

RUSSIAN LEARNERS'

DICTIONARY

Nicholas J. Brown

10,000
words in
frequency
order

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INTRODUCTION

THE CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF THIS DICTIONARY

This dictionary is a Russian learner's vocabulary list of 10,000 words in order of importance.

Serious students of Russian are always aware that vocabulary acquisition is a major problem. Unlike Russian grammar, which has a structure and can be adequately mastered in a year, the vocabulary of the language is huge and amorphous. At the end of a year's intensive study, students should have a good idea of how Russian works and the ability to handle a large number of everyday communicative situations, but their reading speed may be no more than two pages of a novel per hour, with the need for constant recourse to a Russian–English dictionary. 'Go and read lots of Russian and increase your vocabulary,' they are told. But which words to learn? Increasing one's vocabulary is a time-consuming task for most students, and the process needs a structure. The list in this dictionary tells you which words to learn, and in what order.

Why 10,000?

10,000 words (lexemes) is a conventional figure, a convenient round number, for the *active* vocabulary of a university-educated Russian native speaker, although he or she is likely to know, at least passively, six times that figure.

More importantly, the statistics suggest that beyond 10,000, words become too rare to be placed in any meaningful order of frequency and cannot be regarded as in any sense common in everyday spoken or non-technical written Russian. Once you have learnt the first 8,000, you know all the words which are likely to turn up at least ten times each in a million words of Russian. Those between 8,000 and 10,000 are found five to ten times per million. Words which occur less frequently than that are too rare to be worth including in a list of general vocabulary. Items such as **дятел** 'woodpecker', **макароны** 'macaroni', **гатить** 'to lay a log or brushwood road over marshy ground', which are *not* in this list, might prove useful in a specific situation, but you could read and listen to Russian for weeks and not meet any of them once.

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How many do you need to know?

The first 2,000 words can be regarded as a core vocabulary for a British A level course, an intensive graduate-level reading course in Russian or two years of Russian at an American college. Roughly speaking, a vocabulary of 2,000 items guarantees recognition of at least 75 per cent of the words in any Russian text. Four thousand should be the target for the end of a post-A level year of a university course in Britain or an advanced college course in America. In my years of using earlier versions of this dictionary with University of London students specializing in Russian I have treated 8,000 as graduate competence level; a vocabulary of the commonest 8,000 words guarantees recognition of well over 90 per cent of the words in any Russian text (and in practice about 97 per cent, since many of the words not in the list will be proper names or easily guessed internationalisms such as **миграция** 'migration' and technical terms such as **океанология** 'oceanology'). Allowing for the fuzziness of the notion of word frequency (see below), items beyond 8,000 in this list occur fewer than ten times in a million words of Russian text. Any foreign student with a sound knowledge of Russian grammar and a passive knowledge of 8,000 to 10,000 vocabulary items (with perhaps an active vocabulary of half that) can reasonably call him or herself competent in the language for all normal purposes. The benefit of working through the last 2,000 is small, though the round number of 10,000 is an attractive target for the really committed.

What kind of vocabulary is included?

The list is meant to reflect standard literary Russian of the last fifty years or so up to the present. The sources cover all *non-technical* uses of the language from everyday spoken communication to literary works, but with the emphasis on the written language (newspapers, journals, informative prose, literature).

Some specifically Russian (Soviet) features of the list

Given that this frequency list is meant to reflect Russian usage over fifty years of the recent past, during most of which time Russia was part of the Soviet Union, an assiduous student may detect the effect on the list of the Soviet preoccupation, in the press and literature, with military matters (such as the Second World War), industrial production and politics, and, in comparison with writing in the West, the lower frequency of words from such areas as popular culture, colloquial language and sex. Naturally, the list also reflects distinctive features of the Russian way of life, e.g. 4676 **икона** 'icon', 7125 **форточка** 'ventilation window', 8263 **сметана** 'sour cream'.

Working with this dictionary

Some students actually learn the lists; others use them to check how their vocabulary

acquisition is progressing. For many the lists serve as a useful challenge: the target of, say, passive recognition of the first 8,000 Russian words is a realizable goal even for not very committed linguists.

