

Russian Made *EASY!*



Podcast



Episode #11

NOTE: For the full episode audio, supplemental audio exercises, transcripts (and other great resources for learning Russian) head over to RussianMadeEasy.com



Alright, welcome to episode 11 of Russian Made Easy. Again, if you're new to this podcast, it's best to start with episode number 1 because each new installment assumes you've mastered all the previous material.

Anyway, no review needed today since we reviewed virtually all our vocab in the last podcast. So let's jump right in to our first new phrase. Listen and repeat...

мне нравится

That's a tough pair of consonants at the start of that 2nd word...You have an N

and a rolled R. That's very hard to say slowly. Listen again, and also note how the emphasis is on the first syllable.

нравится

Now let's see if you can get the meaning from context:

Imagine I've just gotten home from a trip to the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame. My roommate looks at the merchandise I bought and he says.. "Hmm, you bought just one small AC/DC poster, but you got two huge Led Zeppelin posters, three Led Zeppelin T-shirts and the entire Zeppelin box set?"

So I tell him, "That's because мне нравится AC/DC but I **love** Led Zeppelin."

Try making your own contextual phrase with this. For example: To me, vanilla is an *okay* flavor. So I'd say, **мне нравится vanilla but I love chocolate.**

Hit pause and make your own.

So, how would you translate *mne nraivitsa*? This is a classic example of where we need to be very clear about the super literal meaning. Because, although *mne nraivita* translates as "I like", what you're literally saying is, ***to me is pleasing.***

Let's try it in a few sentences. Say..

I like borscht.

Literally: To me is pleasing borscht.

Мне нравится борщ.

Try saying:

I like pizza.

Again, literally: To me is pleasing pizza.

Мне нравится пицца.

Now you might be thinking...Wait! Why isn't it **pizzU**, with an "uu" sound at the end? Doesn't *liking* something count as doing something to it?

No. And here's why:

WE're not taking any action in the sentence at all. Grammar-wise, the **pizza** is the one doing the action. The pizza is pleasing us. After all, we're not saying "Я"...Right? That's the Russian word for "I". Again, we're saying MHE....to me. The pizza is the one doing the action.

Try saying:

To me is pleasing caviar.

Мне нравится икра.

Now say: I **want** caviar.

Я хочу икру.

See how we're taking action in that last sentence? **I want..**YA hochu.

Since we're acting upon the caviar in that second sentence, that's why we change it now to "ikru" (икру).

Alright, let's move on. How would you say:

This is my tea.

Это мой чай.

And now -- to a friend --

This is your tea.

Это твой чай.

So, MY started with an M -- MOI.

And YOUR started with a T -- TVOI.

Bearing that in mind, here's our new word:

тебе

one more time:

тебе

And here's the meaning:

Imagine you're a big fan of rock music, whereas your roommate prefers jazz. He suggests you both head to a club to listen to live music, but you remind him:

Мне нравится рок а тебе нравится джаз.

As we see there, "rock" and "jazz" are cognates. Listen again:
Мне нравится рок а тебе нравится джаз.

But how would you translate that phrase?

Literally: To me is pleasing rock, whereas to you is pleasing jazz.

So, тебе is the Russian word meaning "to you."
тебе

That's why I brought up MY and YOUR...мой и твой

...to compare that with...

мне, тебе

So try saying this:

My...to me

Мой...мне

Your...to you

Твой...тебе

Those aren't actual sentences. I'm just comparing the "M" stuff versus the "T" stuff.

A minute ago we learned those two music cognates: rock and jazz. Listen one more time and repeat:

рок

джаз

Well, *blues* is another cognate. Listen...

блюз

So ask a friend:

Do you like blues?

Тебе нравится блюз?

How will she answer:

No. I like rock.

Нет. Мне нравится рок.

To all my listeners who are also going through our Russian Accelerator course, I wanted to point something out. In Unit 4 Lesson 5, we first learn about this *мне нравится* construction

What I wanted to add was that *нравится* is the form we use with *singular* nouns. Things like pizza, or rock music, or "this car", and so on. But if we want to say, for example, that:

To me ARE pleasing crepes....**plural**..."crepeS"...we need to slightly change the word. Listen:

Мне нравятся блины.

