

I'm not robot!

Even though I've been living in Moscow for almost 9 years now, I must admit that every time I need to read Russian handwriting (that is Russian cursive) I broke into a sweat.Oddly enough, when it comes to writing Russian cursive, I feel very confident and have no problems at all.So where do these difficulties in reading Cyrillic cursive come from? Why is Russian cursive so scary and what should you do to improve your Russian handwriting skills?Let's figure this out!Examples of Russian cursive writingКурсив (cursive in Russian) is the alphabet Russians commonly use to write by hand and it has many "faces". It looks like this... or like this ..... and even like this! I could keep going, but I'm sure you got the message.The origins of Russian handwritingI have my very own theory about the origin of Russian handwriting and its transformation into the monstrosity we have witnessed in the picture above.In the '70s, in the schools of the Soviet Union, the children were taught чёткописание (clean writing) and teachers used to evaluate and correct the children's почерк (calligraphy) on a daily basis.The letters of the Russian cursive alphabet had to be clear, clean and uniform, perfectly connected to one another and with the same sloping degree.Ah..... the good old days.Contemporary teaching methods are very different from the Soviet ones (as far as I know, Soviet teacher were just as strict as you can imagine).Today, the lack of attention to Russian handwriting caused the beautifully sloping letters of Russian cursive to change into the hot mess you saw in the images above.Photo credit: TASSWhen do you need to know Russian cursive?If you are interested in Russia only as a destination for your vacation, I have good news for you!In fact, the Cyrillic cursive alphabet is mainly used for handwriting and it is really unlikely that you'll need to know and understand it during a vacation. Most menus, street and shop signs and directions are block letters and thus MUCH easier to read.But if you are studying Russian or want to start a new life in Russia, I'm afraid you'll have to master Russian handwriting.Cyrillic cursive tableFor you, I created this table of the Cyrillic cursive alphabet featuring both lowercase and uppercase letters, and also the transliteration (just in case)! When I was a student, I remember being afraid of Russian handwriting. Now I realize that there are three main "anomalies" you have to focus on: The lowercase "т", which for some reason "turns" with respect to the capital letter and the block letters ones.The lowercase "л", which changes completely and turns into what we know being a "g".The letter "т", both capital and lowercase, which becomes our "m". I highly recommend you to get used to Russian cursive as soon as you can, because once you've mastered it, you'll notice how fast and handy it is.Does this solve the problem?No, it doesn't.And get over it. After all, books and newspapers use block letters and so do smartphones and computers.You may need to read a заявление every now and then (declaration, a word that is often used in Russian for any request or handwritten document) and, at most, a few greeting cards. That's is.By the way, as I wrote before tech devices use block letters by default. Obviously, you can change the font into italic in Word and PowerPoint by simply selecting the "c" option as for Latin letters, but the result is not that of a Russian handwritten text.If for some reason you want to achieve the "handwritten" effect on graphics software such as Illustrator and Photoshop, you will need to use a Russian cursive handwritten font.They are quite easy to find online: just google or even better "yandex" (the Russian Google) "рукописный шрифт" (handwritten font). If you don't feel like it, click here to find some Cyrillic handwritten fonts.Choose the one you like best and click on скачать (download)!Have a look at these posts!Did you like this post about Russian cursive? Do you have any questions?Leave me a comment!I hope I have helped you! Help me back! Rate this post and share it with your friends! Do you want to read and write the Russian cursive alphabet? Then I've got good and bad news for you: The bad news is that it's a lot more difficult to read than the regular Cyrillic alphabet. For example: can you decipher this note? Source: Russianstepbystep Any success? If yes, then you can now stop reading this article. If not, continue reading. You'll learn everything you need to know about the Russian cursive writing. And what about the good news? You'll find the goods news at the end of this article. Take a look at the Russian cursive alphabet Here's an overview of all the letters in the Russian alphabet - both capital and lowercase. CyrillicEnglish pronunciationTransliterationExampleа аfather амама, картаБ ббетббиякВ ввалвуказал, вот! вгоггараж, готовД ддадддом, кодЕ ееуеуе, је, еесь, гдеЕ еbeyondyo, jo, ёёлка, всёЖ жжжжжжжжж, ззможно, мужЗ ззероздес, занятиИ иропкоии, яляИ ийеуе, i, jбольшойК кkingккаа, корольЛ лlamplампа, далекоМ мmilkmМосква, тамИ иnicенет, ноО оорот (stressed)аgain (unstressed)оон, онаП ппласепрезидент P проled' r'гРоссия, работС сitscиссибот' teamэто, такУ уююшто-русски, уФ funfкофеX xScottish 'loch'kh, ххлеб, хорошИ ubitstширкЧ чchairch, ёчекИИ иushipшаи, наИИ иpushchairshch, sch, щёборщ, емёб' bhard sign"сьенИ resembles i in битувы, тьб soft sign'лумаь, большойЭ эете, ёгоЮ ююууу, јузнау, говорюя яурядя, яомя, врем Overview of all cursive Russian letters Below you'll find an overview of all the Russian cursive letters. use them as a reference during the Russian cursive challenge (more about that later) ----- Need more structure in your daily Russian practice? Let me help you make daily progress in my 7-day Russian coaching program----- Easy cursive letters (а в ё ж к н о ф у х ь я э я ю)Medium cursive letters (ш ч ц р л и ь з)Difficult cursive letters (т м л д г б ь) Easy means that they're basically the same in typed letters as in cursive. Medium means that there's a slight difference. And difficult means that they look different than in regular form. Here's a complete overview of all the Russian cursive letters: As you read a couple paragraphs ago, Russian cursive looks virtually impossible to read for the untrained eye. I started learning Russian in the beginning of 2016, and now regularly get mistaken for a native speaker when I'm speaking Russian. BUT. I still struggle reading Russian cursive handwriting. Though to be honest, I've never put effort into it. I'm starting to get to the level where I can read Russian at about 0,75 times the speed of how I read English/Dutch. But it slows down to about 0,4 when it comes to or italicized letters. You often find those in books. Even worse, when it comes to a real handwritten note, reading speed even slows down more. So why is Russian cursive handwriting much more difficult to read than the regular part? Some letters look completely different from their regular counterpart In English, handwritten letters are very similar to their block counterparts. In Russian, things are completely different. Take the letter "r" for example... in cursive it's "т". Once you encounter this for the first time, you're going to stare at it and think why on earth they did this? The letter T in cursive looks exactly like the block letter m..... This will take a while to get used to. And there are a couple more letters that undergo radical shifts. You'll also have a lot of fun with your r's and r's. Some letters look like ambiguous 'r's combined It's not just that some letters completely change shape. It's also that many of them turn into i's combined after each other. The following letters all become a succession of upright strokes in cursive: и, л, м, ш, ц, ш, и. What happens when you combine several of the previous upright letters? Can you see the difference between му and мш? In italics you can see the difference... but in handwriting there's no difference. It looks exactly the same. It's identical. The words мщу, "I avenge" and лицу (dative case of лицо "face") are also completely similar in handwritten Russian. Russian cursive challenge If you want to learn to write Russian cursive, you can take 3 routes: Not pay attention at all. Maybe you'll learn it while learning other parts of Russian. Maybe you won't. This is what I did.Pay a little bit of attention. You're probably in this group if you're reading this article. You know a little bit, but it will take a long time before you can comfortable write it.Go all out. Serious about learning to write Russian cursive? Then take a month and completely focus all your Russian practice on learning cursive. The first 2 don't take effort. The third variant needs about half an hour every day for 30 days. See it as a Russian cursive challenge! At the end you'll comfortable be able to write in Russian. The program consists of copying handwriting to internalize the script. And a lot of reading to get your brain to recognize the letters better. Prerequisites: Before you can start the challenge, you need to be able to do the following. Otherwise the challenge won't make any sense: you know the Russian alphabetyou can already write words in the Russian regular block alphabetyou're at least at level A2 in Russian. Meaning you can form simple sentences and introduce yourself in conversations. Here's a short A2 text. If you understand this, you can start the challenge: text with a2 level. Week 1 The first week is all about learning and recognizing the letters. You'll gain a good overview of the alphabet in cursive and will be able to write your first words Daily tasks: copy the entire alphabet in cursive by hand 2 times (10 minutes)watch this video When can you graduate the next week? Take the regular Russian block alphabet, and write the Russian cursive variant next to it from memory. Do this at the end of the week, and compare your cursive with the correct. If you've got all the letters approximately correct, you can continue. Small mistakes in how you write the letter are okay. As long as you don't completely mess them