Since there is a difference between a frequency list and a core vocabulary, many words which a student will learn at an early stage for survival purposes – such as the days of the week – are not among the commonest words of written Russian. До свидания 'goodbye' will probably occur in one of the first lessons of any standard grammar book, though for the language as a whole свидание (1273 in this list) is not in the commonest thousand words. The numbers from один 'one' to двадцать 'twenty' will obviously be learnt as a block, regardless of their variable frequency. This list should be treated as an accompaniment to a basic course; as a means by which post-beginners can check for gaps in their basic wordstock; then as a means for increasing vocabulary, with the reassurance of finding familiar words (e.g. 5297 вторник 'Tuesday') as you work through the later stages of the list.

Teachers and examiners, when choosing a text for unseen comprehension or translation for a specific group of students, can use the alphabetical index to determine what proportion of the words in the given text are unlikely to be part of the vocabulary of the target group of students – and edit or annotate the text accordingly.

THE COMPILATION OF THE DICTIONARY

History of the project

I started compiling a Russian frequency wordlist in the mid-1970s, mainly to assist university evening class students who needed to acquire a reading knowledge of Russian quickly. The original list was a few hundred words long and was based on E A Steinfel'dt's *Russian Word Count* (Tallinn, 1963). In the late seventies, after the publication of L N Zazorina's *Частотный словарь русского языка* (Russian Frequency Dictionary) (Moscow, 1977), I extended the list to 2,000 words for the benefit of University of London intensive beginners who had to reach A level standard in thirty-five weeks of study. Two thousand words was a convenient figure for the core vocabulary of Russian, and seemed to constitute a useful and reachable target for A level students.

For twelve years the total remained at 2,000. The many students who found the list very useful for vocabulary acquisition and asked for further lists were given photocopies of pages from Zazorina's dictionary mentioned above, but were warned that her frequency list contained large numbers of 'useless' words, and were left to do the translations and editing themselves.

In the meantime, the Gestetner stencils with the original wordlists were consigned to the dustbin when word processors arrived. The list was retyped onto floppy disks and edited. With the new technology, which removed the drudgery of fiddling with stencils and two

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typewriters, came the idea of converting the list from an aid to beginners into a fully-fledged graduate-competence vocabulary.

Why has a Russian learner's frequency list of this size not been compiled before and why is this one necessary?

Conventional wisdom has tended to regard frequency lists as valid only up to about 2,000 items, on the basis that 2,000 is a convenient round number for the everyday vocabulary of a language such as Russian. After 2,000, the argument runs, frequency is so dependent on other factors such as topic (literature, domestic life or whatever), the weight given by the researcher to spoken sources, the exclusion or inclusion of technical texts, that there is no point in attempting to extend a general frequency list beyond 2,000 items. My experience suggests otherwise: that it is indeed both possible and pedagogically useful to produce a much longer list. The proof is in the improved performance of students in comprehension and translation examinations in which dictionaries are not permitted, in faster reading speeds and in sample counts which show that knowledge of all or most of the 10,000 words in this frequency list normally guarantees recognition of over 95 per cent of the vocabulary in a non-technical text.

Many vocabulary researchers, convinced that the notion of a frequency dictionary involves too many problems to yield a useful tool, have settled for an alphabetical list of 'common words'. A good example of this kind of compromise, is Patrick Waddington's *A First Russian Vocabulary* (Blackwell, 1988). On page xiii Waddington states: 'frequency-lists need to be checked against commonsense observations. Their findings do not coincide for any but the most obviously important words (perhaps between 100 and 150).' So Waddington's book is set out like a conventional beginner's dictionary, with some 2,300 words in alphabetical order. This has the advantage of making words easy to find, but the severe disadvantage of hiding the notion of frequency. The stimulus of knowing that the words are in order of 'usefulness' seems to me to be vital in persuading students to learn them.

Although, as I indicate below, I do not think that there is any statistically valid way of producing *the* frequency dictionary of Russian, it is my strongly held view that *a* frequency dictionary of Russian is an immensely valuable learner's tool. Students do increase their vocabulary more efficiently than with any other method, they read faster, understand more, translate better; in a word, they become more competent.

