‘to amalgamate’
проща́ться/прости́ться	‘to say goodbye’
совета́ться/по-	‘to take advice’
 совеща́ться (impf. only)	‘to consult’
сраба́таться (pf. only)	‘to achieve a working relationship’
услáвливаться/услóвиться	‘to agree’
целова́ться/по-	‘to kiss’

(3) **С** + instrumental may combine with such verbs:

Дели́ться с **ке́м-нибу́дь** кусо́м хлéба
‘To share a crust of bread with someone’

Совеща́ться со **специали́стами** ‘To consult experts’

in which case the **subject** of the verb may be singular

Я здоро́ваюсь/проща́юсь с **ним** ‘I say hello/goodbye to him’

or plural

Мы сраба́тались с **ни́ми**
‘We developed a good working relationship with them’

In the absence of **с** + instrumental, however, the subject is always plural:

Друзья́ обня́лись ‘The friends embraced’
Враги́ помири́лись ‘The enemies made it up’

(4) Some reciprocal reflexives denote conflict and dispute:

Он со **все́ми** **брани́тся** ‘He quarrels with everyone’

Other verbs include: **би́ться** ‘to fight’, **боро́ться/по-** ‘to struggle’,
руга́ться/по- ‘to abuse one another’, **ссора́ться/по-** ‘to quarrel’.

(5) Reflexive verbs of motion with the prefixes **раз-** and **с-** (**разбегáться/разбежа́ться** ‘to disperse’, **слета́ться/слетéться** ‘to congregate’ (of birds) etc.) also express joint action (see 331).

Note

See 143 (3) (constructions with **дру́г дру́га** ‘each other’).

290 Reflexive verbs which express feelings and attitudes

A number of reflexive verbs express or reflect feelings and attitudes. They may be subdivided into:

(1) Those which appear only as reflexives: **бояться** + gen. ‘to fear’, **гордиться** + instr. ‘to be proud of’, **любоваться/по-** + instr./на + acc. ‘to admire’, **надёяться на** + acc. ‘to hope for, rely on’, **наслаждаться** + instr. ‘to revel in’, **нравиться/по-** + dat. ‘to please’, **опасаться** + gen. ‘to fear’, **расплакаться** (pf. only) ‘to burst into tears’, **рассмеяться** (pf. only) ‘to burst out laughing’, **смеяться/за-** + dat./над + instr. ‘to laugh’, **сомневаться/усомниться в** + prep. ‘to doubt’, **улыбаться/улыбнуться** ‘to smile’.

(2) Those which, shorn of their reflexive endings, can be used as transitive verbs in their own right: **беспокоиться/по-** ‘to worry’, **веселиться/по-** ‘to enjoy oneself’, **волноваться/вз-** ‘to get excited’, **восхищаться/восхититься** + instr. ‘to be delighted’, **печалиться/о-** ‘to grieve’, **признаваться/признаться в** + prep. ‘to confess to’, **пугаться/ис-** + gen. ‘to be frightened’, **радоваться/об-** + dat. ‘to rejoice’, **расстраиваться/расстроиться** ‘to get distraught, upset’, **сердиться/рас-** на + acc. ‘to get angry’, **удивляться/удивиться** + dat. ‘to be surprised’. Compare

Это меня беспокоит ‘That concerns me’

and

Я беспокоюсь ‘I am worried’

291 Intense or purposeful action

The following reflexive verbs denote intense or purposeful action: **добиваться/добиться** + gen. ‘to achieve’, **приниматься/приняться за** + acc. ‘to tackle’, **проситься/по-** ‘to apply’, **пытаться/по-** ‘to attempt’, **стараться/по-** ‘to try’, **стремиться** (impf. only) ‘to strive’, **стучаться/по-** ‘to knock’ (hoping to be admitted), **трудиться/по-** ‘to labour’.

292 Reflexive verbs that emphasize thoroughness

(1) A number of reflexive verbs, mostly prefixed **вы-**, **до-** or **на-**, emphasize thorough completion of an action: **высыпаться/выспаться** ‘to have a good sleep’, **доучиваться/доучиться** ‘to complete one’s

studies', **наедаться/наесться** 'to eat one's fill', **напиваться/напиться** 'to slake one's thirst/get drunk', **насмотрётся** (pf. only) 'to look one's fill' etc.

(2) Reflexive verbs in **за-** denote absorption in an activity: **задумываться/задуматься** 'to be lost in thought', **засматриваться/засмотреться** 'to be absorbed in looking at something' etc.

293 Reflexive verbs that denote potential to perform an action

Some reflexives denote that the subject has the potential to perform some, usually harmful, action:

Корóвы бодáются	'Cows butt'
Крапíва жжётся	'Nettles sting'
Собáки кусаются	'Dogs bite'
Кóшки царапаются	'Cats scratch'

Impersonal Constructions

294 Use of impersonal constructions to denote natural processes

(1) The third-person singulars of some verbs denote climatic or other natural processes:

Вечерéет	'Evening is drawing in'
Морóзит	'Frost is in the air'
Светáет	'Dawn is breaking'
Сквозíт	'There is a draught'
Смеркáется рáно	'It gets dark early'
Темнéет	'It is getting dark'

(2) In the past tense, the neuter is used:

Вечерéло	'Evening was drawing in'
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295 Impersonal constructions with an animate accusative or dative

Impersonal verbs may denote physical state, inclination or urge, the person affected appearing:

(1) In the accusative case:

Петра́ зно́бит	‘Petr feels shivery’
Меня́ ко сну кло́нит	‘I feel drowsy’
Ната́шу лихо́радит	‘Natasha feels feverish’
Бо́льно́го рвёт	‘The patient vomits’ (Его́ вы́рвало ‘He threw up’)
Ма́шу тошнит	‘Masha feels sick’ (Ма́шу стошни́ло ‘Masha vomited’)
Нас тяну́ло друг к другу (Gagarin)	‘We felt drawn to each other’

Меня́ **зуди́ло** посмотре́ть, как они́ отнесу́тся к моему́ появле́нию (Rasputin)

‘I was itching to see how they would react to my appearance’

(2) In the dative case (with a reflexive verb):

Мне нездорови́тся	‘I am feeling off colour’
Ей не рабо́тается	‘She doesn’t feel like working’
Ему́ не спи́тся	‘He doesn’t feel sleepy’
Мне хо́чется пить	‘I feel thirsty’

Пробова́л чита́ть, **не чита́лось**, лёг на кровáть, кури́л (Trifonov) ‘He tried to read but **wasn’t in the mood for reading**, lay down on the bed, smoked’

296 Impersonal constructions involving an external force

(1) In some impersonal constructions the object of a verb (usually in the neuter past tense) appears in the **accusative** and its inanimate agent, often a natural phenomenon or external force, in the **instrumental**:

Да́чу зажгло́ мо́лнией	‘The country cottage was struck by lightning’
Подва́л за́лило водо́й	‘The cellar was flooded’
Избу́ занесло́ сне́гом	‘The hut was snow-bound’
Его́ уби́ло элеќтричеством	‘He was electrocuted’

Труп **унесло реко́й** ‘The body was carried away by the river’

Засы́пало песко́м сква́жины (Trifonov)
‘The bore-holes got clogged with sand’

Note

- (a) The agent of the action is not always indicated: **Вчера́ на стро́йке задави́ло** человека́ ‘A man was run over at the building-site yesterday’, Лодку **кача́ло** ‘The boat was pitching and tossing’, За борт **смы́ло** судово́го по́вара (Gagarin) ‘The ship’s cook was washed overboard’.
- (b) An alternative construction is also possible, with the natural or other phenomenon in the nominative, as the subject of the action: **Его́ уби́ла мо́лния** ‘He was struck by lightning’.

(2) The incidents in this type of construction are **accidental**. Compare:

- (i) Use of the third-person **plural** for **intentional** occurrences:

Его́ **уби́ли** в рукопа́шном бою́
‘He was killed in hand-to-hand fighting’

- (ii) Use of the third-person neuter **singular** for **accidental** occurrences:

Его́ **уби́ло** в перестрёлке ‘He was killed in a skirmish’

297 Expression of other meanings (chance, sufficiency etc.)

Some impersonal constructions are concerned with chance, success, sufficiency/insufficiency, the person affected appearing in the **dative**:

- (1) The verb denotes chance, luck, success:

Мне везёт в ка́рты	‘I am lucky at cards’
Мне повезло́	‘I am in luck, have been lucky’
Ученику́ удалось решить зада́чу	‘The pupil succeeded in solving the problem’
Отцу́ довелось побыва́ть на собра́нии	‘My father had occasion to attend a meeting’

Note also **Вышло́** иначе́ ‘It turned out differently’, where no personal involvement is expressed, and **Что случи́лось/произошло́?** ‘What has happened?’, where the person affected may appear in a prepositional

phrase: Что случилось **с ним**? ‘What has happened to him?’ (cf. У вас что-то **с телефоном** ‘Something’s wrong with your telephone’).

(2) The verb denotes sufficiency/insufficiency, the quantifiable item appearing in the **genitive** case:

Брату недостаёт опыта	‘My brother lacks experience’
Ему всегда не хватает денег	‘He is always short of money’
Хватит бензину	‘There will be enough petrol’

Note

Этого нам ещё не хватало!	‘That’s all we need!’
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298 Constructions with the second-person singular

(1) Impersonal meanings can be expressed using the second-person singular of a verb (the equivalent of English ‘one’ or ‘you’):

Ко всему **привыкаешь**
‘You/one can get used to anything’

Там не **увидишь** наших фильмов, не **прочтёшь** наших книг (*Russia Today*)

‘You won’t see our films or read our books there’ (in the West)

(2) The second-person singular pronoun may be added for emphasis:

И только при условии, если **ты** будешь курить и пить — **ты** будешь пользоваться успехом. Если же **ты** не накрашена и не радуешься плоским шуточкам, мимо **тебя** проходят, как мимо пустого места (*Russia Today*)

‘And you’ll only get anywhere if you smoke and drink. But if you don’t wear make-up or laugh at their pathetic jokes, they’ll cut you dead’

299 Constructions with the third-person plural

(1) The third-person plural is used (*without a pronoun*) to denote action taken by ‘the authorities’ or other third parties:

Говорят , что . . .	‘They say that . . .’
Меня задержали	‘I was arrested’

Его наградили	‘He was decorated’
Пробсят не курить	‘You are requested not to smoke’

Note

Как тебя **зовут**? ‘What is your name?’

(2) Use of the plural may be purely conventional, as in the following examples, in which the subject of the action could be interpreted as singular:

Тебя **ждут**
‘Someone is/Some people are waiting for you’

Вас **пробсят** к телефону
‘You are wanted on the phone’

Тебя **спрашивают**
‘Someone’s asking for you’

Note

The following example draws a clear distinction between the second-person singular, which identifies with the **individual**, and the third-person plural, which identifies with **authority**:

Самое ужасное во всех школах, так это то, что **сидишь** и **трясёшься**, что **тебя пробсят**, и **поставят**, например, тройку или двойку (*Russia Today*)

‘The worst thing in any school is sitting there trembling at the prospect of being asked a question and getting a bare pass or a fail’

The Passive Voice

300 The passive voice. Introductory comments

(1) In a passive construction, the *natural object* of an action becomes the *grammatical subject*. Compare English:

(i) ‘They hate *him*’ (active construction, with ‘*him*’ the natural object of the verb).

(ii) ‘*He* is hated by them’ (passive construction in which ‘*he*’ has become the grammatical subject while remaining the natural object).

(2) Russian expresses passive meaning through reflexive verbs, the third-person plural, participles (see **359** and **360** (2)) and word order (see **478** (2) (i)).

301 The passive expressed by imperfective reflexive verbs

(1) The passive may be expressed by an imperfective reflexive verb:

Здесь **ловились** (impf.) селёдка и редкая рыба — кутум (Lebedev)
 ‘Herring and a rare species, the kutum, **were fished for** here’

(2) The agent of the action may be represented by an **instrumental**:

Смета составляется **бухгалтером**
 ‘The estimate is being prepared **by an accountant**’

or omitted:

По радио **передавалась** новая пьеса
 ‘A new play **was being broadcast** on the radio’

Обувь снималась у входа в храм (Granin)
 ‘**Footwear** was removed at the entrance to the temple’

Note

A reflexive verb with an animate subject is often either a ‘true’ reflexive (Он **моется** ‘He is having a wash’ (not *‘He is being washed’, which should be rendered as Его моют)) or denotes joint action (Пассажиры **собираются** ‘The passengers congregate’). However, reflexive passives with animate subjects appear in examples such as Герои **награждаются** государством ‘Heroes **are rewarded** by the state’.

302 Passive meaning expressed by third-person plural verbs

The use of a third-person plural instead of a reflexive passive emphasizes the involvement of a human agent. Compare use of the reflexive in

Магазин **открывается** ‘The shop opens’

with the third-person plural, with its emphasis on human agency:

И вдруг он слышит, что **дверь открывают**. Но это ещё не парень, это проводница (Rasputin)
 ‘And suddenly he hears the door **being opened**. But it’s not the boy back yet, it’s the guard’

303 Perfective reflexives with passive meaning

Perfective passives are normally expressed by a participle (see 359 and 360 (2) (ii)). However, passives may also be expressed by perfective reflexives that denote:

(1) Covering:

Вершіны **покрылись** снѣгом
‘The peaks became covered in snow’

Note

This sentence describes an *action*. Compare the use of a participle to describe a *state*: Вершіны **покрыты** снѣгом ‘The peaks **are covered** in snow’.

(2) Filling:

Таз **наполнился** водо́й
‘The basin filled with water’

(3) Illuminating:

Поля **осветились** по́здним со́лнцем
‘The fields were illuminated by the late sun’

(4) Others, for example ‘replacing’, ‘creating’, ‘breaking’:

Её прѣжняя радостъ **сменилась** чувством крайнего раздражѣнія
‘Her former joy yielded to a feeling of extreme irritation’

Создалось слѣжное положѣние
‘A complex situation developed’

Разбился стул ‘A chair got smashed’

Note

Animate instrumentals are excluded from such constructions. They are possible only with a passive participle (see 359), cf.:

Кружок **создался/был создан**
‘The club was set up’

Кружок **был создан** (but not *создался) **учениками**
‘The club was set up by the **pupils**’

The Conditional and Subjunctive Moods

304 The conditional mood. Introductory comments

(1) If we compare the sentences

- (i) ‘If he *wakes* his wife she *will be* angry’
- (ii) ‘If he *woke* his wife she *would be* angry’

then it is clear that the situation described in (i) *may* occur, while the situation described in (ii) is *hypothetical*. The implication of statements of type (ii) is that the opposite situation obtains, e.g.

‘If I *knew* (the implication is that I do *not* know), I *would tell* you’

(2) In the above examples, (i) is rendered in Russian by a verb in the future:

Если он **разбуди́т** же́ну, она́ рассе́рдится

while the two examples under (ii) are rendered by the **conditional mood**:

Если́ **бы** он **разбуди́л** же́ну, она́ **рассерди́лась бы**
 Если́ **бы** я **знал**, я **сказа́л бы** вам

305 Formation of the conditional

A conditional construction comprises:

- (i) A conditional clause (если́ **бы** + past tense of the verb).
- (ii) A main clause (past tense of the verb + **бы**):

Если́ **бы** оте́ц **был** жив, он **пора́довался бы** успе́хам сы́на
 ‘If father **were** alive he **would rejoice** at his son’s success’

Note

- (a) Alternatively, the main clause may precede the conditional:

Я **пошёл бы**, **если́ бы** меня́ **пригласи́ли**
 ‘I **would go** if they **invited** me’

- (b) Conditionals can also have **pluperfect** meanings. Thus, the sentence under (a) could also be rendered as ‘I **would have gone** if they **had invited** me’.

- (c) In the main clause, **бы** may precede the verb:

Я бы помог вам, если бы вы меня попросили
'**I would help** you if you asked me' (or '**I would have helped** you if you had asked me')

- (d) The conjunction **то** 'then' may introduce a main clause that follows the conditional clause:

Если бы она родилась в наше время, **то** стала бы артисткой, или диктором, или стюардессой (*Russia Today*)
'**If** she had been born in our time **then** she would have become a performer, or an announcer, or an air hostess'

- (e) Sometimes the **если** clause is omitted. The implication of such statements is 'this is what I would do if I had my way', as in the following example:

Я бы запретил школьникам появляться в общественных местах в какой-либо иной одежде, кроме школьной формы (*Rabotnitsa*)
'**I would ban** schoolchildren from appearing in public places other than in school uniform'

- (f) The conditional is used with either aspect, but is commoner with the perfective.

306 Use of (1) the imperative and (2) the preposition без to express conditional meanings

- (1) The **singular imperative** may be used colloquially with conditional meaning:

Доведись мне (= если бы мне довелось) встретиться с ним раньше, всё **было бы** иначе
'**If I had chanced** to meet him earlier everything would have been different'

Note

The singular imperative can also replace **если** + future tense:

Разгорись (= Если разгорится) атомный пожар — и окажутся бессмысленными усилия людей доброй воли (Lebedev)
'**If** an atomic holocaust **breaks out**, the efforts of people of goodwill will be pointless'

- (2) A prepositional phrase with **без** 'without' may also have conditional meaning:

Без Любы (= **Если бы не Люба**), я бы не получил высшего образования (Рубаков)

'**Had it not been for Liuba** I would not have received a higher education'

307 Use of the particle **бы** to express desire

(1) The past tense + **бы** can be used to express desire on the part of the subject:

Завтра я с удовольствием **пошёл бы** в театр
'**I would** very much **like to go** to the theatre tomorrow'

(2) The phrase **хотёл бы** 'I would like to' is commonly used in this meaning:

Я **хотёл бы** пойти в кино 'I **would like** to go to the cinema'

Note

- (a) Note the expression of desire in constructions of the type **Скорей бы пришло лето!** 'Roll on summer!', **Поехать бы домой!** 'Oh, to go home!'
- (b) Past tense + **бы** is also used to express a mild injunction: **Помогли бы ей** 'You might give her a hand'. This is much less peremptory than the imperative: **Помогите ей!** 'Help her!'

308 Use of the subjunctive to express wish or desire

(1) In translating the sentences

- (i) 'I want to vote'
(ii) 'I want you to vote'

the infinitive in (i), in which the subject is the **same** for both verbs, is rendered by a Russian **infinitive**:

Я хочу **голосовать**

while the infinitive in (ii), in which the subjects of the two verbs are **different**:

I want
you to vote

is rendered in Russian by a **subjunctive** (**чтобы** + past tense):

Я хочу́, чтобы́ вы голосова́ли

Мы хоти́м, **чтобы́** в ми́ре не **было́** я́дерного ору́жия (B. Yeltsin)
‘We want the world to be without nuclear weapons’

Compare:

Он не **хочет**, **чтобы́ я танцева́л** с Тама́рой (Nikolaev)
‘He **does not want me to dance** with Tamara’

Note

Чтобы́ is *never* used with the present or future tense, only with the *past*.

(2) Other words denoting desirability or undesirability may also appear in the main clause: **ва́жно** ‘it is important’, **жела́тельно** ‘it is desirable’, **за то** ‘in favour of’, **лу́чше** ‘it is better’, **наста́ивать/насто́ять** ‘to insist’, **прòтив тогò** ‘against’, **тре́бовать/по-** ‘to demand’:

Гла́вное, чтобы́ спорт служи́л де́лу ми́ра (Kuleshov)
‘**The main thing** is that sport should serve the cause of peace’

Я не **прòтив тогò, чтобы́** он брал на себя́ часть хлопòт на кúхне
(*Russia Today*)
‘**I do not object to his taking on** some of the kitchen chores’

Никтò не **тре́бует**, **чтобы́** де́вушка сидела́ одна́ взаперти́ (*Rabotnitsa*)
‘No one **demands** that a girl should remain locked up in seclusion’

Note

- (a) Desirability may also be implied by constructions with **сказа́ть** ‘to tell’ (Мне мой приё́мный о́тец **сказа́л, что́б я запо́мнил** ме́сто, где ру́кописи зако́паны (*Izvestiia*) ‘My foster father **told me to remember** where the manuscripts are buried’, **Скажи́те** ва́шему Ви́тьке, **чтобы́ он за мной не ходи́л** (Rasputin) ‘**Tell your Vit’ka to stop following me around**’) and **предупреди́ть** ‘to warn’ (Я **предупреди́л** его́, **чтобы́ он не уходи́л** ‘I warned him **not to go away**’).
- (b) The idiomatic use of **чтобы́** + past tense to issue a warning: **Чтобы́** я э́того бо́льше **не слы́шал!** ‘Don’t ever let me hear you say that again!’
- (c) In colloquial contexts, **хотéть** may combine with a future verb: Хотите, я вам **скажу́** ‘Would you like me to tell you?’.

309 The subjunctive of purposeful endeavour

(1) If we compare

(i) **Я хочу́, чтобы́ он пришёл**

‘I want him to come’

(ii) **Я добива́юсь того́, чтобы́ он пришёл**

‘I am trying to get him to come’

then the wish that he should come, expressed in (i) by the verb **хочу́**, finds its counterpart in (ii) in purposeful endeavour (**добива́юсь**) to achieve the desired aim.

(2) Other words involved in this type of construction include **де́лать всё, чтобы́** ‘to do everything to ensure that’, **забо́титься о том, чтобы́** ‘to take care that’, **сле́дить за тем, чтобы́** ‘to see to it that’, **смотре́ть, чтобы́** ‘to mind that’, **стреми́ться к тому́, чтобы́** ‘to strive’:

Забо́титься о то́м, чтобы́ вы не проспáли, бу́дет ЭВМ телефо́нной ста́нции (*Izvestiia*)

‘The computer at the telephone exchange **will see to it that** you do not sleep in’

Смотри́, чтоб́ Куту́зов тебя́ не пойма́л (Iakhontov)

‘**Mind** Kutuzov doesn’t catch you’

Note

Добива́ться/добы́ться is used with the *subjunctive* to denote intent to achieve a purpose (Мы **добива́емся того́, чтобы́** она́ согласи́лась ‘We are trying to get her to agree’) and with the *indicative* to denote achievement (В конце́ концо́в председа́тель **добы́лся того́, что** она́ согласи́лась (Rasputin) ‘The chairman eventually got her to agree’).

310 Purpose clauses

A purpose clause describes an action which is taken with the aim of achieving a desired result. The result clause is introduced:

(1) By **чтобы́ + infinitive** if both clauses have the **same** subject:

Он встал, **чтобы́ откры́ть окно́**

‘He got up **in order to open the window**’

Я позвоню брату, **чтобы** напомнить ему о вечере
'I shall ring my brother **in order to remind him of the party**'

(2) By **чтобы** + the **past tense** (the **subjunctive of purpose**) if the two clauses have **different** subjects:

Он встал, **чтобы** она могла сесть
'He got up **so that she could sit down**'

Я позвоню брату, **чтобы** он знал, что я приехал
'I shall ring my brother, **so that he knows** I have arrived'

Человек снял лыжи, **чтобы** они не мешали ему ползти (Nagibin)
'The man removed his skis, **so that they should not prevent him** from crawling'

311 The expression of hypothesis

(1) If we compare the sentences

- (i) I have not met *the man who swam the Channel*
- (ii) I have never met *a man who has not heard of Leo Tolstoi*

then it is clear that (i) refers to *an actual person* (the man who swam the Channel), while (ii) is dealing with *a hypothetical situation* (an imaginary person who has not heard of Leo Tolstoi).

(i) is expressed in Russian using the **indicative**:

Я не встречал человека, **который** переплыл Ла-Манш
'I have not met the man who swam the Channel'

(ii) is expressed using the **subjunctive of hypothesis** (past tense + **бы**):

Я не встречал человека, **который бы** не слышал о Толстом
'I have never met a man who has not heard of Tolstoi'

Compare:

Нет отрасли промышленности, для которой освоение космического пространства **не оказалось бы** полезным (*Izvestiia*)
'There is no industry which **has not benefited** from the conquest of space'

(2) A similar distinction is made in constructions with **случай** between:

(i) Incidents which *did* occur, where the indicative is used:

Скóлько у нас бýло слýчаев, когдá снимáли с машин стёкла
(*Literaturnaia gazeta*)

'There have been umpteen **cases of car windscreens being removed**'

(ii) Incidents which did *not* occur, where the subjunctive is used:

Нé было слýчая, чтóбы он заблудýлся (Kazakov)

'There was not a single instance **of his getting lost**'

(3) The same principle applies to constructions with verbs of perception and statement: **видеть** 'to see', **замётить** 'to notice', **пóмнить** 'to remember', **сказáть** 'to say', **слýшать** 'to hear' etc.

(i) The indicative is used to refer to an actual occurrence:

Вижу, как онý играю́т в футбо́л

'I see **them playing** football'

(ii) The subjunctive indicates that the subject did not witness or recall the incident and may doubt whether it in fact occurred:

Не пóмню, чтóбы она́ хоть раз **взяла́** ко́рку хлéба (Rasputin)

'I do not recall **her** even once **taking** a crust of bread'

Я не замени́л, чтóбы он упáл в óбморок

'I did not notice **him fainting**'

Use of the indicative here would constitute an acknowledgement that the incident occurred — but that the subject did not witness it:

Я не замети́л, что он упáл в óбморок

'I did not notice **that he had fainted**'

Note

(a) Hypotheses may also be introduced by the phrase **не то, чтóбы**:

И он **не то чтóбы был** недово́лен жízнью, счита́л себя́ неудáчником
(Tendriakov)

'**It is not that he was** dissatisfied with life, he just considered himself unlucky'

or by negated verbs which imply an unreal situation:

Дня́ ведь не проходýло, чтóбы она́ не похва́лила невестку́ (Zalygin)

'Never a day passed **without her praising** her daughter-in-law'

(b) **Боя́ться** 'to fear' combines either with the indicative (Боя́сь, **что он прова́лится** 'I am afraid he will fail', Боя́сь, **что он не**

придёт ‘I am afraid he won’t come’) or a subjunctive (note ‘illogical’ negative): **Боюсь, чтобы он не провалился** ‘I am afraid he may fail’.

312 Concessive constructions

(1) The particle **бы** also appears in concessive constructions (English ‘whoever’, ‘whatever’ etc.):

кто/что/как/где/куда/какой/сколько + бы + ни + past tense

Чего бы это мне ни стоило, на какие бы жертвы ни пришлось пойти — а своего добьюсь (*Rabotnitsa*)

‘**Whatever it costs, whatever sacrifices I may be called upon to make,** I shall achieve my goal’

Я видел, что черепахам плохо в неволе, **как бы я ни старался** хорошо за ними ухаживать (*Iunyi naturalist*)

‘I saw that the tortoises were ill at ease in captivity, **however much I might try** to look after them properly’

(2) **Бы** may be omitted, in reference to an actual incident:

Сколько Носов ни тряс приёмник, голос диктора не зазвучал вновь (Povoliaev)

‘**However much** Nosov **shook** the receiver, the announcer’s voice remained silent’

Как я ни боролся за её здоровье, всё напрасно (*Iunyi naturalist*)

‘**No matter how much I fought** to restore her to health, it was all in vain’

(3) The future may be used to denote that all instances are covered:

Какую газету ни откроешь — всюду разговор о женщине (*Russia Today*)

‘**Whichever paper you open,** the talk is only of women’

Note the set phrases:

во что бы то ни стало

‘at any cost’

как бы то ни было

‘however that might be’

как это ни парадоксально

‘paradoxical as it may seem’

как это ни странно

‘strange as it may seem’

Лыжник **во что бы то ни стало** хотёл продолжать свой мучительный путь (Nagibin)
 ‘The skier was determined to continue his agonizing journey **come what may**’

Constructions Expressing Obligation, Necessity, Possibility or Potential

313 The expression of obligation and necessity

Obligation and necessity can be expressed in the following ways:

(1) Дóлжен + infinitive

(i) Дóлжен, должнá, должнó, должны́ have the endings of short-form adjectives and agree with the subject in gender and number:

я, ты, он дóлжен	‘I, you, he must’ (masculine subject)
я, ты, она́ должнá	‘I, you, she must’ (feminine subject)
оно́ должнó	‘it must’
мы, вы, они́ должны́	‘we, you, they must’

(ii) They also combine with past and future forms of **быть**:

я, ты, он дóлжен был	‘I, you, he had to’ (masculine subject)
я, ты, она́ должнá была́	‘I, you, she had to’ (feminine subject)
оно́ должнó было́	‘it had to’
мы, вы, они́ должны́ были́	‘we, you, they had to’
я дóлжен/должна́ бóду	‘I shall have to’
ты дóлжен/должна́ бóдешь	‘you will have to’
он дóлжен бóдет	‘he will have to’
она́ должнá бóдет	‘she will have to’
оно́ должнó бóдет	‘it will have to’
мы должны́ бóдем	‘we shall have to’
вы должны́ бóдете	‘you will have to’
они́ должны́ бóдут	‘they will have to’

(iii) Дóлжен expresses moral necessity:

Каждый человек дóлжен трудиться	‘Every person must work’
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(iv) It is also used to express other modal concepts, the equivalents of 'should', 'ought to', 'is supposed to', 'is due to' etc.:

Цены **должны** быть гибкими (*Literaturnaia gazeta*)
'Prices **should** be flexible'

В различных странах мира хранятся великолёпные памятники культуры, и мы **должны** знать о них (*Nedelia*)
'Splendid monuments to culture are preserved in various countries of the world, and we **ought to** know about them'

Пытаюсь бутылки из-под минеральной воды сдать, а пункт хоть и **должен** работать, но не работает (*Nedelia*)
'I try to hand in some empty mineral-water bottles, but the collection point is not working, though it **is supposed to** be'

Поезд **должен** прийти в час дня
'The train is **due** in at 1 p.m.'

Note

(a) Past and future usage:

Сейчас Мансуров **должен был** подойти к ней, обнять её (*Zalygin*)
'Now Mansurov **should have** come up to her and embraced her'

Она **должна будет** помочь матери
'She **will have to** help her mother'

(b) The use of **должно быть**, in parenthesis, to denote supposition: Она, **должно быть**, заболела 'She must have fallen ill'; Он, **должно быть**, не понял 'He can't have understood'.

(2) Нужно, надо

(i) **Нужно, надо** refer to necessity:

Ему **нужно/надо было** преждевременно уйти на пенсию по слабости здоровья
'He **had to** retire early due to ill health'

(ii) They can also express the meaning 'ought to':

Больному **надо было** сделать переливание крови
'The patient **ought to have** had a blood transfusion'

(iii) Compare **не нужно** 'it is not necessary' and **не надо** 'one should not':

Не ну́жно запира́ть дверь
‘It is **not necessary** to lock the door’

Не на́до запира́ть дверь
‘You **should not** lock the door’

(3) Сто́ит, сле́дует, прийт́ись, вы́нужден, обяза́н

(i) **Сто́ит** refers to recommended action:

Сто́ит посмотре́ть э́тот фильм ‘It is worth seeing this film’

(ii) **Сле́дует** is more categorical:

Не сле́дует так поступа́ть ‘One shouldn’t behave like that’

(iii) **Прийт́ись** implies reluctant acceptance of necessity:

Ему́ **пришлось** бежа́ть ‘He had to run all the way’
всю доро́гу

(iv) **Вы́нужден** means ‘forced’, **обяза́н** means ‘obliged’:

Пилот **был вы́нужден** посади́ть самолёт в пусты́не
‘The pilot was forced to land the aircraft in the desert’

Врач **обязана** помо́чь больно́му
‘The doctor is obliged to help the patient’

314 The expression of possibility or potential

Possibility or potential may be expressed in the following ways:

(1) Мочь, смочь ‘to be able’

Я могу́/смогу́ приня́ть ва́ше приглаше́ние
‘**I can/shall be able** to accept your invitation’

Note

- (a) A distinction is made between **мочь** ‘to be (physically) able’ and **уме́ть** ‘to be able, know how to’. Compare **Я умею** пла́вать ‘I can/know how to swim’ and Сегодня́ я не **могу́** пла́вать: у меня́ рука́ бо́лит ‘I can’t swim today: I have a sore arm’.
- (b) The imperfective future of **мочь** is rarely, if ever, used. Instead, the future of **быть в состоя́нии** + the infinitive is preferred (see 225 (7)).

- (c) **Мочь** can also be the equivalent of English ‘may’, ‘might’, ‘could have’, ‘might have’:

Мне **могут** возразить: лучше по кооперативной цене, чем вообще отсутствие товара в магазине (*Literaturnaia gazeta*)

‘People **may** object: better at the co-operative price, than the unavailability of the product in the shops’

В кассе **могут** быть билеты

‘There **might be** tickets at the box-office’

Как он **мог** ответить иначе?

‘What other answer **could he have** given?’

Если она решилась на это, значит, **могла** решиться и на другое (*Zalygin*)

‘If she made this decision, she **might** equally well **have** made a different decision’

- (2) Можно/нельзя, (не)возможно

- (i) **Можно** and **нельзя** can denote:

- (a) Permission/prohibition:

— **Можно** сюда сесть?

— Нет, **нельзя**

“‘May I sit here?’”

“‘No, you may not’”

Note

Нельзя ли is used to express a very polite request: **Нельзя ли** сюда сесть? ‘Please, may I sit here?’ (cf. ‘neutral’ **Можно ли?**). Conversely, it may express irritation: **Нельзя ли** потише?! ‘Couldn’t you be a little quieter?!’

- (b) Possibility/impossibility:

Кислород **можно**

получить из воды

‘Oxygen can be extracted from water’

Нельзя согласиться с ним

‘One cannot agree with him’

Note

- (a) **Можно** is often used with interrogative words: На каком автобусе **можно** доехать до центра? ‘Which bus do I take for the city centre?’

- (b) See 279 (3) for the aspect of the infinitive with **нельзя́**. Note that the imperfective infinitive may be used with **нельзя́** in the meaning of impossibility in a **frequentative** context: **Нельзя́** мыть машину́ ка́ждый день ‘It is impossible to wash the car every day’.
- (ii) **Возмо́жно/невозмо́жно** denote only possibility or impossibility (*not* permission/prohibition):

Возмо́жно/мо́жно поста́вить то́чный диа́гноз
‘It is possible to make a precise diagnosis’

Невозмо́жно/нельзя́ реши́ть э́ту зада́чу
‘It is impossible to solve this problem’

Verbs of Motion

315 Unidirectional and multidirectional verbs of motion

Each of fourteen types of motion are represented in Russian by two **imperfective** verbs.

- (1) One denotes **movement in one direction** (unidirectional verbs):

Я иду́ на заво́д	‘ I am on my way to the factory’
Я шёл на заво́д	‘ I was on my way to the factory’

- (2) The other denotes **movement in more than one direction, movement in general, habitual action, return journeys** (multidirectional verbs):

Ка́ждый день он хо́дит в шко́лу	‘He goes to school every day’
Она́ хо́дит по ко́мнате	‘She is walking up and down the room’
Он хо́дит с па́лкой	‘He walks with a stick’
Она́ ходи́ла в кино́	‘She went to the cinema’

316 Conjugation of verbs of motion

The fourteen pairs of imperfective non-prefixed verbs are conjugated as follows (unidirectional first):

(1) идти	иду́, идёшь, идёт, идём, идёте, иду́т	‘to go, walk’
ходить	хожу́, ходишь, ходит etc.	
(2) ехать	еду́, едешь, едет, едем, едете, едут	‘to travel, ride’
ездить	езжу́, ездешь, ездит etc.	
(3) бежать	бегу́, бежишь, бежит, бежим, бежите, бегу́т	‘to run’
бегать	бегая́, бегаешь, бегает etc.	
(4) лететь	лечу́, летишь, летит etc.	‘to fly’
летать	летаю́, летаешь, летает etc.	
(5) плыть	плыву́, плывёшь, плывёт etc.	‘to swim, float’
плавать	плаваю́, плаваешь, плавает etc.	
(6) нести	несу́, несёшь, несёт etc.	‘to carry’
носить	ношу́, носишь, носит etc.	
(7) вести	веду́, ведёшь, ведёт etc.	‘to lead’
водить	вожу́, водишь, водит etc.	
(8) везти	везу́, везёшь, везёт etc.	‘to convey, transport’
возить	вожу́, возишь, возит etc.	
(9) лезть	лэзу́, лэзешь, лэзет etc.	‘to climb’
лазить	лажу́, лазишь, лазит etc.	
(10) ползти	ползу́, ползёшь, ползёт etc.	‘to crawl’
ползать	ползаю́, ползаешь, ползает etc.	
(11) тащить	ташу́, тащишь, тащит etc.	‘to drag’
таскать	таскаю́, таскаешь, таскает etc.	
(12) гнать	гоню́, гонишь, гонит etc.	‘to drive, chase’
гонять	гоняю́, гоняешь, гоняет etc.	
(13) катить	качу́, катишь, катит etc.	‘to roll’
катать	катаю́, катаешь, катает etc.	
(14) брести	бреду́, бредёшь, бредёт etc.	‘to wander’
бродить	брожу́, бродишь, бродит etc.	

Note

There are grounds for excluding **брести/бродить** from the series, since the two verbs differ somewhat in meaning: **брести** ‘to walk along slowly, with difficulty’, **бродить** ‘to wander aimlessly’. **Бродить** differs from other multidirectional verbs in that it cannot denote motion towards a destination. However, the two verbs have traditionally been treated as verbs of motion, and are accordingly dealt with in this section.

317 Imperatives of verbs of motion

Imperatives of verbs of motion are formed according to the rules formulated in 227:

бегí!	‘run!’
ведí!	‘lead!’
идí!	‘go!’
несí!	‘carry!’

Note

Поезжай! ‘Go!’, the imperative of **по́ехать**, is used for single positive commands (**Поезжай** по́ездом! ‘Go by train!’), **ёзди!** for frequentative commands and **Не ёзди!** for negative commands (**Не ёзди** авто́бусом! ‘Don’t go by bus’, i.e. ‘Never go by bus’).

318 Past tense of verbs of motion

(1) Verbs of motion in **-ать/-ять/-еть/-ить** have past tense forms in **-л:** **ходи́л, летéл** etc.

(2) The past tenses of other verbs of motion are as follows:

брести́:	брёл, брела́, брело́, брели́
везти́:	вёз, везла́, везло́, везли́
вести́:	вёл, вела́, вело́, вели́
идти́:	шёл, шла́, шло, шли́
лезть:	лез, лезла, лезло, лезли
нести́:	нёс, несла́, несло́, несли́

319 ‘To go’: **идти/ходить** and **ехать/ездить**

(1) ‘To go’ on foot is rendered in Russian as **идти́/ходи́ть:**

Она́ **идёт** в шко́лу

‘She **is going (is walking, is on her way)** to school’

Она́ **ходи́т** в шко́лу

‘She **goes (walks)** to school’

(2) ‘To go’ by some form of transport is rendered as **ехать/ездить:**

Она́ **едет** в шко́лу

‘She **is going (is riding, travelling, driving)** to school’

Она **ѐздит** в шко́лу авто́бусом
‘She **goes (travels)** to school by bus’

(3) Thus, ‘I am going to town’ can be rendered as

Я **иду́** в го́род
‘I am going to town’ (on foot)

Я **ѐду** в го́род
‘I am going to town’ (by some form of transport)

Substantial trips normally imply the use of **ѐхать/ѐздить**: Я **ѐду** во Фра́нцию ‘I am going to France’.

Note

Идти́/ходить is used with trains (Поезд **идѐт** ‘The train is travelling along’), with ships, as an alternative to **плыть** ‘to sail’, and with road vehicles, as an alternative to **ѐхать** (Машина **идѐт/ѐдет** по доро́ге ‘The car is **driving** along the road’).

320 Functions of unidirectional verbs of motion

(1) Unidirectional verbs of motion denote movement in one particular direction, usually on one occasion:

В пресквѐрном настроѐнии шѐл я по го́роду (Ророн)
‘I walked through town in the foulest of moods’

Три дня и три но́чи **нас везли́** в ареста́нтском ваго́не (Gagarin)
‘For three days and nights **we were transported** in a convict truck’

often with a named destination:

ѐдем в го́род
‘We are driving to **town**’

От пьедеста́ла до **раздева́лки** его́ несу́т на рука́х (Khrutskii)
‘They carry him shoulder-high from the rostrum to the changing-room’

(2) The movement is not necessarily in a straight line:

Он шѐл **зигза́гами** к до́му
‘He was **zigzagging** towards the house’

but in all instances the verb advances the subject or object along a line of progression:

Он **плыл** прѐтив ве́тра и был сла́бее нас (Nikolaev)
‘He **was swimming** against the current and was weaker than we were’

Шурка долго **шёл** лесом, унося ежа подальше от жилья (Vasil'ev)
 'Shurka **walked** through the forest for a long while, carrying the hedgehog further and further away from human habitation'

(3) The destination or direction of the movement may be:

(i) unspecified, as in the last example;

(ii) specified, as in:

К заливу шли через парк (Iakhontov)
 'They were walking through the park **towards the bay**'

(iii) more generally specified, e.g. in terms of points of the compass:

Поезд шёл **на восток**
 'The train was on its way **east**'

Note

The future of unidirectional verbs is far less common than the present and past: Когда мы **будем идти** мимо кинотеатра, мы купим билеты на завтра 'When we **are passing** the cinema, we shall buy tickets for tomorrow', **Будем вести** по очереди 'We shall take it in turns to drive'.

321 Unidirectional verbs in frequentative contexts

(1) Unidirectional verbs usually describe movement in progress on one occasion:

Он **идёт, шёл** в школу 'He **is, was going** to school'

while habitual actions are usually the province of the multidirectional verb (see 322 (3)).

(2) Unidirectional verbs are, however, used to express repeated actions:

(i) Where **movement in one direction** is particularly stressed:

Я иду на работу целых полчаса
 'I **take** a whole half-hour **to get** to work'

(Compare Каждый день я **хожу** на работу 'Every day I **go** to work' (and back).)

Обычно я **иду** с работы пешком, а на работу **еду** на автобусе
 'I usually **walk home** from work but **go** to work on the bus'

Письма 5–6 дней **идут** отсюда в Россию
 ‘Letters **take** 5–6 days **to get** from here to Russia’

Note

A unidirectional verb is also used in Каждый день **летят** письма из страны в страну ‘Every day letters **wing their way** from country to country’ (since each individual letter progresses *in one direction only*).

Когда я **иду** на работу, я всегда покупаю газету
 ‘When I **am on my way** to work, I always buy a newspaper’

Осенью журавли **летят** на юг
 ‘In the autumn the cranes **fly** south’ (*one-way (though repeated) flight* within the given time-span (осенью))

Каждое утро в 8.45 **иду** на автобусную остановку
 ‘Every morning at 8.45 I **walk** to the bus-stop’ (but not back again!)

(ii) Where reference is to actions or processes occurring **in sequence**:

Каждое утро встаю, завтракаю и **иду** на автобусную остановку
 ‘Every morning I get up, have breakfast and **go** to the bus-stop’

Каждый год, как только наступает лето, я **еду** на море
 ‘Every year, as soon as summer comes, I **am off** to the seaside’

(Compare Каждый год **езжу** на море ‘Every year I go to the seaside’ (and back).)

