

Russian Made *EASY!*



Podcast



Episode #9

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 #9. Today we'll learn how to talk about the things we want. But first, let's review by asking our friend about what **she** wants. Ask...

Want coffee?
Хочешь кофе?

How would she ask:
Is there cappuccino?
Есть капучино?

Ask her:

Want pasta?
Хочешь пасту?

How will she ask:
Is there spaghetti?
Есть спагетти?

You thought she didn't like spaghetti, so ask her:
You want spaghetti?
Ты хочешь спагетти?

Now imagine you're at your girlfriend's place. She intends to make dinner for you, so she opens her pantry to show you what your options are. All sorts of pastas and soups and so on. So she asks:

What do you want?
Что ты хочешь?

Pointing to the spaghetti you say:
Я хочу спагетти.

Now listen again:
Я хочу спагетти.

So, Я хочу translates as "I want."

Let's practice those two pairs. To make it more concrete, try tapping your chest -- I know that sounds silly, but -- try tapping your chest as you say this:

I want.
Я хочу

And now gesture to your friend -- or gesture as if your friend were across from you -- and say:

You want
Ты хочешь
One more time. Tapping your chest...

I want.
Я хочу

Now gesture to your friend:

You want.

Ты хочешь

Great. Now, as I've mentioned before, there are lots and lots of food cognates in Russian. And one of the most popular in recent years is clearly sushi. I see sushi restaurants everywhere, now, in Russia and Ukraine. So, try saying: I want sushi.

Я хочу суши.

Let's add a truly Russian food to our vocabulary. We encountered this word for a moment in episode 7, but didn't officially learn it. So try saying:

блины

Note the emphasis on that last sound...

блины

In English we call them pancakes, in France they're called crepes, and in Russian they're called...

блины

But American pancakes are big and fluffy because they add baking soda to make the batter rise. Crepes and blini are very thin, and they usually roll them or fold them, adding various fillings. My favorite filling, by the way, is red caviar.

Anyway, try saying:

I want blini.

Я хочу блины.

Ask your friend: Want blini?

Хочешь блины?

Now let's add one more very Russian word. Listen and repeat:

Чай

So, what is чай? Well, when you pour boiling water over the dried leaves of the tea plant, the resulting drink is called чай.

So, we call the drink "tea" and in Russian it's чай

There's a simple PowerPhrase for this one: Imagine someone has served you some very bad smelling tea. Tell him, "I wouldn't drink this for all the TEA in

China."

Do you hear how the word "чай" is hidden in the word "Chi-na"?

Anyway, ask your friend:

Want tea?

Хочешь чай?

How will she say:

No, thanks. I want coffee.

Нет, спасибо. Я хочу кофе.

Say: I want tea and pancakes.

Я хочу чай и блины.

Until now, we've only been adding nouns -- mostly foods -- into these, *I want*, or *Do you want...* constructions. But we can also add verbs. In other words, just as in English, we can ask:

Want to go?

Want to watch?

Want to eat?

...and so on.

So here's a new verb for us. Listen and repeat:

кушать

One more time: кушать

So what does it mean? Well, if you're thirsty you'd say, "I want to drink." But if you're hungry you'd say, "I want to кушать."

So, кушать is one of the Russian verbs meaning, "to eat". So, in two words, ask your friend:

Want to eat?

Хочешь кушать?

Or, knowing she's hungry, ask her:

What do you want to eat?

Что ты хочешь кушать?

Notice how we included the word "you" in the Russian version:

Что ты хочешь кушать?

Imagine you're mumbling to yourself as you shuffle into the kitchen one morning.
Say...

I want to eat.

Я хочу кушать.

Imagine calling out to your roommate, John, while you're in the kitchen. Ask him...

John, want to eat?

Джон, хочешь кушать?

Some native speakers might've added Ты there. Listen...

Джон, ты хочешь кушать?

He asks: What is there?

Что есть?

Peering in the fridge, tell him:

There is soup and there is salad.

Есть суп и есть салат.

He says: Ok, I'll have the soup.

Хорошо. Я буду суп.

