

Russian Made *EASY!*



Podcast



Episode #24

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



Привет! And welcome to episode 24 of Russian Made Easy. Today we'll be beefing up on our greetings and small talk. So let's first start by repeating the word I opened this podcast with:

привет

One more time:

Привет

So what does it mean? Well, when you see someone you know, you greet them

with “привет.” The key here is, **someone you know**. You can not use this word to a stranger. By definition, it is a greeting used with people you already know. If you say it to a total stranger, they will immediately wonder, “He knows me? When did I ever meet this person?”

Notice how I'm not saying what all those other courses and websites tell you, which is:

Привет is the Russian word for “hi.”

Привет is simply a friendly greeting to people you know. And this leads me to an email I got recently from a Russian Accelerator member. She asks, “Is it ok to use привет with people you speak formally with?” That's a great question. And yes, it's fine. I speak formally, on BBl with my wife's parents, but I'll greet them with привет. To be honest, I mix it up. I'll greet her father with zdrastvityeh, but her mom with привет.

Now, let's say your friend Tanya has just arrived. Listen to what she says **after** greeting me.

Привет, Марк. Как дела?

We know the word как. We worked with it in the last episode. Remember asking your friend:

How are your pancakes?

Как твои блины?

So, how would you translate как дела?

Well, in English we'd say: **Hi Mark, how're things?**

Hopefully, you know by now what I'm going to tell you: The word “дела” does not **MEAN** “things”, as in, “I bought these things yesterday.” Or, “Whose things are these?” That's just how it translates in this context. Because, depending on context, it might translate as “business” or “things to do” and so on.

Anyway, greet your friend Polina by saying:

Hi, Polina. How're things?

Привет Полина! Как дела?

So, how should we respond? Let's come back to that question in a moment, after reviewing the material from recent podcasts.

Imagine your friend's grandmother has brought over some of her homemade pig

fat for you to enjoy. You love it, so tell her:
Your pig fat is very tasty!
Ваше сало очень вкусное!

Imagine your friend brews his own beer. Tell him...
I really like your beer.
Literally: To me VERY pleasing your beer.
Мне очень нравится твоё пиво.

Tell grandma: Your cat is very pretty.
Ваша кошка очень красивая.

Imagine this scenario: Both your friend and her grandmother each have a cat they want you to take. Your friend's cat is mean and hisses at you, whereas grandma's cat purrs and is nice. So tell your friend:

I don't want your cat.
Я не хочу твою кошку.

Then tell grandma:
I want yours.
Я хочу **вашу**.

Now why do we say “vashu” here? Is it to rhyme with the word “хочу”?
No. That's just a coincidence. Instead, it's rhyming with the word “koshku” which – though we didn't actually say it – is nevertheless understood. We *know* that I'm saying, **I want your.....cat.**

Let's try a similar set up. Pretend you're in a Russian bazaar. There's a kid selling a pen, and an old man selling one. The kid's pen cost five cents and writes great. The old man's pen costs ten bucks and has no ink. So tell the old man...

I don't want your pen.
Я не хочу вашу ручку.

Tell the kid: I want yours.
Я хочу твою.

If you got these right...and more importantly, if you understand the patterns here...you're doing awesome. Alright, let's get back to our greetings.

Greet your friend Tolik and ask him how're things:
Привет, Толик. Как дела?

Now listen to his response:

Нормально. А у тебя?

Let's just take that first word: Нормально

How would you translate it. After an uneventful trip, someone asks you how it was. You tell them:
Нормально.

Or this example:

The lady at the deli counter is putting some salad into a container for you. She looks at you, wondering if she put enough in. Tell her...Нормально and reach for the container.

In that first situation, responding to the question of, "How was your trip?", we might've said, "Fine."

In that 2nd example, when the deli lady wants to know if that's enough salad, we might've said:
"That's good."

In Russian, they say: Нормально ...which to me, is essentially a cognate. It's their version of "normal," but again, it's used to mean "Fine, good, okay," and so on. Get used to saying this word a lot.

