

Russian Made *EASY!*



Podcast



Episode #6

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 number six. Let me just toss out a reminder that these podcasts are cumulative, so if this is your first time joining us it's best to start with episode number 1. Now, before getting to our review session, I'd like you to listen to and repeat this two-word phrase.

Я буду

[**NOTE:** I've chosen to *not* sound out the Russian words in these transcripts using English letters. If you'd like to be able to read Russian (it can be learned in just a few days) I'll include a link at the bottom of this transcript to my course on reading Russian.]

You know that first word, Я....it's the буду part that's new for us. Say the phrase one more time:

Я буду

Ok....let that sink in for a bit and now let's do our review:

How would you ask:

What is this?

Что это?

Say: This is caviar.

Это икра.

Ask: Who is this? Your lawyer?

Кто это? Твой адвокат?

Say: No. This is my dad.

Нет. Это мой папа.

Now, what was that two word phrase we learned at the start?

Я буду

Let's see if we can figure out a good translation for it. So, imagine you're in a cafe. The waitress comes over to take your order and you tell her,

Здравствуйте, я буду борщ.

Your girlfriend then addresses the waitress:

А я буду пиццу.

Listen to the two lines again, and think of what the translation might be, given the situation. Remember, we saying this to a waitress who's writing down what we say:

Здравствуйте, я буду борщ.

Means: Hello, I __blank__ borscht.

And then your girlfriend says:

А я буду пиццу.

Which means: And I __blank__ pizza.

In English, there's a variety of ways we'd give our orders. We might say:

I'll **have** the borscht.

...or...

I'll **take** the borscht.

...or...

I'd **like** the borscht.

....and so on.

Any of these translations is fine. But of course, we need to know what we're **literally** saying. And as it turns out "Я буду" means, "I will". So you're telling the waitress: "I will borscht." That's what you're literally saying.

Я буду борщ.

That might sound strange to you at first -- like there's a word missing -- but this is the standard way Russians will order. And of course, we do the same in English. When someone says, "Man, I'm hungry. I feel like pizza tonight," that would actually sound strange to a foreigner, wouldn't it? He's thinking, *You feel like pizza? You feel the way a pizza feels?*

In English, we also leave out the key verb. When you say, "I feel like a beer. Anyone want one?" What you really mean is, "I feel like **having** a beer." Or, "I feel like **drinking** a beer," right?

Now there's one other really important thing I'd like you to pick up on. Listen to how your girlfriend orders pizza.

А я буду пиццу.

Did you hear how she said pizzU -- with an "uu" sound at the end, instead of pizzA?

That is an absolutely key part of Russian grammar, and it's the real topic of today's podcast.

Now, just based on that *one* example, how do you think she might say:

I'll have vodka.

Я буду водку.

Vod-KU with an "uu" sound at the end.

And yet if she orders soup, listen...

Я буду суп.

We just hear "soup". No extra "uu" sound at the end. So what's going on here? I know I made a big point about Russian being a rhyming language -- and believe me, it is -- but that's not what's going on here. Yes, budu does rhyme with vodku, but that's coincidence only. What's going on is that words that normally end in an "ah" sound -- what we called **feminine** words in an earlier podcast -- change their "ah" sound to an "uu" sound **when we do something to them**.

Here is just a small list of what constitutes "doing something" to something.

ordering
wanting
buying
knowing
taking
holding
touching

etc, etc. These all count, linguistically, as doing something to the noun.

To really drive this point home, let me show you how English would sound if it had this same rule. Listen to how the word "cola" (which ends with an "ah" sound) changes in these two phrases.

This is my cola.

Who drank my colu?

Do you see how we're not doing anything to the **cola** in that first phrase. We're just stating a fact: This is my cola. But in the second one, someone has done something to the cola. They drank it. So we have to say **colu**.

Here's another example.

There is **pasta** in the cupboard.

I cooked **pastu** yesterday.

Again, in that first example, we're just stating a fact about the pasta's location.

But in the second phrase, we've done something to the pasta. We've cooked it.

Even people's names need to change in this same way:

This is my sister **Tina**.
I saw **Tinu** yesterday.

Seeing Tina counts as doing something to her.

Now you try it. Based on this pattern, insert the correct form of the word "sofa"...ready?
Is this your new _____ ?

Yes. I bought this _____ at Sears yesterday.

So...Is this your new **sofa**?

We say just sofa because we haven't *done* anything to the sofa.

But: I bought this **sofu** at Sears.

Now we have to say **sofu** because we've done something to it. We bought it.