Sources and methodology

This book has several sources. Apart from my own counts and observations, the primary source, mentioned above, was L N Zasorina's *Частотный словарь русского языка* (Russian Frequency Dictionary) published in 1977. Zasorina's material required a great deal of adaptation. Her dictionary is an academic study, not a pedagogical work, and is of only marginal use to foreign learners. Apart from the absence of translations and stresses,

the main list of 9,000 items in frequency order has a large number of oddities and ‘useless words’ (i.e. words that occur frequently only in specialized contexts such as chemistry). These oddities are the result of the fact that Zazorina’s list is based only on the number of occurrences (absolute frequency) of each word (lexeme) in her one million words, and does not take into account how evenly each lexeme is distributed in different texts and types of text (range of occurrence). When adapting Zazorina’s frequency list, a large proportion of the lexemes had to be moved (usually demoted, sometimes deleted altogether) to take into account their range of occurrence. Other, occasionally intuitive, adjustments had to be made to compensate for changes in usage, the Communist bias of Zazorina’s texts (too many texts by Lenin) and the under-representation of the everyday spoken language.

The first complete version of this 10,000-item dictionary was printed for use by students of SSEES, University of London in May 1993 and proved popular. Since 1993 the list has undergone further modifications, firstly in the light of experience and student comments, secondly by comparison with a major new mathematically rigorous Russian frequency count conducted by Lennart Lönngren et al. of Uppsala University in Sweden (published version: *Частотный словарь современного русского языка*, Studia Slavica Upsaliensia no. 32, Uppsala 1993). Like Zazorina’s, Lönngren’s count is based on one million words of running text, but, unlike Zazorina’s, it is based only on texts written after 1960 and explicitly concentrates on the written language. Although the published version of Lönngren’s computer files is much more restricted in scope than Zazorina’s (her book has 936 pages to Lönngren’s 192), Lönngren uses a more refined methodology, making explicit use of the notion of modified frequency, i.e. he takes into account how evenly a particular lexeme is distributed across different texts (range of occurrence) as well as the number of times it occurs altogether (absolute frequency).

The notion of *modified frequency*, as opposed to *absolute frequency*, can be illustrated by the case of **ка́тер** (‘launch’, ‘cutter’), an intuitively rare lexeme notorious in Zazorina’s list for occupying the 356th place next to **по́мнить** (‘to remember’). These two lexemes are side by side because they both occurred 333 times (their *absolute frequency*) in Zazorina’s million words of text. However, Zazorina indicates in her alphabetical list that **ка́тер** occurred in only six of her ninety-two different texts, and 281 of its occurrences were in just one text, which must have been on a rather narrowly nautical theme. By contrast, **по́мнить** occurred in sixty-one of her ninety-two texts. Adjusting for the very uneven distribution of **ка́тер**, using a mathematical formula, **ка́тер** is given a *modified frequency* which causes it to be demoted by seven or eight thousand places. Thus words which occur frequently only in specific kinds of texts (technical terms in science, or expletives which are frequent in specific varieties of male dialogue) will either not figure in a general frequency list at all, or will come very far down the list.

However, Zazorina, Lönngren and most other frequency counts of Russian (and other languages) are more concerned with demonstrating mathematical rigour than with practical matters such as increasing students’ vocabulary or helping textbook writers. Thus they all contain features which seem either to contradict common sense or at least to be intuitively odd. Although Zazorina used a million words taken from a very wide variety of texts, such

intuitively 'common' lexemes as **вторник** ('Tuesday'), **четверг** ('Thursday'), **сметана** ('sour cream', a central element of the Russian diet) and **сыр** ('cheese') failed to make it into her top ten thousand. All four of these are also missing from Lönngren's list of words with a frequency of at least ten per million, though that result is unsurprising in a count which largely excludes the spoken language and dialogue. Furthermore, however carefully the formula for modified frequency is refined, a statistically rigorous frequency list will always contain items which any experienced teacher will regard as misplaced. The statistics need to be complemented by an element of intuition. This means, for example, that if three counts of the frequency of the word **наган** 'revolver' disagree as to whether **наган** belongs in the most frequent 10,000 words of Russian, I choose the answer which intuitively seems best to fit the needs of the learner described above; **наган** is therefore excluded in favour of the much commoner **револьвер**.