322 Functions of multidirectional verbs of motion

As their name implies, multidirectional verbs denote **movement in more than one direction**. Meanings may be subdivided as follows:

(1) They denote the action in general, a capacity to perform it, to perform it in a particular way, to know how to perform it, to like performing it and so on:

Я хорошо бегаю на коньках	‘I skate well’
Человек ходит на двух ногах	‘Man walks upright’
Истребители летают быстро	‘Fighter-planes fly fast’

Multidirectional infinitives frequently combine with verbs such as **любить** ‘to like’, **предпочитать** ‘to prefer’, **уметь** ‘to know how to’, **учиться** ‘to learn how to’ etc.:

Девчáта любя́т **ходи́ть** в рощу за цветáми (Nikolaev)
 ‘The girls like **going** to the grove for flowers’

Он предпочита́ет **ходи́ть** пешко́м, она́ **э́здит** в авто́бусе или в трамва́е (Kovaleva)
 ‘He prefers **to walk**, she **goes** by bus or tram’

А ты меня́ научи́шь так **ла́зить**? ... спроси́л мальчи́шка (Povoliaev)
 ‘“And will you teach me **to climb** like that?” asked the boy’

Я уме́ю **води́ть** маши́ну ‘I know how **to drive** a car’

(2) They denote movement **in various directions**, up and down, round and round, to and fro, backwards and forwards, and so on:

Всё своё внимáние сосредото́чил на проти́внике, кото́рый **гоня́лся** за ним по рингу (Sal’nikov)
 ‘He concentrated all his attention on his opponent, who **was chasing him round** the ring’

В сара́е **летáли** белогру́дые ла́сточки (Belov)
 ‘White-breasted swallows **were flying about** in the shed’

А стару́хи до по́здней но́чи **пóлзали** по кла́дбищу, втыка́ли о́брáтно кресты́ (Rasputin)
 ‘And the old women **crawled round** the cemetery until late at night, sticking the crosses back into the ground’

Никола́й Ива́нович стал **ходи́ть** по ко́мнате (Proskurin)
 ‘Nikolai Ivanovich began to **walk up and down** the room’

(3) They denote habitual action, expressed as return journeys:

По воскресе́ньям мы **бу́дем э́здить** за́ город
 ‘On Sundays we shall drive into the country’

Авто́бусы **ходи́ли** в са́мые да́льные се́ла (Rybakov)
 ‘The buses **would go** to the most remote villages’

Я **хожу́** в це́рковь ‘I **go** to church’

323 Use of the past tense of a multidirectional verb to denote a single return journey

(1) The past tense (but **never** the present or future) of a multidirectional verb can be used to denote a single return journey:

На прошлой неделе она **ездила** в Лондон
'Last week she **went** to London' (and back)

Она недавно **возила** детей в Нью-Йорк
'Recently she **took** the children to New York' (and back)

(Compare Она **отвезла** детей в Нью-Йорк 'She took the children to New York' (and returned alone).)

Не обращайте на него внимания, — говорит она Кузьме. — Он опять в ресторан **ходил** (Rasputin)
"Pay no attention to him," she says to Kuz'ma. "He's **been** to the restaurant again"

Пока я **бегал** за фотоаппаратом к машине, олень ушёл
'By the time I **had run** to the car for my camera the deer had gone'

Note

In this example **бегал** denotes running to the car *and back*. The use of the unidirectional **бежал** would imply that the deer escaped while the subject *was still running* towards the car.

(2) Sentences which refer to a return journey may also report what happened at the point of destination, between the outward and return legs of the trip:

Ходил с отцом в зоопарк и там **катался** на маленькой лошадке
(Belov)
'I **went** with my father to the zoo, where I **had a ride** on a little horse'

Note

This sentence comprises three actions: (a) went to the zoo, (b) rode on a little horse while there (c) came home again, (a) and (c) being represented by the verb **ходил**.

(3) The multidirectional verb is also used in interrogative and negative sentences which refer to return trips:

Ты ходил в школу сегодня?
'**Have you been/Did you go** to school today?'

Сегодня я **не ходил** в школу
'**I haven't been/I didn't go** to school today'

324 The verbs **нести́, носить́; вести́, водить́; везти́, вози́ть**

Нести́, носить́; вести́, водить́; везти́, вози́ть may all mean ‘to take’:

(1) **Нести́, носить́** means ‘to take (on foot), carry’:

Он **несёт** кни́гу в библиоте́ку
‘He **is taking** the book to the library’ (on foot)

Она́ **носи́ла** малы́тку по ко́мнате
‘She **was carrying** the baby up and down the room’

(2) **Вести́, водить́** means ‘to take, lead’ (persons or animals):

Она́ **вела́** дете́й в шко́лу
‘She **was taking** the children to school’ (on foot)

Она́ **води́ла** дете́й в цирк
‘She **took** the children to the circus’

Note

Вести́/води́ть also means ‘to drive’ (a vehicle).

(3) **Везти́, вози́ть** means ‘to take, drive, convey’ (in a vehicle):

Авто́бус **во́зит** тури́стов по А́нглии
‘The bus **is taking** the tourists round England’

Она́ **везёт** ребёнка в коля́ске
‘She **is wheeling** the child in a pram’

Note

- (a) While **нести́/носить́, вести́/води́ть** and **везти́/вози́ть** denote the *specific* purpose of a journey, **брать/взять** ‘to take’ does not. Compare **Веди́те** дете́й в зооса́д ‘**Take** the children to the zoo’ (the specific reason for the outing) and **Возьми́те** меня́ с собо́й ‘**Take** me with you’ (the person addressed is going anyway).
- (b) A similar principle distinguishes **нести́/носить́** from **везти́/вози́ть** in contexts which involve travelling. Thus, a passenger in a train who is taking a picture to an exhibition may say — **Везу́** карти́ну на вы́ставку в Москвú, while of the briefcase he happens to be carrying he will say — **Несу́** портфе́ль, since it is *not* the object of his journey to transport the briefcase, which is simply an item of personal equipment.

Он **понёс** книгу в библиотéку
‘He **has taken** the book to the library’ (and is not back yet)

Note

- (a) English ‘**went**’ can refer to one-way journeys (‘He **went** to China last week’), rendered by the perfective of a unidirectional verb:

На прошлой неделе он **поёхал** в Кита́й

or to return trips (‘**I went** on holiday to France last year’), rendered by a Russian multidirectional verb:

В прошлом году я **ёздил** на каникулы во Францию

- (b) Note the contrast between durative **шёл** and perfective **пошёл** in the following example: Он кру́то поверну́лся и **пошёл** навстрéчу противнику, котóрый **шёл** на него́ уже́ без улыбки (Sal’nikov) ‘He turned sharply and **set off** towards his opponent, who **was bearing down** on him, no longer with a smile on his face’.

- (3) The future of unidirectional perfectives can be used independently (Я **пойду́** с тобо́й ‘I will go with you’) or with the future perfective of another verb:

— **Пойду́ покурю́**, — говорю́ я (Kazakov)
“‘I’ll go and have a smoke,’” I say’

- (4) The unidirectional perfective may indicate a new phase of an action already in progress (e.g. a change in tempo):

Они́ шли ме́дленно, потóм **пошли́** быстрее́
‘They were walking along slowly, then **quickenened their pace**’

Плове́ц почувствовал уста́лость и **поплы́л** ме́дленнее
‘The swimmer felt tired and **began to swim** more slowly’

- (5) An English phrase may translate a unidirectional perfective:

Мы оттолкну́лись от ба́кена и **поплы́ли** к бе́регу (Nikolaev)
‘We pushed off from the buoy and **struck out** for the shore’

Он шёл по бе́регу, но **побежа́л**, уви́дев меня́
‘He was walking along the shore but **broke into a run** on catching sight of me’

327 Special meanings of пойти

Пойти can mean:

- (1) ‘To start walking’ of a toddler:

Он **пошёл** с десяти месяцев
‘He **started walking** at ten months’

- (2) ‘To start school’ of an infant:

Миша в этом году **пошёл** в школу
‘Misha **started** school this year’

Note also the ‘illogical’ use of the past in Я **пошёл!** ‘I’m off!’, **Поехали!** ‘Let’s go!’ etc.

328 Не пошёл and не ходил

- (1) **Не ходил** denotes that a journey did not take place:

Вчера мы никуда **не ходили**
‘We didn’t go anywhere yesterday’

- (2) **Не пошёл** implies an intention unfulfilled:

Вчера мы никуда **не пошли**
‘We didn’t go anywhere yesterday’ (though we had planned to)

329 Perfectives of multidirectional verbs

- (1) The perfectives of multidirectional verbs are also formed with the prefix **по-**:

ходить/**по-** ‘to walk’ ездить/**по-** ‘to travel’ etc.

- (2) They denote an action of short duration in the past or future:

Он **полетал** над городом и опустился
‘He **circled** the town **for a while** and then landed’

Осталось два раунда. **Походи** немного, потом укройся полотенцем и сиди здесь, жди меня (Sal’nikov)
‘There are two rounds left. **Walk around for a bit**, then wrap yourself in a towel, sit here and wait for me’

330 Figurative and idiomatic uses of verbs of motion

Verbs of motion have a number of figurative or idiomatic meanings. In most cases only one of a pair (either the unidirectional or the multidirectional) can be used in a particular figurative sense: the usual differential criteria between unidirectional and multidirectional do *not* apply when the verbs are used figuratively.

(1) Only **unidirectional** verbs can be used in the following:

- | | |
|--|--|
| (i) Идёт война́, уро́к, филь́м | ‘A war, a lesson, a film is on ’ |
| Э́та шля́па вам идёт | ‘This hat suits you’ |
| Страна́ идёт к социализму́ | ‘The country is moving towards socialism’ |
| Идти́ прот́ив во́ли
большинства́ | ‘ To go against the will of the majority’ |
| Идёт дождь, снег | ‘ It is raining, snowing ’ |
| Иду́т часы́ | ‘The clock is going ’ |

Note

Часы́ **хóдят** is possible in certain contexts: Часы́ **давнó** не хóдят ‘The clock has not gone **for a long time**’.

- | | |
|--|--|
| (ii) вести́ война́ | ‘ to wage war’ |
| вести́ дневни́к | ‘ to keep a diary’ |
| вести́ переписку́ | ‘ to carry on a correspondence’ |
| Доро́га ведёт в лес | ‘The road leads to the forest’ |
| Ложь к добру́ не ведёт | ‘No good can come of lying’ |
| (iii) нести́ отве́тственность | ‘ to bear the responsibility’ |
| нести́ поте́ри | ‘ to bear losses’ |
| нести́ наказа́ние | ‘ to undergo punishment’ |
| (iv) А́кции летя́т вниз | ‘Shares are plummeting ’ |
| Вре́мя летит́ | ‘Time flies ’ |
| (v) лезть в дра́ку | ‘ to get into a brawl’ |
| (vi) Ему́ везёт/повезло́ | ‘He is lucky/is in luck ’ |
| Повезло́ , что отыскали́ льди́ну толщи́ной 47 см. (Lebedev) | ‘ We were lucky enough to find an ice-floe 47 cm thick’ |

(vii) Дни **бегу́т**; Кровь **бежи́т** ‘The days **fly past**’; ‘Blood **flows**’.

(viii) Троллейбус **ползёт**, как черепа́ха
‘The trolley-bus **is crawling along** at a snail’s pace’

(2) Only **multidirectional** verbs are used in the following:

- (i) **но́сить** зва́ние, и́мя ‘to **bear** a title, a name’
но́сить отпеча́ток ‘to **bear** the imprint’
но́сить оде́жду ‘to **wear** clothes’ (habitually: cf. Он **но́сит** шля́пу ‘He wears a hat’ and Он **в шля́пе** ‘He is wearing a hat’)
- (ii) **води́ть** за́ нос ‘to **lead** up the garden path’
- (iii) **хо́дит** слух/**хо́дят** слухи ‘rumour **has it**/rumours **are rife**’
(also, though less commonly, **иду́т** слухи)
- (iv) **ката́ться** на конька́х ‘to **skate**’
ката́ться на велосипе́де ‘to **go** for a cycle ride’
ката́ться на ло́дке ‘to **go** for a row’

331 Compound verbs of motion

(1) All simple verbs of motion combine with up to fifteen different prefixes to form compound aspectival pairs, multidirectional verbs forming the basis of the imperfectives and unidirectional verbs the basis of the perfectives (see 332 for modified verb stems).

(2) These prefixed imperfective/perfective aspectival pairs lack the unidirectional/multidirectional dichotomy of the simple verbs.

(3) Most compound verbs of motion are intransitive and are linked to the following noun by a preposition (see (4)).

(4) Prefixed compounds of **-ходи́ть/-йти́**, for example, are as follows:

<i>Imperfective</i>	<i>Perfective</i>	<i>Preposition</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
входи́ть	войти́	в + acc.	‘to enter’
всходи́ть	взойти́	на + acc.	‘to go up on to’
выходи́ть	выйти́	из + gen.	‘to go out of’
доходи́ть	дойти́	до + gen.	‘to go as far as’
заходи́ть	зайти́	к + dat.	‘to call on someone’
заходи́ть	зайти́	в/на + acc.	‘to call in at a place’
		в + acc.	‘to go a long way into’

находить	найти́	+ acc.	‘to find’
обходить	обойти́	вокруг + gen.	‘to go round’
		+ acc.	‘to inspect/avoid’
отходить	отойти́	от + gen.	‘to move away from’
переходить	перейти́	через + acc.	‘to cross’
		+ acc.	
подходить	подойти́	к + dat.	‘to go up to’
приходить	прийти́	к + dat.	‘to come to see a person’
		в/на + acc.	‘to come to/arrive at a place’
проходить	пройти́	мимо + gen.	‘to pass’
		+ acc.	‘to cover’ (a distance)
расходиться	разойтись	по + dat.	‘to disperse to’ (separate destinations)
сходить	сойти́	с + gen.	‘to come down from, step off’
сходиться	сойтись	с + instr.	‘to come together with’
уходить	уйти́	от + gen.	‘to leave a person’
		из/с + gen.	‘to leave a place’

Note

- (a) Alternative usage may be determined by context: Она́ вышла **в коридор/на улицу** ‘She came out **into** the corridor/**on to** the street’, Он ушёл **на работу** ‘He left **for** work’, Они́ пришли **от директора** ‘They have come **from** the manager’, Она́ сошла **на перрón** ‘She got down **on to** the platform’ etc.
- (b) The choice of preposition with **заходить/зайти́** and **приходить/прийти́** depends on the type of location involved: Он пришёл **в школу/на завод** ‘He arrived **at the school/factory**’ (cf. Он ушёл **из школы/с работы** ‘He left **school/work**’). See 408 and 412.
- (c) Some compounds in **на-** take **на + acc.**: **наехать на дерево** ‘to run into a tree’.
- (d) Prefix and prepositional usage is similar to but not identical with usage with other verbs (see 254).

332 Stems of compound verbs of motion

Prefixes are added to the following stems to make imperfective and perfective compounds. Stems which differ in form from the simple verbs of motion (for meanings, see 316) are in **bold** type:

<i>Imperfective</i>	<i>Perfective</i>
-ходить	-йти́
-езжа́ть	-éхать

-бегáть	-бежа́ть
-летáть	-летéть
-лезáть	-лезть
-плывáть	-плыть
-ползáть	-ползти́
-носíть	-нести́
-водíть	-вести́
-возíть	-везти́
-та́скивать	-тащи́ть
-гоня́ть	-гнать
-ка́тывать	-кати́ть
-брéдать	-брести́

Note

The stems **-бегáть** and **-ползáть** differ from the simple verbs of motion **бегать** 'to run' and **ползать** 'to crawl' only in stress.

333 Spelling rules in the formation of compound verbs of motion

(1) For **вз/-вс-**, **раз-/рас-**, see 16 (4).

(2) The vowel 'o' is inserted between a consonant and **-йти**:

войти́ (impf. **входи́ть**) 'to enter' (future **войду́**; past **вошёл**)

Likewise **взойти́** 'to ascend', **обойти́** 'to go round', **отойти́** 'to move away from', **подойти́** 'to go up to', **разойти́сь** 'to disperse', **сойти́** 'to descend', **сойти́сь** 'to come together'.

(3) A hard sign is inserted between a prefix ending in a consonant and all forms based on the infinitive stems **-езжа́ть/-éхать**:

въезжа́ть, въéхать 'to drive in' etc.

334 Prefixed verbs of motion

The following examples illustrate the use of compound verbs of motion (for examples with **-ходи́ть/-йти́** see 331 (4)):

(1) **К** подно́жью раке́ты **подъезжа́ет** авто́бус (*Russia Today*)
'A bus **draws up to** the base of the rocket'

- (2) Дети **выбега́ют из** моря на пляж (Murav'eva)
'The children **run out of** the sea on to the beach'
- (3) Их объединяет одна общая цель — они́ должны́ **доплы́ть до берега** (*Russia Today*)
'They are united by a common aim — they must **reach** the shore'
- (4) Кононов отпóлз в угол палáтки (Belov)
'Kononov crawled off into the corner of the tent'
- (5) Мяч **залетéл на** кры́шу
'The ball **sailed away on to** the roof'
- (6) Она́ **перелéзла через** забóр
'She **climbed over** the fence'
- (7) **Разбрéдáлись по** вла́жному лéсу (Vanshenkin)
'They **were wandering off through** the damp forest'
- (8) Мяч **перекатíлся через** ли́нию
'The ball **rolled over** the line'
- (9) **Вы́тащили** лётчика **из** горя́щего самолёта
'They **dragged** the pilot **out of** the burning aircraft'
- (10) Мотóры их катерóв свёрхмóщные, ры́бинспéкторам не **догна́ть** (*Izvestiia*)
'The engines of their launches are high-powered, the fisheries inspectors haven't a hope of **catching up with** them'
- (11) **Перенёс** телефóн **на** тахту́ (Avdeenko)
'He **carried** the telephone **over** to the divan'
- (12) — Вот, матрóса тебе́ **привёл**, — сказа́л Куту́зов (Iakhontov)
'“Look, I have **brought** you a sailor,” said Kutuzov'
- (13) Куту́зов сообщíл: яхты́ уже́ **привезли́** (Iakhontov)
'Kutuzov reported that the yachts **had** already **been delivered**'

335 Use of the imperfective past of a compound verb of motion to denote an action and its reverse

- (1) The past tense of the imperfective aspect of a compound verb of motion can denote the action and its reverse (see also 259): Он **приходи́л** 'He came' (and has now gone away again), Он **уезжа́л** 'He went away' (and has now returned).

(2) The prefixes most frequently involved are **в-/вы-, за-, под-, при-/у-**:

Как-то она **приводила** своих детей на рентгэн (Aksenov)
‘She **had** once **brought** her children for an X-ray’

Какие красивые цветы! Кто-то, **должно быть, входил** в комнату
без меня
‘What beautiful flowers! Someone **must have been** into the room when
I was out’

Женщина, которая только что **подходила к** киоску за газетой,
известная актриса
‘The woman who **has just been up to** the kiosk for a newspaper is a
famous actress’

336 Figurative and idiomatic uses of compound verbs of motion

Many compound verbs of motion have figurative or idiomatic meanings. The following list contains only a representative sample:

(1) Compounds in **-ходить, -йти**

входить/войти в моду	‘to come into fashion’
выходить/выйти из строя	‘to break down’
доходить/дойти до слёз	‘to be reduced to tears’
заходить/зайти слишком далеко	‘to go too far’
переходить/перейти к другой теме	‘to switch to a different topic’
подходить/подойти	‘to be suitable’
приходить/прийти в голову (кому-нибудь)	‘to occur (to someone)’
проходить/пройти	‘to pass’ (e.g. время, боль проходит ‘time, pain passes’)
расходиться/разойтись во мнениях	‘not to see eye to eye’
сходить/сойти с ума	‘to go mad’
сходиться/сойтись во мнениях	‘to see eye to eye’

(2) Compounds in **-водить, -вести**

вводить/ввести в обращение	‘to bring into circulation’
выводить/вывести из терпения	‘to exasperate’

доводить/довести до конца	‘to put the finishing touches to’
заводить/завести часы	‘to wind up a watch’
наводить/навести справки	‘to make enquiries’
отводить/отвести душу	‘to unburden one’s soul’
переводить/перевести	‘to translate’
подводить/подвести друга	‘to let a friend down’
приводить/привести к	‘to lead to’
проводить/провести время	‘to spend time’
разводить/развести	‘to breed’ (livestock)
разводиться/развестись	‘to get divorced’
сводить/свести к минимуму	‘to reduce to a minimum’

(3) Compounds in -носить, -нести́

вносить/внести вклад	‘to make a contribution’
выносить/вынести приговор	‘to pass sentence’
доносить/донести на + асс.	‘to denounce’
зanosить/занести	‘to record, register’
наносить/нанести поражение	‘to inflict a defeat’
переносить/перенести зиму	‘to survive the winter’
приносить/принести пользу	‘to bring benefit’

337 Perfectives in *c-* based on multidirectional verbs

(1) Multidirectional verbs combine with the prefix *c-* to form perfectives: **сбегать**, **сходить**, **съездить** etc. They do not have imperfectives.

(2) Such verbs denote the performance of an action and its result, usually within a limited period of time:

Никон **сходил** (pf.) за дровами, затопил маленькую печьку (Abramov)

‘Nikon **went to fetch** some firewood and lit the small stove’

Note

Compounds with *c-* are preferred to the simple unprefixated multidirectional verb (e.g. он ходил, он ездил):

(a) where sequential actions are involved:

Съездил (pf.) за книгами и **сел** заниматься

‘He **went to fetch** the books and sat down to study’

(b) where a time element is involved:

Он **сходил** (pf.) за газéтой за **10 минут**
'He **took 10 minutes to fetch** the newspaper'

(3) Unlike the simple unprefixated multidirectional verb, which can describe single return journeys in the past tense only (see **323**), perfectives in **с-** can also express this meaning in the future, the infinitive and the imperative:

Да и лёгче, пожа́луй, **на Луну́ слетáть** (pf.), чем придумáть такой вездехóд (Abramov)

'I do believe it would be easier **to fly to the Moon and back** than devise a cross-country vehicle like that'

Сходи́ (pf.) к Ма́йе и переда́й ей, чтóбы она́ подошла́ зáвтра пóсле игры́ к газéтному ки́бску (Trifonov)

'**Pop over** to Maia's and tell her to come to the newspaper kiosk after the game tomorrow'

Note

It is important to distinguish perfectives **сходить**, **слетáть**, **сбегáть** from imperfectives **сходить**/perfective **сойт́и** 'to go down', **слетáть**/perfective **слетéть** 'to fly down' and **сбегáть**/perfective **сбежа́ть** 'to run down'.

338 Perfectives in за-, из- and на- based on multidirectional verbs

За-, **из-** and **на-** also combine with multidirectional verbs to form compound perfectives (such verbs do not have imperfectives):

(1) **За-** (in the meaning 'beginning of an action'):

Он в волнэнии **заходил** (pf). по кóмнате
'He **began walking about** the room in agitation'

(2) **Из-** (in the meaning 'to cover the whole area'):

Он **изъездил** (pf). всю страну́
'He **has travelled the length and breadth** of the country'

Он **избегал** (pf). весь сад
'He **covered every inch** of the garden'

(3) **На-** (in the meaning of time or distance covered):

Этот шофёр **наёздил** (pf.) 100 000 км.
‘This driver **has clocked** 100,000 km.’

Лётчик **налетал** (pf.) 1000 часо́в
‘The pilot **has clocked** 1,000 hours’

Note

It is important to distinguish perfective **заходи́ть** from imperfective **заходи́ть**/perfective **зайти́** ‘to drop in’ and perfective **избега́ть** from imperfective **избега́ть**/perfective **избежа́ть** ‘to avoid’.

Participles

339 Participles. Introductory comments

There are five verbal participles in Russian. The active participles, the imperfective passive and the long-form perfective passive decline like long adjectives and agree in case, gender and number with the nouns they qualify, while the short-form perfective passive functions like a short adjective:

the present active	чита́ющий	‘who is reading’
the past active (imperfective)	чита́вший	‘who was reading’
the past active (perfective)	прочита́вший	‘who read’
the imperfective passive	чита́емый	‘which is read’
the perfective passive (short form)	прочита́н	‘has been read’
the perfective passive (long form)	прочита́нный	‘which has been read’

Note

The participles are confined mainly to written styles, except for those used as adjectives and nouns and the perfective passive short form.

340 Present active participle. Formation

(1) The present active participle is formed by replacing the final **-т** of the third-person plural of the present tense by the endings **-щий** (m.), **-щая** (f.), **-щие** (n.), **-шие** (pl.):

бегу́т	бегу́щий	-ая	-ее	-ие	‘who is, are running’
крича́т	крича́щий	-ая	-ее	-ие	‘who is, are shouting’
танцу́ют	танцу́ющий	-ая	-ее	-ие	‘who is, are dancing’
чита́ют	чита́ющий	-ая	-ее	-ие	‘who is, are reading’

(2) In the case of reflexive verbs, **-ся** is used throughout:

смею́тся	смею́щийся	-аяся	-еися	-ияся	‘who is, are laughing’
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341 Stress in the present active participle

(1) The stress in present active participles formed from **first-conjugation** verbs is usually as in the third-person plural:

понима́ть	понима́ют	понима́ющий	‘who understands’
тону́ть	тону́т	тону́щий	‘who drowns/is drowning’
иска́ть	и́щут	и́щущий	‘who looks for/is looking for’
течь	теку́т	теку́щий	‘which flows/is flowing’

Note

There are a few exceptions to this rule, e.g. **могу́щий** from **мо́гут**, third-person plural of **мочь** ‘to be able’.

(2) The stress in participles from **second-conjugation** verbs is usually the same as that of the **infinitive**:

буди́ть	бу́дят	будя́щий	‘who wakes, is waking’
води́ть	во́дят	водя́щий	‘who leads’
кати́ть	ка́тят	каты́щий	‘who is rolling’

(3) However, a number of participles from second-conjugation verbs have the same stress as the third-person plural: **ды́шащий** from дыша́ть ‘to breathe’, **ле́чащий** from лечи́ть ‘to treat’ (medically), **лю́бящий** from люби́ть ‘to love’, **ру́бящий** from руби́ть ‘to chop’, **су́шащий** from суши́ть ‘to dry’, **те́рпящий** from терпе́ть ‘to endure’, **ту́шащий** from туши́ть ‘to extinguish’.

(4) A number of participles have alternative stress: **ва́рящий/варя́щий** from вари́ть ‘to boil’, **го́нящий/гоня́щий** from гна́ть ‘to drive’, **де́лящий/деля́щий** from дели́ть ‘to share’, **су́дящий/судя́щий** from суди́ть ‘to judge’, **у́чащий/уча́щий** from учи́ть ‘to teach’, **хва́лящий/хваля́щий** from хвали́ть ‘to praise’, **шу́тящий/шутя́щий** from шути́ть ‘to joke’.

342 The past active participle. Formation

(1) The past active participle is formed from imperfective and perfective verbs by replacing the **-л** of the masculine past tense by **-вший** (m.), **-шая** (f.), **-шее** (n.), **-шие** (pl.):

писáл	писáвший	-шая	-шее	-шие	‘who was, were writing’
написáл	написáвший	-шая	-шее	-шие	‘who wrote’

(2) In reflexive verbs, the suffix **-ся** is used throughout:

смея́вшийся ‘who laughed, was laughing’

(3) If the masculine past does not end in **-л**, the endings **-ший**, **-шая**, **-шее**, **-шие** are added to it to make the participle:

замёрз	замёрзший	-шая	-шее	-шие	‘who, which froze’
привы́к	привы́кший	-шая	-шее	-шие	‘who got used to’
у́мер	у́мерший	-шая	-шее	-шие	‘who died’

Note

(a) Unprefixed verbs with the suffix **-ну-**, e.g. **га́снуть** ‘to go out’ (past гас/га́снул), **ги́бнуть** ‘to perish’, **па́хнуть** ‘to smell’, and the prefixed verb **исчезну́ть** ‘to disappear’ (past исчéз) form the past participle with the suffix **-вш-**: **га́снувший**, **ги́бнувший**, **исчезнувший**, **па́хнувший**.

(b) Достíгнуть ‘to achieve’ (past достíг) has alternative participles: **достíгший/достíгнувший**. Likewise compounds of **-вергнуть**, e.g. **подвѐргший/подвѐргнувший** from **подвѐргнуть** ‘to subject’ (past подвѐрг) and **втѐргшийся/втѐргнувшийся** from **втѐргнуться** ‘to invade’ (past втѐргся). **Воскрѐсший** from **воскрѐснуть** ‘to rise again’ (past воскрѐс) is commoner than **воскрѐснувший**.

(4) Verbs in **-ти** with a present-future stem in **-т-** or **-д-** have participles based on stems ending in these consonants:

идт́и, past шѐл	шѐдший	-шая	-шее	-шие	‘who was, were going’
вест́и, past вѐл	вѐдший	-шая	-шее	-шие	‘who was, were leading’
цвѐст́и, past цвѐл	цвѐтший	-шая	-шее	-шие	‘which was, were blooming’

Note

Произо́йти ‘to occur’ has alternative participles **происшѐдший** and **произошѐдший**.

343 Stress in the past active participle

Stress is as in the masculine past, with the exception of **умёрший** ‘who died’ (cf. past *умер*).

344 The imperfective passive participle. Formation

(1) The imperfective passive participle is formed by adding adjectival endings to the first-person plural of an imperfective **transitive** verb:

First-person plural	Participle					
любим	лю́бимый	-ая	-ое	-ые	‘who, which is, are loved’	
ценим	це́нимый	-ая	-ое	-ые	‘who, which is, are valued’	
читаём	чита́емый	-ая	-ое	-ые	‘which is, are read’	

(2) Many unprefixated transitive verbs (e.g. **жева́ть** ‘to chew’, **копа́ть** ‘to dig’) do not form the participle. However, participles can be made from most prefixed transitive secondary imperfectives and verbs in **-овать**:

испы́тываемый	-ая	-ое	-ые	‘which is, are (being) tested’
сжигáемый	-ая	-ое	-ые	‘which is, are (being) burnt’
требу́емый	-ая	-ое	-ые	‘which is, are (being) demanded’
имену́емый	-ая	-ое	-ые	‘which is, are (being) referred to’

(3) Participles from transitive verbs in **-авать** are as follows: **дава́емый** ‘which is given/being given’, **признава́емый** ‘which is acknowledged’ etc.

Note

(a) The participle is also formed from a limited number of **intransitive** or **semi-transitive** verbs. Some of these take the dative: **предшествова́ть** ‘to precede’ (**предшеству́емый**), **угрожа́ть** ‘to threaten’ (**угрожа́емый**). Others take the instrumental: **командова́ть** ‘to command’ (**команду́емый**), **пренебрега́ть** ‘to scorn, take no heed of’ (**пренебрега́емый**), **руководи́ть** ‘to run’ (**руководи́мый**), **управля́ть** ‘to manage, guide’ (**управля́емый**). The series also includes **обита́емый** ‘inhabited’ (from intransitive **обита́ть**).

- (b) Among verbs in **-ти**, only **вести** ‘to lead’ (**ведóмый** (**ведóмый** самолёт ‘wing-man’, in an aircraft formation)) and **нести** ‘to carry’ (**несóмый**) form imperfective passive participles (see **346** (2)).

345 Stress in the imperfective passive participle

Stress in imperfective passive participles derived from **first-conjugation** verbs is as in the first-person plural: **используемый** ‘which is used’. In participles derived from **second-conjugation** verbs the stress falls on **-и-**: **гонимый** ‘which is driven’, from **гнать** ‘to drive’ (except for verbs with stem stress throughout: **слышимый** from **слышать** ‘to hear’).

346 Verbs which have no imperfective passive participle

Many verbs have no imperfective passive participle. These include the following:

- (1) Verbs in **-ереть, -зть, -оть, -сть, -уть, -чь**.
- (2) Verbs in **-ти** (except for **вести** ‘to lead’ and **нести** ‘to carry’ (see **344** (3) note (b))).
- (3) Very many monosyllabic verbs, including **бить** ‘to strike’, **брать** ‘to take’, **брить** ‘to shave’, **есть** ‘to eat’, **жать** ‘to press’, **ждать** ‘to wait for’, **звать** ‘to call’, **знать** ‘to know’, **лить** ‘to pour’, **мыть** ‘to wash’, **петь** ‘to sing’, **пить** ‘to drink’, **рвать** ‘to tear’, **ткать** ‘to weave’, **шить** ‘to sew’.
- (4) First-conjugation consonant-stem verbs of the type **вяза́ть** ‘to tie’, **писа́ть** ‘to write’, **пря́тать** ‘to hide’. However, **иска́ть** ‘to seek’ has the participle **иско́мый** (**иско́мая** величина ‘unknown quantity’) and **колеба́ть** ‘to shake’ has **колебле́мый** ‘which is being shaken’. See **217**.
- (5) Many second-conjugation verbs: **благодаря́ть** ‘to thank’, **будя́ть** ‘to awaken’, **гла́дить** ‘to iron’, **гото́вить** ‘to prepare’, **держа́ть** ‘to hold’, **жа́рить** ‘to fry’, **кормя́ть** ‘to feed’, **кра́сить** ‘to paint’, **лечя́ть** ‘to treat’ (medically), **находя́ть** ‘to find’, **платя́ть** ‘to pay’, **по́ртить** ‘to spoil’, **рубя́ть** ‘to chop’, **смотре́ть** ‘to watch’, **ста́вить** ‘to stand’, **стро́ить** ‘to build’, **суша́ть** ‘to dry’, **тра́тить** ‘to spend’, **туша́ть** ‘to extinguish’, **учя́ть** ‘to teach, learn’, **чы́стить** ‘to clean’.

347 Formation of passive participles from secondary imperfectives whose primaries have no participle

Most imperfective passive participles derive from prefixed verbs. They include synonyms or cognates of a number of unprefixated verbs which have no participle (see 346). Thus, the verb **есть** ‘to eat’ has no participle, whereas its synonym, the secondary imperfective **сѣдѣть**, *does* have a participle: **сѣдѣемый** ‘which is eaten’. Compare:

жевать	=	разжёвывать	разжёвываемый	‘which is chewed’
жечь	=	сжигать	сжигаемый	‘which is burnt’
пить	=	выпивать	выпиваемый	‘which is drunk’
платить	=	оплачивать	оплачиваемый	‘who is paid’
тереть	=	растирать	растираемый	‘which is rubbed’

348 The perfective passive participle. Introductory comments

(1) The perfective passive participle has a **short** (predicative) form and a **long** (attributive) form. It is derived only from verbs which are (i) *perfective* and (ii) *transitive*.

(2) Most perfective passive participles contain the suffix **-н/-ен-**, while a minority contain the suffix **-т-**.

349 Formation (infinitives in -ать/-ять)

(1) The masculine short form of the participle derives from infinitives in **-ать** and **-ять** (except for a number of monosyllabic roots, see 357 (5)) by replacing **-ть** by **-н**, to give endings **-ан/-ян**. The syllable immediately preceding **-ан**, **-ян** bears the stress:

задержáть	задѣржан	‘has been arrested’
избрáть	йзбран	‘has been elected’
написáть	написан	‘has been written’

Note

The perfective prefix **вы-** is always stressed: **выигран** ‘has been won’.

(2) **-e-** is liable to mutate to **-ě-** under stress:

завоева́ть	завоёван	‘has been conquered’
причеса́ть	причёсан	‘has had his hair done’

(3) The feminine, neuter and plural forms are derived from the masculine by the addition of **-а, -о, -ы**:

напи́сан	напи́сана	напи́сано	напи́саны
заде́ржан	заде́ржана	заде́ржано	заде́ржаны

350 Stress in the participles from **дать** and its compounds

(1) The short forms of the perfective passive participle of the verb **дать** ‘to give’ have end stress in the feminine, neuter and plural:

дан	данá	данó	даны́
Им данá	власть	‘Authority has been given to them’	

Similarly, **сдать** ‘to hand over’.

(2) The short forms of other compounds of **дать** (e.g. **изда́ть** ‘to publish’) have prefix stress except in the end-stressed feminine (where prefix stress is, however, also allowable):

и́здан	изданá	и́здано	и́зданы	‘has, have been published’
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Similarly, **отда́ть** ‘to return’, **передáть** ‘to convey’ (**пéредан, передaná**), **пода́ть** ‘to serve’, **прида́ть** ‘to impart’, **продáть** ‘to sell’, **разда́ть** ‘to distribute’ (**рóздан, разданá, рóздано, рóзданы**), **созда́ть** ‘to create’.

351 Formation of the long-form (attributive) participle from verbs in **-ать/-ять**

Long-form participles are made from verbs in **-ать/-ять** by adding **-ный, -ная, -ное, -ные** to the masculine short form:

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
напи́сан	напи́санный	напи́санная	напи́санное	напи́санные
				‘written’

352 Formation of the short-form participle from second-conjugation verbs in -ить/-еть

The masculine short form of the participle is derived from second-conjugation infinitives in **-ить/-еть** by replacing the infinitive ending by **-ен** or **-ён**:

(1) -ен

(i) Verbs with **fixed stem stress** or **mobile stress** in conjugation take the ending **-ен**.

(a) Fixed stem stress in conjugation: **запóлнить** ‘to fill in’, **провѐрить** ‘to check’:

Бланк запóлнен	‘The form has been filled in’
Счѐт провѐрен	‘The account has been checked’

(b) Mobile stress in conjugation: **осмотрѐть** ‘to examine’ (**осмотрю́, осмóтришь**), **получи́ть** ‘to receive’ (**получу́, полúчишь**):

Больно́й осмóтрен	‘The patient has been examined’
Докла́д полúчен	‘The report has been received’

(ii) The feminine, neuter and plural forms derive from the masculine by the addition of **-а**, **-о** and **-ы**: **запóлнен**, **запóлнена**, **запóлнено**, **запóлнены**.

Анкѐта запóлнена	‘The questionnaire has been completed ’
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Note

Принуждѐн from **принúдить** ‘to compel’.

(2) -ён

(i) Verbs with **fixed end stress** in conjugation take the masculine short-form ending **-ён**: **реши́ть** ‘to decide’ (**решу́, реши́шь**), **включи́ть** ‘to switch’ (**включу́, включи́шь**):

Вопрóс решён	‘The question has been decided’
Телевизор включён	‘The TV has been switched on/is on’

(ii) The feminine, neuter and plural endings are **end stressed**: **решён**, **решенá**, **решенó**, **решены́**:

Проблѐма решенá	‘The problem has been solved’
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Note

A few verbs with *mobile* stress in conjugation take *end* stress in the participle:

изменить: изменён, **-енá**, **-енó**, **-ены́** ‘has, have been changed’

Likewise, **осуждён** from осудить ‘to condemn’, **оценён** from оценить ‘to estimate’, **разделён** from разделить ‘to divide’, **склонён** from склонить ‘to incline’ (cf. **скло́нен**, **скло́нна** (adj.) ‘is inclined’).

353 Consonant mutation in participles from second-conjugation infinitives in **-ить/-еть**

The following consonant changes operate in the formation of perfective passive participles from second-conjugation verbs in **-ить/-еть** (for stress rules see 352):

б: бл	сруби́ть	сру́блен	‘has been felled’
	употреби́ть	употреблён	‘has been used’
в: вл	доста́вить	доста́влен	‘has been delivered’
	удиви́ть	удивлён	‘is surprised’

Note

Dual mutation in умерщвлён from умертвить ‘to mortify’.

м: мл	офо́рмить	офо́рмлен	‘has been designed’
п: пл	купи́ть	ку́плен	‘has been bought’
	прикрепи́ть	прикреплён	‘is pinned to’
ф: фл	разграфи́ть	разграфлён	‘is ruled’ (with lines)
д: ж	заряди́ть	заря́жен/заря́жён	‘is loaded’
	оби́деть	оби́жен	‘is offended’

Note

The participle from уви́деть ‘to see’ is уви́ден.

д: жд	освободи́ть	освобождён	‘has been liberated’
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Note

-жд- also appears in the imperfective infinitive (**освобождáть**) and the verbal noun (**освобождéние** ‘liberation’). Other verbs which undergo this mutation are mainly abstract and, like **освободи́ть**, have fixed end stress in conjugation: **подтверди́ть** ‘to confirm’, **убеди́ть** ‘to convince’ etc.

з: ж	загрузить	загружен/загружён	‘is laden’
	изобразить	изображён	‘is depicted’

Note

The mutation does not operate in some participles: **вонзён** from вонзить ‘to plunge’, **пронзён** from пронзить ‘to transfix’.

с: ш	пригласить	приглашён	‘has been invited’
	скосить	скошён	‘has been mown’

Note

One or two participles do not undergo mutation: **обезлёсен** from обезлесить ‘to deforest’.

ст: щ	запустить	запущен	‘has been launched’
	простить	прощён	‘has been forgiven’
т: ч	оплатить	оплачен	‘has been paid, settled’
т: щ	сократить	сокращён	‘has been curtailed’

Note

-щ- also appears in the first-person singular (**сокращу́**), the imperfective infinitive (**сокраща́ть**) and the verbal noun (**сокраще́ние** ‘curtailment’). Other verbs of this type, mainly abstract and with fixed end stress in conjugation, include **запрети́ть** ‘to ban’.

354 Formation of the long-form (attributive) participle from second-conjugation verbs in **-ить/-еть**

Long-form participles from second-conjugation verbs in **-ить/-еть** are derived by adding **-ный, -ная, -ное, -ные** to the masculine short form:

<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>	
заполненный	заполненная	заполненное	заполненные	‘completed’
включённый	включённая	включённое	включённые	‘switched on’

355 Formation of perfective passive participles (short form) from verbs in **-ти, -чь, -зть, -сть**

The masculine short form of perfective passive participles from verbs in **-ти, -зть, -сть** and **-чь** is derived by replacing the final **-т** of the third-person singular of the conjugation of the verb by **-н**:

<i>Infinitive</i>		<i>Third-person singular</i>	<i>Participle</i>		
перевести́ ‘to translate’	переведёт	переведён	-енá	-енó	-ены́
подмести́ ‘to sweep’	подметёт	подметён	-енá	-енó	-ены́
спасти́ ‘to save’	спасёт	спасён	-енá	-енó	-ены́
испечь ‘to bake’	испечёт	испечён	-енá	-енó	-ены́
обжечь ‘to scorch’	обожжёт	обожжён	-енá	-енó	-ены́
разгрызть ‘to gnaw’	разгрызёт	разгрызён	-ена	-ено	-ены
украсть ‘to steal’	украдёт	украден	-ена	-ено	-ены

Note

- (a) The participles from *найти́* ‘to find’ and *пройти́* ‘to cover’ (a distance) are, respectively, **найден** and **пройден**.
- (b) *Достичь* ‘to achieve’ has no participle. However, a participle is formed from its synonym *достигнуть*: **достигнут**. See 357 (2).
- (c) Stem stress in participles from some verbs in **-зть/-сть**.
- (d) For participles formed from compounds of **-клясть**, see 357 (5) note (a).
- (e) *Съесть* ‘to eat’ has the participle **съеден**.

356 Long-form participles from verbs in -ти, -чь, -зть, -сть

The long form of participles from verbs in **-ти, -чь, -зть** and **-сть** is made by adding **-ный, -ная, -ное, -ные** to the short-form masculine, e.g. **переведён**:

<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
переведённый	переведённая	переведённое	переведённые ‘translated’

357 Perfective passive participles in -т

The masculine short form of the participle of certain categories of verb is made by removing the soft sign of the infinitive: **открыть** ‘to open’, participle **открыт**. The feminine, neuter and plural forms derive from the masculine by the addition of the endings **-а, -о, -ы**. The following types of verb are involved:

- (1) Verbs in **-отъ** (note stress change in participle):

смолóть ‘to grind’

смóлот, -а, -о, -ы

(2) Verbs in **-уть** (note stress change in participle):

протяну́ть ‘to stretch out’ **протя́нут, -а, -о, -ы**

Note

e is liable to mutate to **ë** under stress: заверну́ть ‘to wrap’, **завёрнут**; застегну́ть ‘to fasten’, **застёгнут**.