In Russia, when a potential landlord shows you her apartment, she might ask simply:

Well, how?

...as in...Well, how is it to you?

Ну как?

With our one new word, tell her it's fine:

Нормально.

And when someone asks you:

How're things?

Как дела?

Tell them:
Fine.
Нормально.

And then ask:
And at you?
А у тебя?

Or try this version. Ask:
And how're things at you?
А как у тебя дела?

This topic of greetings is also the subject of today's tip....

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

Pretend you're spending time with your Russian friend Andrei. A friend of his shows up and says to him: Приветик, Андрюшка! Как дела?

And you're thinking? "Previetek?" I thought it was just "previet." And "Andryushka?" I thought his name was just "Andrei." What's going on?

Well, what's going on is that Russians love to make certain words sound cute. They do this by – what else – changing the endings. The fancy linguistics term for this is "diminutives." Which is a good name for it. Think of the word "diminish" in English, which means to make smaller, right? It's becoming smaller and cuter.

Anyway, the two main ways Russians will make a word sound cute is by adding either "eek" or "ka."
So...привет becomes приветик .

And...Андрей becomes Андрюшка

If grandma has served you just a tiny bowl of salad – in her mind, a small salad – she might ask you:
How's your little-salad?
Как твой салатик?

From салат....we get....салатик
It sounds cute, doesn't it?

If she served you little pancakes, she might ask...

How're you little pancakes?
Как твои блинчики?

Notice the plural with that "и." Блин is the word for pancake. "чик" makes it small. And that "и" at the end makes it plural. (bleen-cheek-ee)
Как твои блинчики?

You don't need to learn these, really. You'll pick them up once you're hanging out with native speakers. I just wanted to introduce you to them so it doesn't throw you off when you hear these diminutive forms.

Returning to our greetings, again greet your friend Anton and ask how're things:
Привет, Антон! Как дела?

Listen to Anton's response:
Всё хорошо. А у тебя как?

We know the word "horosho", but that word "fsyo" is new to this podcast. Imagine you're packing a car for a long trip. You look around, seeing if any other bags need to go in the car. You don't see anything, so you ask your friend, just to be sure:
Всё?

He says:
Да, это всё...
...and he closes the trunk.

In English, we'd say, "Is that everything?" And in Russian, they can just say, "Всё?"

If I were to spell that out using English letters I would spell it F-S-Y-O. Listen to the native speaker...
всё?

So, depending on the phrase, Всё translates as either "everything" or "all."
So say:

Everything's good.
Всё хорошо.

But again, that word всё is used in a lot of situations. For ex: After you've given your order to the waitress, she'll make sure that's everything you want by

saying,
“Everything, yes?”
Всё, да?

Tell her, Yes, that's all. Thanks.
Да, это всё. Спасибо.

Now let's practice a typical encounter with some friends. You see a group of Russians you know. So let's tell them,
Hello!
Здравствуйте.

One of them says:
Hi, Taylor. How're things?
Привет, Тэйлор. Как дела?

Say: Fine.
Нормально.

And ask...And with you?
А у тебя?

He says:
All good.
Всё хорошо.

He notices your friend and asks:
Who is this?
Кто это?

Say:
This is my friend, Vika.
Это моя подруга Вика.

He then says...
Мы сейчас идём в парк. Хотите с нами?

Hmm...we haven't learned everything he said. But we did catch, “f park” which means, “To the park.” Plus we heard, “хотите” which means, “Do you guys want?” He's probably saying that they're going to the park...do you guys want to come with us? So in two words, say:
Okay. Let's go!

Хорошо. Погли!

So, for homework, practice saying both sides of this greeting scenario. Use different names, introduce different people. Say something about the people, and so on. Really try to use a lot of your vocabulary, especially the stuff from the early podcasts. Remember, we want to keep circulating older stuff with newer stuff. Be sure to visit [Russian Made Easy.com](http://RussianMadeEasy.com) for all the downloads today, and I'll see you next time!