Though some judgments on word frequency have to be based on non-statistical intuition, in the pedagogical business of encouraging vocabulary acquisition, intuitive decisions, within certain bounds, need not be seen as a fault. In adjusting some of the findings of Zazorina and Lönngren and others I have used as my criterion the needs of English-speaking learners whose main concerns are (a) the desire to increase their comprehension and reading speed when working with Russian newspapers, literary works and other non-technical material, and (b) the ability to survive and communicate in Russia at the end of the twentieth century.

Why are the days of the week so scattered?

From the teacher or learner's point of view, such closely related words as the days of the week are equally necessary and will normally be taught as a set, but I have resisted any temptation to put them side by side in this frequency list. Firstly, I felt it important to avoid changing the ranking of words beyond the bounds of the variations actually found in different counts. Secondly, the browser through the list must occasionally be entertained or intrigued by the relative positions of semantically closely related items. Taking the seven days of the week as an example, I myself noted with interest that Saturday and Sunday are significantly more frequent than the five working days, and Friday is mentioned more frequently than the days from Monday to Thursday (this order of frequency also holds for other European countries, as is shown by counts for languages as different as English and Slovak). Among the months, one notes that Russia's revolutionary past has made **октябрь** 'October' noticeably more frequent than the other eleven. The numbers too are widely scattered. It may be pedagogically odd to leave **восемьсот** 'eight hundred' until 9104, while **девятьсот** 'nine hundred' is at 191, but the big difference between their frequencies is clearly derived from the fact that **девятьсот** occurs in every twentieth century date.

Vocabulary statistics and their 'fuzziness'

A comparison of any two different vocabulary counts (for example, Zazorina's and Lönngren's) shows that there is a great deal of indeterminacy in the notion of frequency of

occurrence of a word. For example **весь** 'all' is number 22 in Zazorina, number 10 in Lönngren and number 12 in this dictionary, and none of these positions is more 'correct' than the others; the different rankings reflect different choices of texts, variations in methodology and the natural indeterminacy of the subject. This list contains more of the spoken language that Lönngren and more recent usage than Zazorina; consequently, it is different from both. What can be said with reasonable certainty is that **весь** belongs in the forty commonest words of Russian and that it is much commoner than **целый** 'whole' (412 in Zazorina, 205 in Lönngren, 294 in this dictionary). By the time we reach word number 7,000 **поселиться** 'to take up residence' (7748 in Zazorina), the variation could easily be plus or minus a thousand places, even in two counts using similar methods. What matters is that in any count of non-technical Russian usage, **поселиться** is much less common than, for example, **ругать** 'to abuse, scold' (word number 3000) and considerably more frequent than **поселковый** 'village (adj)' (no occurrences in Zazorina's million words), which is its neighbour in the Penguin Russian–English Dictionary, 1995. Given that the present dictionary is meant to stimulate students to increase their Russian vocabulary, the words are necessarily in a numbered order of frequency, but it must be borne in mind that there is no magical significance to be attached to the specific position of any word. **Коммунизм** 'communism' is at no. 666 in this list, but that does not permit us to make a categorical statement that **коммунизм** is the 666th most used word in Russian (or that the numbering proves Russian Communism to be the work of the devil).

Readers will notice that from about 2,000 onwards there are large blocks of words in alphabetical order; for example, the block from no. 9035 **ад** 'hell' to no. 9709 **ярмарка** 'fair', 'trade fair' is 675 words long. The words within each alphabetical block can be regarded as equally frequent, so the fact that **апельсин** 'orange', at no. 9040, occurs before **лимон** 'lemon' at no. 9268 is a matter of the order of the letters in the Russian alphabet, not of the relative frequencies of oranges and lemons in Russian language and culture. Each time you meet a jump from the end of the alphabet to the beginning, you are descending one step on the frequency scale.