(3) Verbs in **-ыть**:

забы́ть ‘to forget’ **забы́т, -а, -о, -ы**

(4) Compounds of **бить, вить, лить, пить, шить**:

вы́шить ‘to embroider’ **вы́шит, -а, -о, -ы**
разби́ть ‘to smash’ **разби́т, -а, -о, -ы**

Note

(a) Зали́ть ‘to flood’: **за́лит, залита́, за́лито, за́литы** (likewise **проли́ть ‘to spill’: про́лит** etc.).

(b) Разви́ть ‘to develop’: **ра́звит/разви́т, развитá, ра́звито/разви́то, ра́звиты/разви́ты**.

(5) Verbs which introduce ‘**н**’ or ‘**м**’ in conjugation (**взять** ‘to take’, compounds of **деть** ‘to put’, **жать** ‘to press’, **клясть** ‘to curse’ and **-нять**, **начать** ‘to begin’, **распять** ‘to crucify’):

<i>Infinitive</i>		<i>First-person singular</i>	<i>Participle</i>
взять	‘to take’	возьму́	взят, -á, -о, -ы
занять	‘to occupy’	займу́	за́нят, -á, -о, -ы
начать	‘to begin’	начну́	нача́т, -á, -о, -ы
оде́ть	‘to dress’	оде́ну	оде́т, -а, -о, -ы
распять	‘to crucify’	распну́	распя́т, -а, -о, -ы
сжать	‘to compress’	сожму́	сжат, -а, -о, -ы
сжать	‘to reap’	сожну́	сжат, -а, -о, -ы
смять	‘to crumple’	сомну́	смят, -а, -о, -ы

Note

(a) Прокля́ть ‘to curse’, first-person singular прокляну́, participle **про́клят, -á, -о, -ы**. Compare *stem* stress in the adjective **про́клятый** ‘wretched’.

(b) Participles from all compounds of **-нять** have the same stress pattern as **за́нят** (except **сня́т, снята́, сня́то, сняты́** from **снять** ‘to take off’).

(6) Verbs in **-ереть** (note loss of second **-e-** in formation of participle):

заперётъ	‘to lock’	за́перт, -а́, -о, -ы
стерётъ	‘to erase’	сте́рт, -а, -о, -ы

(7) Others:

вы́брить	‘to shave’	вы́брит, -а, -о, -ы
спеть	‘to sing’	спет, -а, -о, -ы
прож́ить	‘to spend’ (time)	про́жит, прожита́, про́жито, про́житы

358 The long form of participles in -т

The long-form participle is formed by adding full adjectival endings to the masculine short form in **-т**, e.g. **оде́т**:

<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>	
оде́тый	оде́тая	оде́тое	оде́тые	‘dressed’

Note

Compare the participles **ра́звитый** (скóрость, **ра́звитая** тепловóзом ‘speed developed by a diesel locomotive’) and **разв́итый** (**разв́итая** пружина ‘uncoiled spring’), and the adjective **разв́итой** (**разв́ита́я** промь́шленность ‘highly developed industry’).

359 Functions of short-form participles

(1) Only passive participles have short forms. Active participles have long forms only.

(2) The short form of the imperfective passive participle is rarely used:

Э́тот писа́тель все́ми **лю́бим, уважа́ем**
‘This writer is loved and respected by everyone’

A reflexive verb or third-person plural is preferred instead:

Про́екты **финанси́руются** госуда́рством
‘Projects are financed by the state’

Э́того писа́теля **лю́бят и уважа́ют**
‘This writer is loved and respected’

(3) The short form of the **perfective** passive participle is very much used. It functions as predicate to the noun, with which it agrees in gender and number, and denotes:

(i) The completion of an action:

Война́ объявлена	‘War has been declared’
Флаг поднят	‘The flag has been hoisted’
Письмо́ подписано	‘The letter has been signed’

(ii) The existence of a state:

Дверь заперта́	‘The door is locked’
Телевизо́р включён	‘The television is on’

Note

(a) The participle may precede or follow the noun:

Укрошены́ некоторые́ опасные́ болезни́ (*Russia Today*)
‘Certain dangerous diseases **have been curbed**’

О́стров **превращён** в заказник (Lebedev)
‘The island **has been converted** into a nature reserve’

(b) It may also combine with forms of the verb **быть**:

Он то́лько что **был разбу́жен** гро́мким го́лосом Солоу́хи (Povoliaev)
‘He **had** just been **awakened** by Soloukha’s loud voice’

(Likewise, Он **бу́дет разбу́жен** ‘He will be awakened’, Он **был бы разбу́жен** ‘He would be/would have been awakened’, Рабо́ты должны́ **быть напеча́таны** ‘The essays have to be typed’.)

(c) The agent of the action may be rendered by an instrumental:

Письмо́ подписа́но **мини́стром**
‘The letter is signed by a minister’

360 Functions of long-form participles

Long-form participles, both active and passive, replace relative clauses beginning with **ко́торый** ‘who’, ‘which’.

(1) Active participles

Active participles relate to and qualify nouns which are the subject of an action or state. A comma appears between the noun and the following participle which qualifies it.

(i) The **present** active participle denotes an action which is simultaneous with the action or state denoted by the main verb:

Выставки, **рассказывающие** о предупреждении несчастных случаев, всегда вызывают большой интерес
 ‘Exhibitions **which describe** accident prevention always arouse great interest’

Note

The main verb may denote present *or* past action: Я **видел/вижу** собаку, бегущую по берегу ‘I saw/see a dog running along the shore’.

(ii) The **imperfective past** active participle denotes an action simultaneous with the action of a main verb in the *past tense*:

Женщина, **продававшая** яблоки, подошла к прохожему
 ‘The woman **who was selling** apples approached a passer-by’

(iii) The **perfective past** active participle denotes an action completed *prior to* the action of the main verb:

Медведя прогнал рабочий, **прибежавший** на берег с заряженным ружьём
 ‘The bear was chased off by a worker **who had come running** on to the shore with a loaded gun’

(2) Passive participles

Passive participles relate to and qualify nouns which are the natural **object** of the action denoted by the participle.

(i) The **imperfective** passive denotes an action which is simultaneous with the action of the main verb. The main verb may be in the present, past or future tense of either aspect. A *comma* appears between the noun and the participle which qualifies it:

Он писал статью	о предмете,	} изучаемом всеми учениками
Он написал статью	о предмете,	
Он пишет статью	о предмете,	
Он будет писать статью	о предмете,	
Он напишет статью	о предмете,	

(‘He was writing/wrote/is writing/will be writing/will write an article about a subject **studied** by all pupils’)

Note

The meaning expressed by the participle may be durative:

программа, **передаваемая** по радио
 ‘a programme **being broadcast** on the radio’

or habitual:

пéсни, **любíмые** наро́дом
'songs **loved** by the people'

(ii) The **perfective** passive participle denotes an action completed prior to the action of the main verb. A *comma* appears between the noun and the following participle which qualifies it:

Пересма́тривается програ́мма, **одо́бренная** министр́ами
'A programme **approved** by the ministers is being revised'

В прода́жу поступи́ла ма́рка, **выпу́щенная** в Финля́ндии
'A stamp **issued** in Finland has gone on sale'

361 Agreement of long-form participle and noun

(1) The long-form participle agrees with the noun it qualifies in gender, number and case. It differs in this respect from the relative pronoun **ко́торый**, which agrees with the noun in gender and number but *not* in case (the case of **ко́торый** being determined by the function it fulfils in the relative clause it introduces. See 123 (1) (ii)).

(i) Present active participle

Я зна́ю ма́льчика, пи́шущего пись́мо
'I know **the boy (who is) writing** the letter'

(ii) Past active participle

Я помога́ю учени́кам, провали́вшимся на экза́мене
'I am helping **the pupils who failed** the examination'

(iii) Imperfective passive participle

Э́то — де́вочка, любíмая все́ми
'That is **the girl liked** by everyone'

(iv) Perfective passive

Он пи́шет статью́ о **юношах, нака́занных** за хулига́нство
'He is writing an article about **the youths punished** for hooliganism'

(2) Long participles may *precede* the noun:

(i) If the participle is the noun's only qualifier and functions as an adjective:

спя́щий	ребёнок	'a sleeping child'
Спя́щая	краса́вица	'Sleeping Beauty'

замёрзшее озеро	‘a frozen lake’
Развалины разбомблённых городов (Granin)	‘The ruins of bombed towns’

Note

In some cases the participle may be qualified by an adverb:

хорошо оплачиваемые рабочие	‘well-paid workers’
вновь вышедший роман	‘a novel which has been republished’

(ii) A pronoun or noun may appear between the participle and the noun it qualifies:

спасённые им девочки	‘the girls rescued by him ’
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(iii) It is also possible, especially in literary and journalistic styles, for circumstantial detail to appear between the participle and the noun:

Сшедшие **с поезда** немногие пассажиры разошлись (Nosov)
‘The few passengers who had alighted **from the train** dispersed’

передаваемые **по телевизору** прогнозы погоды
‘weather forecasts transmitted **on TV**’

Двигался конвейер увиденных **в разное время** людей (Gagarin)
‘A panorama of people he had seen **at various times** passed before him’

362 Participial synonymy

(1) The imperfective passive participle may be synonymous with the present active participle of the corresponding reflexive verb:

слова, **употребляемые/употребляющиеся** в речи
‘the words **used** in a speech’

(2) The active participle is used if the verb (e.g. **строить** ‘to build’) has no passive participle:

строящееся здание ‘a building **under construction**’

(3) A ‘true’ reflexive cannot be used with passive meaning, however. Thus, одевающийся can only mean ‘who is dressing’ (but not *‘who is being dressed’).

(4) Where both types of participle are available, the passive participle is used when the *agent* is named:

слова, **употребляемые** (not *употребляющиеся) оратором в публичной речи
 ‘words **used** by an orator in a public speech’

363 Participles as adjectives and nouns

Many participles are also used as adjectives or nouns.

(1) Present active

(i) Adjectives:

блестящий	‘brilliant’
ведущий	‘leading’
выдающийся	‘outstanding’
далеко идущий	‘far-reaching’
подходящий	‘suitable’
следующий	‘next, following’
соответствующий	‘appropriate’
текущий	‘current’

(ii) Nouns:

курящий	‘smoker’
начинающий	‘beginner’
непьющий	‘tee-totaller’
трудящийся	‘worker’
учащийся	‘pupil, student’

(2) Past active

(i) Adjective:

бывший	‘former’
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(ii) Nouns:

пострадавший	‘a casualty’
сумасшедший	‘a madman’
умерший	‘the deceased’
целёвший	‘a survivor’

(3) Imperfective passive

вообража́емый	‘imaginary’
люби́мый	‘favourite’
терпи́мый	‘tolerable’
уважа́емый	‘respected’

Note

Many have negative prefixes, cf. English equivalents in -ble:

невыно́сймый	‘unbearable’
незабыва́емый	‘unforgettable’
необходи́мый	‘indispensable’

A number derive from perfective stems:

незаменя́мый	‘irreplaceable’
(не)излечи́мый	‘(in)curable’
неоспори́мый	‘indisputable’
непобеди́мый	‘invincible’
(не)совмести́мый	‘(in)compatible’

or intransitive verbs:

незави́симый	‘independent’
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A few are used as nouns:

обвиня́емый	‘the accused’
содержи́мое	‘contents’ (of a receptacle)

(4) Perfective passive

заклучённый	‘convict’
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364 Participial adjectives

(1) A number of long adjectives of participial origin differ from long-form participles:

(i) In having no prefix.

(ii) In having one **-н-** instead of two:

варёное яйцо́	‘a boiled egg’
жа́ренная карто́шка	‘fried potatoes’
кра́шенный пол	‘a painted floor’

(не)писа́ный зако́н	‘a(n) (un)written law’
суше́ные фрукты	‘dried fruit’

Note

- (a) Adjectives based on second-conjugation verbs in **-ить** with mobile stress in conjugation tend to have suffix **-ён-**.
- (b) If circumstantial detail is added, *participles* must be used: **ра́ненный** в но́гу солда́т ‘a soldier wounded in the leg’ (cf. ра́ненный солда́т ‘wounded soldier’), **сва́ренное** в кастрю́льке яйцо́ ‘an egg boiled in a saucepan’ (cf. варе́ное яйцо́ ‘boiled egg’).
- (2) Some of the adjectives have the suffix **-т-**:

кры́тый ры́нок	‘covered market’
небри́тое лицо́	‘unshaven face’

К обе́ду мы яви́лись в **мя́той** оде́жде (Nikolaev)
 ‘We appeared for lunch in crumpled clothing’

- (3) Others function as adjectival nouns: **кра́деное** ‘stolen goods’.

365 Distinction between short-form adjectives and short-form participles

Certain short adjectives differ from short-form participles in having the suffix **-ни-** in their feminine, neuter and plural forms by contrast with **-н-** in the participle:

озабо́чен, озабо́чен**на**, озабо́чен**но**, озабо́чен**ны** (adj.)
 озабо́чен, озабо́чен**а**, озабо́чен**о**, озабо́чен**ы** (part.)

Compare

Глаза́ его́ бы́ли **озабо́ченны** (adj.)
 ‘His eyes were troubled’

and

Она́ была́ **озабо́чена** (part.) отъездо́м ма́тери
 ‘She was upset by her mother’s departure’

Likewise, Его́ речь бы́ла **сде́ржана** (adj.) ‘His speech was restrained’, but Во́да бы́ла **сде́ржана** (part.) плоти́ной ‘The water was contained by a dam’. A similar distinction is made between **образова́н, -а, -о, -ы** ‘has been formed’ (part.) and **образова́н, -нна, -нно, -нны** ‘educated’ (adj.),

ограни́чен, -а, -о, -ы ‘limited’ (part.) and **ограни́чен, -нна, -нно, -нны** ‘hide-bound’ (adj.), **рассе́ян, -а, -о, -ы** ‘dispersed’ (part.) and **рассе́ян, -нна, -нно, -нны** ‘absent-minded’ (adj.).

366 Impersonal function of short-form participles

(1) The neuter short forms of the perfective passive participles of certain verbs can be used impersonally:

— Здесь за́нято?	‘Is this place occupied?’
За всё запла́чено	‘Everything has been paid for’
В ваго́не бы́ло битко́м наби́то	‘The carriage was packed’
В за́ле наку́рено	‘The hall is smoke-filled’
Ку́шать по́дано	‘Dinner is served’
С доски́ сте́рто	‘The board has been cleaned’
С ве́чера не у́брано бы́ло со стола́ (Rasputin)	‘The table had not been cleared since the previous evening’
Вам отка́зано в про́сьбе	‘Your request has been refused’

(2) Imperfective participles of this type are found in colloquial speech (mainly in the negative):

Давно́ **не то́плено**
‘The heating has not been on for a long time’

Compare Пол **не мыт** ‘The floor has not been washed’, Бельё **не гла́жено** ‘The washing has not been ironed’.

Note

Impersonal usage in **Прика́зано** оста́ться ‘We have been instructed to stay’, **Кому́́ это́ ска́зано?** ‘How many times do I have to tell you?’, and the phrase **Ска́зано — сде́лано** ‘No sooner said than done’.

Gerunds

367 The gerund. Introductory comments

(1) Gerunds (or ‘verbal adverbs’) are *indeclinable* forms of the verb that substitute for co-ordinate or adverbial clauses in ‘and’, ‘when’, ‘since’, ‘by’, ‘without’ etc.

(2) Gerunds, like active participles, have English equivalents in ‘-ing’, but participles are adjectival in form, agree in gender, case and number with the noun they qualify and replace relative clauses in **кто́рый** (see 360), while gerunds are invariable. Compare the use of the *participle* in

‘the **weeping** boy’ (= the boy **who is weeping**): **пла́чущий** ма́льчик
with the use of the *gerund* in

‘he sits **weeping**’ (= **and weeps**): он си́дит, **пла́ча**

(3) There are imperfective and perfective gerunds.

368 Formation of the imperfective gerund

Most imperfective gerunds are formed by adding **-я** (-а after **ж, ч, ш** or **щ**) to the present-tense stem of the verb (see 212):

говоря́т	говор-	говоря́	‘speaking’
ды́шат	дыш-	дыша́	‘breathing’
несу́т	нес-	неся́	‘carrying’
пла́чут	плач-	пла́ча	‘weeping’
требу́ют	требу-	требу́я	‘demanding’
чита́ют	чита-	чита́я	‘reading’

Note

(a) **Дава́ть** and compounds, compounds of **-знава́ть**, **-ставя́ть** form gerunds as follows: **вставя́я** ‘rising’, **дава́я** ‘giving’:

— Извини́те, у меня́ дела́, — сказа́л Неша́тов, **вставя́я** со сту́ла (Grekova)

“‘Excuse me, I have something to attend to,’ said Neshatov, **getting up** from his chair’

(b) The gerund from **махáть** ‘to wave’ has alternative forms: **махя́я** and **маша́**. Similarly, **брызга́ть**, **брызжа́** ‘playing’ (of a fountain), **брызга́я** ‘sprinkling’ (water on ironing etc.). **Ка́пать** ‘to drip’ has **ка́пая**, **сы́пать** ‘to strew’ has **сы́пя**.

(c) **Бы́ть** has the gerund **бу́дучи** ‘being’:

Он прие́хал в Ло́ндон давно́, ещё́ **бу́дучи** солда́том
‘He arrived in London long ago **when he was** still a soldier’

(d) **Е́дучи** from **еха́ть** ‘to travel’ is sometimes found in poetic or folk speech; **припева́ючи** is used in the phrase **жить припева́ючи** ‘to live in clover’.

- (e) Imperfective gerunds from reflexive verbs take the ending **-сь**: **жа́луясь** from **жа́ловаться** ‘to complain’.

369 Stress in the imperfective gerund

Stress in the gerund is normally as in the first-person singular:

голосова́ть	‘to vote’	голосу́ю	‘I vote’	голосу́я	‘voting’
держа́ть	‘to hold’	держу́	‘I hold’	держа́	‘holding’
кури́ть	‘to smoke’	курю́	‘I smoke’	кура́	‘smoking’
смотре́ть	‘to look’	смотрю́	‘I look’	смотре́я	‘looking’
шепта́ть	‘to whisper’	шепчу́	‘I whisper’	шепча́	‘whispering’

Note

Глядя́ ‘looking’, **ле́жа** ‘lying’, **си́дя** ‘sitting’ and **сто́я** ‘standing’ have *stem* stress despite *end* stress in conjugation: Бараба́нов, **сто́я** на однём колёне, дошнуровывал б́утсы (Vanshenkin) ‘Barabanov was kneeling to finish lacing his boots’.

370 Verbs with no imperfective gerund

Many verbs have no imperfective gerund. These include the following:

- (1) **Бежа́ть** ‘to run’, **бита́** ‘to strike’, **вита́** ‘to twine’, **врата́** ‘to lie’, **гни́ть** ‘to rot’, **дра́ть** ‘to flay’, **е́сть** ‘to eat’, **е́хать** ‘to travel’ (see, however, 368 note (d)), **жа́ждать** ‘to hunger for’, **жа́ть** ‘to press’, **жда́ть** ‘to wait’, **лгата́** ‘to lie’, **лезте́** ‘to climb’, **лита́** ‘to pour’, **мя́ть** ‘to crumple’, **пе́ть** ‘to sing’, **пита́** ‘to drink’, **рв́ать** ‘to tear’, **сла́ть** ‘to send’, **стона́ть** ‘to groan’, **тка́ть** ‘to weave’, **хоте́ть** ‘to want’, **шита́** ‘to sew’.

Note

Gerunds from some other verbs are rarely used: **бера́** from **брати́** ‘to take’, **гона́** from **гна́ть** ‘to drive’, **зова́** from **звати́** ‘to call’, **плыва́** from **плы́ть** ‘to swim’. **Носа́** from **носи́ть** ‘to carry’ and **хода́** from **ходи́ть** ‘to go’ are rarely found; cf., however, compound **прино́ся** ‘bringing’ etc.

- (2) First-conjugation consonant-stem verbs with **с: ш, з: ж** mutation (e.g. **писа́ть** ‘to write’, **ре́зать** ‘to cut’, see 217 (2)).
- (3) Verbs in **-чь**.

(4) Verbs in **-ереть**.

(5) Verbs with the suffix **-ну-** (**гáснуть** ‘to go out’ etc.).

371 Compensation for the lack of an imperfective gerund

(1) If a primary verb has no imperfective gerund it is often possible to form one from its synonym. Thus, **мочь** ‘to be able’ has no gerund, but **быть в состоянии** ‘to be capable of’ does: **бúдучи в состоянии** ‘being able to’. Likewise, **хотéть** ‘to want’ has no gerund, but **желáть** ‘to wish’ does (**желáя** ‘wishing, wanting’):

Желáя скорéе уéхать, он торопíлся закончítь рабóту
 ‘**Wishing** to get away as soon as possible he hastened to finish his work’

(2) Other primaries with no gerund have a synonymous secondary imperfective from which a gerund may be formed:

<i>Primary verb</i>	<i>Secondary imperfective</i>	<i>Gerund</i>	
есть	сѣдáть	сѣдáя	‘eating’
éхать	проезжáть	проезжáя	‘travelling’
ждать	ожидáть	ожидáя	‘waiting’
жечь	сжигáть	сжигáя	‘burning’
петь	распевáть	распевáя	‘singing’
пить	выпивáть	выпивáя	‘drinking’
рвать	разрывáть	разрывáя	‘tearing up’
слать	посылáть	посылáя	‘sending’
тереть	вытирáть	вытирáя	‘wiping’

Кóстя Пимурзjá весь извёлся, **ожидáя** нас (Nikolaev)
 ‘Kostya Pimurzia suffered agonies waiting for us’

372 The perfective gerund: formation (verbs in **-ть, -сть** (д-stems))

(1) The perfective gerund is formed from verbs in **-ть** by replacing the perfective infinitive ending by **-в**:

написáв	‘having written’
пострóбив	‘having built’
промóкнув	‘having got soaked’

(2) Likewise, gerunds from verbs in **-сть** (д-stems only: **присесть** ‘to sit down for a while’, **украсть** ‘to steal’, **упасть** ‘to fall’):

присев ‘having sat down for a while’

373 Reflexive perfective gerunds

Reflexive perfective gerunds have the ending **-вшись**:

вернувшись ‘having returned’
умывшись ‘having washed’

Note

Опершись from **опереться** ‘to lean on’ (cf. figurative usage: **опервшись** на инициативу масс ‘relying on the initiative of the masses’); similarly, **вторгшись** ‘having invaded’ from **вторгнуться**, **вытершись** ‘having dried oneself’, **запершись** ‘having locked oneself in’.

374 Perfective gerunds with alternative forms in **-я/-а**

(1) Some perfective gerunds have alternative forms in **-в** and **-я/-а**, the forms in **-в** generally being preferred in written styles:

заметив/заметя ‘having noticed’
увидев/увидя ‘having seen’

(2) The forms in **-я/-а** are common with reflexive verbs: **возвратясь/возвратившись** (**вернувшись**) ‘having returned’, **встретясь/встретившись** ‘having met’, **прищурясь/прищурившись** ‘screwing up one’s eyes’:

Я ждал, **прислонясь** к стене (Granin)
 ‘I waited, **leaning** against a wall’

Возвратившись к себе на квартиру, она села в своё любимое кресло у окна (Litvinova)
 ‘Returning to her flat, she sat in her favourite armchair by the window’

375 Gerunds from perfective verbs in **-ти** and **-сть**

Gerunds from most perfective verbs in **-ти** and (except for д-stems, see 372) **-сть** are formed by replacing the final two letters of the third-person plural of the verb by **-я**:

пройд-ут	пройд-я	‘having passed’
сойд-ут	сойд-я	‘having descended’

Likewise, **изобретя** ‘having invented’ from изобрести, **подметя** ‘having swept’ from подмести, **принеся** ‘having brought’ from принести, **разбредясь** ‘having wandered off in different directions’ from разбрестись (cf. also **учтя** ‘having taken into consideration’ from учёсть):

Принеся самовар и заварив чай, Дарья наконец заговорила (Rasputin)

‘**Having brought in** the samovar and made the tea Dar’ia finally began to speak’

Note

Compounds of грести, пасти, расти and цвести have perfective gerunds in **-ши**: **выросши** ‘having grown up’ from вырасти, **расцвётши** ‘having blossomed’ from расцвести, **сгрёбши** ‘having raked together’ from сгрести, **спасши** ‘having saved’ from спасти.

376 Gerunds from perfective verbs in **-чь** and **-зть**

Gerunds from perfective verbs in **-чь** and **-зть** are formed by adding **-ши** to the masculine past tense of the verb: **вылезши** ‘having climbed out’ from вылезть, **испёкши** ‘having baked’ from испечь, **сжёгши** ‘having burnt’ from сжечь.

377 Functions of the gerunds

Gerunds replace co-ordinate clauses or adverbial clauses of time, manner, cause, condition etc. They are found mainly in written Russian, co-ordinate or adverbial clauses (English equivalents enclosed in parentheses in the following examples) being preferred in speech.

(1) Imperfective gerunds

The imperfective gerund denotes an action which is simultaneous to the action of the main verb. Either the two actions run in parallel or one interrupts the other. The following meanings are conveyed by the gerund:

Он сидит, **читая**

‘He sits **reading**’ (= and reads)

Он бежит, тяжело дыша́

'He is running along, **breathing** (= and breathes) heavily'

Читая́, записы́ваю незнако́мые слова́

'**When reading** (= when I read) I make a note of words I do not know'

Поднима́ясь по ле́стнице, она́ упала́

'**While going up** (= when/while/as she was going up) the stairs, she fell'

Занима́ясь аэро́бикой, укреплю́ здоро́вье

'**By doing** aerobics (= if I do) I shall improve my fitness'

Бо́ясь грозы́, я поспеши́л домо́й

'**Fearing** (= since I feared) a thunderstorm I hurried home'

На ста́нции, когда́ две́ри раскры́лись, она́ ви́сочила и побежа́ла по платфо́рме, не переста́вая крича́ть (Litvinova)

'At the station, when the doors opened, she jumped out and ran along the platform, shouting all the time'

(2) Perfective gerunds

(i) The perfective gerund describes an action which is completed prior to the action denoted by the main verb:

Написа́в письмо́, он лёг спать

'**Having written** (= when, after he had written) the letter he went to bed'

Не поня́в вопро́са, она́ растеря́лась

'**Not having understood** (= since she had not understood) the question she got confused'

Примени́в но́вый ме́тод, брига́да смо́жет перевы́полнить но́рму

'**By using** (= if it uses) the new method, the work-team will be able to over-fulfil its norm'

(ii) The perfective gerund may also denote a state resulting from the completion of an action:

Он сиде́л, вы́тянув но́ги

'He sat, **stretching out** (= having stretched out) his legs'

Note

Care must be taken to resolve English ambiguity in rendering verb forms in -ing. Compare

'**Stepping** (= as she was stepping) off the pavement she tripped and fell'

Сходя́ (impf. gerund) с тротуа́ра, она́ споткну́лась и упала́

and

‘**Stepping** (= **having** stepped) off the pavement she crossed the road’
Сойдя (pf. gerund) с тротуára, она перешла дорогу

378 Special features of constructions with gerunds

Certain features are characteristic of constructions with gerunds:

(1) The subject of the gerund and the subject of the main clause are the same:

Вернувшись домой, он поставил самовар
‘Having returned home he put on the samovar’

Возвращаясь домой, я попал под дождь
‘While returning home I got caught in the rain’

Note

- (a) In this example the main clause could *not* be replaced by the synonymous Меня застиг дождь ‘I got caught in the rain’, since this would involve a change in subject.
- (b) The gerund is not normally used in conjunction with an impersonal phrase; thus one should write *not* *Подходя к лесу, мне стало холодно, but Когда я подходил к лесу, мне стало холодно ‘As I approached the forest I felt cold’. Impersonal constructions involving *infinitives* may, however, sometimes combine with gerunds: Выполняя это упражнение, можно пользоваться словарём ‘When doing this exercise you may use a dictionary’. (Note, however, that an alternative rendering: Выполняя это упражнение, обращайтесь к словарю ‘When doing this exercise, consult the dictionary’ observes the principle of identity of subject in both clauses.)
- (c) A gerund should be avoided when the subject of the main clause appears in a passive construction, since in such cases the *grammatical* subject of the main clause is not the *logical* subject. Thus, После того как он перелез (rather than перелезши) через забор, он был задержан сторожами ‘Having climbed over the fence, he was detained by guards’.
- (2) A comma separates the main clause from the clause in which the gerund appears:

Он говорил, стараясь сохранять хладнокровие
‘He spoke, trying to retain his composure’

Прочита́в письмо́, он **спря́тал** его́ в ящи́к
 ‘Having read the letter he hid it in a drawer’

(3) The verb in the main clause may be in any tense and either aspect:

Возвраща́ясь с заво́да, я **встреча́л/встрети́л/встреча́ю/бúду** (ча́сто)
встреча́ть/встрече́чу И́ру
 ‘When returning from the factory **I used to meet/met/meet/will** (often)
meet/will meet Ira’

Верну́вшись домо́й, он **ста́вил/постáвил/ста́вит/бúдет ста́вить/**
постáвит самова́р
 ‘Returning home, **he used to put on/put on/puts on/will put on the**
samovar’

Compare

Он **просыпа́лся** по утра́м и, **откры́в** фо́рточку, **начина́л** в ри́тме
 разма́хивать рука́ми (Трофи́мов)
 ‘He **would wake up** in the morning and, **opening** the casement window,
begin rhythmically to swing his arms’

Note

The use of the perfective gerund **откры́в** shows that the actions of opening the window and swinging the arms were sequential (imperfective **открыва́я** would suggest that they were simultaneous).

379 Reversal of the sequence of actions expressed by main verb and gerund

Occasionally the action denoted by the verb in the main clause *precedes* that denoted by the gerund:

Он вы́шел, **хло́пнув** двéрью ‘He went out, slamming the door’

This construction should *not*, however, be regarded as the norm.

380 Gerunds as other parts of speech

Some gerunds or former gerunds also function as other parts of speech, in particular prepositions and adverbs.

(1) Imperfective:

благодаря́	‘thanks to’ (+ dat.; cf. благодаря́ as gerund + acc.)
исключая́	‘excluding, except for’
кра́дучись	‘stealthily’
мо́лча	‘silently’
не счита́я	‘not counting’
не теря́я вре́мени	‘without delay’
су́дя по	‘judging by’ (cf. gerund судя́)

Note

- (a) Some phrases are compounded with the gerund **говоря́: откровенно говоря́** ‘frankly speaking’, **стро́го говоря́** ‘strictly speaking’, **не говоря́ уже́** ‘let alone, to say nothing of’ etc.:

Общество предоставляет им библиотеки, музеи, **не говоря́ уже́** о театрах и кино (Kovaleva)
 ‘Society puts at their disposal libraries and museums, to say nothing of theatres and cinemas’

- (b) Other phrases include **отвечать не задумываясь** ‘to answer without hesitation’, **говорить заика́ясь** ‘to stammer’, **не покладая́ рук** ‘tirelessly’, **не спеша́** ‘unhurriedly’, **нехотя́** ‘reluctantly’.

(2) **Perfective** (mainly in set phrases involving gerunds in **-я/-а**; see 374):

слу́шать рази́ня рот	‘to listen open-mouthed’
сказа́ть положа́ ру́ку на́ сердце	‘to say hand on heart’
рабо́тать спу́стя рукава́	‘to work in a slipshod fashion’
согласи́ться скрепя́ се́рдце	‘to agree reluctantly’
сиде́ть сложá ру́ки	‘to sit twiddling one’s thumbs’

Note also the preposition **спу́стя**: **неде́лю спу́стя** ‘a week later’. See 439 (2)(i).

The Adverb

381 Introductory comments

- (1) Adverbs are indeclinable forms that modify verbs ('he writes *well*'), adjectives ('*surprisingly* good'), other adverbs ('*extremely* quickly') or nouns ('reading *aloud*').
- (2) They answer questions such as '**where?**', '**when?**', '**how?**', '**why?**', '**for what purpose?**', '**to what extent?**'
- (3) A feature of Russian adverbs is that they all derive from other parts of speech (though in the case of most primary adverbs (**так** 'thus', там 'there', **тогда́** 'then' etc.) the principle of their formation is no longer clear).
- (4) The most productive types of adverb are those which derive from **adjectives**. They also derive from **nouns**, **verbs**, **numerals** and **pronouns**.

382 Adverbs derived from adjectives

- (1) Adverbs in -o/-e
- (i) Most adverbs derived from descriptive adjectives are identical with the neuter adjectival short form in **-o/-e** (see **159, 161, 164**):

Long adjective
высо́кий 'high'

Adverb
высоко́ 'high up'

гладкий ‘smooth’	гладко ‘smoothly’
красивый ‘beautiful’	красиво ‘beautifully’
внешний ‘external’	внешне ‘externally’
искренний ‘sincere’	искренне ‘sincerely’
крайний ‘extreme’	крайне ‘extremely’

(ii) In some cases, however, there is a difference in stress, cf. **больно́** (neuter short adjective) ‘is sick’ and **бóльно** (adverb) ‘painfully, it hurts’; **мало́** (neuter short adjective) ‘too small’ and **ма́ло** (adverb) ‘not much’.

Note

- (a) Soft-ending adjectives **да́вний** ‘long-standing’, **пóздний** ‘late’ and **ра́нный** ‘early’ have hard-ending adverbs **давно́** ‘long ago’, **пóздно** ‘late, it is (too) late’, **ра́но** ‘early, it is (too) early’. Note that whereas **ра́нный** has double **н**, **ра́но** has only one.
- (b) Adverbs in **-о/-е** also derive from participles: **неожíданно** ‘unexpectedly’ from **неожíданный**, **угрожа́юще** ‘threateningly’ from **угрожа́ющий**.

(2) Adverbs based on **по-** + dative singular of the adjective

Adverbs of manner of the type **по-** + the dative masculine/neuter singular of the adjective derive from adjectives in **-ый/-ий/-ой** which have no adverb in **-о/-е** (e.g. **друго́й** ‘different’, **но́вый** ‘new’, **пре́жний** ‘former’):

по-друго́му	‘in a different way’
по-настоя́щему	‘in a proper fashion’
по-но́вому	‘in a new way’
по-пре́жнему	‘as before’
по-ра́зному	‘in various ways’

(3) Adverbs in **-и**

(i) Adverbs from adjectives in **-ский/-цкий** (mostly adverbs of manner) take the ending **-и**: thus **бра́тски** ‘fraternally’, **дура́цки** ‘foolishly, in a foolish way’, **логи́чески** ‘logically’ etc.

(ii) Those with animate connotations, including all which denote nationality, may take the prefix **по-**: **ко́фе по-туре́цки** ‘coffee Turkish style’, **по-ле́нински** ‘after the style of Lenin’, **по-ру́сски** ‘in Russian, in the Russian style’.

(iii) In some contexts, prefixed and unprefixed variants are synonymous: **бра́тски/по-бра́тскн** **похло́пать по плечу́** ‘to slap on the shoulder in a

brotherly fashion', **герóйски/по-герóйски** вести себя 'to behave in a heroic way', **дéтски/по-дéтски** доверчивый 'as trusting as a child':

В Нóвый год óсóбенно сердéчно и **по-дру́жески/дру́жески** мы вспомина́ем сотни имéи знако́мых люде́й
'At New Year we recall, in a particularly cordial and friendly way, the names of hundreds of acquaintances'

(iv) In most cases, however, choice is dictated by usage: **дру́жески** подмигну́ть 'to wink in a friendly manner', **звéрски** голо́дный 'ravenously hungry', **по-дéтски** обиде́лся 'he took childish offence'.

Note

- (a) While forms with **по-** answer the implied question **подо́бно кому́/чему́?** 'similar to whom/what?', forms without **по-** answer the questions **как/каки́м о́бразом?** 'how/in what way?'
- (b) Adverbs in **-ически** cannot combine with **по-**.

(4) Adverbs in **-ьи**

Adverbs from adjectives of the type **во́лчий** 'wolf's' (see 151 (1)) take the ending **-ьи**, and are prefixed **по-**: Он **по-медве́жьи** неуклю́ж 'He is as clumsy as a bear', Он **по-соба́чьи** пре́дан своему́ хозя́ину 'He displays a dog-like devotion to his master'.

(5) Adverbs based on preposition + the oblique case of an adjective

(i) Most adverbs of this type consist of a preposition + the fossilized oblique case of a short adjective, run together to form a single word (e.g. **с** + old genitive ***права** = **спра́ва** 'on, from the right'). The adverbs denote variously location, time, manner and extent:

вско́ре	'soon'
(раздева́ться) дого́ла	'(to strip oneself) naked'
(вытира́ть) до́суха	'(to rub) dry'
издалека́	'from a distance'
сле́ва	'on, from the left'
сно́ва	'again'

(ii) A smaller number of adverbs consist of the preposition **в** + the feminine accusative of a long adjective:

вплотну́ю	'right up close to'
вручну́ю	'by hand'
(летéть) вслепу́ю	'(to fly) blind'

383 Adverbs derived from nouns

(1) Adverbs based on the oblique cases of nouns

(i) Many adverbs have the form of the **instrumental singular** of a noun. The adverbs denote location or manner:

верхóм	‘on horseback’
дáром	‘free, for nothing’
рýдом	‘next door, adjacent’
шёпотом	‘in a whisper’

Note

- (a) End stress in the adverb **кругóм** ‘around’ and stem stress in the instrumental of the noun **круг (крýгом)** and in the phrase **голова́ идёт крýгом** ‘my head is spinning’.
- (b) Some adverbs derive from no-longer extant nouns: **óптом** ‘wholesale’, **óщупью** ‘gropingly’, **пешкóм** ‘on foot’, **укрáдкой** ‘furtively’.
- (c) Instrumentals are also used to denote the time of day and the season of the year (see 97 (2) (i), (ii)).

(ii) Other adverbs derived from nouns include **вчерá** ‘yesterday’ (also **позавчерá** ‘the day before yesterday’), **дóма** ‘at home’, **домóй** ‘home(wards)’, **зáвтра** ‘tomorrow’ (also **пóслезáвтра** ‘the day after tomorrow’), **óчень** ‘very, very much’ (**Я óчень** люблю мороженое ‘I am very fond of ice-cream’), **сегóдня** ‘today’.

(2) Adverbs based on preposition-noun phrases

(i) The preposition appears as a separate word in some phrases (**в придáчу** ‘into the bargain’, **на днях** ‘the other day’, **на ходу́** ‘while on the move’), but in most cases preposition and noun are run together. The prepositions **в, на, по** + dative, **с** + genitive are particularly common in this type of formation. All oblique cases are represented:

(a) Accusative:

вслух	‘aloud’
наоборóт	‘on the contrary’

(b) Genitive:

íздали	‘from afar’
свёрху	‘from above’

(c) Dative:

кста́ти	‘apropos’
побли́зости	‘in the vicinity’

(d) Instrumental:

сли́шком	‘too’
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(e) Prepositional:

вме́сте	‘together’
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(ii) Some adverbs appear in pairs, one denoting location and the other destination or goal:

вдали́/вдаль	‘in/into the distance’
внизу́/вниз	‘downstairs’ (location/direction)
внутри́/внутри́	‘inside’ (location/direction)
впередí/вперёд	‘in front/forwards’
за границей́/за границу́	‘abroad’ (location/direction)
наверху́/наверх	‘upstairs’ (location/direction)

*Note*Compare **за́мужем за** + instrumental ‘married to’ and **выходи́ть/вы́йти за́муж за** + accusative ‘to get married’ (of a woman).(iii) Some prepositional phrases involve *two* nouns:

бок о́ бок	‘cheek by jowl’
вре́мя от вре́мени	‘from time to time’
лицо́м к лицу́	‘face to face’

384 Adverbs derived from verbsSome adverbs are based on imperfective gerunds (see also **380** (1)):

кра́дучись	‘stealthily’
не́хотя	‘reluctantly’

Others are based on perfective gerunds, often as part of an adverbial phrase:

сломя́ го́лову	‘at breakneck speed’
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See also **380** (2).

385 Adverbs derived from numerals

Adverbs derived from numerals include the series

вдвоём/втроём/вчетвером . . .

‘two/three/four together . . .’

во-первых/во-вторых/в-третьих . . .

‘in the first/second/third place . . .’

однажды/дважды/трижды . . .

‘once/twice/thrice . . .’

as well as **впервые** ‘for the first time’, **наедине** ‘in private, alone (with)’, and the phrase **один на один** ‘tête-à-tête’.

386 Adverbs derived from pronouns

A number of adverbs are based on:

(i) The demonstrative pronouns **этот** ‘this’, **тот** ‘that’, **сей** ‘this’:

затём	‘afterwards’
потом	‘then, afterwards’
поэтому	‘for that reason, therefore’
сейчас	‘now’
с тех пор/до тех пор/до сих пор	‘since then/until then/hitherto’

Note

- (a) **Потом** and **затём** are synonymous in referring to sequential actions, though **потом** is commoner: **Куплю билет, потом/затём** зайду к приятелю ‘I shall buy a ticket, **then** call on a friend’. **Потом** is also used in the meaning ‘afterwards, in a little while’: **Я сделаю это потом** ‘I’ll do that later’. In colloquial registers it can be governed by a preposition (отложить **на потом** ‘to put off until afterwards’) and can also be used colloquially in the meaning ‘besides’: **Не хочу я ехать, а потом** у меня и времени нет ‘I don’t want to go, and besides I don’t have any time’. **Затём** can also denote purpose: **Поговорим, ведь я затём** и пришёл ‘Let’s talk, after all that’s the reason I have come’, **Я пришёл (затём)**, чтобы поговорить ‘I have come (in order) to have a chat’.
- (b) **Теперь** ‘now’ is more limited in meaning and usage than **сейчас**, which can refer to the past and future, as well as to the present: **О чём**

они́ говори́ли **сейча́с**? ‘What were they talking about **just now**?’, Я бу́ду с ва́ми **сейча́с** ‘I’ll be with you **in a minute**’, Что вы де́лаете **сейча́с/тепе́рь**? ‘What are you doing **now**?’

- (ii) The pronoun **что** ‘what’: **заче́м**? ‘for what purpose?’, **почему́**? ‘why?’ Compare

За́чем вклю́чили свет? — Чтòбы мо́жно бы́ло чита́ть
‘Why have you switched on the light? So as to be able to read’
(purpose)

and

Почему́ вклю́чили свет? — У́же темно́
‘Why have you switched on the light? Because it’s dark’ (cause)

- (iii) The possessive pronouns **мой, твой, свой, наш, ваш**:

по-мо́ему/по-тво́ему	‘in my opinion/in your opinion’ (familiar)
по-на́шему/по-ва́шему	‘in our opinion/in your opinion’ (formal)

Note

- (a) The difference in stress between **по-мо́ему, по-тво́ему**, and the dative case of the possessive pronouns (**моему́, тво́ему**).
- (b) ‘In his/her/their opinion’ are rendered as **по егò/её/их мнèнию**.
- (c) **По-сво́ему** means ‘in one’s own way’: Он всё де́лает **по-сво́ему** ‘He does everything in his own way’.