If you understand this pattern, you have mastered one of the main aspects of Russian grammar. And speaking of Russian, let's apply it now in some all-Russian sentences.

Tell the waitress:
I'll have the caviar.
Я буду икру.

I'll have the vodka.
Я буду водку.

I'll have pizza.
Я буду пиццу.

But now say:
I'll have borscht.
Я буду борщ.

We notice that the word borscht doesn't change.

So, imagine you're sitting there in the cafe with your girlfriend. The waitress brings the coffee that your girlfriend ordered, and just before the waitress walks away, your girlfriend says to her,

Спасибо

The waitress responds with:
Пожалуйста

...and walks away.

Listen again:
Спасибо.
Пожалуйста.

Hmm...Let's the waitress is coming back now with the pizza you ordered. Let's say the same thing your girlfriend did...

Спасибо.

Sure enough, the waitress responds with...
Пожалуйста.

How would this exchange go in English? Like this...
Thank you.
You're welcome.

Let's listen to those words again more closely, and repeat them:
спасибо

You remember how we talked about creating PowerPhrases for new words, to help us remember them? It's usually best if you think of them yourself, but from time to time I'll make a suggestion. For spasibo, imagine buying some butter made with hot peppers. You tell the lady at the grocery store , THANK YOU for the spicy butter.

See how we get THANK YOU and spasibo in there....spicy butter...spasibo.

And what was that other word again?
Пожалуйста

Spoken very slowly, you'll often hear there's an "uu" sound in there...puh-zhal-oo-eesta

But at normal speed it essentially gets dropped. Listen...
Пожалуйста

Now, пожалуйста does not MEAN "you're welcome". In fact, it literally means "please", which is why we'll be adding it to our requests in a moment. So why would they tell you "Please" after you say *Thank you*? Well, it makes sense if you think of what words they're leaving out. You say...

Thank you.

And they say, "Please....there's no need to thank me."

Say that word one more time...
пожалуйста

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

There's something in linguistics known as a construction. That's the fancy term they give to the simple idea of a fill-in-the-blank phrase. And that's what we've been working with today. For example, the English phrase...

I'll have _____

...is a very common construction for ordering food. And you can fill in all sorts of things in the blank:

I'll have the soup.

I'll have the lobster.

I'll have the pancakes

..and so on.

If you're a foreigner trying to learn English, you'd be smart to master such a common construction. And if you practice the right way, you'll quickly become fluent with that construction. If you do this for all the major constructions, and you can quickly become fluent in the language. In short: Constructions are the most efficient tool for developing fluency in a language.

So, let's practice again with our Russian construction, inserting various foods in there.

Я буду __blank__.

Order soup:
Я буду суп.

Order borscht.
Я буду борщ.

Order pizza.
Я буду пиццу.

Order caviar.
Я буду икру.

In the mood for some greens? The word for **salad** in Russian is a cognate.
Listen:
салат

Only, it ends in a "t" ...салаТ, and the stress is at the end...саЛАТ

So, order a salad:
Я буду салат.

Coffee is also a cognate. Listen...
кофе....кофе

So, order coffee:
Я буду кофе.

Let's try to fill out the exchange a bit more. So, there you are, sitting in a Russian cafe. The waitress comes over and greets you...

Здравствуйте.

Greet her right back:
Здравствуйте.

Now, there's a few main ways she might prompt you for your order. In English the waitress might say, "What can I get'chya?" ..or..."What would you like?"...or..."Are you ready to order?" and so on.
So, let the waitress say her thing and then tell her...

I'll have borscht, please.
Я буду борщ, пожалуйста.

Your friend then says...
And I'll have a salad.
А я буду салат, пожалуйста.

Listen to how the waitress reads back your orders:

Борщ и салат, да?

Tell her: Yes. Thank you.
Да. Спасибо.

She says: You're welcome.
Пожалуйста.

Did you catch the word for "and", as in borscht and a salad?
It was И

Борщ и салат, да?

So tell the waitress, I'll have the soup and salad, please.
Я буду суп и салат, пожалуйста.

Try saying:
Hello, I'll have a pizza and coffee, please.
Здравствуйте, я буду пиццу и кофе, пожалуйста.

Next time we'll learn perhaps the two most common and useful words in Russian -- beyond just Да and НЕТ. So I hope you tune in for that.

As always, I welcome your feedback on these podcasts. Feel free to write me at: mark@russianmadeeasy.com

I'd love to hear what you think, and how you're doing. And be sure to head over to RussianMadeEasy.com for today's downloads. See you next time.