The difference is very subtle. Listen to the two different words side by side:

нравится

нравятся

Can you hear the difference? This is why I didn't bring it up in Unit 4, because it's so subtle. And even if you use the wrong one, a native speaker's brain will still "hear" the right one. It will basically hear the one that it grammatically expects. But let me emphasize the difference, just so you're aware of it.

nraaaa-**veeeet**-suh

nraaa-**viiih**-suh

An "ee" sound in the first, an "ih" sound for that second, plural version. Listen one more time to the native speaker.

So, from now on, whenever it's not clear, I'll point out whether we're using the singular version of the plural version. But honestly, at conversational speed, the difference is almost non-existent except among speakers who really articulate everything they say.

So, ask your friend:

Do you like sushi? (We need the plural form here)

Тебе нравятся суши?

Do you like yogurt? (Singular form)

Тебе нравится йогурт?

Ask your friend Sergei...

Hey, Sergei...do you like my friend Linda?

Эй Сергей...Тебе нравится моя подруга Линда?

Now, for him to say:
Yes, I like her...

...listen to how he literally phrases it:

Да, она мне нравится.
Yes, she to me is pleasing.

Let's continue to play matchmaker, and this time ask *Linda* if she likes Sergei.
Like this...

Hey Linda, do you like my friend Sergei?
Эй Линда...Тебе нравится мой друг Сергей?

So, how will she literally phrase this:
Yes, I like him.
Literally: Yes, he to me is pleasing.
Да, он мне нравится.

V.O. And now, here's your Tip of the Day from Russian Made Easy...

Today's tip is a kind of flashback to the one I gave in episode four of this series, where I mentioned the importance of flashcards. But now I want to add two important things:

First, you recall how I mentioned you need to put an X on a card every time you get it wrong. The more X's any card has, the more often you should test yourself on it. Well, at some point, you'll have a small group of cards with lots of X's, and a whole bunch of other cards that you always get right. So, the tip here is to re-write those most difficult ones onto a new card or two. I could usually fit six phrases on one side. Put that card consisting of your toughest phrases in your wallet and test yourself a lot. In the morning as your coffee is brewing, in line at the bank, when you're filling up your tank, etc.

The other follow-up tip here is to remember to go through your cards *Russian side first* from time to time. Read the Russian word or phrase out loud and then translate into English.

Alright, let's learn another new word. Listen and repeat:

ТАНЦЕВАТЬ

One more time:
танцевать

It doesn't *sound* like a cognate, but it actually is...at least the first syllable of it, anyway. See if you can get the meaning:

I like to go to bars and have drinks with my buddies. My girlfriend, though, prefers to go to clubs and танцевать with her girlfriends.

To move your body rhythmically to music is to танцевать.

Do you hear the "cognate-ness" of the word? We say "to dance" and they say "танц....евать"

Ask your friend: Do you like to dance?
Literally: To you is pleasing to dance?
Тебе нравится танцевать?

Say:
No. I don't like to dance.
Нет, мне не нравится танцевать.

That's a lot of "n"s isn't it? Нет, мне не нравится танцевать.
Listen again:
Нет, мне не нравится танцевать.

How will your friend ask, in just two words:
Wanna dance?
Хочешь танцевать?

Say, Yes, I want to dance.
Да. Я хочу танцевать.

Let's try just a few more phrases. Ask a friend...

Want coffee?
Хочешь кофе?

No thanks.
Нет спасибо.

I don't like coffee.
Мне не нравится кофе.

Is there tea?
Есть чай?

And one more time, ask your friend..
Do you like to dance?
Тебе нравится танцевать?

Of course, please go to RussianMadeEasy.com to get the transcript of this podcast, and the audio downloads. And for homework, be sure to use this very important construction with as much of your vocabulary as you can fit in there. Practice saying and asking... *Do you like yogurt? I like yogurt. I don't like caviar. Do you like caviar?* and so on. And of course, put in all your Russian Accelerator vocabulary too, of course.

Next time we'll take it a step further by learning to talk about the things we **love**. I'll see you there!

PS: That dance song is called "Zachem" by 5sta Family. Search Youtube...it's a great video!