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

Do you know what a verb conjugation is? I know, "conjugation" is one of those fancy grammar terms I usually hate, but it's good to know, at least for today's tip. So, in English we say: I want...You want...They want....but Steve...*wants*.

Or....I go, you go, we go, but she....*goes*.

Why is it "you go" but "she goes"? Because, in English, there's a different conjugation for he and she.

Well, in Russian there are separate conjugations for each "doer" of the action. If you bear with me here, I'll russify the English verb "to want" to kinda give you a feel for all six. Listen...do NOT repeat...

I want-ayu

To a friend: You want-ayesh?

He want-ayet

We want-ayem

They want-ayoot

You guys want-aityeh

So, see the two groups? The first group is me, you, and that guy or that girl
The second group is we, you guys, and them

And again, in Russian, each of those six "doers" of the action has its own conjugation. That is, a different ending to the verb. And we've learned two of them so far. The two most common:

The "I" form, as in: I want tea.
Я хочу чай.

And the "you" form, as in:
You want pancakes?
Ты хочешь блины?

So, where's the "tip" in all of this? Well, the absolute worst thing you can do is try to learn all six conjugations at once. And yet, just this morning, I got an email from a frustrated student who is also taking private Russian lessons from a native speaker. The woman is not only making him learn all six conjugations right from the start, she's *chiding* him for not having them down...for not having mastered them. That really frustrates me because, yes, native speakers **are** experts, of course, at speaking Russian. But that does NOT in any way make them experts at teaching it. The fact is, conjugations should be learned gradually. One at a time. Do it that way and they're no sweat at all.

The last new word for today is a tiny one. Listen...
не

One more time:
не

So, it sounds like HET but without the "t" at the end. But that's really only when the speaker is emphasizing the word. When spoken quickly, in the middle of a sentence, it really sounds simply like:
ни

Listen for it in this short conversation. I'm in my kitchen, and I'm taking some leftover pizza out of the fridge. So, I ask my friend:

Хочешь пиццу?

Нет, спасибо. Я не хочу кушать.

Listen to her answer again:

Нет, спасибо. Я не хочу кушать.

Did you hear "nyeh" or "nee"? Я не хочу кушать?

What she's saying is, "No, thanks. I don't want to eat."

She might've phrased it with fewer words. Listen to this version:

Хочешь пиццу?

Нет. Не хочу.

There she's simply saying: "No. Don't want."

In English, we can't really leave out the word "I" like that. We have to say, "No, I don't want." In fact, we also need to add "any", as in, "No thanks. I don't want any."

But in Russian, it's normal and grammatical to say:

No. Don't want.

Нет. Не хочу.

This time using the word "I", say:

I don't want pizza. I want sushi.

Я не хочу пиццу. Я хочу суши.

In three words, say:

Tanya, want tea?

Таня, хочешь чай?

How will she say:

No thanks. I want coffee.

Нет, спасибо. Я хочу кофе.

How will she ask you:
Want pancakes?
Хочешь блины?

Tell her:
No thanks. I want yogurt.
Нет, спасибо. Я хочу йогурт.

Or, if you're not hungry, tell her:
No thanks. I don't want to eat.
Нет, спасибо. Я не хочу кушать.

Imagine you're in your girlfriend's pantry as you two decide what to cook for dinner. She holds out a box of pasta. You frown and say...

No, I don't want pasta. I want soup.
Нет, я не хочу пасту. Я хочу суп.

She then pokes fun at your picky eating habits...

Ты не хочешь пасту, ты не хочешь пиццу, ты не хочешь блины....ты **только** хочешь суп!

There was a new word in there, did you catch it? только Could you guess the meaning based on what she was saying? To check, please visit RussianMadeEasy.com. You'll find the answer the transcript of this podcast.

Meanwhile, in the next episode we're going to have you play the role of interpreter. It's great practice and you'll be amazed at how much you've learned and can understand. See you then!

ANSWER to today's mystery word: только = only

..as in: You don't want pasta, you don't want pizza, you don't want pancakes...you **only** want soup!

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