Allowing for the considerable indeterminacy described above, the frequency of the items in this list per million words of text can be roughly banded as follows:

- Items 1–2000. The commonest words in Russian, **и** 'and' and **в** 'in', occur over 30,000 times each per million words of text. Word no. 2000, **пропаганда** 'propaganda' occurs about 65 times per million words.
- Items 2001–3000. Words around no. 2000 in the list occur about 65 times per million words; by no. 3000 we are dealing with words which occur about 40 times per million.
- Items 3000–4000: 40 times to 25 times per million.
- Items 4000–6000: 25 times to 15 times per million.
- Items 6000–8000: 15 to 10 times per million.
- Items 8000–10000: 10 to 8 times per million.

As indicated above, the academic validity of frequency dictionaries can easily be questioned. The very fuzziness of the notion of frequency, and the significant differences

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between any two frequency lists compiled by different people or different methods, make the compilation of the 'correct' or 'ultimate' frequency dictionary of Modern Russian an impossibility. The justification for producing a new frequency dictionary of this size is not that I claim to have found some definitive way of determining word frequency for the Russian language as a whole, but that such a wordlist is useful. Students are stimulated to increase their active and passive vocabularies in an organized, efficient way, the increase in their vocabulary can be easily measured by testing from the list, and one more straightforward criterion of learner competence is added to such traditional criteria as number of grammatical errors, accent and speed of delivery. To put it briefly, the idea may have some theoretical flaws, but in practice it works.

ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

a	accusative case
adj	adjective
biol	biological
coll	colloquial (informal usage)
d	dative case
det	determinate
dim	diminutive
econ	economics
f	feminine gender
g	genitive case
geog	geographical
hist	historical
i	imperfective aspect
inst	instrumental case
i/p	both imperfective and perfective aspects
indecl	indeclinable
indet	indeterminate
inf	infinitive
intrans	intransitive
m	masculine gender
n	neuter gender
nom	nominative case
obs	obsolete
os	oneself
p	perfective aspect
past	past tense
pers	person
pl	plural
poss	possessive
pr	prepositional (or locative) case
pres	present tense

s.o.	someone
sg	singular
sth	something
swh	somewhere
tech	technical

Pronunciation

If a word in the list has an unpredictable pronunciation feature, this is shown in square brackets immediately after the entry. For example, the pronunciation of word no. 50 *eró* ('his', 'its'), in which *r* is pronounced as English 'v', is shown as: [yevo].

The English translations

The aim has been to give a concise English equivalent, or more than one equivalent where a single English word would be insufficient to cover the range of the Russian. Commas separate closely related equivalents; different meanings of a word are separated by semicolons.

Examples and grammatical information

For the first 600 words, examples are given for every entry. Although the examples often contain important grammatical information (declension of nouns, conjugation of verbs), the assumption is that a Russian beginner learning the first few hundred words of the language needs exemplification more than morphological detail. He or she will meet the declension and conjugation details of this core vocabulary in his or her textbook and/or classes.

After item no. 600, full grammatical information is shown, while examples are generally given only in those cases where short translations are insufficient on their own. Where a word is commonly found (or found exclusively) in a particular phrase, that phrase is given. Examples are also given to illustrate grammatical or idiomatic points, and sometimes just to provide an element of interest in an otherwise bare list of words.

By the time the student has mastered the first 600 words of Russian, he or she should already be familiar with the basic patterns of Russian grammar. From no. 601 onwards, the list uses normal Russian dictionary conventions for representing, in concise form, the declension of nouns, conjugation of verbs and the mobile stress patterns of both.

These conventions can be summarized as follows:

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Verbs

Verb conjugation is *not* shown for all straightforward, completely regular verbs in **-ать** (**-аю**, **-аешь** etc.), **-ить** (**-ю**, **-ишь** etc.), **-уть** (**-у**, **-ешь** etc.) and **-уть** (**-у́**, **-ёшь** etc.).

The present tense (imperfective aspect) or future tense (perfective aspect) of all other verbs (and any **-ать**, **-ить** or **-уть** verbs which have mobile stress or any other deviation from the basic pattern) is shown by the first person and second person singular (the **я** and **ты** forms, e.g. **плати́ть** 'to pay': **плачу́**, **плати́шь**). The other four forms (**он плати́т**, **мы плати́м**, **вы плати́те**, **они́ платя́т**) can be predicted from the **я** and **ты** forms, since the stem and stress will be the same as for the **ты** form. Any exceptions to this rule are shown, e.g.:

1702 **убежа́ть** 'to run away', **убегу́**, **убежи́шь**, **убегу́т**.

