

BASIC RULES OF RUSSIAN PRONUNCIATION

1. Stress

In a word, only one vowel is stressed, all the other vowels are reduced. The vowels that undergo significant reduction are -а -о. When these vowels are not stressed, they sound like the 'a' in **but**. When stressed they are longer like 'a' sound in **far** and 'o' like **goal** respectively.

The vowels - и and -у when not stressed are short like the i sound in **thin** and u sound in **put** respectively. When stressed they are like the ee sound in **seen** and oo sound like **spoon**. Vowel 'ё' is always stressed.

2. Palatalization

There are two groups of vowels in Russian they are as follows :

Nonpalatalizing vowels	а, э, о, у, ы
Palatalizing vowels	я, е, ё, ю, и

Whenever the palatalizing vowels follow a consonant, the preceding consonant is softened. The tongue moves to the roof of the mouth or the palate. The softness is also indicated by the soft sign -ь like the word **мать**.

Palatalization is especially important in case of -д and -т.

Compare the pronunciations of the following words.

дом дядя Том тётя

3. Voiced and voiceless consonant

Voiced consonants	б б́, в в́, г ѓ, д д́, ж, з з́
Voiceless consonants	п п́, ф ф́, к ќ, т т́, ш, щ́

There are pairs of voiced and voiceless consonants in Russian. When the voiced consonants come at the end of a word, they are pronounced like their voiceless counterparts. For example :

год (го**т**) зу**б** (зу**п**) друг (дру**к**)

Voiced consonants which have voiceless counterparts are also devoiced at the beginning and in the middle of a word if they precede a voiceless consonant. For example :

всегд**а** (фсегд**а**) оши**б**ка (ошип**к**ка)

The teachers are requested to make the learners read out aloud the words given as a part of alphabet and vocabulary for reading practice. The same words can be used for writing practice.

4. The '7 Naughty' Consonants are 'г,к,х,ж,ч,ш,щ.' They never combine with vowel 'ы'.