- (iv) **Весь** ‘all’:

вездé/всю́ду; отовсю́ду	‘everywhere; from everywhere’
весьма́	‘extremely’
совсе́м	‘quite’

Note

Compare **Э́то не совсе́м пра́вда** ‘That’s **not quite** true’ and **Э́то совсе́м не пра́вда** ‘That’s **not at all** true’.

387 Primary spatial adverbs

- (1) **Где** ‘where’, **здесь** ‘here’ and **там** ‘there’ denote location:

Где вы раба́таете?	‘Where do you work?’
Я раба́таю здесь ; он раба́тает там	‘I work here’; ‘he works there’

Note

Тут ‘here’ is more colloquial than **здесь** and can also have a temporal meaning, e.g. **Тут** рассказчик замолчал ‘Here the narrator fell silent’.

(2) **Куда** ‘where’ (to), **сюда** ‘here’ and **туда** ‘there’ indicate direction:

Куда вы идёте?	‘Where are you going?’
Идите сюда !	‘Come here!’
Туда идёт автобус нoмер пять	‘The number 5 bus goes there’

(3) **Откуда** ‘from where’, **отсюда** ‘from here’ and **оттуда** ‘from there’ indicate withdrawal:

Откуда он пришёл?	‘Where has he come from?’
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Note

Откуда вы знаете? ‘How do you know?’

388 Primary adverbs of time

(1) **Тогда** ‘then’

Тогда ‘then, at that time’ must be differentiated from **потом/затем** ‘then, afterwards’. Compare

Тогда я жил на севере
‘I lived in the north **then**/at that time’

and

Сначала думай, **потом** говори
‘First think, **then** speak’

(2) **Когда/как** ‘when/as’

(i) **Когда** or **в то время как** are preferred to **как** in rendering ‘as’ (= ‘when’) in clauses of time:

Когда/в то время как я шёл по дороге, я встретил старого знакомого
‘As I was walking down the road I met an old acquaintance’

(ii) However, **как** is used with verbs of perception (**видеть** ‘to see’, **слышать** ‘to listen’, **слышать** ‘to hear’, **смотреть** ‘to watch’):

Смотрим, **как** дети играют
‘We watch the children playing’

Я слýшаю, **как** она поёт
‘I listen to her singing’

(iii) **Ждать** ‘to wait’ and **любить** ‘to like’ govern object clauses introduced by **когда**:

Жду, **когда** вы кончите
‘I am waiting for you to finish’

Люблю, **когда** ты поёшь нарóдные пёсни
‘I like you to sing folk songs’

Note

For constructions with **слýчай** ‘case’ see 311 (2).

(3) Как/как вдруг ‘when suddenly/than’

(i) **Как** (or **как вдруг**) is used to introduce a sudden or unexpected action, often interrupting another action:

Я как раз гла́дил брю́ки, **как вдруг** погас свет
‘I was just ironing my trousers **when suddenly** the light went out’

(ii) The main clause in such constructions is often introduced by a negative:

Не прошёл он и десяти шагов, **как** раздался вы́стрел
‘He had not taken ten paces **when** a shot rang out’

(iii) Frequently the verb (**не**) **успеть** or the conjunction **едва́** is involved in such constructions:

Не (or **Едва́**) **успёл** я наж́ать кно́пку, **как** дверь распахну́лась
‘I had not had time (had hardly had time) to press the button when the door flew open’

Едва́ я вы́шел на у́лицу, **как** пошёл си́льный дождь
‘**Hardly** had I gone out on to the street **than** it began raining heavily’

Note

See also 466–467 for further examples of adverbial clauses of time.

389 Ужé, ужé не

(1) **Ужé** ‘already’ is far commoner in Russian than ‘already’ in English, which often has no equivalent in indicating the early implementation or completion of an action:

Он пришёл **ужé** вчера́
‘He arrived yesterday/as early as yesterday’

(2) **Уже** is particularly important in clarifying tense sequence:

Демонстранты **уже** разбежались, когда приехала оперативная машина

‘The demonstrators **had already** dispersed when the squad car arrived’

Note

Without **уже** the above sentence means ‘The demonstrators dispersed **when** the squad car arrived’.

(3) **Уже не** (or **больше не**) means ‘no longer, not any more’: Он **уже не/больше не** работает здесь ‘He doesn’t work here any more’.

Note

Уже нет replaces **уже не** in the absence of a predicate: Он работает здесь? **Уже нет** ‘Does he work here? Not any more’.

390 **Ещё, ещё не**

(1) **Ещё** ‘still/yet’, **ещё не** ‘not yet’ can be used with temporal meaning:

Ребёнок **ещё** (or **всё ещё**) спит

‘The child is still asleep’

Ещё девочкой она лишилась матери

‘She lost her mother when she was only a little girl’

Она **ещё не** пришла

‘She hasn’t arrived yet’

Note

Ещё нет replaces **ещё не** in the absence of a predicate: Она пришла? **Ещё нет** ‘Has she arrived?’ ‘Not yet’.

(2) **Ещё** can also mean ‘additional’, compare:

Дай **ещё** чашку чаю

‘Give me another (= an additional) cup of tea’

and

Дай **другую** чашку

‘Give me another (= a different) cup’

(3) It can also be synonymous with **уже** in a temporal context:

Он у́ехал **ещё/уже** на прошлой неделе
‘He left last week’

Note

- (a) The use of **ещё** with comparatives, as an adverb of degree: **ещё** лучше ‘still/even better’.
- (b) **Ещё раз** ‘once more’, referring to a repeated action (but not a repeated state): Я позвоню **ещё раз** ‘I’ll ring again’. Compare **снова**, which may denote resumption rather than repetition: После болезни он **снова** стал ходить в кино ‘After his illness he has begun going to the cinema again’. **Опять** may be used as a synonym of **снова** (**Снова/опять** пошёл дождь ‘It began raining again’), but may also have emotional overtones, sometimes expressing irritation (**Опять** поезд опаздывает! ‘The train is late again!’).

391 The temporal adverbs **долго, давно** and **недавно**

(1) **Долго** denotes a definite but unspecified period of time:

Он **долго** одева́ется
‘He takes a long time to dress’

(2) **Давно** ‘for a long time’ (it also means ‘a long time ago’) implies an unfinished action or process:

Он **давно** рабо́тает здесь
‘He has been working here for a long time’ (and still is)

Он **давно** жил там
‘He **had** been living there for a long time’

Note

- (a) Cf. **256** (2) (vii).
- (b) Cf. tense usage in *negative* contexts: Я давно не **курю** ‘I haven’t smoked for some time’ (have given it up) and Я давно не **курил** ‘I haven’t smoked for some time’ (but may do so again).

(3) **Недавно** refers to a recent event:

Он у́мер **недавно**
‘He died **recently**’

while (**в/за**) **последнее время** ‘recently, of late’ refers to a process or state extending over a period of time. Absence of a preposition represents more colloquial usage:

Последнее время не было дождя
‘There hasn’t been any rain **recently**’

392 Primary adverbs of manner and extent

(1) **Как** and **так** may denote:

(i) Manner:

Вот как надо писать!	‘That’s how to write!’
Надо вести себя так	‘You should behave like that ’

Note

- (a) **Как** also combines with the verb **любить** ‘to like’ in expressing manner: Люблю, **как** ты готовишь еду ‘I like the way you cook’.
 (b) **Не так** may mean ‘wrongly’: Вы **не так** меняете пробку ‘You’re not changing the fuse the right way’ (cf. неправильно ‘incorrectly’).

(ii) Degree or extent:

Как хорошо она играет!	‘How well she plays!’
Я так много ходил, что устал	‘I have walked so much that I am tired’

(2) In comparisons, the particle **же** usually follows **так**:

Он так же умён, как я	‘He is just as clever as I am’
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but this does not occur in a negative comparison

Он не так умён, как я	‘He is not as clever as I am’
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When two qualities relate to the same person, the particle **и** is used for emphasis:

Он так же умён, как и добр	‘He is as clever as he is kind’
--	---------------------------------

(3) **Как?** is used as the equivalent of English ‘what?’ in establishing personal and other details:

Как твоё имя?/твоё отчество?/твоя фамилия?
‘What is your first name?/your patronymic?/your surname?’

Как тебя зовут?
‘What is your name?’

Как ваш адрес?
‘What is your address?’

Note also the phrase **Как** это по-ру́ски? ‘What is the Russian for that?’

393 Interrelating adverbs

Interrelating adverbs

там, где
туда́, куда́
туда́, откуда́
тогда́, когда́
так, как etc.

may be used when no specific referent of place, time or manner is named:

Я рабо́таю **там, где** он рабо́тал ра́ньше
‘I work **where** (lit. ‘**there, where**’) he used to work’

По́мню, как побежа́ли мы **туда́, куда́** нас велá густáя толпа́ люде́й
(Grekova)
‘I recall how we ran **to where** a dense crowd of people led us’

Люба́я рабо́та то́лько **тогда́** увлека́ет, **когда́** ты в ней уже́ какие́-то
та́йны откры́л (*Iunyi naturalist*)
‘A job only becomes absorbing **when** you have discovered some of its
secrets’

Он поступи́л **так, как** я ему́ велéл
‘He acted **as** I told him to’

394 То́же, та́кже

(1) Both **то́же** and **та́кже** mean ‘also, as well, too’. **То́же** may be regarded as the more colloquial variant, **та́кже** as the more official:

Он то́же/та́кже поéдет	‘He will go too ’
Мы то́же/та́кже согла́сны	‘We also agree’

Note

(a) **Тóже/тáкже не** means ‘not . . . either’: Он **тóже/тáкже** не поедет ‘He won’t go **either**’.

(b) See 472 (9) for **тóже** as a particle.

(2) **Тóже** is preferred in contexts which express identification with an action, state or attribute already referred to:

Вы зányаты? **Я тóже**
‘Are you busy? **So** am I’

— Я óчень хочú пойтí на концéрт
‘I am very keen to go to the concert’

— Она́ **тóже** хочёт пойтí
‘She wants to go **too**’

У стéны стоял бéлый стол и четы́ре стúла, **тóже** бéлых
‘A white table and four chairs, **also** white, stood by the wall’

(3) **Тáкже** is preferred when providing additional or supplementary information (in the meaning **крóме тогó, ещё и** ‘apart from that, in addition’):

Я нáчал, крóме книг, читáть **тáкже** и журнáльные стáтьи
‘I began to read magazine articles **as well as** books’

Он óчень хитёр, не хúже брáта; но он **тáкже** óчень талáнтлив
‘He is very cunning, no less so than his brother; but he is **also** very talented’

Существúют **тáкже** стереотíпы маскулíнности и феминíнности
(*Nedelia*)
‘There **also** exist stereotypes of masculinity and femininity’

(4) **Тáкже** is particularly common with the conjunction **а**:

Речь шла в основнóм о проблемáх двусторóнних отношéний, **а тáкже** о положéнии в Ливáне
‘It was basically a question of problems of bilateral relations, **and also** the situation in the Lebanon’

Note

А never combines with **тóже**.

(5) Compare the contrasting usage of **тóже** and **тáкже** in the following:

Он **тóже** вы́разил готóвность помóчь
‘He **also** expressed his willingness to help’ (emulating **someone else’s** willingness to help)

Он **та́кже** вы́разил гото́вность помо́чь
 ‘He **also** expressed his willingness to help’ (in addition to **other action**
 he had agreed to take)

395 Indefinite adverbs (adverbs in -то, -нибудь, -либо and ко́е-)

Adverbs in -то, -нибудь and -либо are adverbial counterparts to the indefinite pronouns (see 138). They include:

где́-то	‘somewhere’	где́-нибу́дь	‘somewhere, anywhere’
куда́-то	‘somewhere’ (direction)	куда́-нибу́дь	‘somewhere, anywhere’ (direction)
ка́к-то	‘somehow’	ка́к-нибу́дь	‘somehow, anyhow’
когда́-то	‘once, at one time’	когда́-нибу́дь	‘at any time, ever’
почему́-то	‘for some reason’	почему́-нибу́дь	‘for some, any reason’

All the adverbs can also combine with -либо. Ко́е- combines with где, как, когда́ and куда́.

(1) Adverbs in -то

Где́-то/куда́-то denote a particular but unidentified place, когда́-то a particular but unidentified time, почему́-то a particular but unidentified cause. The adverbs relate predominantly to the past or present tense:

Вор пря́чется где́-то побли́зости
 ‘The thief is hiding **somewhere** nearby’

Он ка́к-то спра́вился с зада́чей
 ‘**Somehow** he coped with the task’

— Э́то мой дру́г, игра́ли когда́-то в футбо́л (Vanshenkin)
 ‘That is my friend, we used to play football **at one time**’

Тре́тий пассажи́р то́же есть, но, ви́дно, куда́-то вы́шел
 (Rasputin)
 ‘There is a third passenger too, but he must have gone out **somewhere**’

Он почему́-то недово́лен на́шим решéнием
 ‘**For some reason** he is displeased with our decision’

(2) Adverbs in -нибудь

Adverbs in -нибу́дь are used:

(i) In **questions**:

Вы **когда-нибудь** отдыхали на Чёрном море?
'Have you **ever** holidayed on the Black Sea?'

(ii) In the **future**, implying a choice still to be made:

Через годик **куда-нибудь** переберусь: в Харьков, Киев, Днепропетровск (Rybakov)
'In a year or so I shall move **somewhere**: to Khar'kov, Kiev, Dnepropetrovsk'

(iii) After **imperatives**:

Загляни ко мне **когда-нибудь**
'Pop in to see me **some time**'

(iv) In referring to **different** circumstances on different occasions, irrespective of tense:

По воскресеньям мы всегда ездим **куда-нибудь** на машине
'We always go for a drive somewhere on Sundays' (different places on different occasions)

(v) In contexts where the adverb implies inferior quality:

Я стал коммунистом. И не **где-нибудь**, а в Средиземном море
(*Russia Today*)
'I have become a Communist. And not **any old where**, but in the Mediterranean'

(3) Adverbs in -либо

Adverbs in **-либо** express an even greater degree of indefiniteness than adverbs in **-нибудь**. They denote 'anywhere' (at any place you like to name), 'ever' (at any time you like to name) etc.:

Это была сильнейшая команда, которая **когда-либо** выигрывала чемпионаты мира (*Sputnik*)
'It was the strongest team that had **ever** won world championships'

(4) Adverbs in **где-**(i) **Кде-где** means 'in various places':

Кде-где в нашем городе проводились демонстрации
'Demonstrations were held **at various localities** in our town'

(ii) **Кде-как** means 'with great difficulty'

Мы **кде-как** добрались домой
'**Somehow** we struggled home'

or ‘carelessly’

Работа сделана **коде-как**

‘The work has been done **any old how**’

Note

Коде-когда means ‘occasionally’, **коде-куда** ‘to a particular place’.

396 The negative adverbs **нигде́, никуда́, ниоткуда́, никогда́, никаќ, ниско́лько**

(1) Negative adverbs are formed by affixing **ни-** to the adverbs **где** ‘where’, **как** ‘how’, **когда́** ‘when’, **куда́** ‘where to’, **откуда́** ‘from where’, **ско́лько** ‘how much’:

нигде́	‘nowhere’	никуда́	‘nowhere’ (direction)
ника́к	‘in no way’	ниоткуда́	‘from nowhere’
никогда́	‘never’	ниско́лько	‘not at all’

Note

‘Hardly ever’ is rendered as **почти́ никогда́**, ‘hardly anywhere’ as **почти́ нигде́** etc.

(2) Like negative pronouns (see **133**), negative adverbs combine with the particles **не/нет**:

Он нигде́ не рабóтает	‘He does not work anywhere’
Он никуда́ не идёт	‘He isn’t going anywhere’
Ниоткуда́ нет писем	‘There are no letters from anywhere’
Она́ никогда́ не лжёт	‘She never tells lies’
Она́ ника́к не реагировала	‘She did not react at all’
Я ниско́лько не обиделся	‘I wasn’t at all offended’

Note

Нельзя́ also combines directly with a negative adverb: **Ника́к нельзя́ согласиться́ с ним** ‘One can in no way agree with him’.

(3) It is possible to accumulate negatives within one sentence:

Никто́ никогда́ никуда́ не ёздит
‘No one ever goes anywhere’

Де́ти **никогда́ ниче́го не** узна́ют о них (Zalygin)
‘The children will never learn anything about them’

Note

Ни разу ‘not once’ and **не раз** ‘more than once’. Compare:

Он **ни разу** не прибóрал в кóмнате у Áндерсена (Paustovskii)
‘**Not once** did he tidy Andersen’s room’

and

О недостáтках **не раз** ужé писáлось
‘These shortcomings have been written about **more than once**’

397 The negative adverbs **нéгде**, **нéкуда**, **нéкогда**, **нéоткуда**, **нéзачем**

(1) Like the ‘potential’ negative pronouns (see 137), the ‘potential’ negative adverbs appear in infinitive constructions: (**Нам**) **нéгде** жить ‘There is nowhere (for us) to live’. The series comprises:

нéгде	‘there is nowhere to’
нéзачем	‘there is no point’
нéкогда	‘there is no time to’
нéкуда	‘there is nowhere to’ (direction)
нéоткуда	‘there is no place from where’

Note

Нéкогда can also mean ‘once, at one time’.

(2) There are two variants of the construction:

(i) The **impersonal**:

Утерéться бýло нéчем, переодéться **нéгде** (Vanshenkin)
‘There was nothing to dry oneself on and nowhere to change’

Копáть могíлу бýло **нéкогда** и **нéзачем** (Rybakov)
‘There was no time to dig a grave and no point in doing so’

(ii) The **personal**, with the logical subject appearing in the dative case (see 93):

Емý нéгде рабóтать	‘He has nowhere to work’
Ей нéкогда бýло разговáривать	‘She had no time to converse’
Нам нéкуда бýдет éхать	‘We shall have nowhere to go’

Note

As with the ‘potential’ negative pronouns, there is a positive counterpart to this construction involving **е́сть** (present tense), **бы́ло** (past) and **бу́дет** (future), e.g.

Е́сть/бы́ло/бу́дет куда́ пойти
‘There is/was/will be somewhere to go’

398 Comparative adverbs

(1) The comparatives of adverbs in **-o/-e** are identical with short-form comparative adjectives (see **179** and **180**):

Всё сильнее и **глубже** осознаём духовное родство с другими народами (Kostomarov)
‘We are **more and more intensively** and **profoundly** conscious of our spiritual kinship with other nations’

Note

Adverbs with more than two syllables have an alternative comparative in **более**: **выгоднее/более выгодно** ‘more beneficially’, cf. **мéнее выгодно** ‘less beneficially’. The form with **более** is the *norm* for comparatives of adverbs other than those in **-o/-e**: **более логически** ‘more logically’ (cf. **мéнее логически** ‘less logically’).

(2) Comparative adverbs appear in the same types of construction as comparative adjectives (see **182**), i.e. constructions:

(i) With **чем** ‘than’:

Но сильней, **чем** завод, любил Пётр Телепнёв свой сад (Trifonov)
‘But Petr Telepnev loved his garden more **than** the factory’

(ii) With the **genitive**:

Трениер чаще **других слов** употребляет слово «работа» (Sal’nikov)
‘The trainer uses the word “work” more often **than other words**’

(iii) With **гораздо** ‘much’ (also **много, намного, куда́**):

Он вернулся домой **гораздо** позже
‘He returned home **much** later’

(iv) With **чем . . . тем** ‘the . . . the’:

Чем больше я отды́хал от футбо́ла, **тем** сильнее хоте́лось играть

‘**The** more I rested from football **the** more I wanted to play’

(v) With the prefix **по-** ‘a little’:

Но́чью капита́н **поту́же** затягивался ремне́м (Gagarin)

‘At night the captain would tighten his belt **a little**’

(vi) With instrumental or **на** + accusative in quantifying a difference:

Я верну́лся **на пять мину́т/пятью мину́тами** ра́ньше, чем ожида́л

‘I arrived **five minutes** earlier than I had expected’

(vii) With **как мо́жно** ‘as . . . as possible’:

Мы е́хали **как мо́жно** ме́дленнее

‘We were driving **as slowly as possible**’

399 Variant forms of some comparative adverbs

Some comparative adverbs have variant forms:

(1) Бо́льше/бо́лее ‘more’; ме́ньше/ме́нее ‘less’

(i) These may be differentiated stylistically, the comparatives in **-ше** belonging to the ‘neutral’ register and those in **-ее** to a more ‘bookish’ style (**бо́льше/бо́лее тридцати́** ‘more than thirty’).

(ii) Only **бо́льше/ме́ньше** are used to denote extent or degree: Он лю́бит дочь **бо́льше** (*not* бо́лее), чем сы́на ‘He loves his daughter more than (he loves) his son’.

(iii) **Бо́лее** and **ме́нее** are mainly used in the formation of long comparative adjectives and adverbs (see 177 and 398 (1) note), and in a number of set phrases: **бо́лее йли ме́нее** ‘more or less’, **бо́лее того́** ‘furthermore’ etc.

(2) Да́льше/да́лее ‘further’

Apart from its spatial meaning, **да́льше** ‘further’ also implies subsequent action (А **да́льше** что случи́лось? ‘And what happened next?’) or encouragement (Ну — **да́льше!** ‘Well, go on!’). **Да́лее** is limited mainly to the phrase **и так да́лее (и т.д.)** ‘and so on’.

400 The superlative adverb

(1) A superlative adverb consists of a comparative adverb in **-e** or **-ee** + **всего́** (for **internal** comparison) or **всех** (for **external** comparison):

Я работаю лучше **всегда́** вéчером
 'I work best of all in the evening' (i.e. compared with other times)

Я работаю лучше **всех** вéчером
 'I work best in the evening' (i.e. compared with other people)

Compare:

Мы все старéли, А́да Ефíмовна — **мéньше всех** (Grekoва)
 'We were all ageing, Ada Efimovna **least of all**' (= **less than anyone**)

(2) **Наибóлее** can also be used in the formation of superlative adverbs (**наибóлее свобóдно** 'most freely, fluently' (cf. **наимéнее свобóдно** 'least fluently')), and this is the *norm* with adverbs which do not end in **-o/-e**, e.g. **наибóлее логíчески** 'most logically'.

The Preposition

401 Introductory comments

(1) A preposition is a part of speech which expresses the relationship of one word to another: колодец **без** воды 'a well without water', добр **к** детям 'kind to children', прыгнуть **через** забор 'to jump over the fence'.

(2) Each Russian preposition governs a noun or pronoun in an oblique case. Some prepositions govern two or even three cases.

(3) Prepositions may be subdivided as follows:

(i) Primary: **в** 'in', **до** 'as far as', **на** 'on' etc.

(ii) Adverbial: **близ** 'near', **вдоль** 'along' etc.

(iii) Prepositions derived from nouns (e.g. **в пользу** 'in favour of', **насчёт** 'on account of') and from verbs (**благодаря** 'thanks to' etc.).

402 Primary prepositions and cases

The primaries (central meanings only) can be arranged in a grid, as follows.

<i>Preposition</i>	<i>Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
(1) без		'without'			
(2) в	'into'				'in'
(3) для		'for'			
(4) до		'as far as'			
(5) за	'behind' (motion)			'behind'	
(6) из		'out of'			
(7) из-за		'from behind'			
(8) из-под		'from under'			
(9) к			'towards'		
(10) крòме		'except for'			
(11) мèжду				'between'	
(12) на	'on to'				'on'
(13) над				'above'	
(14) о	'against'				'about'
(15) от		'from'			
(16) перед				'in front of'	
(17) по	'up to'		'along'		'after'
(18) под	'under' (motion)			'under'	
(19) при					'in the presence of'
(20) про	'about'				
(21) ра́ди		'for the sake of'			
(22) с	'approximately'	'down from'		'with'	
(23) у		'at'			
(24) через	'across'				

Note

- (a) Though not strictly speaking primary prepositions, **из-за** and **из-под** are usually included in the series.
- (b) See **419** (1) (i) *Note* for **мèжду** + *genitive* case.
- (c) **о** is written as **об** before words beginning with **а, э, и, о** or **у** (e.g. **об А́нглии** 'about England') and as **обо** in combinations such as **обо всём** 'about everything' and **обо мне** 'about me'.

403 Repetition of prepositions

The repetition of prepositions is optional, compare:

В Москвѣ и нѣкоторых другіх городѣх ... (*Izvestiia*)
 ‘In Moscow and certain other cities ...’

and

Он был **в** пижамѣ и **в** домашних туфлях (*Zalygin*)
 ‘He was wearing pyjamas and slippers’

except where two or more items governed by the same preposition appear in different clauses, when repetition is mandatory:

Я надѣялся не только **на** неё, **но** и **на** него
 ‘I relied not only on her, but also on him’

404 The buffer vowel -o

Primary prepositions which end in a consonant acquire a final **-o** when followed by certain clusters of consonants. These subdivide as follows:

(1) Clusters which affect many prepositions:

(i) **Вр-** (mainly время ‘time’): во время ‘during’, ко времени ‘by the time’, со времени ‘since the time’.

(ii) **Вс-** (mainly declined forms of весь ‘all’): во всё ‘in everything’, изо всех сил ‘with all one’s might’ (but из всех моих друзей ‘of all my friends’), обо всё ‘about everything’, со всех концов ‘from all parts’ (над, перед, от are not affected).

(iii) **Вт-** (mainly вторник ‘Tuesday’ and второй ‘second’): во вторник ‘on Tuesday’, ко вторнику ‘by Tuesday’, со вторника ‘since Tuesday’; во втором ‘in the second’, со второго ‘since the second’.

(iv) **Дн-** (mainly oblique cases of день ‘day’ and дно ‘bottom’): ко дню ‘for the day’, со/с днём ‘with the day’, со дня ‘since the day’, изо дня в день ‘daily, constantly’; ко дну ‘to the bottom’.

(v) **Мн-** (mainly oblique cases of я ‘I’ and многое/многие ‘many’): во мне ‘in me’, ко мне ‘to me’, надо мной ‘above me’, передо мной ‘in front of me’, подо мной ‘below me’, со мной ‘with me’, обо мне ‘about me’; во

мно́гом ‘in many ways’, со мно́гими ‘with many people’ (*but* из мно́гих ‘of many people’, от мно́гих ‘from many people’).

(2) Clusters that affect only certain prepositions; the cluster often repeats the final consonant of the preposition or its unvoiced/voiced/mutated counterpart: во Владивосто́ке ‘in Vladivostok’, во МХА́Те ‘in the Moscow Art Theatre’, во Пско́ве ‘in Pskov’, во флоте́ ‘in the navy’, во Фра́нции ‘in France’; со зло́сти ‘out of malice’, со скóростью ‘at a speed’, со среды́ ‘since Wednesday’, со ста́нции ‘from the station’, со стeны́ ‘from the wall’, со столá ‘from the table’, со шта́том ‘with a staff’; подо льдом ‘under the ice’, etc.

Note

Also во Вьетна́ме ‘in Vietnam’, во дворе́ ‘in the yard’, во избежа́ние ‘in avoidance of’, во и́мя ‘in the name of’, во ско́лько? ‘at what time?’ and clusters in monosyllabic oblique case forms whose nominatives contain a fleeting vowel: во рту́ ‘in the mouth’ (from рот ‘mouth’), со лба́ ‘from the forehead’ (from лоб ‘forehead’), со льдом ‘with ice’ (from лёд ‘ice’).

405 Stress in primary prepositions

(1) Prepositions are usually unstressed; however, some primaries, in particular **за**, **на**, **по**, **под** and, to a lesser extent, **до**, **из** and **о/об**, take the stress when combined with certain nouns and numerals. Many such combinations are characteristic of colloquial registers.

(2) The types of noun involved include parts of the body (e.g. голова́ ‘head’), geographical features (бе́рег ‘shore’), other locations (го́род ‘town’), time words (год ‘year’) and some others (вид ‘view’). All nouns and numerals involved are monosyllables or have *initial* stress in the declined form.

(3) The commonest case involved is the accusative, but others are also found.

(4) Among the commonest combinations are the following:

(i) **До** + genitive: до́ дому ‘as far as home’, (с утра́) до́ ночи (from morning) ‘till night’, до́ смерти (испугáлся) (was scared) ‘to death’.

(ii) **За** + accusative: за́ борт ‘overboard’ (direction), за́ волосы ‘by the hair’, за́ год ‘in a year’, за́ голову́ ‘by the head’, за́ город ‘into the country’,

за гору 'beyond the mountain' (direction), за два (го́да), две (неде́ли), три (го́да), пять, шесть, семь, восемь, девять, десять, сто (лет) 'in two (years/weeks), three, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, a hundred' (years), за день 'in a day', за зиму 'during the winter', за косу/косы 'by the plait/plaits', за лето 'during the summer', за море 'beyond the sea' (direction), за ногу/ноги 'by the leg/legs', за нос 'by the nose', за ночь 'during the night', за плечи 'by the shoulders', за полночь 'beyond midnight', за реку 'beyond the river' (direction), за руку/руки 'by the hand/hands', за спину 'behind the back' (direction), (держáться) за стену (to hold) 'on to the wall', за угол 'round the corner' (direction), за ухо/уши 'by the ear/ears', (ущипну́ть) за щеку (to pinch) 'on the cheek'.

Note

Alternative noun/numeral stress is found in за вóлосы, го́лову, два/две, три, пять, шесть, семь, вóсемь, де́вять, де́сять, сто, ле́то, мо́ре, плéчи.

(iii) **За** + instrumental: за городом 'in the country' (cf. за го́родом 'beyond the town'), за морем (ог за мо́рем) 'overseas', за ухом 'behind the ear'.

(iv) **Из** + genitive: из виду 'from sight', из дому 'out of the house' (one's own house, cf. из до́ма 'out of someone else's house', e.g. из до́ма Са́ши 'from Sasha's house'), из лесу 'from the forest' (also из ле́са), из носу 'from the nose' (also из но́са).

(v) **На** + accusative: на берег 'on to the shore', на бок 'on to one's side', на борт 'on board' (direction), (спустíть) на воду (to launch) 'on to the water' (cf. смотре́ть на во́ду/на воду 'to look at the water'), на год 'for a year', на голову 'on to the head', на гору 'onto the hill', на два (numerals behave as with за + accusative (see (ii) above)), на день 'for a day', на дом 'to the premises' (but смотре́ть на дом 'to look at the house'), на зиму 'for the winter', на лето 'for the summer', на море 'to the sea', на ногу/ноги 'on to the leg/legs, foot/feet', на нос 'on to the nose', на ночь 'for the night', на пол 'on to the floor', на реку 'to the river', на руку 'onto the hand'/на руки 'into the arms', на спину 'on to the back', на стену 'on to the wall', (шепта́ть) на ухо (to whisper) 'into the ear' (cf. нацепíть на у́хо 'to attach to the ear').

Note

The following take alternative noun/numeral stress: на бе́рег, го́лову, два (and other numerals), ле́то, мо́ре, ре́ку, сте́ну.

(vi) **На** + prepositional: на море/на мо́ре 'on the sea, at the seaside'.

(vii) **О/об** + accusative: (бок) о бок ‘(side) by side’, об пол/об пол ‘against the floor’, (рукá) об руку ‘in hand’.

(viii) **По** + accusative: по два/две, двое, три, трое, сто ‘two, three, a hundred each’ (with alternative numeral stress: по два ‘two each’ etc.).

(ix) **По** + dative: по лесу/по лэсу ‘through the forest’, по морю/по мóрю ‘over the sea’, по полю/по пóлю ‘over the field’.

(x) **Под** + accusative: под воду/под вóду ‘under the water’ (direction), под гору ‘downhill’, под ноги ‘under one’s feet’ (direction), под руку/руки ‘by the arm/arms’.

(xi) **Под** + instrumental: под боком/под бóком ‘close at hand’.

(xii) **При** смерти ‘at death’s door’.

Note

Alternative stress is possible in many literal contexts, while idioms retain prepositional stress: лезть на стену/на стéну ‘to climb up on to the wall’, but лезть на стену (fig.) ‘to go berserk’. Compare положá руку на сердце ‘hand on heart’ and жаловаться на сéрдце ‘to complain of heart trouble’.

406 Adverbial prepositions

Adverbial prepositions take the following forms.

(1) One-word prepositions (all + genitive unless otherwise indicated): близ ‘near’, вблизи ‘close to’, вглубь ‘into the depths of’, вдоль ‘along’, взамен ‘in exchange for’, вместо ‘instead of’, вне ‘outside’, внутри ‘inside’ (location), внутрь ‘inside’ (direction), возле ‘close to’, вокруг ‘around’, вопреки + dative ‘contrary to’, впереди ‘in front of’, вроде ‘like’, мимо ‘past’, навстрéчу + dative ‘towards’, наканúне ‘on the eve of’, наперекóр + dative ‘counter to’, напрóтив ‘opposite’, óколо ‘near’, относительно ‘with regard to’, подле ‘by the side of’, подобно + dative ‘similar to’, пóзади ‘behind’, поперёк ‘across, athwart’, пóсле ‘after’, посреди ‘in the midst of’, прóтив ‘opposite’, свёрх ‘above’, свýше ‘more than’, сзáди ‘behind’, сквóзь + accusative ‘through’, соглáсно + dative ‘according to’, среди ‘among’.

(2) Compounds involving a primary preposition: вблизи от ‘close to’, вдали от ‘far from’, вмéсте с + instrumental ‘together with’, вплóть до ‘right up to’, вслед за + instrumental ‘after’, незавýсимо от ‘irrespective

of', рядом с + instrumental 'next to', согласно с + instrumental 'in accordance with'.

407 Prepositions derived from nouns and verbs

(1) Compound prepositions derived from nouns comprise:

(i) One-word prepositions (all + genitive): порядка 'of the order of', посредством 'by means of', путём 'by dint of'.

(ii) Those that combine with one primary preposition (all + genitive): в виде 'in the form of', ввиду 'in view of', в интересах 'in the interests of', в качестве 'in the capacity of', в направлении 'in the direction of', во время 'during', в пользу 'in favour of', в продолжение 'in the course of', в результате 'as a result of', в силу 'on the strength of', вследствие 'in consequence of', в сторону 'in the direction of', в течение 'during the course of', в ходе 'during the course of', в целях 'for the purpose of', за счёт 'at the expense of', на протяжении 'during', с целью 'with the object of'.

(iii) Those that combine with two primaries: в зависимости от 'depending on', в отличие от 'unlike', в связи с + instrumental 'in connection with', по направлению к 'in the direction of', по отношению к 'in relation to', по сравнению с + instrumental 'by comparison with'.

(2) Most prepositions derived from verbs are based on gerunds: благодаря + dative 'thanks to', включая + accusative 'including', начиная с + genitive 'beginning with', несмотря на + accusative 'despite', не считая + genitive 'not counting', спустя + accusative 'after', судя по + dative 'judging by'. See also 380.

Note

Спустя may follow or precede the noun: две недели **спустя/спустя** две недели 'two weeks later'.

Spatial Prepositions

408 В and на + prepositional/accusative, из/с + genitive

(1) В/на + prepositional

409 The use of **в** and **на** with geographical terminology and the names of organizations, buildings and parts of buildings

With certain categories of noun the distinction between **в** and **на** is not always clear cut.

(1) Countries

(i) **В** is used for almost all countries: **в Великобритании** ‘in Great Britain’, **в России** ‘in Russia’.

(ii) **На** is used with some states which are also islands: **на Кубе** ‘in Cuba’. Note also **на родине** ‘in the homeland’, **на Руси** ‘in Rus’ (but **в древней Руси** ‘in ancient Rus’) and **на чужбине** ‘in a foreign land’.

(2) Republics and other territories in the former USSR

(i) The names of former Soviet Republics and other major territories take **в**: **в Армении** ‘in Armenia’, **в Сибири** ‘in Siberia’.

(ii) Note **на (в) Украине** ‘in Ukraine’ (but **в Западной Украине** ‘in Western Ukraine’) and the use of **на** with areas ending in **-щина**: **на Днепро́вщине** ‘in the area of the Dnieper’. **В Украине** is becoming increasingly acceptable.

(3) Natural features and climatic zones

(i) **В Арктике** ‘in the Arctic’, **в пустыне** ‘in the desert’, **в степи** ‘in the steppe’, **в тайге** ‘in the taiga’.

(ii) **На возвышенности** ‘in the highlands’, **на лугу́** ‘in a meadow’, **на низменности** ‘in the lowlands’, **на полюсе** ‘at the Pole’, **на поляне** ‘in a glade’, **на прósеке** ‘in a forest cutting’, **на равнине** ‘in the plain’, **на целине́** ‘in the virgin soil’.

(4) Mountain ranges

(i) **В** is used with plural **гóры** ‘mountains’ (**в гора́х** ‘in the mountains’) and with ranges that have plural names: **в Альпах** ‘in the Alps’, **в Андах** ‘in the Andes’, **в Карпáтах** ‘in the Carpathians’ etc. (Exceptions include **на Балкáнах** ‘in the Balkans’ and **на Воробьёвых гора́х** ‘on the Sparrow Hills’.)

(ii) **На** is used with ranges that have singular names: **на Алта́е/Кавка́зе/Пами́ре/Ура́ле** ‘in the Altai/Caucasus/Pamirs/Urals’. (**Тянь-Ша́нь** ‘Tien-Shan’ is used with either **в** or **на**: **в/на Тянь-Ша́не**.)

Note

В replaces **на** when the noun is qualified by an adjective: **в Востóчном Памíре** ‘in the Eastern Pamirs’ (except for **Кавкáз** ‘Caucasus’: **на Востóчном Кавкáзе** ‘in the Eastern Caucasus’).

(5) Islands, archipelagoes, peninsulas

(i) **На** is the norm: **на Аля́ске** ‘in Alaska’, **на Гава́йях** ‘in Hawaii’, **на Кíпре** ‘in Cyprus’, **на Кóрсике** ‘in Corsica’, **на Крíte** ‘on Crete’, **на Ма́льте** ‘in Malta’, **на Таймы́ре** ‘on the Taimyr peninsula’, **на Я́ве** ‘in Java’.

(ii) However, **в** is used in **в Кры́му** ‘in the Crimea’ and with islands ending in **-ия**: **в Гренла́ндии** ‘in Greenland’, **в Сарди́нии** ‘in Sardinia’, **в Сици́лии** ‘in Sicily’ (cf. **на óстрове** Сарди́ния/Сици́лия ‘on the island of Sardinia, Sicily’ etc).

(6) Points of the compass

На is used with points of the compass: **на востóке/за́паде/ю́ге/се́вере** ‘in the east/west/south/north’, **на ю́го-востóке/се́веро-за́паде** ‘in the south-east/north-west’. Political **на За́паде** ‘in the West’ (i.e. ‘in Western countries’) is distinguished from geographical **на за́паде** ‘in the west’. Compare **на Бли́жнем/Да́льном Востóке** ‘in the Near/Far East’.

(7) Towns

(i) Town names, many parts of towns and most regions of Moscow combine with **в**: **в Москвé** ‘in Moscow’, **в переу́лке** ‘in a side-street’, **в при́городе** ‘in a suburb’, **в Остáнкино** ‘in Ostankino’, **в Черéмушках** ‘in Chermushki’.

(ii) **На** is used as follows:

(a) **На окра́ине** ‘in the outskirts’, **на пло́щади** ‘in the square’, **на у́лице** ‘in the street’ (**в** is possible only when narrowness is emphasized: **в у́зких у́лицах** ‘in the narrow streets’). Note **в/на сквэ́ре** ‘in the small public garden’.

(b) With some Moscow regions: **на Арба́те** ‘in the Arbat’, **на Прэ́сне** ‘in Presnia’, **на Со́коле** ‘in Sokol’.

(8) Buildings (and parts of buildings), areas and workplaces

(i) Most names of buildings and organizations take **в**: **в апте́ке** ‘at the chemist’s shop’, **в аэропорту́** ‘at the airport’, **в колхо́зе** ‘at the collective farm’, **в цирке́** ‘at the circus’, **в шко́ле** ‘at the school’ etc.

(ii) Combinations with **на** relate especially to areas historically associated with open spaces or complexes of buildings rather than single structures. Thus, both **по́чта** ‘post office’ and **ста́нция** ‘station’ take **на** by association with the pre-Revolutionary **почто́вая ста́нция** ‘relay station’, an area with stables, administrative offices and sleeping accommodation, where travellers could obtain fresh horses. Combinations with **на** include the following:

(a) **На аэродро́ме** ‘at the aerodrome’, **на ба́зе** ‘at the base’, **на вокза́ле** ‘at the main station’, **на вы́ставке** ‘at the exhibition’, **на да́че** ‘at the country cottage’, **на заво́де** ‘at the plant’, **на по́чте** ‘at the post office’, **на почта́мте** ‘at the main post office’, **на предпри́ятии** ‘at the enterprise’, **на ры́нке** ‘at the market’, **на скла́де** ‘at the warehouse’, **на спорти́вной площа́дке** ‘at the sports ground’, **на стадио́не** ‘at the stadium’, **на ста́нции** ‘at the station’, **на строи́тельстве/стро́йке** ‘at the building site’, **на фа́брике** ‘at the factory’, **на фе́рме** ‘at the farm’, **на я́рмарке** ‘at the trade fair’.

(b) Certain parts of buildings and organizations: **на балко́не** ‘on (theatr. ‘in’) the balcony’, **на гале́рке** ‘in the gallery’ (theatr.), **на ка́федре** ‘in the (university) department’, **на факульте́те** ‘in the faculty’, **на чердаке́** ‘in the attic’, **на я́русе** ‘in the circle’ (theatr.).

Note

В до́ме ‘in the house’, but **на дому́** ‘on the premises, at home’: Он зарабо́тывает и **на дому́** ‘He earns extra money at home’ (cf. Зака́з доста́влен **на́ дом** ‘The order has been delivered to the door’). Compare also **в теа́тре** ‘in the theatre’ and Рабо́таю **на теа́тре/ра́дио/телеви́дении** ‘I work in the theatre/in radio/on TV’ (professional parlance).

(9) Miscellaneous

На де́реве ‘in a tree’, **на корме́** ‘in the stern’, **на носу́** ‘in the prow’, **на ре́йде** ‘in the roads’ (of a harbour), **на сковоро́де** ‘in a frying-pan’.

410 Nouns which may be used with **в and **на**, but with different meanings**

Many nouns may be used with either **в** or **на**, with negligible difference in meaning (though **на** is more usually associated with an activity being

carried out): **в/на кварти́ре** ‘in the flat’, **в/на коню́шне** ‘in the stable’, **в/на кúхне** ‘in the kitchen’, **в/на фло́те** ‘in the navy’ etc.

Other nouns combine with **в** and **на**, but with a *difference* in meaning.

(1) Автóбус (and other vehicles)

(i) **В автóбусе** ‘in the bus’ is used if there is emphasis on the vehicle as a scene of activity: Уро́ки я в́ыучила **в автóбусе/в по́езде/в метро́** ‘I did my homework in the bus/the train/on the underground’.