If a verb is used only in the third person, e.g. 886 **уда́ться** 'to succeed', only the third person singular (**уда́тся**) is given.

In the later stages of the list, the conjugation of first-conjugation verbs ending in **-овать** (**-ую**, **-уешь**) and **-ять** (**-яю**, **-яешь**) is shown by the first person singular (the **я** form) only, since all the other five forms are immediately predictable.

The past tense (marked **past**) is normally shown if the form is any way unpredictable or if it has mobile stress. Note that if only the m sg and f sg are given, e.g.:

1112 **перейти́** 'to cross', **past** **перешёл**, **перешла́**

then the n sg and pl forms have the same stress as the feminine, i.e. **перешло́**, **перешли́**.

If the n sg is shown with a different stress from the f sg, then the pl form has the same stress as the neuter, e.g.:

677 **пить** 'to drink', **past** **пил**, **пила́**, **пи́лю**.

The pl stress is then predictable as **пи́ли**.

If only the feminine form is given (e.g. 3979 **оторва́ться** 'to be torn off, break away', f **past** **оторвала́сь**), then all other forms of the past tense have the same stress as the infinitive.

Imperfective and perfective partners (e.g. **чита́ть**, **прочи́тать** 'to read') are treated as two separate lexemes, in common with the normal practice of Russian frequency dictionaries, but for the benefit of learners, the entry for each verb indicates the verb's aspectual partner, if it has one. Readers will note, perhaps with interest, that the two aspects of a verb can have very different frequencies. For example, the perfective of the verb 'to find' **найти́** is at no. 234, while the imperfective **находи́ть** is a thousand places lower, at no. 1197. The aspectual

partner, where one exists, is always shown, although some partners may occur too rarely to merit their own entries in the 10,000 list.

Nouns

Where a noun conforms to one of the basic declension patterns – of **центр, музей, автомобиль** m, **книга, отрасль** f, **упражнение**, etc. – no grammatical information is given, i.e. the user can assume that the word is regular and that the stress remains in the same place throughout the declension.

Where a noun deviates in any way from the basic patterns, the irregular forms – such as awkward genitive plurals and stress changes – are always shown. Enough information is given to enable the learner to predict the whole declension. Note the following:

If the end-stressed genitive singular (g sg) of a masculine noun is given, but no other forms, (e.g. 667 **корабль**, g sg **корабля** 'ship'), then *all* other forms of the noun, singular and plural, are also stressed on the ending (e.g. **кораблём, кораблём, кораблём, кораблём**, etc.).

A few monosyllabic nouns with stem stress in the singular have end stress in the prepositional singular (pr sg) after the prepositions **в** and **на** only. An example is:

1375 **цепь** 'chain' pr sg **о цепи, на цепи**

If the nominative plural (nom pl) is given, but no other plural forms, then all the singular forms have the same stress and stem as the nominative singular (or g sg if given), while the other five plural forms have the same stress and stem as the nom pl, e.g.:

822 **глубина́** 'depth', nom pl **глубины́**

1373 **стул** 'chair', nom pl **стулья́**

The a sg of **глубина́** is **глубину́**, while the g pl is **глубин**, the d pl **глубинам**, the inst pl **глубинами** and the pr pl **глубинах**. The g sg of **стул** is **стула́**, while the g pl is **стульев** and the d pl **стульям**.

This pattern is common in neuter nouns, particularly those stressed on the ending in the nom sg, e.g.:

854 **село́** 'village', nom pl **се́ла**

The g sg must be **села́**, while the d pl is **се́лам** and the inst pl is **се́лами**.

An example of a neuter noun stressed on the stem in the singular and on the ending in the plural is:

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775 **море** 'sea', nom pl **моря**

It follows that the g sg is **моря**, while the d pl is **морьям**.

Some nouns are stressed on the stem in the nom pl but on the ending in the g pl, in which case the d pl, inst pl and pr pl are also stressed on the ending. This is quite a common pattern. These are shown as in these examples:

601 **область** 'oblast, province' g pl **областéй**

985 **конь** 'horse', g sg **коня**, nom pl **кони**, g pl **конéй**

So the d pl of **область** is **областáм** and the pr pl is **областáх**. The d sg of **конь** is **коню** and the d pl is **коньям**.