up. Something like this below is fine! Week 2 Week 2 is all about drilling things deeper. you'll make sure you remember the alphabet correctly. Daily tasks: write down the alphabet from memory 2 times. Compare with a source after each repetition. (10 minutes)Read the following Russian cursive text (20 minutes) Source: When can you graduate to the next week? If, at the end you wrote all the letters the way they should be, you can continue to the next week. Week 3 In the third week you'll learn how to form you first words and interconnect all the letters. There are no formal rules how to connect the letters, so you'll develop your own style. Also, by now you've seen in the last 2 weeks how usually the letters are connected. Take the texts you read in the previous 2 weeks and go handcopy them. Daily task: Handcopy the texts from the previous 2 weeks. Interchange between them to make it more interesting. (30 minutes) When can you graduate? If you feel you can now comfortable write Russian cursive, you can continue to the next week. Week 4 In this week you will start to write Russian cursiveyourself. The main goal is to internalize the letters and words even more. Daily task: write 10 sentences about yourself. Introduce who you are, what your hobbies are and why you're learning Russian. Repeat this throughout the week to get a good grasp on writing and forming sentences in Russian handwriting. When have you graduated? Post what you've written on the Russian Reddit and ask people if they can read it! If then can, you've successfully passed the 30 day Russian cursive challenge! History of Russian cursive It may look like Russian cursive is thousands of years old. In fact, it has only been developed since the 18th century. That is: the form Russians use nowadays. Before that, there was a version of the Cyrillic script called tachigraphic writing (скоропис). This in turn was based on the earlier cyrillic bookhand scripts. Thos were called ustav and poloustav. It was developed as a counterpart to the printed letters in books. If you've already been learning some Russian, you know that the italic version of the Russian letters are based on Russian cursive. Cursive is taught in Russian schools. Why? Because you can write it much faster than if you were to write the printed letter. So it's mainly used for personal letters and school work. And, if you ask any Russian, of course for doctors notes! Basically, almost no Russian writes NOT in cursive when writing by hand. Russian schools teach their students to write cursive in the first grade. Food for thought: do you NEED to know Russian cursive? Take a quick look at the Russian subreddit (community of 60.000 + Russian learners). You quickly see that many people have it as personal challenge to learn Russian well. Many Russian redditors also want to learn how to write Russian cursive handwriting. I'm going to give a slightly unpopular opinion here. You don't need to learn Russian cursive. Yes, it's nice to know Russian cursive. Yes, it's nice to know Russian cursive writing. Yes, it's cool to show your friends. Yes, Russians appreciate your effort into learning it. But no. Your Russian language speaking skills are not going to improve by learning Russian cursive writing. One problem I see often is that people focus on the wrong things when learning Russian. What do I mean? You care most about speaking Russian. Right? No matter how good your Russian cursive writing is. If you haven't put in the time to practice speaking... you're going to be lousy at having conversations. In my 6 years of learning Russian, basically all I did was focus on speaking. Sure, I watched a lot of movies, and listened to music. BUT. Those are worth nothing if you're not speaking. Do you recognize yourself in this? If not, then you need to start some speaking practices quickly. After you've got that started you can then start focusing on the Russian handwriting. Russian Cursive FAQ Below you can find answers to some common questions regarding Russian cursive: Is Russian cursive real? Yes, Russian cursive is real. Even though it may seem impossible for you to read it, Russian people still use it. Luckily you don't need to know it as a foreigner as most communication is done by typing these days. How do you write cursive in Russian? First you need to know the regular Cyrillic alphabet. Only then can you start to learn Russian cursive writing. Make sure to take your time and practice each letter on its own in both capital and small letters. Why does Russian cursive look like that? It looks weird because it has evolved throughout the years to be fast to write and easy to understand for native speakers. But that can make it difficult for non-native speakers to read Russian cursive. Can Russians read their own cursive? Yes, Russians can read their own cursive. But it depends on who write it. Just like in English, if someone has a horrible handwriting, not everyone else is able to correctly decipher what's written.





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