(ii) **На** is preferred when emphasis is on travel (though either preposition *may* be used): две останóвки **на метро́** до Арба́та ‘two stops on the underground to the Arbat’. Only **на** is possible with the names of ships: **на пароходе́** ‘on the steamer’. Public transport vehicles may appear in the instrumental case, as an alternative to a prepositional construction: до́ехать **трамва́ем** ‘to get there by tram’, достави́ть груз **самолётом/парохо́дом** ‘to deliver a load by aircraft/by steamer’. However, this does not apply to **велосипе́д** ‘bicycle’, **ло́дка** ‘boat’, **метро́** ‘underground’, **мотоци́кл** ‘motorcycle’, **такси́** ‘taxi’, which appear only with prepositions (éхать **на велосипе́де/на такси́** ‘to ride a bicycle/go by taxi’ etc.).

(2) Во́здух

(i) **В во́здухе** means ‘up in the air, pervading the air’: Самолёт **в во́здухе** ‘The aircraft is up in the air’, **В во́здухе** повис за́пах табака́ ‘The smell of tobacco hung in the air’.

(ii) **На во́здухе** means ‘out in the open air’: **на све́жем/откры́том во́здухе** ‘in the fresh/the open air’. Compare the use of **на** in other outdoor contexts: Зна́мя колы́шется **на ветру́** ‘The flag flutters in the breeze’, сиде́ть **на со́лнце** ‘to sit in the sun’ etc.

(3) Высотá/глубина́

(i) **В** is used in the absence of quantification: **в прозра́чной высотé** ‘in the translucent heights’, **в морско́й глубинé/в океа́нских глубина́х** ‘in the ocean depths’. Note also **в глубинé** за́ла ‘at the back of the hall’, **в глубинé** ле́са ‘in the depths of the forest’, **в глубинé** са́да ‘at the bottom of the garden’.

(ii) **На** is used when quantification is stated or implied: **на высотé** двух киломе́тров/**на э́той высотé** ‘at a height of two kilometres/at this height’, **на глубинé** трёх сантимéтров ‘at a depth of three centimetres’.

(4) Глаза́

(i) **В** is used in contexts of emotion or opinion: выражение страдания **в глазах** ‘an expression of suffering in the eyes’, Каким болваном я вы́глядел **в её глазах** ‘What an idiot I appeared in her eyes’.

(ii) **На** denotes:

(a) ‘On the surface’: Контактные линзы оста́ются **на глазах** месяцами ‘Contact lenses stay in the eyes for months on end’.

(b) ‘Swiftly/in the presence of’: Города́ рожда́ются **на наших глазах** ‘Towns spring up before our very eyes’.

Note

Either preposition may be used in the context of tears: **В/на глазах** показались слёзы ‘Tears appeared in her eyes’.

(5) Горá

В го́ру means ‘uphill’: идти́ **в го́ру** ‘to go uphill’. **На́ го́ру** refers to a specific hill or mountain: забра́ться **на́ го́ру** ‘to climb a mountain’.

Note the mining term **на-гора́** ‘to the surface’.

(6) Дво́р

(i) **Во дво́ре** ‘in the yard’ refers to an area surrounded by houses or a fence: **Во дво́ре** было́ две покрýшки ‘There were two tyre covers in the yard’.

(ii) **На дво́ре** denotes:

(a) A specific kind of yard: **на ко́нном дво́ре** ‘in the stable yard’.

(b) ‘Outside’: **На дво́ре** зима́ ‘It is winter outside’.

(7) Ме́сто

(i) **В ме́сте** is used to denote:

(a) Part of a whole: Кни́га по́рвана **в одно́м ме́сте** ‘The book is torn in one place’.

(b) A three-dimensional area: **в те́мном ме́сте** ‘in a dark place’.

(c) ‘Together’: всё собра́ть **в одно́м ме́сте** ‘to collect everything in one place’.

(d) ‘The same’: Мы всегда́ встреча́лись **в одно́м ме́сте** ‘We always met in the same place’.

(e) A locality: **в чудёсном месте** ‘in a delightful spot’.

Note

В is also used in certain adjectival combinations: **в другом месте** ‘somewhere else’, **в разных местах** ‘in various places’.

(ii) **На месте** is used to denote:

(a) ‘The proper place’: Все вещи **на месте** ‘Everything is in its proper place’.

(b) Immobility: стоять **на месте** ‘to stand still’.

(c) Possession: Я сижу **на твоём месте** ‘I am sitting in your place’.

(d) Former whereabouts: Деньги лежат **на прежнем месте** ‘The money is lying where it was’.

(e) Replacement: **На месте** пустырей выросли жилые кварталы ‘Blocks of flats have sprung up in place of waste ground’.

(f) Flat areas: **на ровном месте** ‘on a level stretch of ground’.

(g) Preferred conduct: **на вашем месте** ‘if I were you’.

(h) Scale of priorities: **На втором месте** — жилищные условия ‘Housing conditions are in second place’.

Note

На местах ‘in the provinces’: Пёрвый тур проводится **на местах** ‘The first round is being held in the provinces’.

(8) Море

(i) **В море** denotes:

(a) Activity or location beneath the surface: Эти рыбы водятся **в Чёрном море** ‘These fish are found in the Black Sea’.

(b) Out at sea, on a voyage etc.: Корабль уже давно **в море** ‘The ship has been under way for some time’; compare also **в открытом море** ‘in the open sea’.

(ii) **На море** denotes activity or location on the surface of the sea (приключения на суше и **на море** ‘adventures on land and sea’) or on the seashore (Ялта находится **на Чёрном море** ‘Yalta is on the Black Sea’).

(9) Небо

Either preposition is used to denote the location of natural phenomena (огромное солнце **в/на чистом небе** ‘an enormous sun in the clear sky’),

while **в** is preferred for birds, aircraft, sounds etc. (В́аря увидела **в небе́** два вертолётá ‘Varia saw two helicopters in the sky’, **В небе́** слы́шался рóкот ‘A low rumble was heard in the sky’).

(10) Окно́

(i) **В окне́** means ‘visible at the window’: **В окне́** показáлась егó голова́ ‘His head appeared at the window’.

(ii) **На окне́** means ‘on the window/the window-sill’: **На окне́** сто́яли цветы́ ‘There were flowers on the window-sill’. Note also **На окна́х** рóзовые занавёски ‘There are pink curtains at the windows’.

(11) По́ле

(i) **В по́ле** means ‘out in the fields’: В дере́вне пу́сто, все **в по́ле** ‘The village is deserted, everyone is out in the fields’.

(ii) **На по́ле** denotes a specific area or plot: **На по́ле** сто́ял тра́ктор ‘In the field stood a tractor’, **На поля́х** рабо́тали лю́ди ‘People were working in the fields’, **на карто́фельном по́ле** ‘in a potato field’, **на по́ле бо́я** ‘on the battle field’, **на ле́тном по́ле** ‘on the flying field’, **на футбо́льном по́ле** ‘on the football field’.

Note

На поля́х also means ‘in the margin’.

(12) Развѐдка

В развѐдке refers to military intelligence, **на развѐдке** to prospecting: Он рабо́тает **на развѐдке** не́фти ‘He works in oil prospecting’.

(13) Рука́/ру́ки

(i) **В руке́/рука́х** means ‘in the hand/hands’: У Арсе́ния **в руке́х** аво́ська ‘Arsenii is holding a string-bag’.

(ii) **На руке́/рука́х** means ‘in the arm(s)’: **На одной́ руке́** у неё ребёнок ‘She has a child in one arm’, Она́ подошла́ с Витько́й **на руке́х** ‘She came up with Vit’ka in her arms’.

Note

Кни́га **на руке́х** ‘The (library) book is out’, У него́ семья́ **на руке́х** ‘He has a family to support’.

(14) Свет

(i) **В свете** means ‘in the light/bathed in light’: **В жёлтом свете** фонарём толпились девушки ‘The girls crowded in the yellow light of the lanterns’. Note also figurative usage: **в свете** новых открытий ‘in the light of recent discoveries’.

(ii) **На свете** means ‘in the world’: Сколько видов слонов **на свете**? ‘How many species of elephant are there in the world?’ **На свету** is used when something is examined: Она осматривала одежду **на свету** ‘She was examining the clothes in the light’.

(15) Селó

В селё means ‘in a village’, **на селё** ‘in country areas’: роль интеллигенции **на селё** ‘the intelligentsia’s role in country areas’.

(16) Середина

В or **на** are used to denote the centre of an area: Трактор **в/на середине** поля ‘The tractor is in the middle of the field’. **В середине** denotes enclosure, ‘in between’: **в середине** толпы ‘in the middle of a crowd’.

(17) Стúдия

В is used for an artist’s studio, and for radio and recording studios (**в радиостúдии/в стúдии** звукозаписи), whereas **на** is used with film studios (фильм дублирован **на киностúдии** ‘The film has been dubbed at the film studio’).

(18) Суд

В судё means ‘in the court-room’: **В судё** сегодня многолюдно ‘The court-room is crowded today’; **в/на судё** ‘at the trial’.

(19) У́хо

На́ ухо is the norm: шепну́ть **на́ ухо** ‘to whisper in someone’s ear’. **В́ ухо** may be used to emphasize directed sound: шепну́ть прямо **в́ ухо** ‘to whisper directly into someone’s ear’.

(20) Ша́хта

В ша́хте means ‘down the mine’, **на ша́хте** ‘at the mine/colliery’.

411 Special uses of **с** + genitive

(1) The nouns enumerated in **410** combine with:

(i) **В/на** + accusative to denote direction:

Шахтёр спустился **в шахту**
‘The miner went down the mine’

Она подхватила ребёнка **на руки**
‘She gathered the child up in her arms’

(ii) **Из/с** + genitive to denote withdrawal:

Монета выпала **из её рук**
‘The coin fell from her hands’

Он упал **с большой высоты**
‘He fell from a great height’

(2) Some nouns combine only with **с** + genitive to denote withdrawal, even where location is expressed by **в** + prepositional: cf.

Самолёт **в воздухе**
‘The aircraft is in the air’

Самолёт **с (not из!) воздуха** заметил терпящих бедствие
‘The aircraft spotted the victims of the disaster from the air’

Compare also:

с горы	‘downhill’
со двора	‘from the yard’
с моря	‘from the sea’
с неба	‘from the sky’
с поля/полей	‘from the field/fields’

412 Uses of **в** and **на** when the dependent noun denotes an activity, event

(1) **На** combines with the prepositional of nouns which denote activities or events: **на войне** ‘at the war’, **на концерте** ‘at a concert’, **на матче** ‘at a match’, **на работе** ‘at work’, **на свадьбе** ‘at a wedding’, **на собрании** ‘at a meeting’, **на уроке** ‘at the lesson’.

(2) **На** + accusative/**с** + genitive denote, respectively, movement towards and withdrawal from these activities, thus

Иду на работу	‘I am going to work’
Иду домой с работы	‘I am going home from work’

Note

В combines with nouns that denote a performance (a) if the performer is the subject of the verb (петь **в опере** ‘to sing in an opera’) and (b) in references to the *content* of a work (**В этой опере** много красивых арий ‘There are many beautiful arias in this opera’).

413 **В and на: extension of the spatial meanings**

A number of meanings of **в** and **на** can be regarded as extensions of the spatial meanings.

(1) **В** + prepositional

(i) ‘Covered in’:

Пальцы у меня **в царапинах**
‘My fingers are covered in scratches’

(ii) Distance:

В километре от ГЭС — большое озеро
‘A large lake is situated a kilometre from the power station’

Он живёт **в пяти минутах ходьбы** от станции
‘He lives five minutes’ walk from the station’

Note

‘At what distance?’ is rendered as **на каком расстоянии?** (See 415 (2) for **за** + accusative in the meaning of distance.)

(iii) A group to which the subject belongs:

Он в гостях	‘He is on a visit’
оставаться в живых	‘to survive’

Note

The idea of plurality in phrases of this type is often an abstraction, since **в гостях**, for example, can be used even if the subject is the only guest (cf. also идти **в гости** ‘to go visiting’).

(iv) Various physical states:

в её присутствии	‘in her presence’ (cf. в её отсутствии ‘in her absence’)
в пути́	‘en route’
в хорошем состоянии	‘in good condition’

(v) Various mental states:

Он в восторге	‘He is delighted’
Она́ в хорошем настроении	‘She is in a good mood’

Note

The phrase **в самом деле** implies confirmation (Он говорит, что он китаец, и **в самом деле** он китаец ‘He says he is Chinese, and he **really is** Chinese’), while **на самом деле** implies contrast (на вид такие милые, а **на самом деле** злые ‘seemingly so nice, but **in fact** spiteful’).

(2) На + prepositional

На + prepositional is used in a number of phrases:

кататься на коньках	‘to skate’
ходить на лыжах	‘to ski’
рука́ на перевязи	‘an arm in a sling’

including some which denote state:

на воле/свободе	‘at liberty’
быть на пенсии	‘to be on a pension, retired’
на второй/третьей скорости	‘in second, third gear’
на ранней стадии	‘at an early stage’

Prepositions that Denote the Position of an Object in Relation to Another Object (Behind, in Front of, Below, on Top of etc.), or Movement to or from that Position

414 За + instrumental/accusative, из-за + genitive

(1) За + instrumental

(i) **За** + instrumental means ‘behind, on the other side of, beyond’ etc.:

за дóмом	‘behind the house’
за мостóм	‘on the other side of the bridge’
за рекóй	‘beyond the river’

Note

Сзàди and **позади́** + genitive are synonymous with **за** + instrumental in the meaning ‘behind’: **сзàди, позади́** дóма ‘behind the house’. **Сзàди меня́** ‘behind me’ lacks the idea of close proximity that adheres to **за мной**.

(ii) The following phrases are particularly common:

за бóртом	‘overboard’
зá городом	‘in the suburbs, in the country’
за гра́ницей	‘abroad’
за двéрью	‘behind, outside the door’
за окнóм	‘outside the window’ (from the inside), ‘inside the window’ (from the outside)
за рулём	‘at the wheel’
за столóм	‘at the table’ (also за обéдом ‘at lunch’ etc.)
за углóм	‘round the corner’

Note also **зáмужем** ‘married’ (of a woman): Она́ **зáмужем** за рýсским ‘She is married to a Russian’.

(2) За + accusative

За + accusative is used to denote movement to these positions:

поéхать	зá город	‘to drive out of town’
éхать	за гра́ницу	‘to go abroad’
спрýтаться	за дверь	‘to hide behind the door’
сесть	за стол	‘to sit down at the table’
зайт́и	зá угол	‘to go round the corner’

Note also **зáмуж**: Она́ вы́шла **зáмуж** за актёра ‘She married an actor’.

(3) Из-за + genitive

Из-за + genitive denotes withdrawal from these positions:

Он верну́лся	из-за гра́ницы	‘He returned from abroad’
Она́ встáла	из-за столá	‘She got up from the table’
Они́ показáлись	из-за угла́	‘They appeared round the corner’

415 **За + instrumental/accusative: extension of the spatial meanings**

Other spatial meanings of **за** are as follows:

(1) **За + instrumental**

(i) Sequence:

Самолёты взлетели **один за другим**
 ‘The aircraft took off one after the other’

(ii) An object followed or pursued:

гнаться	за мячом	‘to chase the ball’
охотиться	за тигром	‘to hunt a tiger’ (for the zoo, cf. охотиться на тигра ‘to hunt (to kill) a tiger’)
слéдовать	за экскурсоводом	‘to follow the guide’

(iii) Occupation with an activity:

проводить вéчер **за игрой** ‘to spend the evening playing’

(2) **За + accusative**

За + accusative may denote distance from a point:

За пять киломéтров отсюда сего́дня свадьба
 ‘There is a wedding today five kilometres from here’

Note

В пяти киломéтрах could also be used here (see **413** (1) (ii)), but only **за** is possible:

(a) When movement to a goal is implied:

бежа́ть **за во́семь киломéтров** домо́й
 ‘to run eight kilometres home’

(b) When **за** combines with **до** to distinguish two spatial points:

За пятьсо́т мэтров **до** фи́ниша подтяну́лся англича́нин
 ‘Five hundred metres from the finish the Englishman rallied’

(c) When distance is expressed in terms of **дверь** ‘door’, **дом** ‘house’, **квартáл** ‘block’:

За два дома до этого угла в 20-е годы было общежитие (Panova)
 ‘There was a hostel two doors down from this corner in the 1920s’

416 Перед + instrumental, вперёд + genitive

(1) **Перед** means ‘in front of’:

перед домом ‘in front of the house’

Note

- (a) Unlike **за**, **перед** cannot take the accusative to denote movement to a position, cf. Он повесил пальто **за дверь** ‘He hung the coat behind the door’, but Он поставил миску **перед собой** ‘He put the bowl in front of him’.
- (b) Note figurative usage: **Перед нами** большая задача ‘A major task faces us’.

(2) **Вперёд** + genitive ‘in front of, ahead of’ is usually associated with animate nouns or moving objects: ехать **вперёд автобуса** ‘to drive ahead of the bus’. Unlike **перед**, it does not imply closeness: Дети бежали **далеко вперёд взрослых** ‘The children were running far ahead of the adults’.

417 Под + instrumental/accusative, из-под + genitive

(1) **Под** + instrumental

(i) The central meaning of **под** is ‘under’:

плавать под водой	‘to swim under water’
стоять под мостом	‘to stand under the bridge’
под мышкой	‘under one’s arm’
поле под рожью	‘a field under rye’

Note the phrases:

под носом, под рукой	‘near by, close at hand’
под горой	‘at the bottom of the hill’
под дождём	‘in the rain’
под потолком	‘from the ceiling’ (Лампы висят под потолком ‘The lamps hang from the ceiling’)

(ii) **Под** also denotes proximity to towns:

бои **под Москвой** ‘the battles near Moscow’

(iii) **Под углом** means ‘at an angle’:

Улица выходила **под углом** к трамвайной остановке
‘The street went off at an angle to the tram stop’

(iv) **Под** is also used figuratively: **под арестом, влиянием, давлением, контролем, угрозой** ‘under arrest, the influence, pressure, control, threat’, cf.:

Эксперименты проводятся **под руководством** учёных
‘The experiments are carried out under the guidance of scientists’

Note

Что вы понимаете **под** этим словом? ‘What do you understand **by this** word?’

(2) **Под** + accusative

Под + the accusative denotes:

(i) Movement to a position underneath something:

Они сели **под дерево** ‘They sat down under a tree’
Он спрятал руки **под стол** ‘He hid his hands under the table’

Compare also the phrases:

спускаться **под гору** (= с горы) ‘to go downhill’
Она попала **под дождь** ‘She got caught in the rain’
обработать поле **под пшеницу** ‘to put a field under wheat’

(ii) Movement to a position near (a town):

Мы переехали **под** ‘We moved to near St
Санкт-Петербургу Petersburg’

(iii) Transfer to a state:

ставить **под угрозу** ‘to place under threat’

(3) **Из-под** + genitive

(i) **Из-под** means ‘from underneath, from near’ (a town):

Он вь́лез из-под столá	‘He climbed out from under the table’
Он верну́лся из-под Ростóва	‘He has returned from near Rostov’

(ii) It is also used figuratively:

Маши́на вь́шла из-под контрóля	‘The car went out of control’
Она́ вь́шла из-под его́ влия́ния	‘She escaped from his influence’

418 Над + instrumental, пове́рх + genitive

(1) **Над** means ‘over, above’:

над голово́й	‘overhead’
Самолёт летит над го́родом	‘The aircraft is flying over the town’
над у́ровнем мо́ря	‘above sea level’

Note

- (a) Unlike **под** (see 417 (2) (i)), **над** does *not* take the accusative to denote movement to a position: Повеси́ли ла́мпу **над** столóм ‘They hung the lamp over the table’.
- (b) **Над** is also used figuratively: побе́да **над** фаши́змом ‘victory over Fascism’, рабо́тать **над** рома́ном ‘to work on a novel’, сжа́литься **над** сирото́й ‘to take pity on an orphan’, смея́ться **над** дурако́м ‘to laugh at a fool’, суд **над** Э́йхманом ‘the trial of Eichmann’.

(2) **Пове́рх** means ‘over, over the top of, on top of’: смотре́ть **пове́рх** очко́в ‘to look over the top of one’s spectacles’, Он наде́л свите́р **пове́рх** руба́шки ‘He put his sweater on over his shirt’.

419 Ме́жду + instrumental, среди́, посреди́, напра́тив, протíв, вдо́ль, вне́, вну́три, вну́трь, вокру́г, мимо + genitive

(1) Ме́жду/среди́

(i) **Между** means ‘between’:

между магази́ном и доро́гой
‘between the shop and the road’

Между дома́ми есть забор
‘There is a fence between the houses’

между на́ми ‘between you and me’

Note

Между governs the instrumental singular and the instrumental or (less frequently) *genitive* plural (**между дере́вьями/дере́ьев** ‘between the trees’); the *genitive* is found mainly in poetic speech and idiomatic phrases (**между двух огне́й** ‘between the devil and the deep blue sea’, **чита́ть между строк** ‘to read between the lines’).

(ii) **Среди́/посреди́** means ‘in the middle’ (of an area):

Среди́/посреди́ поля́ стоя́ло не́сколько кусто́в
‘In the middle of the field stood several bushes’

Note

Среди́ (but *not* **посреди́**) can also mean ‘among, surrounded by’:

Среди́ дере́ьев стои́т дом ‘A house stands among the trees’

(2) **Напроти́в/проти́в**

Напроти́в/проти́в mean ‘opposite’, combining with verbs of state *and* movement:

Я живу́ **напроти́в/проти́в** заво́да
‘I live opposite the factory’

Кре́сло поста́влю **напроти́в/проти́в** телеви́зора
‘I shall put the chair opposite the TV set’

Note

Проти́в (but not **напроти́в**) also has the meaning ‘against, opposed to’: **идти́ проти́в ве́тра** ‘to walk into the wind’, **плыть проти́в тече́ния** ‘to swim against the current’, **проти́в часовой стрелки** ‘anti-clockwise’.

(3) **Вдо́ль, вне́, внутри́, вну́ть, вокру́г, мимо́**

(i) **Вдо́ль** means ‘along, alongside’:

идти **вдоль шоссе**

‘to walk alongside the highway’ (cf. ехать **по** шоссе ‘to drive **along** the highway’)

Вдоль забора посажены деревья

‘Trees are planted along(side) the fence’

Note

See also **424** (1) (d) for **вдоль** in the meaning ‘along the surface of’.

(ii) **Вне** means ‘outside’:

Часть дня он проводит **вне дома**

‘He spends part of the day outside the house’

Note

Figurative usage: **вне опасности, очереди** ‘out of danger, out of turn’.

(iii) **Внутри** and its directional counterpart **внутрь** mean ‘inside’:

внутри города

‘inside the town’

проникать **внутрь помещения**

‘to penetrate inside the building’

(iv) **Вокруг** means ‘round’:

Земля вращается **вокруг**
своей оси

‘the Earth rotates round its axis’

Они сидели **вокруг стола**

‘They sat round the table’

(v) **Мимо** means ‘past’:

идти **мимо дома**

‘to go past the house’

Prepositions that Denote Spatial Closeness to an Object, Movement Towards or Away from an Object, or Distance from an Object

420 У + genitive, к + dative, от + genitive

(1) У + genitive case

(i) The central meaning of у + genitive is ‘at, by, near’ an object:

остановиться **у самой двери**

‘to stop right by the door’

сидеть **у окна**

‘to sit by the window’

Note

(a) For prepositions denoting proximity to a *person*, see **421**.

(b) Figurative usage: **быть у власти** ‘to be in power’.

(ii) **У** also means ‘at the house of, with, at’ (the doctor’s etc.):

Она отдыхает **у сестры** в деревне
‘She is relaxing at her sister’s place in the country’

Сегодня Саша был **у врача**
‘Today Sasha was at the doctor’s’

у нас ‘at our place, in our country’

(2) **К** + dative case

(i) **К** is used in the meaning ‘towards’ (a place), ‘to see’ (a person):

Я побежал **к выходу** ‘I ran towards the exit’
Она идёт **к городу** ‘She is going towards the town’ (cf.
идти **по направлению к городу,**
в направлении города/к городу
‘to walk in the direction of the
town’)

Он пошёл **к врачу** ‘He has gone to see the doctor’

Note

(a) Он пришёл **к власти** ‘He came to power’, путь **к счастью** ‘the path to happiness’.

(b) Идти **навстречу другу** ‘to go to meet a friend’, and figurative usage:
идти **навстречу всем опасностям** ‘to face up to all kinds of
dangers’.

(ii) **К** can also denote bodily attitude:

Я стоял боком **к мосту** ‘I stood sideways on to the bridge’
Он сидел спиной **ко мне** ‘He sat with his back to me’

(3) **От** + genitive case

The central meaning of **от** is ‘away from’:

Он шёл **от реки** ‘He was walking away from the river’
(cf. Он шёл **со стороны** реки ‘He
was walking from the direction of
the river’)

Она ушла **от мужа** ‘She left her husband’

421 Близ, близко от, возле, недалёко от, неподалёку от, около, подле + genitive; близко к, ближе к + dative; рядом с + instrumental

Of these prepositions, *подле* ‘beside’ is rarely used, while *близ*, *возле* and *около* ‘near, close to’ are commonly used to denote proximity to a person or an object:

близ/возле/около дома ‘near the house’

Note

- (a) *Возле* may imply *greater* proximity: Он живёт *возле нас* ‘He lives very near us’. Additional emphasis may be imparted by the pronoun *самый*: *возле самого леса* ‘hard by the forest’.
- (b) *Около* ‘near’ expresses a greater degree of proximity than *недалёко от* ‘not far from’. *Неподалёку* is more colloquial than *недалёко*.
- (c) *Близко от* ‘close to’ is used to denote passage at close quarters, as well as close location: Птица пролетела *близко от него* ‘The bird flew past very close to him’.
- (d) *Рядом с* means ‘next to, next door to’: Дом *рядом с* парком ‘The house is next to the park’.
- (e) *Близко/ближе к* denote direction towards: Он подошёл *близко/ближе к дому* ‘He went up close/closer to the house’.
- (f) For *под* + instrumental/accusative and *из-под* + genitive in meaning of proximity see 417 (1) (ii), (2) (ii), (3) (i).

422 При + prepositional

При + prepositional:

- (i) combines with the following nouns in the meaning of proximity: *вход/въезд* ‘entrance’, *выход* ‘exit’, *дорога* ‘road’:

Дача стояла *при дороге*
‘The country cottage stood at the roadside’

повесить объявление *при входе*
‘to hang a notice at the entrance’

поставить часовых *при въезде* в туннель
‘to post sentries at the entrance to the tunnel’

(ii) combines with the names of the sites of battles: **битва при Сталинграде** ‘the battle of Stalingrad’ (cf. **бой за Великобританию** ‘the Battle of Britain’).

(iii) denotes attachment: **При университете** есть поликлиника ‘There is a polyclinic attached to the university’, **прачечная при общежитии** ‘a laundry attached to the residence’.

423 Вдали от, далеко от, подальше от + genitive

Both **вдали от** and **далекó от** mean ‘far from’: **вдали/далекó от родно́го го́рода** ‘far from one’s home town’. However, **вдали от** never denotes movement: Он отошёл **далекó от** (but not **вдали от**) деревни ‘He moved far away from the village’. ((**По**)**дальше от**, however, is used in such contexts: Он сел **подальше от** окна ‘He sat down a little further away from the window’.)

See also **413** (1) (ii) and **415** (2) (**в** + prepositional, **за** + accusative, **на** + prepositional in the meaning of distance).

Prepositions that Denote Along, Across, Through a Spatial Area

424 По + dative; через, скво́зь + accusative; поперёк, вглубь, вдо́ль + genitive

(1) **По** means ‘over the surface/along/up/down’ etc.:

идти **по бе́регу**
‘to walk along the shore’

плыть вверх **по течению́**
‘to sail upstream’

Ка́пли дождя́ стека́ют **по стеклу́**
‘Raindrops stream down the pane’

По коридору́ мать прошла́ на кúхню
‘Mother proceeded down the corridor to the kitchen’

Note

(a) Movement may be in more than one direction: катáться **по кру́гу** ‘to skate in a circle’, Меня́ вози́ли **по всей Болга́рии** ‘I was driven all over Bulgaria’.

- (b) The distinction between **идти** по улице ‘to walk down the street’ and **ходить** по улице ‘to walk up and down the street’ (see also **320** and **322** (2)).
- (c) **По** may also denote location at or movement to various points in space: Перепись населения провели **по всем населённым пунктам** ‘The census was carried out throughout all populated areas’, Весь день я ходил **по магазинам** ‘I spent all day walking round the shops’.
- (d) In combination with **дорога** ‘road’, **улица** ‘street’ and nouns that denote other lines of progress (**берег** ‘shore’, **опушка** ‘outskirts’ etc.), **по** + dative is synonymous with the instrumental or **вдоль** + genitive: идти **по берегу/берегом/вдоль берега**.
- (e) Either **по** or **через** may be used to denote movement across an inhabited area: проехать **по всей Москвѣ/через всю Москвѹ** ‘to travel right across Moscow’ (**через** implies crossing and emerging from the other side of the city).
- (2) The central meaning of **через** is ‘through’, ‘across’, ‘from one side to the other’ (often with a verb prefixed **пере-**: **перебежать** через дорогу ‘to run across the road’), ‘over’, ‘via’:

В школу мы ходили **через лес**
‘We used to go to school through the forest’

Он перелѣз **через забор**
‘He climbed over the fence’

ѐхать в Кіев **через Москвѹ**
‘to travel to Kiev via Moscow’

мост **через рѣку**
‘a bridge over the river’

Note

- (a) **Через** implies a direction or destination and therefore does not combine with verbs such as **бродить** ‘to roam’, **гулять** ‘to stroll’, **по** + dative being preferred: мы гуляли **по лесу** ‘we were strolling through the forest’.
- (b) **Через** in the meaning ‘across’ is not normally repeated within a sentence, thus: Машины проезжают **через рѣку, по красивому мосту** ‘The cars drive across the river over a handsome bridge’ (cf., used in isolation, synonymous идти **через мост** and идти **по мосту** ‘to walk across a bridge’).

(c) **Через** may also denote:

- (i) A spatial interval: **Через два дома** живёт её дочь ‘Her daughter lives two doors down’, **Километров через пять** нашли скалу ‘Some five kilometres on they found the rock’.
- (ii) A recurrent interval: **через правильные промежутки** ‘at regular intervals’, **спотыкаться через каждые два шага** ‘to stumble at every two paces’, **печатать через строчку** ‘to type double-spaced’.
- (iii) An intermediary: **разговаривать через переводчика** ‘to converse through an interpreter’.

(3) **Сквозь** implies difficulty of accomplishment, resistance etc.:

смотреть **сквозь щель**
‘to peer through a crack’

Сквозь крышу протекала вода
‘Water was leaking through the roof’

пробираться **сквозь толпу**
‘to push one’s way through the crowd’

Note

- (a) **Через** in such contexts implies less resistance in passing through: Лучи солнца проникали **сквозь/через** листву ‘The rays of the sun were penetrating/passing through the foliage’.
- (b) Only **сквозь** (*not* через) is possible with a noun that denotes a climatic feature: Солнце пробивалось **сквозь метель/туман/тучу** ‘The sun was forcing its way through the snow storm/mist/cloud’.
- (c) Она смотрела на него **через** очки ‘She was looking at him **over (the top of)** her glasses’; Она смотрела на него **сквозь** очки ‘She was looking at him **through** her glasses’.
- (d) Figurative usage: смотреть **сквозь пальцы** на что-нибудь ‘to turn a blind eye to something’.

(4) **Поперёк** means ‘transversely across, athwart, crosswise’:

лечь **поперёк постели**
‘to lie across the bed’

Грузовик стоял **поперёк дороги** и тормозил движение
‘The lorry was blocking the road, impeding the traffic’

(5) **Вглубь** means ‘deep into’:

вглубь лесов ‘into the heart of the forest’
вглубь материка ‘inland’

Prepositions that Denote Spatial Limit

425 До + genitive, по + accusative

(1) **До** + genitive means ‘as far as’: Автобус идёт только **до Арбата** ‘The bus only goes as far as the Arbat’.

(2) **По** + accusative denotes the limit of an action or process, up to and including a point in space represented by:

(i) A part of the body:

обнажённая **по локоть** рука
‘an arm bared to the elbow’

Он вошёл в воду **по пояс**
‘He waded into the water up to his waist’

(ii) Other spatial points:

дома, **по окна** занесённые снегом
‘houses buried up to the windows in snow’

Note the idioms **занят по горло** ‘up to one’s eyes in work’, **сыт по горло** ‘fed up to the back teeth’, **влюбляться по уши** ‘to fall madly in love’, **по уши в долгах** ‘up to the ears in debt’.

Temporal Prepositions

426 Telling the time

The question **В котóром часу?/Во сколько?** ‘At what time?’ is answered as follows:

(1) **В** + accusative on the hour and up to the half-hour:

в час/два часа ...	‘at one o’clock/two o’clock ...’
в пять минут шестóго	‘at five past five’
в полдень/в полночь	‘at midday/midnight’

(2) **В** + prepositional on the half-hour:

в половине пёрвого	‘at half past twelve’ (colloquially в полпёрвого)
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(3) By **без** + genitive after the half-hour:

без пяти пять ‘at five to five’

Note

- (a) **В** + prepositional and **около** are used to denote approximate time: **в восьмом часу** ‘between seven and eight’, **в начале девятого** ‘just after eight’, **около двух часов** ‘at about two o’clock’.
- (b) In colloquial Russian, prepositions may be juxtaposed: **До какого часа вы работаете сегодня? До без четверти восемь** ‘What time do you work until today?’ ‘Until a quarter to eight’.
- (c) **В** + accusative is usual in phrases with **миг/мгновение** (**в последний миг/в последнее мгновение** ‘at the last instant’), **минута** (**в последнюю минуту** ‘at the last minute’, **в последние минуты** ‘in the final minutes’), **момент** (**в последний момент** ‘at the last moment’) and **час** (**в поздний час** ‘at a late hour’).
- (d) However, **на** + prepositional is used in sporting contexts: **На шестой минуте** польская команда открыла счёт ‘The Polish team opened the score in the sixth minute’, **на первых/последних минутах** матча ‘in the opening, closing minutes of the match’. Compare similar usage in chess: **Партия завершилась на 16-м ходу** ‘The game finished at the 16th move’.

See 206 for a detailed account of how to tell the time.

427 Days

(1) **В** combines with the accusative of **день** and the days of the week:

в какой день/в какие дни?	‘on what day/on what days?’
в понедельник, во вторник	‘on Monday, on Tuesday’
в среду, в четверг, в пятницу	‘on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday’
в субботу, в воскресенье	‘on Saturday, Sunday’
в этот, прошлый, будущий понедельник	‘this, last, next Monday’

(2) While **в** is used with days qualified by **первый** (**в первый день/в первые сутки** ‘on the first day’), **на** + accusative is used with ordinal numerals above **первый** (**на третий день/третьи сутки** ‘on the third day’, **на второй день** после отъезда ‘on the second day after leaving’), and with **другой, следующий**: **на другой/следующий день** ‘on the next day’ (cf. **в другой день** ‘on another day’).

(3) **По** combines with the dative plural to denote recurrent points in time: **по среда́м** ‘on Wednesdays’, **по суббо́там у́тром** ‘on Saturday mornings’.

Note

- (a) **День** itself is used in this meaning only in certain phrases: **по чётным/нечётным дням** ‘on even/odd days’ etc.
- (b) An alternative construction with **в** + accusative plural is possible in certain combinations: **по будням/в будни** ‘on weekdays’, **по выходным дням/в выходные дни** ‘on days off’ **по праздни́кам/в праздни́ки** ‘on holidays’. In some expressions only **в** + accusative is possible: **в обы́чные дни** ‘on normal days’.
- (c) **По** + dative plural also indicates temporal continuity: **по це́лым часа́м/дням** ‘for hours/days on end’ (also **це́лыми дня́ми/часа́ми**).

428 Parts of a day

(1) Nouns that denote part of a day (**у́тро** ‘morning’ etc.) usually appear in the instrumental: **у́тром** ‘in the morning’ etc. (but **пять часо́в утра́** ‘five o’clock in the morning’; see **97** (2) (i) and **206** (1) (ii)).

(2) However, **в** + accusative is used with nouns denoting parts of a day which are qualified by pronouns or adjectives (including **пе́рвый** ‘first’): **в пе́рвый/последний ве́чер** ‘on the first/the last evening’, **в ту ночь** ‘that night’, **в э́то воскресе́ное у́тро** ‘on that Sunday morning’.

(3) When nouns which denote part of a day are qualified by **друго́й/сле́дующий** or ordinals above **пе́рвый**, however, they combine with **на** + accusative: **на сле́дующий ве́чер/сле́дующую ночь/друго́е у́тро/тре́тье у́тро** ‘on the next evening/the next night/the next morning/the third morning’.

(4) **По** + dative plural denotes recurrent points in time: **по ве́черам/ноча́м/у́трам** ‘in the evenings/at nights/in the mornings’; **по нача́м** он не спит ‘he doesn’t sleep at nights’.

Note

В сýмки/сýмраках ‘at dusk’, but **на восхо́де** ‘at sunrise’, **на заката́е** ‘at sunset’, **на заре́/рассвете́** ‘at dawn’.

429 Weeks, months, years and centuries

(1) **На** combines with the prepositional of **неделя** ‘week’:

на этой, прошлой, ‘this, last, next week’
будущей неделе

(2) **В** combines with the prepositional of:

(i) **Месяц** ‘month’ and the names of calendar months:

в январé, февралé мартé ... ‘in January, February, March ...’
в этом, прошлом, будущем ‘this, last, next month’
месяце

Note

- (a) All names of months are masculine and are spelt with a small letter. The six months from **сентябрь** ‘September’ through to **февраль** ‘February’ take end stress in declension: **в сентябрé** ‘in September’ etc. The other six, from **март** to **август**, have fixed stress in declension.
- (b) ‘This March, last April, next December’ are rendered as **в мартé этого гóда, в апрéле прошлого гóда, в декабрé будущего гóда**.
- (c) The use of **на** + prepositional in contexts relating to pregnancy: Он оставил её **на седьмом месяце** беременности ‘He abandoned her in the seventh month of her pregnancy’.
- (d) The use of consecutive dates in **ночь с 11-го на 12-е января** ‘the night of 11 January’.

(ii) **Год** ‘year’:

в этом, прошлом, будущем ‘this, last, next year’
годú

в ты́сяча девятьсо́т ‘in 1998’
девяно́сто восьмо́м годú

в двухты́сячном годú ‘in the year 2000’

Note

- (a) **В слéдующем годú** is also used, especially with a reference point in the past: **В слéдующем годú** овладéли частью Финля́ндии ‘In the following year they captured part of Finland’.

- (b) The prepositional case is also used with years in the plural: **в 1920–1921 годах** ‘in 1920–1921’.
- (c) With decades, the accusative is preferred for processes extending over a period: **В 1960-е годы** здесь продавались русские книги ‘Russian books were sold here in the 1960s’. The prepositional is preferred for an event occurring at a point within a decade: Магазин закрылся **в 1970-х годах** ‘The shop closed in the 1970s’.
- (iii) **Век/столетие** ‘century’ and **тысячелетие** ‘millennium’:

в этом, прошлом,	‘this, last, next century’
будущем веке/столетии	
в XX (двадцатом) веке	‘in the twentieth century’
в третьем тысячелетии	‘in the third millennium’

Note

- (a) When qualified by modifiers other than **этот, прошлый, будущий, в** combines with the accusative of **неделя, месяц, год**: **в первую, последнюю неделю** ‘in the first, the last week’, **в первые недели** осени ‘in the first weeks of autumn’, **в первый месяц** курса ‘in the first month of the course’, **в первый/последний год** войны ‘in the first/last year of the war’, **в год** рождения ‘in the year of my birth’, **в послевоенные годы** ‘in the post-war years’. (This also applies to the seasons, cf. **осенью, зимой** ‘in the autumn, winter’ but **в ту осень** ‘that autumn’, **в трудную зиму** ‘in a difficult winter’.)
- (b) With ordinal numerals above **первый, на** + accusative is the norm: **на четвертый месяц** ‘in the fourth month’, **на вторую неделю** ‘in the second week’, **на четвертый год** ‘in the fourth year’ (but **на четвертом году** перестройки ‘in the fourth year of restructuring’, where reference is to a stage in a process).

430 General time words

В governs the accusative case of nouns which denote time in general or an indefinite period of time (**век** ‘age’, **время** ‘time’, **эпоха** ‘epoch’ etc.):

в а́томный век/срédние века́	‘in the atomic age/the middle ages’
в ми́рное вре́мя	‘in peace time’
во времена́ Петра́ I	‘during the time of Peter I’
в пери́од социализма	‘under socialism’
в зи́мнюю по́ру	‘in winter time’
в зи́мний сезо́н	‘in the winter season’ (also в зи́мнем сезо́не)
в стари́ну	‘in the old days’
в тече́ние	‘during the course of’
в на́шу эпо́ху	‘in our era’

Note

- (a) **Во вре́мя** is used with activities/events (**во вре́мя уро́ка** ‘during the lesson’), but *not* with words of time. **В тече́ние** can be used with either, thus: Репорта́жи бу́дем передава́ть **в тече́ние** всей конфе́ренции ‘We shall be transmitting reports **throughout** the whole conference’, **в тече́ние** сле́дующих не́скольких неде́ль ‘during the next few weeks’.
- (b) **Во времена́** is used for the distant past: **во времена́** крепо́стного пра́ва ‘during serfdom’, **во времена́** Шекспі́ра (= при Шекспі́ре/при жи́зни Шекспі́ра) ‘in Shakespeare’s time’ (see 442 (2) for **при** in temporal meaning). **Во времена́** is preferred to **при** when the events are distant in time *and* (from a Russian viewpoint) location. Compare Росси́я европеизи́ровалась **при Пётре́ Пётрво́м/во времена́ Пётра́ Пётрво́го** ‘Russia was Europeanized in the reign of Peter the First’ (an event distant in time) and **Во времена́ Пётра́ Пётрво́го** А́нглия была́ вели́кой морско́й держа́вой ‘Britain was a great naval power during the time of Peter the First’ (a historical fact distant in time *and* location).
- (c) **В хо́де** is common in scientific and journalistic literature, combining with a noun that denotes a process: **в хо́де обсу́ждения** (= **в проце́ссе обсу́ждения/при обсу́ждении**) ‘during the discussion’.
- (d) **За** + accusative denotes the period during which an event occurs or events occur: Он встреча́л **за э́то вре́мя** не бо́лее 60 други́х автомоби́лей ‘During this period he encountered no more than 60 other cars’.
- (e) **На протя́жении** is used with longish periods of time: **на протя́жении не́скольких веко́в** ‘over the course of several centuries’.

431 Nouns that denote stages in a process

В is used in temporal meaning with the prepositional case of:

- (1) The nouns **про́шлое** ‘past’, **настоя́щее** ‘present’, **бу́дущее** ‘future’:

в про́шлом, настоя́щем, бу́дущем ‘in the past, present, future’

- (2) The nouns **ко́нec** ‘end’, **нача́ло** ‘beginning’, **сере́дина** ‘middle’:

в нача́ле, сере́дине, ко́нecе ‘at the beginning, in the middle, at the end’

Note the phrase **в ко́нecе ко́нcoв** ‘eventually/in the end’.