Feminine nouns stressed on the ending in the nom sg nearly always have mobile stress, as in the example **глуби́на** 'depth' above. A small number of end-stressed feminine nouns (e.g. **река́** 'river') have a more complex pattern of mobile stress, which is shown as follows. If the stress moves in the singular, the move affects only the a sg, which is given (**ре́ку**). If the a sg is stressed on the stem, then so is the nom pl, which is given (**ре́ки**). To show that the other plural forms are stressed on the ending, the end-stressed d pl is given, e.g.:

676 **река́** 'river', a sg **ре́ку**, nom pl **ре́ки**, d pl **река́м**

So the g sg is **реки́** and the inst pl is **река́ми**.

Where there are exceptions to these patterns, e.g. the plural forms of 1203 **сестра́** 'sister', all the forms are given.

Fleeting (mobile) vowels

Brackets round the last vowel in a noun, e.g. 195 **от(é)ц** 'father', indicate a fleeting (mobile) vowel. A mobile vowel, though present in the n sg, is missing from all other forms, e.g. **от(é)ц**, g sg **отца́**, g pl **отцо́в**.

Adjectives

Adjectives have fixed stress. Their long-form declensions are also entirely regular and predictable. Endings are shown only to pick out adjectives of the rare **трéтий** type (f **трéтья**, n **трéтье** 'third'), cf **бо́жий** 'God's' (no. 2644). Stress mobility is common in short-form adjectives (the f sg is frequently stressed on the -a ending), but, given that short forms are in the main associated with bookish, written (formal) language, short-form adjectives are normally shown only when they occur as separate lexical items (e.g. 125 **до́лжен** 'obliged', 1216 **рад** 'glad').

Adverbs

Adverbs, though their form can often be predicted from the related adjective, are listed separately in this dictionary (though not in Lönngren's, for example). It is worth noting that the relative frequencies of an adjective and its corresponding adverb can be significantly different.

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**10,000 WORDS
IN FREQUENCY ORDER**

1. и	and	Москва и Петербург	Moscow and St Petersburg
2. в (во)	(+pr) in (+a) into, to	в Москвѣ в Москвѹ	in Moscow to Moscow
3. не	not	Он не в Москвѣ	He is not in Moscow
4. на	(+pr) on, at (+a) onto, to	на работѣ на стол	at work onto the table
5. я	I	Я говорю	I speak/am speaking/say
6. он	he	Он говорит	He speaks/is speaking/says
7. что	what that	Что это? Я говорю, что он на работѣ	What is this? I say that he is at work
8. с (со)	(+inst) with (+g) from, off	чай с лимоном со столá	tea with lemon from (off) the table
9. это	this, that, it	Это наш клуб; Это вѣрно	This is our club; That's true
10. БЫТЬ i present tense: есть	to be there is, there are	БЫТЬ или не БЫТЬ? Есть кофе?	To be or not to be? Is there any coffee?
11. а	and, but (slight contrast)	Она в Москвѣ, а он в Петербурге	She is in Moscow, and (but) he is in St Petersburg
12. весь m/вся f/ всѣ n/все pl	all	весь стол вся Москва	the whole table all of Moscow
13. они́	they	Они́ в Москвѣ	They are in Moscow
14. она́	she	Она́ со мной	She is with me
15. как	how, as, like	Как он говорит? как я, как ты	How does he speak? like me, like you
16. мы	we	Мы были в Петербурге	We were in St Petersburg
17. к (ко) +d	towards, to	к до́му; ко мне	towards the house; towards me
18. у +g	by; at (used in 'have' construction)	у окнá; у Ива́на; У Ива́на есть дом	by the window; at Ivan's house; Ivan has a house
19. вы	you (polite/pl)	Вы говорите	You are speaking
20. этот m/эта f/ это n/эти pl	this	этот стол, эта книга, эти люди	this table, this book, these people
21. за	(+a) for (+inst) behind	платить за водку за до́мом	to pay for the vodka; behind the house
22. тот m/та f/ то n/те pl	that	тот дом; в то время; то, что ...	that house; at that time; the fact that ...
23. но	but	Но это не правда	But that's not true
24. ты	you (familiar)	Ты говоришь	You are speaking
25. по +d	along; around; according to	по улице; по городу; по плану	along the street; around the town; according to

