

Group 1: Same look and sound as in English

There are six Russian letters that match their English counterparts by both pronunciation and form -- А, Е, К, М, О and Т.

А а	sounds like "a" in after, ask. In pronouncing this sound, the mouth is open a bit wider as compared to English
Е е	sounds either like "ye" in yes or like "e" as in ebony . It is pronounced with preceding y in the beginning of a word or after a vowel.
К к	sounds like "k" in kite, making, like. Try to avoid the puff of air after the sound typical for the English language.
М м	sounds like "m" in mobile, dome.
О о	sounds like "o" in more (without the 'r' sound). Try protruding and rounding your lips a bit more than you do in English. In unstressed positions, this letter sounds like "u" in under, but more lax.
Т т	sounds like "t" in task, tardy. The tip of the tongue touches the lower teeth, as opposed the upper gum ridge in English.

Group 2: Sound-alikes but different look

There are sixteen Russian letters that do not exist in English but have familiar pronunciation. The include Б, Г, Д, ё, Ж, П, Ф, И, й, Л, Ц, Ш, Щ, Э, Ю and Я.

Б б	sounds like "b" in buy, blue. Try to avoid a puff of air after the sound typical in the English language.
Г г	sounds like "g" in get, guard.
Д д	sounds like d in double, did. In pronouncing this letter, the tip of the tongue touches the lower teeth.
Ё ё	sounds like "yo" in York or like "o" in copy, obvious depending on the position in a word.
Ж ж	sounds like "s" in usual, pleasure.
П п	sounds like "p" in compassion. Try to avoid a puff of unvoiced air after the sound as typical for the English language.
Ф ф	sounds like "f" in fasten, fact.
И и	sounds like "ee" in free, meet.
Й й	sounds like "y" in oyster, soy.
Л л	sounds like "l" in lock, chill.
Ц ц	sounds like "ts" in that's.
Ш ш	sounds like "sh" in ship, crush but with the tongue farther back in the mouth
Щ щ	sounds like "shsh" in rush-ship. When pronouncing it, try to place your tongue higher and more forward in the mouth than in English.

- Э э** sounds like "e" in ebony, edit. When pronouncing this sound, try opening the mouth a bit wider than you do in English.
- Ю ю** sounds like the word "you" but faster. In some cases it sounds like "oo" in oodles
- Я я** sounds like "yu" in yummy. In some cases it sounds like "a" in after, ask.

Group 3: Look-alikes but different sound

The following eight Russian letters look like their English counterparts (or even digits) but have different pronunciation--В, З, Н, Р, С, У, Ч, Х.

- В в** sounds like "v" in voice, visit
- З з** sounds like "z" in zodiac. This letter might look like the number three (3) but it only conveys a sound and has nothing to do with digits.
- Н н** sounds like "n" in noon, nose. Like with the Russian letter Т, the tip of the tongue touches the lower teeth when pronouncing this letter.
- Р р** sounds like "r" in "rest" but [rolled](#).
- С с** sounds like "s" in sun, sale. Unlike in English, the tip of the tongue touches the lower teeth.
- У у** sounds like "oo" in oodles. This sound is pronounced shorter than in English, with lips more rounded and protruded.
- Ч ч** sounds like "ch" in church, cheek. Do not confuse this letter with the number four (4).
- Х х** sounds like "ch" in loch when pronounced in Scottish manner. It remotely reminds "h" in hoopla.

Group 4: New look and sound (or no sound)

The last group includes letters that do not exist in English and either represent unfamiliar sounds or have no sound value (Ы, Ъ, Ь).

- Ы ы** No English equivalent. To produce "Ы" sound, notice the positions of the tongue when pronouncing English sounds i as in kit and u as in sugar. Then place your tongue in between and emit a voiced sound.
- **Ь** This letter is called the "soft sign" and has **no sound value**. It is used to modify the pronunciation of the preceding consonant by making it soft (palatalized). A consonant becomes soft when it is pronounced with the middle of the tongue raised towards the roof of the mouth.
- **Ъ** The "hard sign" has **no sound value**. It occurs only between a consonant and a vowel as in the word "въезд" (entry). It is used to show that the consonant should not be palatalized and that the consequent vowel is preceded by the "y" sound as in yes.

Илья Yefimovich Repin Илья́ Ефи́мович Ре́пин