- (3) Nouns that denote stages in life:

в младе́нчестве, де́тстве ‘in babyhood, childhood’
в мо́лодости, ста́рости ‘in youth, old age’
в глубо́кой ста́рости ‘at a ripe old age’ (but **на ста́рости лет** ‘in old age’)

Note

- (a) **В во́зрасте** ‘at an age’: Приуча́ться к ко́фе **в её во́зрасте** нежелáтельно ‘It is undesirable to get used to drinking coffee at her age’. ‘At my age’ may be rendered as **в моём во́зрасте/в мои́ го́ды**. ‘At the age of seven’ is expressed as follows: **в во́зрасте семи́ лет/в семи́лeтнем во́зрасте/в семь лет/семи́ лет**.
- (b) Use of **на** in Он **на 76-м го́ду** потеря́л зрeние ‘He lost his sight in his 76th year’, **на 6-м деcя́тке** ‘in one’s fifties’, **на моём ве́ку** ‘in my lifetime’.
- (4) Nouns that denote a stage in an activity or event:

в антра́кте, в перерыве ‘in the interval, at break-time’
в тре́тьем пери́оде ‘in the third period’ (ice-hockey)
во второ́м тайме ‘in the second half’
в послéднем ту́ре ‘in the final round of a competition’
 соревно́вания

432 The weather

В + accusative is used to describe the weather:

в плохую погоду ‘in bad weather’

Самолёты **в туман** прикованы к землё
‘In fog the aircraft are grounded’

Note

Во время can also be used in more general meanings (**во время метели** ‘during the snowstorm’), cf. **в** + accusative with its implications of time and circumstance (**В метель** они сбились с пути ‘They lost their way in the snowstorm’). Nouns such as **жарá** ‘heat’, **погода** ‘weather’, **холод** ‘cold’ combine only with **в** + accusative.

433 Festivals

The names of some festivals combine with **в** or **на** + accusative: **в/на Новый год** ‘at New Year’. **В** is commoner (**в Праздник Победы** ‘at the Victory Festival’, **в новогодний праздник** ‘at the new year festival’, **в майские праздники** ‘at the May festivities’), but **на** persists with religious festivals (**на Пасху** ‘at Easter’, **на Рождество** ‘at Christmas’).

The Use of Prepositions to Denote Action in Relation to Various Time Limits

434 The use of **с** + genitive, **до** + genitive/**по** + accusative to denote terminal points in time

(1) **С** + genitive denotes ‘since/from’ a point in time:

С субботы мы вместе	‘We have been together since Saturday’
с давних пор	‘since time immemorial’
с тех пор	‘since then’

(Начиная) **с апреля** Венгрия перейдёт на летнее время
‘(With effect) from April Hungary will switch to summer time’

Note

Со времени, со дня, с момента etc. combine with nouns that denote the names of activities or events:

Два десятилетия прошлó **со времени победы**
‘Two decades have passed **since the victory**’

со дня новосѣлья
‘since the house-warming’

с момента получения вáшего письма
‘since receipt of your letter’

Note also **со времён**: **со времён Ивана III** ‘since the time of Ivan III’.

(2) **До** means ‘until’:

ждать до вечера	‘to wait until evening’
Я б́уду здесь (вплóть)	‘I shall be here (right up) until
до пяти часóв	five o’clock’
до сих пор	‘up till now, hitherto’

Note

‘Not until’ is rendered by **тóлько** ‘only’: **тóлько** пòсле полóночи ‘not until after midnight’.

(3) **По** + accusative means ‘up to and including’: **по шестóе мая** (or **до шестóго мая включительно**) ‘up to and including 6 May’; **по сéй дéнь** ‘up to the present day’.

С and **до/по** denote the terminal limits of an action:

Он отдыхáет **с 26 мáрта до пéрвого апрéля**
‘He is on holiday from 26 March to 1 April’ (reporting back on 1 April)

Он отдыхáет **с 26 мáрта по пéрвое апрéля**
‘He is on holiday from 26 March to 1 April inclusive’ (reporting back on 2 April)

Note the phrases **со дня нá дéнь** ‘any day now’, **с минúты на минúту** ‘any minute now’, **с чáсу на чáс** ‘any time now’.

435 Use of **к** + dative and **под** + accusative to denote temporal approach

(1) **к** + dative means ‘by’:

к концú недели	‘by the end of the week’
к понедéльнику	‘by Monday’

(2) **Под** + accusative denotes:

(i) ‘Towards, approaching’ a time, in combination with **вечер** ‘evening’, **воскресенье** ‘Sunday’, **праздник** ‘festival’, **старость** ‘old age’, **утро** ‘morning’ etc.:

Он вернулся **под вечер под конец** сентября
‘He returned towards evening towards the end of September’

Я встал **под утро** ‘I got up in the early hours’

(ii) ‘On the eve of’ a holiday or festival (a synonym of **накануне** + genitive):

под Новый год ‘on New Year’s Eve’

436 Use of **в/за** + accusative to denote the time taken to complete an action

Both **в** and **за** + accusative denote the time taken to complete an action:

Смена паровозов была произведена **в две–три минуты** (Век)
‘The switch of locomotives was carried out in 2–3 minutes’

Он покрасил кухню **за четыре дня**
‘He painted the kitchen in four days’

Note

- (a) If the *duration* of an action is emphasized, *not* its completion, the accusative is used *without* a preposition: Он читал роман **четыре часа** ‘He read the novel for four hours’. Compare Он прочитал роман **за/в четыре дня** ‘He read the novel in four days’.
- (b) **За** is sometimes preferred to **в** in order to avoid possible ambiguity: Он составил доклад **за три часа** ‘He compiled the report in three hours’ (**в три часа** could mean ‘at three o’clock’).
- (c) **За** is also usually preferred when the time appears excessive in relation to the task: В электросварке **и за полгода** не разберёшься! (Kochetov) ‘You won’t get the hang of arc-welding even in six months!’
- (d) **В** appears in the phrases: **в два счёта** ‘in two shakes’, **в мгновение ока** ‘in the twinkling of an eye’, **в считанные минуты** ‘in a few brief minutes’.

437 Use of **в** + accusative to denote the period during which an action occurs a stated number of times

В combines with the accusative of a time word to denote the period during which an action occurs a stated number of times:

Он **éздит** на **Кúбу** ‘He goes to Cuba four times a year’
4 рáза в год

438 Use of **на** + accusative to denote the time for which something has been arranged

На + accusative denotes the time for which an event has been arranged:

Собрáние **назнáчено на седьмо́е ма́рта**
 ‘The meeting has been arranged for 7 March’

Отложíть **на бúдущую неде́лю**
 ‘To postpone to next week’

Note

- (a) Other verbs which appear in the construction include **заказа́ть (на сре́ду)** ‘to order’ (for Wednesday), **перенести́ (на четве́рг)** ‘to carry over’ (till Thursday).
- (b) The elliptical construction **На деся́тое** билéтов уже́ нет ‘There are no tickets left for the tenth’.

439 Use of prepositions to denote sequence in time (before, after etc.)

(1) Prepositions denoting precedence in time

- (i) **До** means (any time) ‘before’:

до война́ ‘before the war’

(ii) **До** also combines with **за** + accusative where one event precedes another by a stated time interval:

Про́верили мото́ры **за час до вы́лета**
 ‘They checked the engines an hour before take-off’

Note also the adverb **задо́лго**: **задо́лго до** войны ‘long before the war’.

(iii) **Перед** means ‘just before’:

перед сном	‘before going to bed’
переоде́ться перед ужином	‘to change for (just before) dinner’

Note

(a) The noun can be qualified by **са́мый**: **перед са́мым** отъез́дом ‘just prior to departure’.

(b) The comparative **ра́ньше** is restricted to usage with animate nouns and nouns that denote deadlines: Он прише́л **ра́ньше меня́, ра́ньше вре́мени** ‘He arrived before me, ahead of time’.

(iv) **Наза́д** + accusative ‘ago’ is now more commonly used than the pronoun + adverb formation **тому́ наза́д**: неде́лю (тому́) **наза́д** ‘a week ago’.

(2) Prepositions denoting subsequent action

(i) **Пос́ле, че́рез**

Пос́ле means ‘after’ an event (**пос́ле заня́тий** ‘after lessons’), while **че́рез** is used with words of **time** to denote ‘after the expiry of/in/later’, with reference to the past, present or future:

Начне́м че́рез час	‘We shall begin in an hour’s time’
Мы нача́ли че́рез час	‘We began an hour later’

Note

(a) The preposition must not be separated from its noun: **ме́нее, че́м че́рез час** ‘in less than an hour’s time’ (or ‘less than an hour later’).

(b) **По исте́чении** ‘on expiry of’ is synonymous with **че́рез** in this meaning. Compare **спу́стя**, which combines mainly with past tense verbs: Он у́мер **спу́стя ме́сяц/ме́сяц спу́стя** ‘He died a month later’.

(c) **Пос́ле** replaces **че́рез** when the time word is extended by a genitive: **че́рез год** ‘after a year’, but **пос́ле** го́да разлу́ки ‘after a year’s separation’.

Both **че́рез** and **пос́ле** are used in constructions which denote the temporal relationship of sequential events:

Через восемь дней после Рождества наши начали наступление
‘Our lads went on the offensive eight days after Christmas’

Note

- (a) **Через** is *optional* in such contexts (cf. **за ... до** (1) (ii) above, where **за** is *compulsory*).
- (b) **Спустя** may replace **через** in such constructions: **спустя 8 дней/8 дней спустя после Рождества**.

Через is also used to denote a recurrent temporal interval:

Пароход останавливается здесь **через раз**
‘The steamer stops here every other time’

Автобусы ходят **через каждые десять минут**
‘The buses run every ten minutes’

(ii) **По + prepositional**

По + prepositional is synonymous with **после** in official and scientific styles, in combination with verbal and some other abstract nouns:

по возвращении (= после возвращения) домой	‘on returning home’
по окончании университета	‘on graduating’
по получении письма	‘on receipt of the letter’
по приезде	‘on arrival’
по его смерти	‘on his death’

(iii) **За + instrumental**

За + instrumental denotes sequence in time:

год за годом, день за днём year after year, day after day

(iv) **В + accusative**

В + ordinal numeral + раз defines an event’s place in a series:

Она голосует **в первый раз** ‘She is voting for the first time’

(v) **На + accusative**

На + accusative is used to denote the time subsequent to the **completion** of an action:

Он **на год** поехал за границу
‘He has gone abroad for a year’

Она прятала **на лето** зимние вещи
'She would put her winter things away for the summer'

Он встал с постели **на 5 минут**
'He got out of bed for 5 minutes'

Note

- (a) The accusative *without* a preposition denotes the time spent *performing* an action. Compare:

Он шёл в школу **10 минут** 'He took 10 minutes to get to school'

and

Он выключает свет **на 10 минут** 'He puts the light out for 10 minutes'

where the 10 minutes *follow the completion* of the action of putting out the light, and the result (darkness) is effective throughout that time. Intention is implied.

- (b) The accusative without a preposition is therefore used with durative verbs (Я **три недели отдыхал** в Ялте 'I holidayed in Yalta for three weeks' (time and action coincide)), while **на** + accusative is used with verbs that denote completed actions (Пьяниц **сажают в камеру на ночь** 'Drunks are put in a cell for the night' (the time is subsequent to the completion of the action)).

Note also the adverb **надолго**: Она уехала **надолго** 'She went away for a long time'.

440 Temporal prepositional phrases as attributes to nouns: за + accusative, от + genitive

- (1) **За** + accusative is used to denote a journal publication date:

«Металл» **за апрель этого года** 'the journal *Metall* for this April'

- (2) **От** + genitive denotes the date of a document:

письмо **от первого августа** 'a letter of 1 August'

441 Positioning an event within a time span: **среди** + genitive, **между** + instrumental

Среди denotes ‘in the middle of’: **среди но́чи** ‘in the middle of the night’ (note also **среди́ бе́ла дня́** ‘in broad daylight’). **Между** positions an event between two other events: **между двумя́ война́ми** ‘between two wars’, он отды́хал **между обе́дом и у́жином** ‘he relaxed between lunch and dinner’.

442 Coincidence in time: **при** + prepositional

При is used in a number of contexts denoting coincidence in time:

(1) ‘In the presence of’:

при свиде́телях ‘in the presence of witnesses’

(2) ‘In the (life-)time of’, ‘during’ (see **430** note (b)):

при жи́зни А́ни ‘in Ania’s lifetime’

при Ста́лине ‘in Stalin’s time, under Stalin’

(3) It governs:

(i) The nouns **вид, звук, мысль, сло́во/сло́ва**:

при ви́де Петро́ва (= **когда́** я уви́дел Петро́ва)
‘at the sight of Petrov’ (= **when** I saw Petrov)

при зву́ке звонка́
‘at the sound of the bell’

Он содро́гнулся **при одно́й мы́сли** о пора́жении
‘He shuddered at the mere thought of defeat’

При э́тих сло́вах она́ побледне́ла
‘She grew pale at these words’

(ii) Nouns that denote a source of light:

Он чита́л **при све́те ла́мпы/при ла́мпе**
‘He was reading by the light of a lamp’

(iii) The noun **возмо́жность** ‘opportunity’:

при ка́ждой/пе́рвой возмо́жности
‘at every/the first opportunity’

(iv) Nouns denoting various types of state or circumstance:

при таких обстоятельствах
'in the circumstances'

при температуре тридцать градусов
'at a temperature of thirty degrees'

(v) Verbal and some other abstract nouns:

При взлёте уровень шумов достигал 112 децибел
'On (= during) take-off engine noise reached 112 decibels'

При перевозке мебели было разбито несколько стульев
'Several chairs were broken during the move'

(vi) Nouns that denote a social order:

при социализме	'under socialism'
при советской власти	'under Soviet power'
при этом режиме	'under this regime'

Note

При смерти 'at death's door'.

Other Meanings

443 Prepositions with causal meaning

The following prepositions are used to denote the cause of an action or state:

(1) **Из-за** + genitive/благодаря + dative

Из-за and **благодаря** are used when the cause of an action is *external* to the subject, **из-за** being preferred when the outcome is unfavourable and **благодаря** when it is favourable:

Поезд опоздал **из-за тумана**
'The train was late because of the fog'

Я провалился **из-за тебя**
'I failed because of you'

Благодаря вам я выжил
'Thanks to you I survived'

Note

The distinction between **из-за** and **благодаря** is sometimes blurred, **благодаря** being used on occasion as a synonym of **из-за**, in particular when the outcome is neutral from the subject's point of view.

(2) **От** + genitive in the meaning 'physical cause'

Phrases with **от** + genitive denote the physical cause of a state or process:

дорóга, мо́края от дождя́	'a road wet with rain'
боль от ожóга	'pain from a burn'
Он у́мер от ра́ка	'He died of cancer'

(3) **От/из** + genitive in the meaning 'emotional cause'

Both **от** and **из** combine with nouns of feeling which provoke a reaction on the part of the subject:

(i) Phrases with **от** imply an **involuntary or spontaneous reaction**:

Он запла́кал от ра́дости	'He wept with joy '
Она́ дрожи́т от стра́ха	'She is trembling with fear '
Он покрасне́л от стыда́	'He blushed with shame '

(ii) Phrases with **из** denote that the feeling experienced motivates a **deliberate action** on the part of the subject:

уби́йство из ре́вности	'murder motivated by jealousy '
Он солга́л из стра́ха	'He lied out of fear '
Он отказа́лся из упря́мства	'He refused out of obstinacy '

(4) **От/с** + genitive

(i) **С** + genitive expresses causal meanings similar to those expressed by **от**. Often the prepositions are interchangeable when the dependent noun denotes:

(a) A feeling: пла́кать **от** стра́ха/со стра́ха/со стра́ху 'to weep with fear'.

(b) A physical sensation or state: умерéть **от** го́лода/с го́лоду 'to starve to death'.

Note

In such examples the phrases in **с** incline towards the *colloquial*.

(ii) **С** + genitive is common in figurative usage: умирать **со скуки/со смеху** 'to die of boredom/laughing'.

(iii) It also appears in certain set expressions:

устать с дороги	'to get tired from the journey'
с непривычки	'due to lack of practice'
ни с того ни с сего	'for no particular reason'

(5) По + dative

Phrases with **по** + dative case express causal meaning:

(i) When the dependent noun itself is causal (**причина** 'cause' etc.):

По какому поводу вы об этом вспомнили?	'What made you think of that?'
по какой причине?	'for what reason?'
по финансовым соображениям	'for financial considerations'

(ii) When the dependent noun denotes handicaps or drawbacks associated with:

(a) Ill-health:

по болезни 'due to sickness'

По слабости здоровья он почти не покидает города
'Because of poor health he hardly leaves the town'

(b) Age or inexperience:

Сын **по молодости** не понимает её
'Her son does not understand her because of his youth'

Нигде уже не работал **по старости**
'He had stopped working altogether due to old age'

(c) Negative character traits:

Мальчик это сделал **по глупости**
'The boy did this out of stupidity'

Note

Из-за would be used, however, if there was a change in subject:

Из-за его глупости пострадали его друзья
'His friends suffered because of his stupidity'

(d) Error, ignorance:

По винé водителя происходит 8 из 10 авáрий
‘Eight out of ten road accidents are caused by driver error’

по ошйбке, недосмóтру ‘by mistake, due to an oversight’

Note also брак **по расчёту** ‘marriage of convenience’.

(6) За + instrumental

(i) The spatial origins of the causal meanings of **за** + instrumental are evident in examples such as **За стеной** не видно ‘You can see nothing for the wall’ (lit. ‘behind the wall’).

(ii) **За** also combines with nouns that denote:

(a) Absence:

Лаборатория не рабóтает **за неимéнием** лаборáнта
‘The laboratory is not functioning for want of a laboratory assistant’

Его оправдáли **за отсутствием** ули́к
‘He was acquitted for lack of evidence’

(b) Worthlessness:

бросить **за негóдностью**
‘to discard as worthless’

Прóдали **за ненáдобностью**
‘It was sold as surplus to requirements’

Note also the compound causal prepositions **в результате** ‘as a result of’ and **вследствие** ‘in consequence of’. Both take the genitive case.

444 Prepositions that denote the object of feelings and attitudes

(1) К + dative

К is used to denote the object of many feelings and attitudes:

Она вэжлива	ко всем	‘She is polite to everyone’
Он добр	к живóтным	‘He is kind to animals’
интерéс	к этимоло́гии	‘ interest in etymology’
любо́вь	к ро́дине	‘ love for the homeland’
относи́ться	к	‘ to relate to, to treat (someone)’
презрэние	к врагу́	‘ scorn for an enemy’

Note

С + instrumental is used in certain combinations: Лára **вэжлива со всіми** ‘Lara is polite to everyone’ (cf. вэжлива ко всем, above), Я была с **ва́ми груба́** ‘I was rude to you’, Суд был **строг с** подсудимыми ‘The court was hard on the defendants’. Compare **обра́щаться с** + instrumental ‘to treat’.

(2) На + accusative

На + accusative denotes the object of anger and similar emotions:

Он негодова́л	на неё	‘He was indignant with her’
Я оби́делся	на его́ слова́	‘I took offence at his words’
Он серди́т/зол	на меня́	‘He is angry with me’
Я тайла́	на неё мно́го оби́д	‘I nursed many grudges against her’

(3) Перед + instrumental

Phrases with **перед** denote the object of feelings of guilt, duty, responsibility, fear, embarrassment, ingratiation, defiance etc.:

Я винова́т	перед ва́ми	‘I owe you an apology’
долг	перед ро́диной	‘duty to the homeland’
зайскивать	перед нача́льником	‘to ingratiate oneself with the boss’
Он извини́лся	перед ни́ми	‘He apologized to them’
Отвеча́ю	перед роди́телями	‘I am responsible to the parents’
страх	перед сме́ртью	‘fear of death’
Ему́ сты́дно	перед са́ми́м собо́й	‘He is ashamed of himself’

(4) По + dative

Phrases in **по** + dative denote the object of yearning, grieving etc.:

скуча́ть	по де́тям	‘to miss the children’
тоска́	по ро́дине	‘homesickness’
Она́ в тра́уре	по му́жу	‘She is in mourning for her husband’

(First- and second-person pronouns appear in the *prepositional* case after such verbs: скуча́ли **по нас, вас** ‘they missed us, you’. Third-person pronouns appear in the dative or prepositional.)

Note

The compound prepositions **в отноше́нии** + genitive, **по отноше́нию к**: щепети́льный **в отноше́нии** своих обяза́нностей/**по отноше́нию к** своим обяза́нностям ‘punctilious **with respect to** his obligations’.

445 Prepositions that denote extent

Some prepositions denote extent in its various forms: the dimensions of an object, quantitative difference and so on.

(1) В + accusative

В + accusative is used to quantify a dimension:

(i) In terms of objects:

ка́бели толщинóй **в рúку** ‘cables the thickness of one’s arm’

(ii) In terms of conventional units of measurement:

река́ глубинóй	в три мэтра	‘a river three metres deep’
гора́ высотóй	в ты́сячу мэтров	‘a mountain 1,000 metres high’
площа́дь ширино́й	в пятьдеся́т мэтров	‘a square 50 metres wide’

Note

- (a) The dimension word appears in the instrumental in such constructions, but questions about dimension are posed in the genitive: **Како́го он рóста?** ‘How tall is he?’
- (b) The dimension word can be omitted altogether where it is obvious which dimension is meant: турби́на (мо́щностью) **в двéсти ты́сяч килова́тт** ‘a 200,000-kilowatt turbine’, местá (сто́имостью) **в се́мьдеся́т рублéй** ‘70-rouble seats’.
- (c) Conversely, **в** may be omitted where the dimension word is retained, especially in journalistic, colloquial and technical styles: гора́ высотóй (**в**) **пять ты́сяч мэтров** ‘a mountain 5,000 metres high’.

В + accusative is also used in comparative constructions with **раз**:

Его́ дом **в три ра́за** бо́льше моего́
‘His house is three times bigger than mine’

(2) В + prepositional

(i) **В** governs the prepositional of nouns that denote extent, scale etc.:

в крúпном масшта́бе	‘on a large scale’
в како́й-то ме́ре	‘in some measure’

Приро́да изучена **в тако́й стéпени**, что неожíданности вря́д ли возмо́жны

‘Nature has been studied to such a degree that surprises are hardly possible’

(ii) In some constructions with **стéпень**, **в** and **до** are synonymous: **в/до некоторой стéпени** ‘to a certain extent’, **в/до такой стéпени** ‘to such a degree’, but **в** is preferred in the lower and comparative ranges: **в малóй стéпени** ‘to a small extent’, **в бóльшей стéпени** ‘to a greater extent’, **в разнóй стéпени** ‘to varying degrees’.

(3) До + genitive

(i) The central meaning of **до** is ‘limit’ or ‘extent’:

родители, имéющие	‘parents having up to five
до пяти человек детéй	children’
накуриваться до тошноты	‘to smoke to the point of nausea’
доводить до слéз	‘to reduce to tears’

Note also the set expressions:

Он промóк	до нитки/до послéдней	‘He got soaked to the skin’
Он эгоист	до мóзга костéй	‘He is an egoist to the core’
выпить всё	до послéдней кáпли	‘to drain to the last drop’
танцевáть	до упáду	‘to dance till you drop’

(ii) **До** also combines with **стéпень** (see (2) (ii) above).

(4) За + accusative

The preposition is used in constructions that denote excess:

Морóз ужé за тридцать	‘There are already over
	thirty degrees of frost’
Было зá полночь	‘It was past midnight’
Ему за сóрок	‘He is over forty’
Давлéние перевалило атмосферé	‘The pressure exceeded
зá сто	100 atmospheres’

(5) На + accusative

На + accusative case denotes quantification:

(i) With comparatives (see also **182** (2) (i)):

Он на три гóда старéше меня	‘He is three years older than me’
------------------------------------	-----------------------------------

(ii) In terms of:

(a) Percentages and fractions:

Земля на три четверти океан	'The Earth is three-quarters ocean'
выполнять норму на сто пять процентов	'to fulfil one's norm by 105%'

(b) Ratio/distribution:

На каждые три квартиры должно быть два телефона
'There should be two telephones to every three apartments'

(c) Monetary value:

штрафовать на 500 рублей	'to fine 500 roubles'
на 300 (рублей) марок	'300 roubles' worth of stamps'

(d) Scholastic achievement:

учиться **на круглые пятёрки** 'to get straight As'

(e) Projection through space:

бег на тысячу метров	'1,000 metres race'
Сосна простирается на полтораста километров	'The pines extend for 150 kilometres'
Он кричит на весь двор	'He shouts so loud as to be heard over the whole yard'

(6) *Около* + genitive

Около denotes approximation:

около метра	'about a metre'
около часа	'about an hour'
около двух недель	'about two weeks'

Note

Unlike *с* + accusative (see (8)), **около** combines only with nouns that denote units of measurement.

(7) *Порядка* + genitive

Порядка + genitive denotes approximate numerical quantity:

Цены **порядка двадцати–тридцати долларов**
'Prices of the order of 20–30 dollars'

До ближайшей деревни **порядка пятидесяти километров**
 (*Moskovskii komsomolets*)
 ‘It is about fifty kilometres to the nearest village’

(8) С + accusative

С + accusative expresses many types of approximation (cf. (6)):

Он прожил там с месяц	‘He spent about a month there’
Он ростом с сестрú	‘He is about the same height as his sister’
Мальчик с пальчик	‘Tom Thumb’

446 Prepositions that denote purpose

Many prepositional phrases denote the purpose for which an action is performed or for which an object is designed:

(1) В + accusative

В + accusative appears in a number of phrases which denote the purpose of an action:

Он выступил в защиту своих прав	‘He spoke up in defence of his rights’
Посадили дерево в память о павших воинах	‘They planted a tree in memory of soldiers who fell in battle’
Устроили приём в честь отца	‘They arranged a reception in honour of father’
Я поднял обе руки в знак примирения	‘I raised both arms as a token of reconciliation’

(2) Для + genitive ‘meant for/designed for’

папка для бумаг	‘a file for documents’
общежитие для студéнтов	‘a residence for students’

Note

(a) **Для** can also govern a verbal noun: Учёные собрались **для обсуждения** ряда вопросов (= чтобы обсудить ряд вопросов)
 ‘The scientists gathered for a discussion of a number of questions’.

- (b) The set phrases **для вёрности** 'just to make sure', **для ви́да** 'for the sake of appearances', **для разнообра́зия** 'for a change'.

(3) За + accusative

За + accusative denotes the object of struggle, competition etc.:

борóться за независимость	'to struggle for independence'
соревновáться за высокие урожа́и	'to compete for high-yield harvests'

(4) За + instrumental in the meaning 'for/to fetch'

идти́ за водо́й	'to go for water'
Я зашёл за своим дру́гом	'I called for my friend'
о́чередь за хле́бом	'a queue for bread'

Note usage in abstract contexts: Он обрати́лся ко мне **за сове́том/пóмощью** 'He turned to me for advice/help'.

(5) На + accusative

На + accusative denotes:

- (i) A profession aspired to (constructions with **учи́ться**):

учи́ться на инжене́ра	'to study to be an engineer'
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- (ii) A quality, the presence/evaluation of which is the object of testing:

испы́тывать но́вый шлем на про́чность	'to test a new helmet for strength'
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- (iii) The purpose of a precautionary measure (constructions with **слу́чай**):

Она́ взяла́ с собо́й зóнтик на слу́чай дождя́	'She took an umbrella with her in case of rain'
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Note

На всякий слу́чай 'just in case/to be on the safe side':

Спусти́лся в овра́г, **на всякий слу́чай** с ножо́м в руке́ (Aitmatov)
'He descended into the gully with a knife in his hand, just to be on the safe side'

(6) О + prepositional

О + prepositional can denote the purpose of a request or plea:

крик, призы́в о по́мощи	'a cry, an appeal for help'
про́сьба о деньга́х	'a request for money'

(7) По + dative (constructions with **дело/делá** ‘business’)

Ёду в гóрод **по делу/делáм** ‘I am going to town on business’

(8) Под + accusative

Под + accusative denotes the function for which an area is designated:

Дáли зéмлю **под огорóды**
‘They allocated land for market gardens’

кóмнаты, отведённые **под музéй**
‘rooms ear-marked for a museum’

Note also **в интересах** ‘in the interests of’ and **в целях** ‘for the purpose of’ (both + genitive): **в целях** повышéния производительности труда ‘for the purpose of increasing labour productivity’ (cf. **с целью** ‘with the aim of’, which normally combines with a verbal noun or an infinitive).

447 Concessive meanings expressed by prepositions

(1) **Несмотря на** + accusative ‘despite’ is the commonest of the concessive prepositions:

Несмотря на плохúю погоду, онí играли в тéннис
‘Despite the bad weather, they played tennis’

(2) **Вопреки** + dative ‘contrary to’, **невзирая на** + accusative ‘despite, regardless of’, **наперекóр** + dative ‘in defiance of’ relate to more official styles: **вопреки приказу** ‘contrary to orders’.

(3) **При** may also be used with concessive meaning, especially in combination with **весь** ‘all’:

При всём своём таланте он не годётся в министрý
‘For all his talent he is not cut out to be a minister’

При всём желáнии не могу́ вам помочь
‘Much as I would like to, I cannot help you’

448 По + dative/accusative in distributive meaning

In distributive meanings **по** combines:

(1) With the dative of singular nouns:

Он дал ученикám **по учебнику**
‘He gave the pupils a book each’

В 25% семей было **по одному ребёнку**
‘25% of families had one child each’

(2) With the accusative of two, three and four (also 200, 300 and 400):

Мы выпили **по две чашки** ‘We drank two cups each’

(3) With the dative *or* accusative of other numerals, the dependent noun appearing in the *genitive plural*:

Нам дали **по пяти/по пять тетрадей**
‘They gave us five exercise books each’

Note

The accusative, formerly confined mainly to colloquial styles, is now freely used in written styles also:

За столами сидело **по десять студентов**
‘At each of the tables sat ten students’

Работают **по семь часов** в день
‘They work seven hours a day’

Тройм из них было **по тринадцать** (Marinina)
‘Three of them were thirteen years old’

(4) Indefinite numerals are found in either case:

Эти слова имеют **по несколько/нескольку** значений
‘These words have several meanings each’

Note

A distributive phrase in **по** may function as:

(a) The subject:

По обе стороны парадной имелось **по балкону**
‘There was a balcony at either side of the main entrance’

(b) The object:

Сжимал в каждой руке **по пистолету**
‘He gripped a pistol in each hand’

(c) A temporal expression:

Останáвливаются два пóезда в сýтки, кáждый **стоит по три минуты**
‘Two trains a day stop here, each for three minutes at a time’

(d) An attribute:

Четы́ре билéта **по двáдцать рублéй**
‘Four tickets at twenty roubles each’

Note the colloquial phrase **По чéм?** ‘how much?’ (each): По чéм яблoки?
‘How much are apples?’ (each).

Other Important Meanings Expressed by Prepositions

449 Prepositions that take the accusative

(1) В

В + accusative denotes:

(i) The target of throwing, knocking, shooting etc. (see also **451** (2) (iv)):

Он брóсил в меня́ поду́шку	‘He threw a pillow at me ’
Он вы́стрелил в цель	‘He fired at the target ’
Он ра́нен в го́лову	‘He is wounded in the head ’
стучáть в дверь	‘to knock on/at the door ’
Он удáрил меня́ в чéлюсть	‘He punched me on the jaw ’

(ii) A game (constructions with **игрáть**; see also **453** (2) (i)):

игрáть в футбóл/прýтки	‘to play football/hide and seek’
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(iii) The object of belief/infatuation:

вéрить в социáлизм	‘to believe in socialism’
Он влюбíлся в медсестрý	‘He fell in love with a nurse’

(iv) An object looked/shouted into or through:

Он **в бинóкль** рассмáтривает рéку
‘He examines the river through binoculars’

смотре́ть на себя́ в зéркало	‘to look at oneself in the mirror’
смотре́ть в окно́	‘to look out of the window’
кри́кнуть в мегафо́н	‘to shout through a megaphone’

(v) A professional or other group (note that what appears to be the nominative plural in these constructions is historically an *accusative*):

Он не годится в музыканты	‘He is not cut out to be a musician’
идти в гости	‘to go visiting’
произвести в офицеры	‘to commission’

Note that the idea of plurality is lost in many such expressions: Он годится ей в отцы ‘He is old enough to be her father’.

(2) За

Constructions with **за** involve:

(i) Thanking, paying, rewarding, punishing for:

медаль за отвагу	‘a medal for bravery ’
Его наказали за ошибку	‘He was punished for the mistake ’
Она платит ему за молоко	‘She pays him for the milk ’
продавать за 1000 рублей	‘to sell for 1,000 roubles ’
спасибо за совет	‘thanks for the advice ’

(ii) Identifying, evaluating as:

Он выдал себя **за специалиста**
‘He passed himself off **as an expert**’

Принимали её **за мою девушку**
‘They took her **for my girl friend**’

Он слывет **за знатокá**
‘He passes **for a connoisseur**’

(iii) Seizing, holding, leading by:

Я взял Инку за руку	‘I took Inka by the hand ’
Он схватился за голову	‘He clutched his head ’

(iv) Feelings experienced on behalf of someone else:

Она боится за меня	‘She is afraid for me ’
Я рад за тебя	‘I am glad for you ’

(v) The meaning ‘in favour of’:

Я голосовал за вас	‘I voted for you’
пить за здоровье отца	‘to drink to father’s health’

Note

Что за in the meaning **какой** does not affect the case of the dependent noun: **Что за мѹка!** ‘What torment!’, **Что это за друзья?** ‘What kind of friends are those?’, **Что за книгу она купила?** ‘What kind of book did she buy?’

(3) На

(i) **На** has many literal and figurative meanings which denote various forms of direction, allocation, expenditure etc.:

жаловаться на питание	‘to complain about the food’
заказ на платье	‘an order for a dress’
лес на постройку	‘timber for building’
мода/спрос на иностранные машинны	‘fashion/demand for foreign cars’
надѣяться на успех/ на брата	‘to hope for success/rely on one’s brother’
обменять квартиру на дачу	‘to exchange a flat for a country cottage’
обращать внимание на совет	‘to pay attention to advice’
оказывать давление на кого-нибудь	‘to put pressure on someone’
охотиться на волка	‘to hunt a wolf’
право на отдых	‘the right to relaxation’
производить впечатление на друга	‘to make an impression on a friend’
работать на семью	‘to work for one’s family’
рецепт на лекарство	‘a prescription for medicine’
смотреть на карту	‘to look at a map’
тратить время на пустяки/ деньги на конфеты	‘to spend time on trifles/money on sweets’
что на обед?	‘what’s for lunch?’

(ii) The main verb or adjective may denote resolve:

Он готов на всё	‘He is prepared to go to any lengths’
идти на риск	‘to take a risk’

Note

Готов на implies desperate resolve, **готов к** only preparedness.

(iii) The main verb, adjective or noun may express reaction:

отвечать на вопро́с	‘to answer a question’
реакция на критику	‘reaction to criticism’

(4) О

О, об + accusative denotes the object of collision, friction, pressure etc.:

Волны разбиваются о рифы	‘The waves smash against the reefs’
Она споткнулась о камень	‘She tripped over a stone’
Он ударился ногой об стул	‘He struck his leg against a chair’

(5) Под

Под + accusative implies:

(i) ‘Support’ for the dependent noun (usually **рука́** or **ру́ки**):

Его́ подде́рживали **под руки**
‘They were supporting him by the arms’

Они́ прогу́ливаются **под руку**
‘They are strolling about arm in arm’

(ii) ‘Accompaniment’:

танцевать под оркестр	‘to dance to an orchestra’
Она́ села под бу́рные аплодисме́нты	‘She sat down to tumultuous applause’

(iii) ‘Imitation’, ‘adaptation to style’ etc.:

Он пел **под Шаля́пина**
‘He sang in imitation of Shaliapin’

комо́д **под кра́сное де́рево**
‘an imitation mahogany sideboard’

стри́чься **под ма́льчика**
‘to have one’s hair cut like a boy’s’

450 Prepositions that take the genitive

(1) Для

Для can have a comparative/relative meaning:

Тепло́ для **ноября́**

‘It is warm for November’

(2) Из

Из denotes source:Э́то я узна́л **из газе́т**

‘I learnt that from the papers’

Он **из рабо́чей семье́**

‘He is from a working-class family’

посу́да **из гли́ны**

‘crockery made of clay’

Оди́н **из нас** помо́жет

‘One of us will help’

Солнце́ состои́т **из водоро́да**
и гели́я‘The sun consists of hydrogen and
helium’

(3) Из-под

Из-под denotes the former content of a container:буты́лка **из-под молока́**

‘a milk bottle/empty milk bottle’

Compare буты́лка **молока́** ‘a bottle of milk’.

(4) От

(i) **От** appears in contexts involving protection, evasion, riddance etc.:**возде́рживаться от**

‘to abstain from voting’

голосова́ния

защища́ть го́род от врага́‘to defend the town against an
enemy’**избавля́ться от** привы́чки

‘to get rid of a habit’

Она́ **отказа́лась от** обе́да

‘She refused lunch’

(ii) This also applies in curative contexts:

лека́рство **от ка́шля**

‘cough medicine’

лечи́ть ма́льчика **от**

‘to treat the boy for diphtheria’

дифте́рия

(5) С

С + genitive is used:

(i) With verbs of beginning:

Их дру́жба **нача́лась с дра́ки**‘Their friendship began with a
fight’

(ii) To indicate the spelling of initial letters:

писа́ть сло́во **с большо́й/ма́лой бу́квы**
 ‘to spell a word with a capital/a small letter’

Note

Че́рез is used with *non*-initial letters: Сло́во ‘парашю́т’ пи́шется **че́рез ю** ‘The word парашю́т is spelt with a ю’.

(iii) To denote ‘permission’:

Приезжа́йте ещѐ — то́лько **с разреше́ния роди́телей**
 ‘Come again, but with your parents’ permission’

(6) У

У denotes the person from whom something is bought, borrowed, stolen, from whom lessons are taken, of whom a request is made etc.:

Беру́ у него́ уро́ки	‘I take lessons from him’
заказа́ть костю́м у портно́го	‘to order a suit from a tailor’
Он занима́ет у них де́ньги	‘He borrows money from them’
Я купи́л дом у дяди	‘I bought the house from my uncle’
Я мно́гому научи́лся у э́того па́рня	‘I learnt a lot from this chap’
Я попро́сил у него́ ре́чку	‘I asked him for a pen’
Спроси́те доро́гу у милиционе́ра	‘Ask a policeman the way’
У меня́ укра́ли часы́	‘I had my watch stolen’

Note

- (a) **От** is used, however, when the subject is a passive recipient (Я получи́л письмо́ **от отца́** ‘I received a letter from my father’) and **с** + genitive in contexts denoting the exaction of due payment, tax etc. (собира́ть нало́г **с ча́стников** ‘to collect tax from private owners’, Ско́лько **с меня́**? ‘How much do I owe you?’).
- (b) **Узна́ть** ‘to learn, find out’ combines with either **от** or **у**, **от** implying passive, **у** active participation: Э́то я узна́л **от неѐ** ‘I heard that from her’, Э́то я узна́л **у неѐ** ‘I found that out from her’.

451 Prepositions that take the dative

(1) К

К is used:

(i) To relate a part, component or supplement to the whole:

увертю́ра к «Пи́ковой да́ме» ‘the overture to *Queen of Spades*’

(ii) With **готов** 'ready', **готовиться** 'to prepare', **готовность** 'readiness':

готов к труду и обороне 'ready for labour and defence'

(iii) With nouns that denote emotional reaction to an event or impression:

к сожалению 'unfortunately'

к счастью 'fortunately'

к моему удивлению 'to my surprise'

(2) По

По is used:

(i) With nouns that denote means of communication:

по железной дороге 'by rail'

по (авиа)почте 'by (air)mail'

по второй программе 'on channel two'

по радио, по телевизору/ 'on the radio, on TV'

**телевидению (also на
телевидении)**

Разговор на эту тему состоится **по городскому кабельному телевидению** (*Argumenty i fakty*)

'A conversation on this subject will take place on municipal cable television'.

по телефону 'on the telephone'

по мобильному 'on a mobile'

по факсу 'by fax'

Note

бродить по Интернету 'to surf the Internet', but **в Интернете** 'on the Internet', **на Интернет-сайте** 'at a web-site'.

(ii) In the meaning 'according to', 'by' etc.:

по приглашению 'by invitation'

по просьбе 'at the request of'

по расписанию, плану 'according to the timetable, the plan'

По моим часам (or на **моих** 'By my watch it's already
часам) уже полночь midnight'

(iii) To denote a criterion for judgment:

Врач судит о здоровье ребёнка **по цвету** его лица
 ‘A doctor judges the health of a child by its complexion’

(iv) To denote a target, especially a moving or diffuse target (cf. **449** (1) (i)):

Открыли огонь **по врагу** ‘They opened fire on the enemy’
 стрелять **по демонстрантам** ‘to fire on the demonstrators’

Compare also **стучать по столу** ‘to bang on the table’ and **стучать в дверь** ‘to knock at the door’ (see **449** (1) (i)).

(v) To define the ‘frame of reference’ of persons, groups, objects etc.:

Инженер **по профессии** ‘engineer by profession’
 чемпион **по боксу** ‘boxing champion’
 экзамен **по истории** ‘history examination’

(vi) With ordinal numerals, to denote position in a scale of dimensions or priorities:

Африка — **второй по величине** материк
 ‘Africa is the second largest continent’

452 Prepositions that take the instrumental

(1) За

За links verbs of observation, supervision to their objects:

Котика наблюдали **за собакой** ‘The cat was observing the dog’
 Он следил **за развитием**
 техники ‘He was following the
 development of technology’

(2) С

(i) The central meaning of **с** is ‘with/together with/accompanied by’ etc.:

мальчик **с удочкой в руке** ‘a boy with a rod in his hand’
 человек **с красивым лицом** ‘a man with a handsome face’
 Я согласен **с вами** ‘I agree with you’
 Он говорит **с акцентом** ‘He speaks with an accent’
 Она слушала **с интересом** ‘She listened with interest’
 Он решил задачу **с трудом** ‘He had difficulty in solving the
 problem’

Note

- (a) **Со скоростью** ‘at a speed’: Он е́хал **со скоростью** пятьдесят киломе́тров в час ‘He was driving at a speed of fifty kilometres per hour’.
- (b) **Развестись с** ‘to divorce’, **расстаться с** ‘to part with’, while denoting separation, retain the meaning of joint involvement.
- (c) Nouns and pronouns can be linked by **с**: **мы с вами** ‘you and I’, **он с сестрой** ‘he and his sister’, **отец с матерью** ‘father and mother’. Note also **хлеб с маслом** ‘bread and butter’. A plural verb is used if the nouns are of equal status: Отец с матерью **отказались** помочь ‘Father and mother refused to help’. Otherwise a singular verb is used: Мать с ребёнком **пошла в** больницу ‘The mother went to the hospital with the child’.
- (d) A nuance of purpose: **обращаться к кому-нибудь с просьбой** ‘to make a request of somebody’, Премьер-министр **приехал в** Германию с **визитом** ‘The prime minister arrived in Germany on a visit’.
- (e) See **94** for constructions in which ‘with’ is rendered by a simple instrumental (писать **карандашом** ‘to write with a pencil’).
- (ii) **С** is used with the names of public service vehicles when these are qualified by adjectives:

приехать **с ранним, с двухчасовым** поездом
 ‘to arrive on the early, the two o’clock train’ (cf. **приехать поездом** ‘to arrive by train’)

453 Prepositions that take the prepositional

(1) В

- (i) **В** links verbs, adjectives, nouns denoting ‘guilt’, ‘suspicion’, ‘confession’, ‘certainty’, ‘doubt’, ‘reproach’ to their objects:

Всех шестерых **обвиняли во взрыве коменда́туры**
 ‘All six were accused of blowing up the commandant’s office’

Он был аресто́ван **по подозрению в кра́же**
 ‘He was arrested on suspicion of theft’

Он **призна́лся в убийстве** ‘He confessed to the murder’

Я **сомнева́юсь в э́том** ‘I doubt that’

Она́ **уве́рена в себе́** ‘She is sure of herself’

Его́ **упрека́ют в ле́ни** ‘He is reproached with laziness’

(ii) The dependent noun may also define the context of forms such as **беда́** ‘trouble’, **дело́** ‘matter, fact’, **причина́** ‘cause’ etc.:

Беда́ в том, что он её любит
‘The trouble is that he loves her’

Дело́ в том, что он ненадёжный
‘The fact is that he is unreliable’

(2) На

The dependent noun may denote:

(i) A musical instrument:

играть **на скри́пке** ‘to play the violin’

(ii) A language:

Он говори́т **на трёх язы́ках** ‘He speaks three languages’

(3) О

The central meaning of **о** + prepositional is ‘concerning’, ‘about’:

ду́мать **о пла́не** ‘to think about the plan’
зако́н **о разво́де** ‘divorce law’
напомина́ть кому́-нибудь **о до́лге** ‘to remind someone of their duty’
мысль **о сча́стье** ‘the thought of happiness’

Note

Про + accusative is a colloquial synonym of **о** ‘about’.

