

# As Easy As ABC or АБВ?

Beginning Russian

# A New Alphabet

Before you learn Russian, you need to learn the Cyrillic alphabet. Although many of the letters look the same as the Latin Alphabet, you'll find many of them to be very different. We'll learn them in this order:

- ▶ Letters that look and sound like Latin letters
- ▶ Letters that look like Latin letters but sound different
- ▶ Letters that look unfamiliar but have familiar sounds
  - ▶ Single sounds
  - ▶ diphthongs
- ▶ New letters and new sounds

# Letters that look & sound like Latin letters

- ▶ A a = [ah] as in father
- ▶ Б б = [b] as in box
- ▶ К к = [k] as in kitten
- ▶ М м = [m] as in mother
- ▶ О о = [o] as in home
- ▶ С с = [s] as in ceiling
- ▶ Т т = [t] as in top

# Letters that look familiar but sound different

- ▶ В в = [v] as in violin
- ▶ Г г = [g] as in grass
- ▶ Е е = [yeh] as in yesterday
- ▶ Ё ё = [yoh] as in yo-yo
- ▶ Н н = [n] as in next
- ▶ Р р = [r] as in rainbow
- ▶ У у = [ooh] as in food
- ▶ Х х = [kh] as in the Scottish "loch"

# Letters that look unfamiliar, but have familiar sounds—single sounds

- ▶ Д д = [d] as in dog
- ▶ З з = [z] as in zebra
- ▶ И и = [ee] as in feed
- ▶ Й й = [y] as in monkey
- ▶ Л л = [l] as in lamp
- ▶ П п = [p] as in puppy
- ▶ Ф ф = [f] as in film
- ▶ Э э = [eh] as in pen

# Letters that look unfamiliar, but have familiar sounds—diphthongs

- ▶ Ж ж = [zh] as in pleasure
- ▶ Ц ц = [tz] as in Mozart
- ▶ Ч ч = [ch] as in chair
- ▶ Ш ш = [sh] as in shawl
- ▶ Ю ю = [yu] as in you
- ▶ Я я = [yah] as in yarn

# New Letters & New Sounds

- ▶ Щ щ = [chsh]
- ▶ Ъ hard sign (changes the sound of the preceding consonant)
- ▶ Ъ = [yi]
- ▶ Ь soft sign (changes the sound of the preceding consonant)

Ready for some practice?

Look at the following Russian words that are cognates with English words and see if you can figure out what they mean in English.





Балет = Ballet  
Опера = Opera



Попкорн =  
Popcorn



Пластик=

Plastic

Металл=

Metal



Банан=  
banana



Краб=

Crab