

Спасибо ("spa-see-ba") - Thank-You

Пожалуйста ("pa-zhal-sta") - Please (and You're Welcome)

The word Пожалуйста is also used to mean "You're Welcome", after somebody says thank-you. You should always say this after someone thanks you. Пожалуйста is pronounced a little different than it is written, you can basically forget the "й".

Yes and No.

Two other very important Russian words are "Yes" and "No".

Да ("da") - Yes

Нет ("nyet") - No

Saying Hello.

When you are in Russia and you meet somebody, the first thing you will want to do is to say "hello". There are two forms of this word.

Здравствуйте ("zdra-stvooy-tye") - Hello (Formal)

Привет ("pree-vyet") - Hi (Informal)

Здравствуйте may be a little difficult for you to pronounce at first, but it is the most common Russian greeting so you should try to practice it. Привет is also commonly used with friends. However, keep in mind that Привет is informal (much like "hi" in English), and should only be used with friends. If somebody says Привет to you, then it is normally safe to proceed in the friendly tone.

Introducing Yourself.

In order to introduce yourself, you may need the following phrases.

Меня зовут ... ("min-ya za-voot") - My name is ...

Как вас зовут? ("kak vas za-voot") - What is your name?

Очень приятно ("och-en pree-yat-na") - Pleased to meet you.

Note: The above 3 phrases are grammatically unusual. You should just learn the whole phrase, not the individual words.

How are you?

The most natural way to ask someone how they are in Russian is to ask: "how are things?"

Как дела? - (kak dela) How are things?

Хорошо спасибо - (khorosho spasiba) Good/Well thank-you

Плохо - (plokha) Bad

Saying Good-Bye.

There are also two words for saying good-bye.

До свидания ("da-svee-da-nee-ye") - Good-bye. (The до is pronounced as if it is part of the next word)

Пока ("pa-ka") - Bye (Informal, slang)

You should generally use до свидания, which is appropriate in formal or informal situations. You may also hear people say Пока, but we suggest you only use it with friends.

Other useful phrases

Вы говорите по-английски? - (Vy gavoritye pa-angliyskiy) Do you (formal) speak English?

Я говорю по-английски - (Ya gavoryu pa-angliyskiy) I speak English

Я понимаю - (Ya panimayu) I understand

Я не понимаю - (Ya ne panimayu) I don't understand (or if you really want to prove it, say ya ne monirayu)