Ска́зка про бе́лого бычка́ ‘the same old story’

(4) При

При can mean ‘in view of’, ‘thanks to’, ‘with’, ‘given’:

При тако́м тала́нте он ста́нет знамени́тостью
‘With talent like that he will become a celebrity’

При её обжа́нии не ка́ждая же́нщина помеша́ла бы ей блиста́ть
‘With her charm not every woman would be able to prevent her from standing out’

The Conjunction

454 Introductory comments

(1) Conjunctions fulfil a cohesive function in linking words and concepts to create connected speech.

(2) They fall into the following broad categories:

(i) **Co-ordinating conjunctions** link words and clauses of comparable status (bread *and* butter, young *but* experienced etc.). They subdivide into connective, adversative and disjunctive.

(ii) **Subordinating conjunctions** introduce statements that are dependent on the main clause (he said *that* he had no objection; I called the doctor *because* I felt unwell; I want to play tennis *if* the weather improves etc.). They subdivide into explanatory, causal, conditional, concessive, comparative and temporal conjunctions, and conjunctions of purpose and result.

Many compound conjunctions, traditionally separated by a comma, can now also be written without: *ввиду того (,) что* ‘in view of the fact that’; *до того (,) как* ‘before’; *из-за того (,) что* ‘because of the fact that’; *после того (,) как* ‘after’; *с тех пор (,) как* ‘since’ etc. The use of a comma throws the meaning expressed by the subordinate clause into greater relief.

Co-ordinating Conjunctions

455 Connective conjunctions

(1) И ‘and’

И links:

(i) Like parts of speech:

Брат и сестра́	‘Brother and sister’
Она́ поёт и игра́ет	‘She sings and plays’

(ii) Compatible ideas:

Светило́ солне́це, **и** бы́ло жа́рко
‘The sun was shining and it was hot’

(2) И . . . и ‘both . . . and’

(i) **И . . . и** lend greater emphasis than **и**:

Он **и** спосо́бный, **и** трудолю́бный
‘He is both capable and industrious’

(ii) The same meaning may be expressed:

(a) **Ву как . . . так и** (a mark of a more literary style):

Такие вопро́сы интересу́ют мно́гих специа́листов **как** в Росси́и,
так и в зарубе́жных страна́х
‘Such questions interest many specialists both in Russia and abroad’

(b) With still greater emphasis, by **не то́лько . . . но и** (also characteristic of a bookish style): Он говори́т **не то́лько** по-кита́йски, **но и** по-япо́нски
‘He speaks not only Chinese but also Japanese’.

(3) Ни . . . ни ‘neither . . . nor’

У люде́й не́ было **ни отча́яния**, **ни стра́ха** (V. Putin)
‘People had neither despair nor fear’

Note

(a) The second **ни** (‘nor’) is preceded by a comma.

- (b) **He** is normally required only when there is a single predicate: Ни он, ни она́ **не игра́ет** (single predicate) на флэ́йте ‘Neither he nor she plays the flute’. Compare the absence of **не** in Она́ ни игра́ет, ни поёт ‘She neither plays nor sings’ and Он ни ру́сский, ни поля́к ‘He is neither a Russian nor a Pole’, where there are two predicates (**игра́ет/поёт; ру́сский/поля́к**). **He** is retained, however, in constructions involving the past or future of **быть** ‘to be’ (or other copula): Вчера́ **не́ было́**/завтра **не бу́дет** ни хо́лодно, ни жа́рко ‘Yesterday it was not/tomorrow it will neither be cold nor hot’. Note also usage with **нельзя́**: С ним **нельзя́** ни хитри́ть, ни шути́ть (Zalygin) ‘With him you can neither pretend nor joke’.
- (c) If there are two subjects, the predicate must be compatible with both: Ни он, ни она́ **не зна́ет** ‘Neither he nor she knows’ (зна́ет agrees with он and with она́), but Ни он, ни она́ **не зна́ли** ‘Neither he nor she knew’, Ни он, ни она́ **не дово́льны** ‘Neither he nor she is pleased’, Ни он, ни я **не говорю́м** по-по́льски ‘Neither he nor I speak Polish’.

456 Adversative conjunctions

- (1) A ‘and, but, whereas’

The conjunction **а**:

- (i) links ideas which contrast without conflicting. The same parts of speech usually appear on either side of the conjunction:

Он сиди́т,	а я стою́	‘He sits and I stand’
Э́то ко́шка,	а э́то соба́ка	‘That is a cat and that is a dog’

- (ii) introduces a positive statement via a preceding negative:

Приро́да не храм,	а масте́рская	‘Nature is not a temple, but a workshop’
Он не пи́шет,	а чита́ет	‘He is not writing but reading’
Кни́га не бе́лая,	а кра́сная	‘The book is not white, but red’

Note

The order of the clauses may be reversed:

А́страхань, Сара́тов — города́ на Во́лге, **а не** на До́ну (Vvedenskaia)
‘Astrakhan and Saratov are towns on the Volga and not on the Don’

(iii) introduces a supplementary statement or question:

А где другие гости? 'And where are the other guests?'

Note the phrase **а вдруг?**: **А вдруг** он не вовремя придёт? 'Suppose/What if he doesn't get here in time?'

(iv) introduces parenthetical statements:

Появление зрителей, **а** их было человек 80, снова мобилизовало актёров (Garin)

'The appearance of the audience, and they were about 80 in number, again stirred the actors into action'

(2) Но 'but'

(i) **Но** links clauses which express incompatible ideas, e.g.

Машина старая, **но** хорошая

'The car is old *but* good' (an arguably unexpected combination)

(ii) The conjunction is often close in meaning to **однако** 'however', **несмотря на это** 'despite this' (note, however, that **однако** can *replace* **но**, while **несмотря на это** *combines* with it, except when it appears at the beginning of a new sentence):

Ему захотелось позвонить в больницу, **но** (= **однако/но несмотря на это**) он сдержал себя и позвонил только утром (Panova)

'He was tempted to ring the hospital **but** (= despite this) restrained himself and didn't ring until morning'

Мы овладели сложнейшими методами познания, **но** ещё плохо понимаем других людей и самих себя (Kron)

'We have mastered the most complex methods of cognition, **yet** still have an imperfect understanding of other people and ourselves'

Note

Всё же means 'all the same', **зато** 'on the other hand':

Дорого, **зато** хорошая вещь

'It's expensive, **but then** it is a quality article'

(3) И, а and но

Learners sometimes experience difficulty in selecting the appropriate conjunction, especially where **а** and **но** are concerned. The following examples, each of which begins in the same way, illustrate their usage:

(i) **И** introduces additional information:

Он молодой **и энергичный**
'He is young and (he is also) energetic'

Она любит кошек **и собак**
'She likes cats and (she also likes) dogs'

(ii) **А** introduces information which contrasts with but does not conflict with the first statement:

Он молодой, **а она старая**
'He is young, and (= whereas) she is old'

Она любит кошек, **а он любит собак**
'She likes cats, and he likes dogs'

(iii) **Но** introduces information which is in antithesis to the first statement:

Он молодой, **но опытный**
'He is young, but (i.e. despite this, nevertheless) experienced'

Она любит кошек, **но не любит собак**
'She likes cats, but she does not like dogs'

Note

А and **но** sometimes appear in the same context, **но** expressing a stronger antithesis than **а**: Он хочет, **а** я не хочу 'He wants to, and I don't'; Он хочет, **но** я не хочу 'He wants to, but I don't'.

457 Disjunctive conjunctions

(1) **Или** 'or'

Или presents alternatives:

Это собака **или** волк? 'Is that a dog or a wolf?'

Note

(a) **Или** does not normally appear in negative contexts. Thus, 'He doesn't like football or tennis' is rendered as Он не любит **ни** футбола, **ни** тенниса (or ни футбол, ни теннис).

(b) ‘Or’ (= ‘or else’, ‘otherwise’) may be rendered as **а то/а не то/иначе**:

На останóвках не выходíte, **а (не) то** загуля́етесь
 ‘Don’t get out at the stops **or** you’ll get lost’

(2) И́ли . . . и́ли (less commonly **ли́бо . . . ли́бо**) ‘either . . . or’

И́ли я пойду́ к нему́, **и́ли** он приде́т ко мне
 ‘Either I will go to him or he will come to me’

Note

As in constructions with **ни . . . ни** ‘neither . . . nor’ (see 455 (3) note (c)), a compatible predicate must be found for subjects of different gender: Семьи, где **появи́лись** и́ли но́вая ма́ма и́ли но́вый па́па (*Sem’ia*) ‘Families in which a new mummy or a new daddy has appeared’.

(3) Не то . . . не то ‘either . . . or’

Не то . . . не то may imply difficulty of identification:

Ма́ть её, Наде́жда, по фами́лии не́ то Куку́шкина, не́ то Христиа́нио́к
 (Ропов)
 ‘Her mother, Nadezhda, has the surname Kukushkina, or it could be
 Khristianiuk’

(4) То . . . то ‘now . . . now’

Он **то** красне́ет, **то** бледне́ет
 ‘Now he blushes, now he grows pale’

(5) То ли . . . то ли ‘maybe . . . maybe’

То ли . . . то ли implies an element of conjecture:

И ско́лько лет ему́, сказа́ть бы́ло невозмо́жно — **то ли** под три́дцать,
то ли за со́рок (Trifonov)
 ‘And it was impossible to say how old he was – **maybe** getting on for
 thirty, **maybe** in his forties’

Subordinating Conjunctions

458 Explanatory conjunctions

(1) Что ‘that’

(i) **Что** is used after verbs of saying, thinking etc.:

Он сказа́л, **что** он мне помо́жет
'He said (**that**) he would help me'

Note

Что should *not* be omitted in such contexts, cf. English: 'I think (that) he's out' and Russian Я ду́маю, **что** его́ нет до́ма.

(ii) (**То**), **что** also renders the English (**preposition** +) '**-ing**':

(a) **Извѣстен** + instrumental:

Она́ изве́стна **тем, что** переплы́ла проли́в Ла-Ма́нш
'She is famous **for having** swum the Channel'

(b) **Наказа́ть за** + accusative 'to punish for':

Ма́льчика наказа́ли **за то, что** разби́л окно́
'The boy was punished **for breaking** the window'

(c) **Нача́ть с** + genitive 'to begin by':

Она́ нача́ла **с тогó, что** привѣтствова́ла госте́й
'She began **by welcoming** the guests'

(d) **Обвини́ть в** + prepositional 'to accuse of':

Его́ обвини́ли **в том, что** он укра́л часы́
'They accused him **of stealing** the watch'

(e) **Поздра́вить с** + instrumental 'to congratulate on':

Я поздра́вил его́ **с тем, что** он сдал экза́мен
'I congratulated him **on passing** the examination'

(f) **Привы́кнуть к** 'to get used to':

Он приви́к **к тому́, что** его́ уважа́ют
'He is accustomed **to being** respected'

Note

То, как; то, где; то, когда́ etc. are also possible with some verbs, e.g. **зависеть**: это́ зави́сит **от тогó, что** он ска́жет/**где** он живѐт/**как** он себя́ чу́вствует/**когда́** он ко́нчит, 'it **depends what** he says/**where** he lives/**how** he feels/**when** he finishes'.

(2) Чтòбы

Чтобы + past tense is used after verbs of request, command or warning:

Скажи ему, **чтобы** он не уходил
‘Tell him not to leave’

Она предупредила его, **чтобы** он не купался в озере
‘She warned him not to bathe in the lake’

Она просила, **чтобы** все вытирали ноги у двери
‘She asked that everyone should wipe their feet at the door’

Он приказал, **чтобы** нас пустили во дворец
‘He ordered that we should be admitted to the palace’

See also **308** (2) note (a).

Note

Просить, по-/приказывать, приказать, **чтобы** are preferred in impersonal constructions. Compare use of the **infinitive** when the verbs take a direct or indirect object: Он попросил меня **открыть** дверь ‘He asked me to open the door’, Он приказал солдатам **стрелять** ‘He ordered the soldiers to shoot’.

(3) Будто/будто бы ‘as if, that’, якобы ‘allegedly, supposedly’

Будто, будто бы, якобы question the truth of a statement: Он уверяет, **будто** сам видел ‘He alleges that he saw it with his own eyes’. Compare:

Артисты, тысячный раз играя пьесу, делают вид, **будто** им неизвестно — чем кончится (Zalygin)
‘Actors performing a play for the thousandth time pretend they do not know how it will end’

Он её убеждал, **будто бы** её новая физиономия лучше старой (Zalygin)
‘He tried to convince her that her new face was better than her old one’

Он утверждает, **якобы** приказ отменён
‘He alleges that the order has been rescinded’

See **464** (2) (i) for **будто** as a comparative conjunction.

459 Causal conjunctions

(1) Благодаря тому́, что

Благодаря́ тому́, что is associated with favourable circumstances (see 443 (1)):

Она́ сдала́ экза́мен **благодаря́ тому́, что** рабо́тала усердно
 ‘She passed the examination **thanks to having** worked industriously’

(2) Ввиду́ того́, что

Ввиду́ того́, что ‘in view of the fact that’, like **вследствие того́, что** ‘in consequence of the fact that’ and **в силу́ того́, что** ‘on account of the fact that’, belongs to official styles:

Ввиду́ того́, что я во вре́мя о́тпуска был бо́лен, прошу́ продлить мне о́тпуск
 ‘**In view of the fact that** I was ill while on holiday I request an extension of leave’

(3) Из-за того́, что

Из-за того́ что, like **из-за** (see 443 (1)), is often associated with unfavourable circumstances:

Из-за того́, что я в указа́нный срок не верну́л книг в библиотеку́, у меня́ бы́ли неприятности́
 ‘I got into trouble **for not returning** the library books on time’

(4) Оттого́ что

Like **от** (see 443 (3) (i)), **оттого́, что** is associated with involuntary cause:

Бы́ло неловко́ **оттого́, что** его́ заподо́зрили в жела́нии порисова́ться (Granin)
 ‘He felt awkward **at being suspected** of wishing to show off’

(5) Поско́льку ‘as long as’

Поско́льку ты согла́сен, я не бу́ду возража́ть
 ‘As long as you agree I won’t object’

(6) Потому́ что ‘because’

Его исключили из команды, **потому́ что** он не присутствовал на тренировках
 ‘He was left out of the team because he had not attended training sessions’

Note

- (a) A comma separates **потому́** and **что** when the cause is emphasized, usually by the addition of **бúдто бы** ‘as if’, **ещё и** ‘also’, **мóжет быть** ‘perhaps’, **тóлько** ‘only’ etc. (see also 454 (2) (ii)):

ещё и потому́, что	‘also because’
мóжет быть потому́, что	‘maybe because’
потому́ бúдто бы, что	‘seemingly because’
тóлько потому́ (or потому́ тóлько), что	‘only because’

Его пригласили **потому́ тóлько, что** он племянник режиссёра
 ‘They **only** invited him **because** he is the producer’s nephew’

- (b) Emphasis may also be expressed by distancing **потому́** from **что**:

Потому́ бúдто бы его и пригласили, **что** он племянник режиссёра
 ‘The reason why they seem to have invited him is that he is the producer’s nephew’

- (7) Так как ‘because, since’

Американский учёный встретился с учёными университета, **так как** круг проблем, над решением которых они работают, родни́ темам его работ
 ‘The American scientist met scientists in the university since the problems they are working on are akin to his own areas of interest’

Note

- (a) **Потому́ что** and **так как** are virtually identical in meaning. However, clauses beginning with **потому́ что** always *follow* the main clause, while clauses in **так как** can precede or follow: Мы устали, **так как** работали без перерыва ‘We were tired since we had worked without a break’ or **Так как** работали без перерыва, мы устали ‘Since we had worked without a break we were tired’.
- (b) **Под предлогом что/под тем предлогом что/под предлогом того́ что** ‘on the pretext that’ denote pretended cause; **ибо** ‘for’ relates mainly to high style or scientific contexts.

460 Conjunctions of purpose

Чтобы 'in order to/in order that'

See also 309–310.

(i) **Чтобы** is used:

(a) With an **infinitive** if the subject of both clauses is the same:

Я взял ведро, **чтобы набрать** в родникé воды (Kazakov)
 'I took a bucket **in order to** draw some water from the spring'

(b) With the **past tense** if there is a change in subject:

Я дал ей ведро, **чтобы она могла** набрать в родникé воды
 'I gave her the bucket **so that she could** draw water from the spring'

(ii) **Для того/с тем чтобы** throw the meaning of purpose into greater relief:

Грузы перетаскивались в склады, . . . **для того, чтобы (с тем, чтобы)** на товары не лил дождь (Semushkin)
 'The freight was dragged over to the warehouses **so that** the merchandise should not get rained on'

(iii) **Чтобы** combines with prepositional phrases and verbs which denote purpose or desire: **добиваться/добиться** + genitive 'to achieve', **заботиться о** + prepositional 'to be concerned about', **за то** 'in favour of', **настаивать/настоять на** + prepositional 'to insist on', **против того** 'against', **стремиться к** 'to strive for':

Мы **добиваемся того, чтобы** все голосовали на выборах
 'We are trying to get everyone to vote at the election'

Я **за то (против того), чтобы** все учились русскому языку
 'I am in favour of (against) everyone learning Russian'

Государство **заботится о том, чтобы** граждане не голодали
 'The state is concerned that its citizens should not go hungry'

Он **настаивает (на том), чтобы** я остался ночевать
 'He insists I should stay the night'

Мы **стремимся к тому, чтобы** кит был объявлен видом, находящимся под угрозой исчезновения
 'We are striving to get the whale declared an endangered species'

(iv) **Чтобы** is normally *omitted* after verbs of motion and their equivalents if there is no change in subject: Он пришёл поговорить ‘He came to have a chat’. However, **чтобы** is *retained* after verbs of motion:

(a) When the action expressed by the **чтобы** clause represents the purpose expressed by the main clause *but is not subsequent to it in time*:

Я вышел из комнаты, **чтобы** доказать своё безразличие к разговору
‘I left the room in order to show my indifference to the conversation’

(b) When the **чтобы** clause contains a negative subordinate infinitive:

Я вышел из комнаты, **чтобы не разбудить** ребёнка
‘I left the room so as not to awaken the child’

(c) When the subordinate infinitive is accompanied by adverbial modifiers:

Я забрался на гору, **чтобы оттуда как следует** оглядеть окрестность
‘I climbed the hill so as to survey the surrounding district properly’

(v) **Вместо того, чтобы** ‘instead of’ implies choice of a preferred alternative:

Вместо того, чтобы отдыхать на пляже, он пошёл на концерт
‘Instead of relaxing on the beach he went to a concert’

Note

Чтобы does not *always* denote purpose:

Посетители уехали с тем, **чтобы** через час явиться ещё раз
‘The visitors left, only **to turn up again** an hour later’

461 Conjunctions of result

Так что ‘so/so that’

Он провалился, **так что** ему пришлось пересдавать экзамен
‘He failed, so he had to resit the examination’

The conjunctions **вследствие чего** ‘in consequence of which’ and **в результате чего** ‘as a result of which’ are used in official registers.

462 Conditional conjunctions

(1) Если 'if'

Если (бы) is dealt with in 304–305.

Note also the precautionary **на случай если** 'just in case':

Она мне дала свой телефон, **на случай если** придётся что-нибудь передать

'She gave me her telephone number **just in case** a message needed to be passed on'

See also 446 (5) (iii).

(2) Если не 'unless'

Он уйдёт, **если вы не** помешаете ему

'He'll go away unless you stop him'

(3) При условии что 'on condition that'

Она выйдет замуж за него **при условии, что** он уедет из Англии

'She will marry him on condition that he leaves England'

(4) Раз 'if, since, now that'

Раз has passed from conversational into literary style:

Раз дал слово, надо его сдержать

'Now that he's given his word he should keep it'

(5) Кõли/кõль; кõль скõро 'if'

Кõли/кõль is a colloquial and obsolescent synonym of **если** (**кõли** на то пошло 'for that matter/if that's the way it is') and is rarely found in written styles. **Кõль скõро** may be used in polemic, where it raises the emotional tension:

И уж **кõль скõро** люди дёржат живõтных, **то** несовершенство службы ветеринарной пõмощи «бьёт» прёжде всего по владельцам (*Sem'ia*)

'And since people keep animals, imperfections in the veterinary service hit their owners hardest'

(6) Достатõчно (it is) 'sufficient/all it needs'

Доста́точно ‘it is sufficient’ may acquire a conditional nuance:

Доста́точно было́ одной из пуль попа́сть в ми́ну, **и** (or **как**) она́ взлетела́ бы на во́здух (Stepanov)

‘All it needed was for one of the bullets to hit the mine and it would have exploded’

463 Concessive conjunctions

(1) **Хотя́/хоть** ‘although’

Хотя́ (= **несмотря́ на то, что**) он такой молодой, его́ избра́ли депута́том Государственной Ду́мы

‘Although (= ‘despite the fact that’) he is so young he was elected a member of the State Duma’

The main clause may be introduced by **а** ‘but’, **за́то** ‘on the other hand’, **но** ‘but’, **одна́ко** ‘however’:

Фёдор **хоть и** нача́льник, **но** всё-таки́ сосе́д (Zhukhovitskii)

‘Although Fedor is the boss, he is a neighbour just the same’

(2) **Пусть** ‘even if, albeit’

Пусть (**пуска́й**) is characterized by colloquial or emotive nuances:

Люди́ всегда́ бу́дут стреми́ться к верши́нам, **пусть** да́же с ри́ском для́ жи́зни

‘People will always aim for the heights, albeit at risk to their lives’

For concessive constructions with **ни** see 312.

464 Comparative conjunctions

(1) **Как** ‘as, like’

(i) **Как** can be used to introduce a comparison:

Верши́ны колы́хались, **как** гребни́ волн

‘The summits swayed **like** the crests of waves’

(ii) For additional emphasis, **так же как** or **то́чно так же как** is used:

Их на́до обуча́ть э́тому, **так же как** их у́чат чита́ть и писа́ть

‘They have to be taught this, **just as** they are taught to read and write’

(2) **Будто/как будто/словно/точно** ‘as if’

(i) **Будто** introduces statements which are seemingly at variance with reality:

Вцепился глазами, **будто** следил за раздумьями Дробышева (Granin)

‘He fastened his eyes on him as if he were following Drobyshev’s meditations’

See **458** (3) for **будто** as an explanatory conjunction.

(ii) **Как будто (бы)/словно/точно** are used to compare similar situations:

Он перецеловался со всеми, **как будто** уезжал на несколько лет

‘He exchanged kisses with everyone, as if he were going away for several years’

Уснула так, **как будто бы** она что-то совершила (Zalygin)

‘She fell asleep as if she had accomplished something’

Слушать его было тяжело, **точно** больного, который не желает сознавать безнадёжность своего положения (Granin)

‘It was distressing to listen to him, like listening to a sick person who is reluctant to acknowledge the hopelessness of his situation’

465 Temporal conjunctions. Introductory comments

(1) Some English temporal prepositions, e.g. ‘before’, ‘after’, ‘until’, ‘since’ etc., also function as conjunctions:

Preposition

Conjunction

‘**before** dinner’

‘**before** he arrived’

‘**after** the lesson’

‘**after** the lesson finished’

‘**until** Thursday’

‘**until** we turned the corner’

‘**since** May’

‘**since** he left’

(2) This does *not* apply, however, to their counterparts in Russian.

(i) The temporal prepositions are dealt with in **434** and **439**:

English

‘before dinner’
 ‘after the lesson’
 ‘until Thursday’
 ‘since May’

Russian

до ужина, **перед** ужином
 по́сле уро́ка
 до четверга́
 с ма́я

(ii) The equivalent conjunctions are as follows:

‘before’	до то́го как/пре́жде чем
‘just before’	перед тем как
‘after’	по́сле то́го как
‘until’	(до тех пор) пока́ . . . не
‘since’	с тех пор как

Note

English conjunctions such as ‘when’, ‘if’, ‘until’, ‘as soon as’ do not normally combine with the future tense, even when reference is to the future: ‘when he *arrives*’, ‘if he *gets* here in time’, ‘I’ll wait until you *finish/have finished*’, ‘I’ll leave as soon as the clock *strikes* 12’ etc. In Russian, however, future *meaning* is expressed by the future of the verb in such contexts: когда он **приде́т** ‘when he arrives’, Подожду́, пока́ вы не **ко́нчите** ‘I’ll wait until you finish’. (See also 264.)

466 Temporal conjunctions which render ‘before’, ‘after’, ‘by the time that’, ‘until’, ‘since’

(1) До то́го как ‘before’

До то́го, как мы вам рассказа́ли о Венесуэ́ле, вы, вероятно, и не подозрева́ли, что её назва́ние связа́но с назва́нием Вене́ции (Vvedenskaia)

‘Before we told you about Venezuela you probably had no idea its name was associated with that of Venice’

Note

Задолго до то́го как ‘long before’, **ещё до то́го как** ‘even before’.

(2) Перед тем как ‘just before’

Она зажгла свечи **перед тем как** гости сели за стол
 ‘She lit the candles just before the guests sat down to table’

Note

- (a) An *infinitive* may be used in the time clause if the subject of both clauses is the same: Она надела новое платье **перед тем как** спуститься на встречу с гостями ‘She put on a new dress before going down to meet the guests’.
- (b) **Перед тем как** retains the meaning of close proximity to the event which is expressed by the preposition **перед** (see 439 (1) (iii)), and can combine with adverbs and adverbial phrases which stress immediacy: **в последний момент перед тем как** ‘in the final moment before’, **как раз перед тем как** ‘just before’, **непосредственно перед тем как** ‘immediately before’ etc.

- (3) Прежде чем ‘before’

Прежде чем is a synonym of **до того как** in strictly temporal meanings. However, *only* прежде чем may be used in contexts that denote:

- (i) Precaution:

Каждый раз птицы улетают, **прежде чем** я успею подойти к ним
 (Aramilev)
 ‘Every time the birds fly away before I have time to approach them’

- (ii) Inexpediency:

Прежде чем осуждать соседа, надо присмотреться к самому себе
 ‘Before condemning one’s neighbour, one should take a hard look at oneself’

- (iii) The dependence of the time clause on the main clause:

Надо самому что-то знать, **прежде чем** учить других
 ‘You must know something yourself before teaching others’

- (4) После того как ‘after’

После того как дети легли спать, она поставила самовар
 ‘After the children had gone to bed she put on the samovar’

Однажды **после того, как** отчим очень сильно его ударил, Володя даже обратился в милицию (*Sem'ia*)
 'Once, after his stepfather had hit him with particular force, Volodia even went to the police'

A perfective gerund may be used instead of a conjunction if the subject of the temporal clause is the same as that of the main clause: **Сдав (= после того как она сдала)** вступительные экзамены, она поступила в МГУ
 'Having passed the entrance examinations she enrolled at Moscow State University'.

(5) Пока́

Пока́ means:

(i) 'By the time': **Пока́** приехали пожарные, пламя удалось потушить
 'By the time the fire brigade arrived the fire had been put out'.

(ii) 'While':

(a) When two actions or processes are running parallel:

Пока́ я занимаюсь, дети играют в саду́
 'While I am studying the children play in the garden'

Пока́ вы в пути, помещение прогреется (*Izvestiia*)
 'While you are on your way the building will warm up'

(b) When one action or process interrupts another:

Пока́ мы собирались в дорогу, стало темно́
 'While we were getting ready for the journey it grew dark'

Note

Пока́ may be replaced by **в то время как** in these meanings. 'While' (= 'whereas') is rendered by **в то время как/тогда́ как**: Он за но́вый режём, **в то время как/тогда́ как** я решительно протём 'He is in favour of the new regime, while I am emphatically against it'. **Пока́** is also used in 'opportunist' contexts: Перейдём дорогу, **пока́** машин нет 'We'll cross the road while it's clear'.

(6) Пока́ . . . не 'until'

Пока . . . **не** can be used with future and past tense forms:

Я подожду, пока он не **вернётся**
'I shall wait until he returns'

Я подождёл, пока машина не **вышла** на площадь
'I waited until the car came out on to the square'

Note

- (a) The conventional negative is **пока** . . . **не**.
(b) Compare Жду, **когда** вы кончите 'I am waiting for you to finish'.

(7) С тех пор как 'since'

С тех пор как он живёт в новом доме, мы ни разу не встречались
'Since he has been living in his new house, we haven't once met'

467 Other conjunctions of time

(1) Когда 'when, as, whenever, after'

Когда вы кончите, будем чай пить
'**When (after)** you have finished we shall drink tea'

Когда я возвращался домой, я встретил своего бывшего учителя
'**As I** was returning home I met my former teacher'

(**Каждый раз**), **когда** машина останавливается, ребёнок просыпается
'**Whenever** the car stops the baby wakes up'

Note

- (a) For English present tense rendered by a Russian future, see **264** and **465 Note**.
(b) A gerund may be used instead of **когда** + finite verb if the subject of both clauses is the same: **Возвращаясь** домой, я встретил своего бывшего учителя 'While returning home I met my former teacher'.
(c) **Когда** is also used with **ждать** and **любить**: Мы ждали, **когда** кто-нибудь из девчат появится на дороге (Nikolaev) 'We were waiting for one of the girls to appear on the road'; — А твоя-то, значит, не очень любит, **когда** ты пьёшь? (Rasputin) 'So your old woman isn't very keen on you drinking?'

(d) Constructions with **случай** 'case':

Иногда сообщают **о случаях, когда** водители нарушают правила из-за того, что дорожные знаки плохо видны (*Nedelia*)
 'Sometimes there are reports of drivers committing an offence because road signs are not easily visible'

(2) Как 'as, when'

(i) **Как** 'as, when' is not used independently in temporal meaning, **когда** being preferred (see above). Alternatively, **как** may be modified to **в то время как** 'while': **В то время как** докладчик говорил, я делал записки 'While the speaker was giving his talk I made notes'. The addition of **как раз** lends a sense of immediacy: Он резко обернулся **как раз в то время как** она открыла дверь (German) 'He turned abruptly just as she opened the door'.

(ii) **Как** is also used to denote suddenness/unexpectedness:

(a) A negative verb often appears in the main clause:

Не прожили и двух лет, **как** получили квартиру
 'They had spent less than two years there **when** they received a flat'

in particular **не успеть** 'not to have time to, not to manage':

Не успел я добраться до двери, **как** свет погас
 'I hadn't managed to reach the door **when** the light went out'

(b) The conjunction **едва** 'hardly' may also appear in the main clause:

Едва мы добрались до леса, как пошёл дождь
 'Hardly had we reached the forest **than** it began raining'

(c) **Стоит, стоило** 'hardly, no sooner than' also appear:

Стоило ему свернуть на просёлочную дорогу, **как** мотор заглох
 'No sooner had he turned on to a country road **than** the engine cut out'

Note

Стоит/стоило combine only with *perfective* infinitives.

(3) Как вдруг 'when suddenly'

Как вдруг introduces an action which interrupts the action of the main clause:

Он застёгивал воротник, **как вдруг** оторвалась пуговица
'He was fastening his collar when suddenly a button came off'

(4) Как только 'as soon as'

Как только он вернётся, будем проверять работы
'As soon as he returns we shall correct the papers'

Как только поблизости появляется враг, пингвины выскакивают
из воды
'As soon as an enemy appears in the vicinity the penguins jump out of
the water'

(5) По мере того как 'as, in proportion as'

The conjunction **по мере того как** '(in proportion) as' links two actions
or processes advancing in parallel ('gradational' meaning):

По мере того как поднималось солнце, день теплел (Bunin)
'As the sun rose the day was becoming warm'

The Particle

468 The particle. Introductory comments

(1) Particles are parts of speech which impart additional semantic nuances to other words, phrases or sentences, in most cases having no independent meanings of their own. Some, however, are polysemantic (see **473**), precise translation often being possible only within a wider context.

(2) Particles are, in the main, a feature of colloquial Russian, where they are used to express a variety of emotions, subjective attitudes and assessments, imbuing individual speech with emotive colour and expressive spontaneity, sometimes in combination with other emotional intensifiers such as diminutives: **Ну, давайте, мужичкй**, поднимем за счастье молодых (Shcherbakov) ‘Come on, chaps, let’s raise our glasses to the happiness of the young couple’.

(3) The effect of a particle may be varied or intensified by intonation. Thus, for example, **Петь так** петь ‘If we’re going to sing, let’s sing’ can, depending on the intonational pattern with which the phrase is uttered, denote an eagerness to sing or a reluctant acceptance of the inevitable.

(4) Some particles are formally identical with conjunctions (e.g. **а, да, же**), others with adverbs (e.g. **ещё, только, ужé**) or pronouns (e.g. **то**). Some are of verbal origin (e.g. **ведь, мол, пусть, хоть**). There is considerable overlap between particles and certain interjections: **Ох уж** эти мне родственники! ‘Oh, these relations!’, **Ну и** мороз! ‘Quite a frost!’

469 The position of the particle in the sentence

(1) Some particles always *precede* the word they qualify:

Да здравствует мир!	‘Long live peace!’
Ну , поехали!	‘Right, let’s go!’
Пусть скажет	‘Let him tell us’
Что за безобразие!	‘How disgraceful!’

(2) Others always follow the word they qualify:

Расскажи же	‘Come on, tell us all about it’
Помолчи- ка	‘Do be quiet’
Ты ли это сделал?	‘Was it you who did that?’

Теперь-**то** я понял весь ужас своего положения
 ‘It was now that I realized the full horror of my situation’

(3) Others still may stand at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence (or occasionally at the end of a sentence):

Ведь он ошибается *or* Он **ведь** ошибается
 ‘He is wrong, you know’

(4) Some, e.g. **так**, may occupy a central position between two forms:

Пить **так** пить, — тихо сказала Галка (Gagarin)
 “‘If we’re drinking, let’s drink,” said Galka softly’

470 The use of particles to impart different nuances of meaning

A phrase such as, for example, *Это не подлежит сомнению* ‘That’s not open to doubt’, can combine with a number of different particles, each of which imparts to it a different emphasis. Thus:

(1) **Ведь** may be used to introduce a self-evident fact or to issue a gentle reminder:

Ведь это не подлежит сомнению
 ‘You know, that’s not open to doubt’

(2) **Вот** cites the statement as an example:

Вот это не подлежит сомнению
 ‘Now this, for instance, is beyond doubt’

Только он сможет решить эту проблему
 ‘Only he will be able to solve this problem’

Note

- (a) **Только** immediately precedes the word it qualifies: Он сможет решить **только** эту проблему ‘He will be able to solve only **this** problem’.
- (b) It may also be used idiomatically: А он **только** знает, что посмеивается ‘All he can do is keep sniggering’.

472 Modal functions of particles

Particles also fulfil modal functions:

(1) **Desirability:**

Отдохнуть бы!	‘Oh for a rest!’
Лишь бы побольше времени	‘If only there were more time’

(2) **Command or exhortation:**

Давай остановимся!	‘Let’s make a halt!’
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(3) **Confirmation:**

— Ты любишь оперу?	‘Do you like opera?’
— Ещё бы!	‘I’ll say!’

(4) **Negation:**

Нет , он не читает книгу	‘No, he is not reading the book’
Нет ни минуты времени	‘There’s not a spare moment’

Note

- (a) The particle **не** ‘not’ *precedes* the word it qualifies, thus:

Не он читает книгу	‘He is not the one who is reading a book’
Не книгу он читает	‘It’s not a book he’s reading’

- (b) If the negated form is *not* a verb, the negative/genitive rule does *not* apply: cf. Я не вижу **стола** ‘I don’t see a table’ and Не **стол** я вижу ‘It’s not a table I see’. The negated word in such constructions (here, **стол**) bears the logical stress and is pronounced with rising intonation.

- (c) ‘Yes’ is rendered as **нет** in a positive answer to a negative question: Вы не любите кошек? **Нет**, люблю! ‘Don’t you like cats?’ ‘Yes, I do!’

(5) **Interrogative:**

Давно ли он умер?	‘Is it long since he died?’
Не он ли опоздал?	‘Wasn’t it he who was late?’
Много ли там было народу?	‘Were there a lot of people there?’
Разве вы не знаете?	‘ Surely you know?’
Неужели он прав?	‘ Surely he can’t be right?’

Note

- (a) **Ли** follows the emphasized word, which bears the logical stress. This also applies in reported questions, where **ли** follows the ‘operative’ element:

Он спросил, знаю ли я	‘He asked if I knew’
Я не помню, хорошая ли это книга	‘I don’t remember if that is a good book’

- (b) **Ли** may also express uncertainty (Не ошибся ли он? ‘Could he have made a mistake?’) and may appear in rhetorical questions (Не стыдно ли тебе? ‘Aren’t you ashamed of yourself?’).
- (c) If **ли** is omitted from a question, the word order is *not* inverted: ‘Is he working?’ is rendered either as Работает ли он? or Он работает? (no inversion, and with rising intonation on the stressed syllable).
- (d) Both **разве** and **неужели** ‘really/surely not’ imply doubt in the reliability of a statement, or a conviction that the opposite is true. **Неужели** is much more emphatic than **разве**, and is commoner in spoken Russian. **Разве** can also denote hesitancy: **Разве** в кино сходить? ‘**I wonder if** I should go to the cinema?’

- (6) **Direct speech:** the particles **де/дескать/мол** indicate that direct speech is being quoted:

Пётр снисходительно пожал плечами: чего, **мол**, морочить голову (Abramov)

‘Peter shrugged his shoulders in a condescending way, **as if to say**, “Pull the other one”’

(7) **Probability or improbability:**

Ты, пожалуй , прав	‘You may well be right’
Вряд ли он придёт	‘He’s hardly likely to come’
Едва ли можно согласиться с ним	‘One can hardly agree with him’

(8) **Comparison or similarity:** *бўдто/как бўдто/как бы/слўвно* are used to compare similar events, actions etc.:

Мўжет бытъ, пылъ пусти́л в глаза́? — Нет, **как бўдто** и взапра́вду у́ехал (Azhaev)

‘Maybe he was having us on? No, he **really does seem** to have gone’

(9) **Emotional nuances:** *пря́мо, то́-то, так, уж* render emotional and expressive nuances (enthusiasm, resignation, determination, irony etc.):

Пря́мо стра́шно!

‘Simply terrifying!’

То́-то бы́ли ра́дости!

‘We were **over the moon!**’

Е́хать **так** е́хать!

‘If we’re going, **let’s** go!’

То́же у́мник нашёлся!

‘**Some** genius we have here!’

Вот о́ни, раба́тники!

‘**Some** workers!’

473 The meanings of individual particles

While some particles convey one meaning only, others are polysemantic.

(1) A

A is used:

(i) In prompting an answer:

Я́блоко да́ть, **а**?

‘I’ll give you an apple, **shall I?**’

(ii) In making a request:

Помоги́ мне немно́жко, **а**?

‘Give us a hand, **would you?**’

(iii) In stating the apparently obvious:

— Что же мне тепе́рь де́лать?

‘Whatever should I do now?’

— **А** о́чень прѳсто

‘**Why**, it’s very simple’

(iv) In a conversational exchange:

— Ми́тю мо́жно?

‘Can I speak to Mitia?’

— **А** он на раба́те

‘**I’m afraid** he’s at work’

— **А** когда́ он бу́дет?

‘**And** when will he be in?’

— **А** кто его спра́шивает?

‘**Now**, who is this asking for him?’

(2) Было

Было is used to denote:

(i) The immediate cancellation or reversal of an action:

Пёс поднял **было** голову и снова опустил (Abramov)
‘The hound raised its head and lowered it again’

(ii) The reversal or abandonment, often through interruption, of an action or process which has just begun:

«Скóрая пóмощь» трóнулась **было** вперёд, но вахтёр вдруг суетливо замахал шофёру, и машина остановилась (Tendriakov)
‘The ambulance **had begun** to move off, but the porter suddenly began waving to the driver in agitation and the vehicle stopped’

(iii) The abandonment of a projected action:

Он пóдьял **было** стакáн, но раздúмал
‘He **was about** to pick up the glass, but changed his mind’

Note

(a) The verb in such constructions is almost invariably perfective. The only imperfective forms commonly found are **собирáться** and **хотéть**, which are followed by a *perfective* infinitive: Он собирáлся/хотéл **было попросить** разрешéния выйти, но испугáлся ‘He was **on the point** of asking permission to go out, but took fright’.

(b) **Было** also combines with perfective participles and gerunds:

У Тихоокеáнского побережья вновь наблюдаю́т **исчезнувших было** серых китов (*Sel'skaia zhizn'*)
‘Grey whales, which **had been on the verge of extinction**, are again being sighted off the Pacific coast’

Остановившись было у перекрёстка, шофёр всё-таки поёхал на краснóй свет
‘**Having been on the point of stopping** at the crossroads, the driver jumped the lights instead’

(3) Ведь

Ведь is used:

(i) To explain or justify:

Конéчно, умéю стрелять из винтóвки, служил **ведь** в áрмии

‘Of course I can fire a rifle, **after all** I did do my army service’

(ii) To prompt a desired answer:

Ведь ты пойдёшь в магази́н?

‘Now you are going to the shop, **aren’t you?**’

(iii) To issue a gentle reminder:

Ты **ведь** обеща́л

‘You did promise, **you know**’

(iv) To administer a mild reproof:

— Кто это, «мы»?

— Но́вые ру́сские!

— Но **ведь** я — евре́йка, — засмея́лась она́ (Попов)

“‘Who do you mean, ‘us’?

“New Russians.”

“But I’m Jewish,” she laughed.’

(4) Вот

See also **471** (1). **Вот** can be used:

(i) In combination with interrogative words:

Вот где я живу́

‘**That’s** where I live’

Вот почему́ он ушёл

‘**That’s** why he left’

(ii) For contrast:

С Ва́ней я дружу́, а **вот** с Ни́ной ника́к не ла́жу

‘I’m friends with Vania, but I **just** can’t get on with Nina’

(iii) In warnings:

Вот всем расскажу́ об это́м

‘**Now** I’m going to tell everyone about this’

(iv) In expressing feelings such as amazement, indignation etc.:

Вот дура́к!

‘**What** an idiot!’

(5) Да

Да is used:

(i) In self-exoneration:

Да я молчу́!

‘But I am being quiet!’

(ii) In consolation:

Да ты не расстра́ивайся!

‘**Now** don’t upset yourself!’

(iii) In indefinite answers:

Да я не знаю! 'Oh, I don't know!'

(6) Ещё

Ещё is used to express:

(i) Outrage or indignation:

Ещё учёным называется! 'And he calls himself a **scholar**!'

(ii) Emphatic affirmation:

— Брат играет в шахматы? 'Does your brother play chess?'
— **Ещё** как! '**I'll say** he does!'

(iii) Emphatic denial:

— Вы голодны? 'Are you hungry?'
— **Ещё** чего! Я только что позавтракала! '**Hungry!** I've only just had breakfast!'

(iv) A warning or threat:

Ещё уволят! 'You'll get the sack (**if you don't watch out!**)'

(7) Же

(i) **Же** denotes categorical, insistent affirmation, often stressing the indisputability of a statement:

Ты **же** обеща́л! 'But you promised!'

(ii) When qualifying interrogative words, **же** imparts a peremptory nuance, implying astonishment, indignation, disapproval etc.:

Куда **же** ты идёшь? 'Where do you think **you're** going?'
Кто **же** так поступает? 'Now whoever behaves like **that**?'

(iii) The particle can also specify precisely a place or time denoted by an adverb or adverbial phrase, e.g. здесь **же** 'at this very spot':

Приеду сегодня **же** 'I shall come **straightaway**'
Там **же** живёт мой брат '**That's** where my brother lives'

Тогда **же** было произнесено́ гла́вное сло́во совреме́нной биоло́гии — ген (*Russia Today*)

‘It was precisely at **that** point that the most important word in modern biology was uttered — gene’

(iv) With demonstrative pronouns **же** conveys meanings of identity or similarity:

Мы идём по той же улице	‘We are walking down the same street’
Он одёт в такой же пиджак	‘He is dressed in the same kind of jacket’

(v) **Же** imparts an insistent or impatient nuance to imperatives:

Стояй же спокойно, наконец!	‘Now, will you stand still!’
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(vi) The set phrase **надо же!** expresses extreme indignation:

— Это он так написёл?! — громко возмутилась Попова. —
 Нахалиба! **Надо же!** ... Ну **надо же!** (Shukshin)
 “‘He wrote that?!”, shouted Popova indignantly. “The impudent puppy!
What a nerve! What a confounded nerve!”

(8) И

(i) **И** may lend emphasis to the word which *follows* it:

Я и стараюсь!	‘I am trying!’
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(ii) It can also mean ‘even/also/too/as well’:

Он говорит и по-китайски	‘He speaks Chinese as well ’
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(iii) In negative statements it means ‘either’:

И я не знаю	‘I don’t know either ’
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(9) -ка

(i) **-ка** may combine with the first-person perfective future of a verb to denote mild resolve:

Пойдú- ка домой	‘I think I might go home’
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(ii) It softens the force of an imperative, expressing:

(a) Gentle exhortation:

Дай- ка спички, Стас (Gagarin)	‘ Do give me the matches, Stas’
---------------------------------------	--

(ii) An exemplary meaning:

Взять **хоть** тебя; ты ведь ни разу не пожаловался
‘Take you, **for example**; now you haven’t once complained’

(iii) A readiness to oblige, or to indulge a whim:

По́едем **хоть** за́втра! ‘Let’s go tomorrow, **for all**
I care!’

(iv) Intensity or extreme manifestation (with imperatives):

Рабо́ты у него́ **хоть отбавля́й!** ‘He’s **up to his eyes** in work!’

(14) Что

(i) In questions, **что** often emphasizes the preceding noun or pronoun:

А я́ **что**, возража́ю? ‘I’m not objecting, **am I?**’
Ты́ **что**, с ума́ сошла́? ‘Are you mad, **or what?**’

(ii) The phrase (**ну**) **что́** вы! denotes energetic denial:

Ну **что́** вы! Я́ впло́нне ‘Now **come off it!** I’m perfectly fit!’
здо́рова!

474 The aggregation of particles for increased emphasis

(1) Particles may be aggregated to heighten emphasis:

(i) **А ведь/да ведь/но ведь**:

А ведь Алекса́ндр счита́лся оди́м из сильне́йших игроко́в (*Russia Today*)
‘**And yet, you know**, Aleksandr was considered to be one of the very best players’

(ii) **А ещё**:

Сам не учи́лся, **а ещё** специа́листов критику́ет!
‘He hasn’t studied himself, **yet has the nerve** to criticize the experts!’

(iii) **Бы уж**:

— О го́споди, — перекрести́лась ба́ба, — молча́л **бы уж** (Belov)
“‘Oh, my God,” the woman said, crossing herself, “you **really ought to**
have kept your mouth shut”

(iv) **Вот ещё/вот уж:**

— Надо бы его разыскать — сказал Пётр.

— **Вот ещё.** — нахмурилась Леля. — Больше тебе делать нечего?
(Uvarova)

“I suppose we ought to go looking for him,” said Petr.

“**Come off it,**” said Lelia with a frown. “Have you nothing better to do with your time?”

Вот уж не знаю.

‘I haven’t the **foggiest**’

(v) **Да и/да уж:**

А костёр горел-горел **да и** спалил 1 700 гектаров леса (*Russia Today*)

‘And the bonfire burnt on and on and **went and** destroyed 1,700 hectares of woodland’

Да уж и сама-то хороша! (Shcherbakov)

‘She’s a fine one to talk!’

(vi) **Ещё бы/ещё как:**

Вёсело на душе! **Ещё бы:** сбывась мечта (Sobolev)

‘I’m overjoyed! **You bet,** my dream has come true’

Согласится? **Ещё как согласится!**

‘Will he agree? **I’ll say he will!**’

(vii) **Как это:**

Обидится? **Как это** обидится!

‘Take offence? **Not a chance!**’

(viii) **Не то чтобы уж:**

А Клавдия была **не то чтобы уж** красавица ... (Shcherbakov)

‘And Claudia was **not exactly** what you might call a raving beauty ...’

(ix) **Ну и; ну уж; ну уж и; ну-ка; ну что ж:**

Ну и баба! — бормотал он (Grekoва)

“‘**What a woman!**”, he murmured’

Ну уж не сердись, я не хотела тебя обидеть

‘**Come on,** don’t get angry, I didn’t mean to offend you’

(ii) **Ведь ... -то:**

Опоздаём **ведь** на пбезд-**то**

‘**You know**, we’re **going to go and** miss that train’

(iii) **Ну ... же:**

Ну, ну, — сердито добавил он. — **Я же** сказал, что иду (Proskurin)
“**All right**,” he added angrily, “I said I was coming, **didn’t I?**”

— **Ну**, обнимитесь **же**

— ‘**Come on then**, give each other a hug’

(iv) **Уж ... -то:**

Уйдёт. **Уж** он-**то** её знает! (Koluntsev)

‘He’ll leave. **After all**, he knows her **if anyone does!**’

(3) Feelings such as indignation can generate whole strings of particles:

Ну да ведь и дурак же он!

‘**Well, really, you know**, the man is a complete idiot!’

(4) The phrase **куда там** can appear either with or without **уж**:

Пробовали её учить программированию — **куда там**. Синус пútала с интегралом (Grekova)

‘They tried to teach her programming. **Some hope**. She confused sines with integrals’

— Теперь таких мужиков и нет, как мой старик, — говорят старуха.

— **Куда уж там!** (Rasputin)

“They don’t make them like my old man any more,” says the old woman.

“**No way!**”

Word Order

475 Introductory comments

(1) The inflected nature of Russian allows greater flexibility of word order than is possible in English, where only rigid order of words differentiates the meaning of sentences such as ‘Ivan loves Masha’ and ‘Masha loves Ivan’.

(2) In Russian, by contrast, inflectional endings indicate the functions of words irrespective of their position in the sentence. Thus, the feminine noun accusative ending **-y** in **Мáшу** identifies Masha as the object of the verb both in **Ивáн** **лю́бит** **Мáшу** ‘Ivan loves Masha’ and **Мáшу** **лю́бит** **Ивáн** ‘It is Ivan who loves Masha’, the difference between the two sentences being one of emphasis rather than meaning.

(3) Word order in Russian, though flexible, is by no means arbitrary, however; any disruption of the accepted or ‘neutral’ order throws the displaced elements into sharp relief.

(4) Questions of word order are ideally considered within the wider context of a narrative, since the order of elements in a sentence is often determined by what has gone before (see **476**) (3) (ii)).

476 ‘New’ and ‘given’ information

(1) ‘New’ information

Each statement contains *new* information. Except in emotionally charged language, where different criteria apply (see 484), this *new* information appears at or towards the *end* of a statement in Russian, in contrast with English, where it usually appears at or near the *beginning*. Thus, in the sentence

В Женёве состоялся фестиваль 'A festival took place in Geneva'

the festival (**фестиваль**), as the nucleus of the new information, occupies the *final* position, while the verb **состоялся** 'took place' is also new but of secondary significance. **В Женёве** 'in Geneva', as incidental or '*given*' information (see (2)), appears in *initial* position.

Note

- (a) The reverse order: **Фестиваль состоялся в Женёве** answers the question **Где состоялся фестиваль?** '**Where** did the festival take place?' and can be rendered as 'The festival took place in Geneva'.
- (b) In English, nouns which are the subject of *new* information are usually preceded by '*a*': 'There is **a** dog in the garden' (В саду есть **собака**). Nouns which are the subject of *given* information are usually preceded by '*the*': '**The** dog is in the garden' (**Собака** в саду).

(2) 'Given' information

Most statements contain an item or items of '*given*' information, that is, information which is either known or presumed to be known to the reader, has been mentioned before, can be assumed from the context, or is entirely incidental to the event being described. *Given* information is never the point of the utterance. It is often circumstantial, taking the form of an adverb of time, place or manner:

Здесь удобно 'It's comfortable **here**'

5 октября в Женёве в непринуждённой обстановке начались переговоры по разоружению
'Disarmament talks began **in a relaxed atmosphere in Geneva on 5 October**'

(3) 'Given' and 'new' information

- (i) The order 'given' information + 'new' information (with less essential preceding essential new items) is standard in a Russian sentence:

От реформы цен никто не пострадает (*Ogonek*)

'No one will suffer from the price reform'

In this example, price reform (**реформа цен**), as a matter of common knowledge ('given' information), occupies initial position, while **никто не пострадает** 'no one will suffer' is *new* information and appears in final position.

(ii) An utterance must be considered within its overall context. Thus, in the following extracts, the *new* information at the end of each successive sentence becomes the *given* information at the start of the next:

В то время я жил в маленьком северном городе. **Город** стоял на берегу **рек**. **По реке** плыли белые пароходы (Kazakov)

'At that time I lived in a small northern **town**. **The town** stood on the bank of a **river**. **Down the river** sailed white steamers'

На площади возле решётки стоят **столбы**. **К столбам** прикреплены железные **таблички**. Везде этих **табличек** останавливаются автобусы (Soloukhin)

'On the square close to the railing stand **pillars**. To **these pillars** are attached iron **plaques**. Buses stop close to **these plaques**'

Note

The principle that 'given' information precedes 'new' allows the differentiation of ostensibly synonymous statements such as На столе **ваза** 'There is a **vase** on the table' (answering the question **Что** на столе? 'What is on the table?') and **Ваза на столе** 'The vase is **on the table**' (answering the question **Где** ваза? 'Where is the vase?').

(iii) Sometimes the relative status of items is implied by context.

Thus, in

Я включил радио и услышал **знакомую балладу**. **Пела** Алла Пугачёва

'I switched on the radio and heard a **well-known ballad**. **It was being sung** by Alla Pugacheva'

the reference in the first sentence to a well-known ballad (*new* information) determines the status of **пела** 'it was being sung' as *given* information at the start of the second. **Алла Пугачёва**, as *new* information, appears in *final* position, since the point of the statement is to establish, not that someone was singing a ballad (that is known from the first sentence), but *who* was singing it.

Note

This also applies to statements which indicate a **source of information**:
 Как **сообщает ИТАР-ТАСС...** ‘As **ITAR-TASS reports...**’

(v) Questions introduced by an interrogative word:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Где живёт ва́ша дочь ? | ‘Where does your daughter live?’ |
| Когда открыва́ется магази́н ? | ‘When does the shop open?’ |

Note

- (a) The order interrogative word + subject + predicate is compulsory with a *pronoun* subject (Почему́ **он** **пришёл**? ‘Why has he come?’), but optional with a *noun* subject (Куда́ **летит** **самолёт**/Куда́ **самолёт** **летит**? ‘Where is the aircraft flying to?’).
- (b) Questions which are *not* introduced by an interrogative word have the same order as a direct statement. Compare Она́ **передала́** вам **письмо́** ‘**She passed** the letter to you’ and Она́ **передала́** вам **письмо́**? ‘**Did she pass** the letter to you?’ Alternatively, **ли** may appear as second element after the operative word (or words) in the question: Передала́ **ли** она́ вам **письмо́**? ‘Did she pass the letter to you?’ Compare **Она́** **ли** вам **передала́** **письмо́**? ‘Was it **she** who passed the letter to you?’, **Письмо́** **ли** она́ вам **передала́**? ‘Was it a **letter** she passed to you?’ The order operative word + **ли** is also used in reported questions: Он **спроси́л**, **передала́** **ли** она́ вам **письмо́** ‘He asked if she had passed the letter to you’.

478 Subject, verb, object

(1) Subject + verb + object

The order subject + verb + object is encountered in the vast majority of sentences which contain these three elements:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Пётр купи́л кни́гу | ‘Peter has bought a book’ |
|---|---------------------------|

Note

- (a) A *pronoun* object may precede (or follow) the verb: — Я **вас** не **понима́ю**, **товарищ** **генерáл** (Grekova) ‘I don’t understand you, comrade general’; Он **ниче́го** не **ест** ‘He isn’t eating anything’.
- (b) The order *subject* + *object noun* + *verb* places unusual emphasis on the verb (or object noun): Пётр **Ната́шу** **уважа́ет** ‘Peter **respects**

Natasha' (even though he may not, for example, **like** her); Мы **дом** купили 'We have bought a **house**'. This order is found predominantly in spoken Russian.

- (c) The order *subject + verb + object* is virtually mandatory when the accusative case of subject noun and object noun is the same as the nominative, since a reversal of the order would change the meaning, cf. Клі́мат ме́няет ра́стительность 'The climate alters vegetation' and Ра́стительность ме́няет клі́мат 'Vegetation alters the climate', Ма́ть лю́бит дочь 'The mother loves her daughter' and Дочь лю́бит ма́ть 'The daughter loves her mother'.

(2) Object + verb + subject

- (i) The order object + verb + subject

Кни́гу купі́л Пе́тр

in which the subject (**Пе́тр**) is central to the *new* information, is rendered in English by a passive construction ('The book **was bought** by Peter') or by a construction introduced by 'It is ...' ('**It is Peter** (and not someone else) who bought the book').

- (ii) This order is also common:

- (a) With an **inanimate** subject:

Ме́ня разбу́дила гро́за
'I was awakened by a thunderstorm'

А́нну Каре́нину задави́л по́езд
'Anna Karenina was crushed by a train'

- (b) In sentences which contain set phrases in which the noun component is **qualified**:

Большо́е значе́ние име́ет уче́бный проце́сс
'The teaching process is of great significance'

Суще́ственную роль игра́ли профе́созы
'A significant role was played by the unions'

- (c) In impersonal constructions involving the third-person plural: Ово́щи уже́ **выгружа́ют** 'The vegetables are already being unloaded', Вас **пробьят** к телефо́ну 'You are wanted on the phone', Её **зову́т** Ната́лья 'She is called Natal'ia'.

(3) Object + subject + verb

Other variants in word order depend on the relative weighting of elements in a particular context. Thus, in the example

Эту работу Генеральный секретарь хорошо понимал (*Literaturnaia gazeta*)

‘This was work the General Secretary understood well’

the *subject* (Генеральный секретарь) and *object* (эту работу) are given information, while *adverb* + *verb* (хорошо понимал) are *new* information and appear in final position.

479 The position of the adjective

(1) The long (attributive) adjective

(i) An attributive adjective normally precedes the noun it qualifies:

И вот — один из солнечных июньских дней (Tokareva)

‘And now it was one of those sunny June days’

Note

(a) See 484 (1) for stylistic variants.

(b) The attributive adjective may follow the noun in menus, stock lists etc. (кофе натуральный ‘real coffee’, ромашка садовая ‘garden camomile’) and where the noun is generic (Елена — девушка умная ‘Elena is an intelligent girl’).

(c) The long adjective follows the noun when used in **predicative** meaning: Он очень **молодой** (or **молод**) ‘he is very young’.

(ii) Contrary to English practice, circumstantial information may be placed in parenthesis between the attributive adjective and the noun:

Они жили в большом, с тремя этажами и со многими окнами, особняке

‘They lived in a large detached house **with three floors and many windows**’

(iii) As in English, the adjective may follow the noun, standing in apposition to it and separated from it by a comma:

На нарах лежал полушубок, новенький, очень нарядный (Bogomolov)

‘On the bunk lay a sheepskin coat, brand-new, very smart’

(2) The short adjective

A short adjective normally follows the noun, as its predicate.

Note

See **484** (1) (i) for stylistic variants and **359** (3) (ii) note (a) for the position of short-form perfective passive participles.

480 The position of the adverb

As a class which tends to convey *less essential* rather than *new* information, adverbs more often than not *precede* the verb. The adverb is usually positioned next to the verb it qualifies; in other positions it is thrown into sharp relief, since it then normally conveys new, not given, information and moves towards the end of the statement.

(1) Adverbs and adverbial phrases of time

(i) Adverbs of time usually *precede* the verb:

Он всегда́ ошибáется	‘He always gets it wrong’
Он ещё не просну́лся	‘He has not woken up yet’

Вы **дóлго** ждáли? — спроси́л Кривору́чко (Rybakov)
 “‘Did you have long to wait?’, asked Krivoruchko’

(ii) In descriptions of incidents and events, the adverb of time is usually in initial position, followed by verb + subject, which jointly convey the *new* information:

Вдруг раздался вы́стрел (Rybakov)
 ‘Suddenly a shot rang out’

(iii) However, adverbs and adverbial phrases that convey essential *new* information appear in *final* position: e.g. the question **Когда́** экипа́жи соверши́ли пёрвый совме́стный полёт? ‘**When** did the crews make the first joint flight?’ can be answered as follows:

Экипа́жи соверши́ли пёрвый совме́стный полёт **в ию́ле 1975**
го́да
 ‘The crews carried out the first joint flight in July 1975’

(2) Adverbs and adverbial phrases of place

(i) Adverbs and adverbial phrases of place also normally appear in initial position as incidental or *given* information, preceding the *new*

information conveyed either by the subject alone or by the verb + subject:

В городе два театра
‘There are two theatres **in the town**’

Из служёбного здания вышел высокий вялый человек (Grekoва)
‘A tall sluggish-looking man left **the service building**’

(ii) However, adverbs of place that report *new* information appear in *final* position: e.g. the question **Где** расположена Красная площадь? ‘Where is Red Square situated?’ can be answered as follows:

Красная площадь расположена **в центре Москвы**
‘Red Square is situated in the centre of Moscow’

(3) Adverbs and adverbial phrases of manner and degree

(i) Adverbs of manner and degree in **-о/-е** usually precede the verb or adjective:

Он **хорошо** говорит
‘He speaks well’

— А вы откуда? — **дружелюбно** спросил Тёткин (Grekoва)
‘“And where are you from?”, asked Tetkin amicably’

Она **искренне** рада нам
‘She is genuinely glad to see us’

Compare also adverbs of the type по-дружески: Он **по-дружески** пожал мне руку ‘He shook my hand in a friendly manner’. However, adverbs of nationality and language normally *follow* the verb: Он понимает **по-русски** ‘He understands Russian’.

(ii) A number of other adverbs of manner and degree, e.g. **вовсе не** ‘not at all’, **едва** ‘barely’, and analogous prepositional phrases also precede the verb, cf.:

Она **в спешке** забыла поднять книгу
‘In her haste she forgot to pick up the book’

481 Sentences that contain more than one adverb or adverbial phrase

The normal sequence for different types of adverb and adverbial phrase appearing within the same sentence is as follows:

- 1 adverbs/adverbial phrases of *time*
- 2 adverbs/adverbial phrases of *place*
- 3 other types of adverb/adverbial phrase (*manner, cause* etc.):

Среди́ но́чи к пе́реднему кра́ю оборо́ны тайко́м подкра́лся солдат-разве́дчик
 ‘In the middle of the night a reconnaissance scout stealthily crept up to the front line’

Ка́ждый час в на́шей стране́ от боле́зни се́рдца умира́ет 80 человек (*Ogonek*)
 ‘Every hour 80 people in our country die of heart disease’

Неда́вно в Москве́ проводи́лся кинофестива́ль
 ‘A film festival was held recently in Moscow’

В Росси́и бы́стро в́росли города́ и се́ла
 ‘Towns and villages sprang up quickly in Russia’

482 The position of the noun or pronoun in impersonal constructions

The accusative or dative noun or pronoun normally occupies initial position in impersonal expressions, with *new* information in final position:

Бра́та лихора́дит	‘My brother is feverish’
Дом зажгло́	‘The house caught fire’
Та́нюшке во́семь лет	‘Taniushka is eight years old’
Мне хо́лодно	‘I feel cold’
Ей пришло́сь бежа́ть	‘She had to run’
Нам нельзя́ бы́ло кури́ть	‘We were not allowed to smoke’

Note

The same order applies to constructions with **нра́виться/по-** and with **ну́жен, нужна́, ну́жно, нужны́**: **Взро́слым** пона́равился филь́м ‘The adults liked the film’, **Студе́нту** ну́жны де́ньги ‘The student needs money’. Reversal of this order throws the noun or pronoun into sharp relief: **Филь́м** пона́равился **взро́слым** (**, но не де́тям**) ‘The **adults** liked the film (**, but the children** didn’t)’; **Де́ньги** ну́жны **мне** (**, а не ей**) ‘I need the money (**, and she doesn’t**)’.

(2) Verb + subject

In expressive styles, *new* information may precede *given*, a reversal of neutral order:

У меня **голова́ болит**

'I have a headache' (cf. neutral У меня́ болит голова́)

Кто звони́л? **Ма́рина звони́ла**

'Who rang? Marina rang' (cf. neutral Звони́ла Ма́рина)

(3) Adverbs

(i) The order of adverbs/adverbial phrases may be reversed in expressive styles:

Холо́дно се́годня

'It is cold today' (cf. neutral Се́годня холо́дно)

Ста́льной зуб сверка́л у него́ во рту (Rybakov)

'A steel tooth glittered in his mouth' (cf. neutral У него́ во рту сверка́л ста́льной зуб)

(ii) Compare also the displacement of adverbs in their function as introductory words:

Смотре́ть э́тот фильм **стра́шно и сты́дно** (*Ekran detiam*)

'It is terrible and embarrassing to see this film' (cf. neutral Стра́шно и сты́дно смотре́ть э́тот фильм)

(4) Pronouns

The pronoun may *follow* the predicate in expressive styles, often with a concomitant change of emphasis:

— Хоро́шая пе́сня, — сказа́л Марк.

— То́лько **поёте вы́** её пло́хо, заме́тила Со́фья Алекса́ндровна (Rybakov)

“Nice song,” said Mark.

“Except that **you** don't sing it very well,” remarked Sof'ia Aleksandrovna' (cf. neutral вы пло́хо её поёте)

Что сде́лал **ты́**?

'What did **you** do?' (cf. neutral Что ты сде́лал?)

Appendix: English Words and Phrases in Modern Russian

A feature of Russian in the twenty-first century is its absorption of words of foreign origin, especially from English in the fields of IT, social media and the retail trade, which have a significant impact on grammatical practice. Below is a list of some recent ‘arrivals’ taken from the print and social media, with a brief description of their grammatical importance, where relevant. Nouns are masculine (and therefore declinable), unless otherwise indicated. For the declension of hyphenated nouns, see **74**.

апгре́йд	upgrade
аплóмб	aplomb
ачíвка (f.)	achievement
биткóин	bitcoin
блог, блóггер	blog, blogger
блокíровать, за-	to block (an account, plastic card)
блокчéйн	blockchain
блускрíн	bluescreen (error message on a PC)
боди-áрт	body art
бодибíлдинг	body-building
бра́узер	browser
брейк	break, interval (кофе-брейк: coffee break)
бри́финг	briefing
бэ́кграунд	background

вэ́ндор	vendor
верну́ться с отве́том	to come back with an answer
ва́лю (n. indecl.)	value (meaning, significance)
гламу́р, гламу́рьё (n. pej.), гламу́рный	glamour, glamorous
га́ймер	gamer
га́ймпле́й	game play
гу́гльпо́мощь (f.)	Google help
да́ть джоб-о́ффер	to give a job offer
дедла́йн	deadline
ди́джитализа́ция (f.)	digitalization
диспле́й	display (on a PC screen)
запости́ть	to post (on social media; used only in the past tense)
зачеки́ниться	to check in (used only in the past tense)
имплементи́ровать	to implement
интерне́т-пользо́ватель	Internet user
интерфе́йс	interface
киберпро́странство (n.)	cyberspace
клик (vb. кли́кнуть)	click, to click (on a PC)
ко́нтенг	(information) content
креати́в	creative input (idea, approach, etc.)
круасса́н	croissant
ка́шбэ́к	cashback
лайк (vb. ла́йкнуть)	to 'like' (on social media: ставить лайк: to press the 'like' button)
ла́йфхак	lifehack
лейбл	label
логин	log in
лук	look (appearance)
ма́йнить	to mine (crypto-currency)
мейк-ап	make-up
мейнстрим	mainstream
милкше́йк	milkshake
митиги́ровать ри́ски	to mitigate risks
нон-сто́п	non-stop
панке́йк	pancake
пи́рсинг	(body) piercing
пийа́р	PR
плаги́н	plug-in (software)
пле́ер	player (of CDs, DVDs, etc.)
поп-а́рт	pop-art

пра́йс-лист	price list
промо́утер, промо́ушн	promoter, promotion
ра́ндоm, рандо́мно	random, randomly
ре́йтинг	rating, grade
риэ́лтор (also риелтор)	estate agent
ро́утер	router (wi-fi)
сэ́льфи (n. indecl.)	selfie
си́блинг	sibling
сингл	single (record)
скриншóт	screen shot
смáйл	smiley (emoticon)
смартфо́н	smartphone
смúзи (n. indecl.)	smoothie
Спíкер	Speaker (in the State Duma)
стартáп	start-up
стáтус по прогрéссу	progress status
стейкхóлдер	stakeholder
стопóриться	to stop, stall, be delayed
сэконд-хэнд	second-hand
сэндвíч	sandwich
тест-дра́йв	test-drive
трек	track (music)
трéнинг	training
тьюто́р	tutor
фа́йл	file (for work on a PC)
фасилитáтор	facilitator
флэ́шка (f.)	USB stick
фрила́нс	freelance (фрила́нс-рабо́тник: freelancer)
фронтмэн	frontman
фрэш	freshly squeezed juice
ха́йп	hype
ха́кер	hacker
хара́ссмент	(sexual) harassment
хит	hit (music)
челенджíровать	to challenge
шаблí (n. indecl.)	Chablis
ше́йпинг	shaping
шóппинг	shopping, retail therapy (i.e. sing. only)
шоу (n. indecl.) (то́к-шоу, but шоу-бíзнес is m.)	show (talk show, show business)
электрoка́р	electric car

эмбџи (n. indecl.)	emoji
этикџт	label
юзџр	user (of a PC)
юзџрпик	user pic (on a PC)
я (не) комфџртен с џтим	I am not comfortable with this

Future possible challenges to grammatical rules and conventions can be observed in the following examples:

выџгода по трейд-џн (trade-in benefit), ТГУ – в ТОП-300 лџчших университетџв мџра (Tomsk State University is in the top 300 world universities), интернет-сџрвис-провайдер (Internet service provider), онлџйн-платџж, онлџйновый платџж (online payment), офлџйн режим, офлџйновый режим (offline mode).

Glossary

The glossary contains brief definitions of the most important grammatical terms used in the book. Additional information may be obtained through the subject index.

Acronyms — words formed from the initial letters of other words: **вуз** from **вы́сшее учебное заведе́ние** ‘higher educational institution’ (HEI).

Adjectival nouns — words that have the form of adjectives but function as nouns: **сто́ловая** ‘dining room’.

Adjectives — parts of speech that qualify or describe a noun or pronoun: **большо́й** дом ‘a large house’ (long, attributive, form), она́ **голо́дна́** ‘she is hungry’ (short, predicative, form).

Adverbs — parts of speech that modify a verb: он бежа́л **бы́стро** ‘he ran quickly’, an adjective: **неожи́данно** хоро́ший ‘**unexpectedly** good’, or another adverb: **кра́йне** ме́дленно ‘**extremely** slowly’.

Agent nouns — nouns denoting persons who perform an action: **писа́тель** ‘a writer’.

Agreement — convention that (a) adjectives, pronouns and numerals should be in the same *case* as the noun they qualify: они живу́т в **двух большо́их пала́тках** ‘they live in two large tents’; (b) adjectives, nouns, pronouns and verbs should share the same *gender*: **ста́рая соба́ка спала́** ‘the old dog was asleep’, and *number* (singular or plural): **э́тот ма́льчик**

БЫЛ дóма ‘**this boy was** at home’, **ЭТИ** мáльчики **БЫЛИ** дóма ‘**these boys were** at home’.

Alphabetisms — words comprising initial capital letters which are pronounced as letters of the alphabet: РФ [эр-эф] (Российская Федерация) ‘RF’ (Russian Federation) or as words: **ВИЧ** [вич] (вирус иммунодефицита человека) ‘HIV’.

Apposition — a situation in which a series of nouns or noun phrases denote the same object or person and thus share the same grammatical case: она замужем за **моим братом Иваном** ‘she is married to **my brother Ivan**’.

Aspect — a grammatical feature of the Russian verb that distinguishes repeated or durative actions (expressed by the **imperfective** aspect: он **пьёт** ‘he **drinks**’, она **писала** ‘she **was writing**’) from actions that denote initiation (он **заплакал** ‘he **began weeping**’), conclusion or result (она **заведёт** часы ‘she **will wind up** the clock’), or short duration (дети **поспали** ‘the children **had a nap**’).

Attributive adjective — the full (long) form of an adjective, usually appearing before the noun, qualifying it and agreeing with it in gender, case and number: она добра к **младшему брату** ‘she is kind to **her younger brother**’, она довольна **прилежными учениками** ‘she is pleased with the **diligent pupils**’.

Augmentative nouns — suffixed nouns that denote largeness: рыба-**ина** ‘a **large fish**’.

Cardinal numerals — the basic numbers denoting quantity: **один** дом ‘**one** house’, два карандаша ‘**two** pencils’, etc.

Case — the form of a noun, pronoun or adjective that shows its grammatical relationship to other words in the sentence: он смóтрит на **мою сестру́** ‘he is looking at **my sister**’ (accusative case), она сидела в **самом удобном кресле** (prepositional/locative case) ‘she was sitting in **the most comfortable armchair**’, etc.

Collective nouns — nouns that denote a collection or group of beings or things: **скот** ‘cattle’, **листва́** ‘foliage’.

Comparative degree — the second degree of comparison in the series ‘positive’ (e.g. **умный** ‘clever’), ‘comparative’ (e.g. **более умный** ‘cleverer’) and ‘superlative’ (e.g. **самый умный** ‘cleverest’).

Compound — a word created by joining together two or more other words or forms: **книголюб** ‘book-lover’, **виноградосоковыжималка** ‘grape-juice squeezer’.

Conditionals — verb forms that express conditions or hypotheses: *если бы я знал, я сказал бы вам* ‘if I knew, I would tell you’.

Conjunctions — parts of speech that join words, phrases or clauses: *собаки и кошки* ‘dogs **and** cats’, *молодой, но опытный* ‘young **but** experienced’, *голоден, потому что не завтракал* ‘hungry **because** he hasn’t had breakfast’, etc.

Declension — the process of adding endings to the stems of nouns, adjectives, pronouns and numerals to indicate their grammatical relationship to other words in the sentence: *цвет крови-и* ‘the colour of blood’, *разошлись по разным причинам-ам* ‘separated for various reasons’, *обедал с пятью друзьями* ‘dined with five friends’.

Diminutives — suffixed forms of nouns and adjectives that denote smallness: *бледненькое личико* ‘a pale little face’.

Direct object — noun or pronoun that denotes the person or thing affected by the action of a verb: *она наказывает его* ‘she punishes **him**’, *он читает книгу* ‘he is reading **a book**’.

Fleeting vowels — vowels that interrupt a sequence of consonants but are lost in declension: *рынок* ‘market’ (genitive *рынка*).

Gender — the classification of words, in accordance with their endings, as masculine (*дом* ‘house’, *музей* ‘museum’ [zero endings]), feminine (*машин-а* ‘car’, *недел-я* ‘week’) or neuter (*окно-о* ‘window’, *поле-е* ‘field’).

Gerund (verbal adverb) — indeclinable verb form that fulfils an adverbial function, replacing a co-ordinate or adverbial clause: *он сидит, читая* ‘he sits **reading**’ (= and reads), *прочитав книгу, я поставил её на полку* ‘**having read** (= after I had read) the book I put it on the shelf’.

Imperative — verb form used to express commands: *Слушай!* ‘**Listen!**’

Imperfective verb — a verb that denotes a past, present or future action (a) in progress: *она велá машину* ‘she **was driving** a car’, *я буду отдыхáть* ‘**I will be relaxing**’ or (b) repeated: *он звонит ей раз в неделю* ‘he **rings** her once a week’.

Impersonal constructions — constructions that have no subject: *холодно* ‘it is cold’, *ему повезло* ‘he is in **luck**’, *говорят, что* ‘**it is said that**’, etc.

Indefinite numerals — numerals that denote an imprecise quantity: *много денег* ‘**a lot of** money’, *несколько человек* ‘**a few** people’.

Indefinite pronouns — pronouns that refer to unspecified persons or things: *кто-то* ‘someone’, *что-нибудь* ‘something, anything’.

Indirect object — person or object indirectly affected by an action, e.g. benefiting from it: он подарил куклу девочке ‘he gave the doll [direct object] to the little girl [indirect object]’.

Infinitive — the basic form of a verb: читать/прочитать ‘to read’.

Intransitive verbs — verbs that do not require an object in order to express their meaning: он лежал на полу ‘he was lying on the floor’.

Modals — forms that denote necessity, possibility or impossibility: он должен работать ‘he must work’, ей нужно отдыхать ‘she needs to relax’, он не мог ответить на вопрос ‘he could not answer the question’.

Mood — the manner in which the action of a verb expresses itself, allowing the action to be judged as real or unreal. Of the four moods, the **indicative** states a fact: он копал в саду ‘he was digging in the garden’, the **imperative** expresses a command: Сотри с доски! ‘Clean the board!’, the **conditional/subjunctive** expresses a state, event or action as possible, conditional or desirable: скорее бы лето ‘roll on summer’, and the **infinitive** denotes the action of the verb in its most abstract form, without relation to person, time or number: читать ‘to read’.

Morphology — the study of linguistic forms: the declension of nouns, adjectives, pronouns and numerals, the conjugation of verbs, etc.

Mutation — sound changes caused by adjacent morphemes or words: т : ч in лететь ‘to fly’/лечу ‘I am flying’.

Nouns — words that name a person, thing or quality: отец ‘father’, стол ‘table’, любовь ‘love’.

Number — grammatical category that distinguishes whether a noun is singular (книга ‘book’) or plural (книги ‘books’).

Numerals — figures or words used to represent numbers, e.g. три (3) ‘three’.

Oblique case — any case form of a noun, pronoun or adjective except for the nominative.

Ordinal numerals — numerals that express order or position in a series and are adjectival in form: третий урок ‘the third lesson’.

Palatalization — the softening of a consonant by raising the centre of the tongue towards the hard palate during pronunciation. A palatalized or soft consonant is indicated by a following soft sign (ь), я, е, и, ё or ю: мать ‘mother’, пятёрка ‘a five’, люди ‘people’.

Particles — indeclinable words that impart emotive or expressive nuances of meaning to other words, phrases or whole sentences: Что **же** ты делаешь? ‘whatever are you doing?’, **Уж** придумал! ‘Now pull the other one!’.

Participles — verb forms that take the form of adjectives and (a) replace relative clauses: Мальчик, **пишущий** письмо (= **который пишет** письмо) ‘A boy **writing** a letter (= **who is writing** a letter)’, Дача, **построенная** соседями (= **которую** соседи построили) ‘A country cottage **built** by the neighbours’ (= **which** the neighbours **built**), or (b) function as predicates: Вопрос **решён** ‘The question **has been solved**’.

Partitive genitive — a genitive that indicates that only part of a substance is involved in an action or state: она выпила **молока** ‘she drank **some milk**’.

Passive constructions — constructions in which the grammatical subject is the object of the action: водка **делается** из картофеля ‘vodka **is made** from potatoes’, он **был спасён** пожарником ‘he **was saved** by a fireman’.

Perfective verb — verb that describes a completed action in the past (она **подписала** письмо ‘she **signed** the letter’) or anticipates its completion in the future (я **закрою** окно ‘I **will close** the window’).

Possessive pronouns — pronouns that denote possession: **мой** телефон ‘my telephone number’, **её** компьютер ‘her computer’.

Predicate — that part of a sentence or phrase that conveys information about the subject: отец **болен** ‘father **is ill**’, дети **пели песню** ‘the children **were singing a song**’, мой брат **стал солдатом** ‘my brother **became a soldier**’.

Prefix — form added to the beginning of a word to create a new word with a different meaning: **перечитать** ‘to **reread**’, спуск ‘descent’ or a different aspect: **написать** ‘to write’.

Prepositions — words that precede a noun (or pronoun), expressing its relation to another word in the sentence: она **из** России ‘she is **from** Russia’, я разговаривал **с** гостями ‘I was conversing **with** the guests’.

Pronouns — words used instead of nouns, to avoid repetition: где Пётр? Вот **он** ‘Where is Peter? There **he** is’.

Reflexive constructions — constructions in which subject and object refer to the same person or thing: он **моется** ‘he **washes (himself)**’.

Reflexive pronouns — pronouns that refer to the same person as the subject of the sentence: он доволен **собой** ‘he is pleased with **himself**’, она смотрит на **себя** в зеркало ‘she looks at **herself** in the mirror’.

Relative pronouns — pronouns that refer back to a preceding noun (the antecedent): девочка, **которая** сдала экзамен ‘the girl **who** passed the examination’, книга, **которую** все читают ‘a book (**that**) everyone is reading’.

Root — an irreducible element of language from which other words are formed: **-да-** as in **дать** ‘to give’, **издатель** ‘publisher’, **продажа** ‘sale’, etc.

Semantics — the study of the meanings of words, morphemes, word groups, etc.

Stem — the root of a word, to which prefixes, suffixes and endings may be added: **-сух-** as in **засуха** ‘drought’, or the root and its variants: **-зр-** as in **зрительный** ‘visual’/**-зер-** as in **зеркало** ‘mirror’/**-зор-** as in **обзор** ‘survey’, etc.

Stump compounds — abbreviations based on the abridged form of one or more words: **драгметалл** (from **драгоценный металл**) ‘precious metal’, **спецхран** (from **специальное хранилище**) ‘special storage area’.

Subject — the person about whom or the thing about which the sentence conveys information: **поезд** остановился ‘**the train** stopped’, **его сестра** вышла замуж ‘**his sister** got married’, **мы** готовы ‘**we** are ready’.

Subjunctive mood — a verb structure that presents a state, event or act as something desired: он хочет, **чтобы я голосовал** ‘he wants **me to vote**’, or hypothetical: я не помню, **чтобы он хоть раз ошибся** ‘I don’t remember **him** even once **making a mistake**’.

Suffixes — forms added to the end of a word or stem to create a new word: **социализм** ‘**socialism**’.

Superlative degree — *see* Comparative degree

Syntax — the set of rules that determines the grammatical arrangement of words in a sentence to show their relationship to each other (e.g. the relationship of verbs, adjectives and prepositions to the case of the noun they govern: **подражать** ‘to imitate’ + dative, **доволен** ‘satisfied’ + instrumental, **из** ‘from’ + genitive, etc.).

Tense — verb form that denotes the time of an action (past, present or future): они **выиграли** ‘they **won**’, я **слушаю** ‘I **am listening**’, мы **начнём** ‘we **will begin**’.

Transitive verbs — verbs which can express their meaning only through government of a direct object: он **снимает пальто** ‘he **takes off his coat**’.

Transliteration — representation of the spelling of a word using the letters of a different alphabet: **perestroika** (transliteration of перестройка ‘restructuring’), **Solzhenitsyn** (transliteration of Солженицын).

Unvoiced (voiceless) consonants — consonants pronounced without vibration of the vocal cords: **п, к, с, т, ф, ш** and others.

Verbs — parts of speech that denote an action (он **печатает** ‘he **is typing**’) or state (она **жила** на юге ‘she **lived** in the south’).

Voiced consonants — consonants pronounced with vibration of the vocal cords: **б, г, з, д, в, ж** and others.

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The Russian National Corpus that contains over 300 million words, a reference system based on a collection of Russian texts in electronic form

<http://englex.ru/english-borrowings-in-russian/>

List of English words and phrases entering the Russian language, thematically arranged, with explanations (in Russian)

<http://www.gov.ru>

Russian government website

<http://www.kremlin.ru>

Russian Presidential website

<http://www.izvestiya.ru>

Website for the daily newspaper *Izvestiia*

<http://www.interfax.ru>

Website for the Interfax news agency

<http://www.kommersant.ru>

Website for the daily newspaper *Kommersant*"

<http://www.rian.ru>

Website for the RIA news agency

<http://www.itar-tass.com>

Website for the Itar-Tass news agency

<http://www.multitran.ru>

Online translation resource

Note

Some quotations in this book have been taken from standard grammars of the Russian language.

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Word Index

The *Word Index* does not include every word that appears in the *Grammar*. It is intended to interact with the *Contents* to facilitate access to all parts of the book. It contains all verbs with a difficult conjugation, all prepositions, conjunctions, particles, verbs and adjectives which take an oblique case, prefixes, many suffixes and other endings, and additional words and forms which illustrate significant grammatical points.

Words which appear in lists are not normally included. Thus, instead of enumerating nouns which have a locative in -ý, only the ending -ý appears in the *Word Index*, as a guide to relevant nouns. This principle is adhered to throughout the *Word Index*.

Many verb forms can be traced through their infinitives, and the forms of many nouns, pronouns, adjectives and numerals through their nominative case. The *Word Index* does not include the borrowings from English contained in the Appendix.

The *Word Index* contains references to stress patterns, except for stress in prepositions (for prepositional stress see pages 419–21).

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Note

ГАИ [гай] (Госуда́рственная автомоби́льная инспе́кция) ‘State Vehicle Inspectorate’ (see pp. 61 and 99) has now been replaced by **ГИБДД** [ги-бэ-дэ-дэ] (Госуда́рственная инспе́кция безопа́сности доро́жного движе́ния) ‘State Road Traffic Safety Inspectorate’.

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