26. из (изо) +g	out of, from	из дома	the plan out of the house
27. о (об/обо) +рг	about, concerning	Он говорит о Москвѣ	He is speaking about Moscow
28. свой	one's own	Он говорит о своей работѣ	He is talking about his own work
29. так	so	так быстро	so quickly
30. один м/одна f/одно n	one	один стол	one table
31. вот	here, there (pointing)	Вот дом	There is the house
32. котóрый	which, who	дѣвушка, котóрую он лóбит	the girl whom he loves
33. наш	our	наш дом	our house
34. тóлько	only	У Ивána тóлько один брат	Ivan has only one brother
35. ещё	still, yet	Он ещё не знáет	He doesn't know yet
36. от +g	from	письмó от Ивána	a letter from Ivan
37. такой	such	такóй большóй сад	such a large garden
38. мочь i (с- р)	to be able	Я могу; Он не мóжет говорить	I can; He can't speak
39. говорить i (по- р)	to speak	Я могу говорить	I can speak
40. сказáть р (говорить i)	to say	Я сказáл, что он в Москвѣ; Скажите, пожалуйста	I said that he is in Moscow; Tell me, please
41. для +g	for	письмó для Ивána	a letter for Ivan
42. ужé	already	Он ужé знáет об этóм	He already knows about this
43. знáть i +a	to know	Я знáю её	I know her
44. да	yes; and, but	Да, этó правдa; он да я	Yes, that's true; he and I
45. какóй	what (kind of)	Какóй у Ивána дом?	What kind of house has Ivan got?
46. когдá	when	Когдá вы бы́ли в Москвѣ?	When were you in Moscow?
47. другóй	different, other	в другóм дóме	in a different (another) house
48. пѣрвый	first	в пѣрвом дóме	in the first house
49. чтóбы	in order to	чтóбы говорить по-ру́сски	in order to speak Russian
50. егó [yevo]	his, its	Этó егó кн́ига?	Is this his book?
51. год	year	в этóм годú	this year
52. кто	who	Я знáю, кто он	I know who he is

53. дело	matter, business	Это моё дело	This is my business
54. нет	no; (+g) there is no	Нет работы	There is no work
55. её	her	Вот её дом	There's her house
56. очень	very	очень большой город	a very large town
57. большой	large	большие города	large towns
58. новый	new	С Новым годом!	Happy New Year
59. стать р (становиться i)	(р only) begin; (+inst) become	Он стал говорить; Она стала инженером	He began to speak; She became an engineer
60. работа	work	Он говорит о своей работе	He is speaking about his work
61. сейчас	now, right now	Он сейчас в Москвѣ	He's in Moscow at the moment
62. время п	time	в то время ; во время войны; много времени	at that time ; during the war; a lot of time времени
63. человек (рl люди)	person	Она хороший человек	She is a good person
64. идти i (пойти р)	to go (on foot)	Я иду по улице; Куда ты идёшь ?	I am walking along the street; Where are you going ?
65. если	if	Если она хочет, я тоже хочу	If she wants (to), I want (to) too
66. два m, п/две f	two	два часа; две машины	two o'clock; two cars
67. мой	my	Вот мой дом	There is my house
68. жизнь f	life	Наша жизнь хорошая	Our life is good
69. до +g	up to; until	До свидания!	Until we meet again=Goodbye
70. где	where	Он знаёт , где мой дом	He knows where my house is
71. каждый	each, every	каждый день	each (every) day
72. самый	the very, most	самый большой дом	the biggest house
73. хотеть i (за- р)	to want	Я хочу говорить по-русски; ты хочешь ; Что вы хотите?	I want to speak Russian; you want ; What do you want ?
74. здесь	here	Я здесь уже два года	I have been here for two years
75. надо	it is necessary	Надо говорить по-русски	One must speak Russian
76. люди рl	people	Русские – хорошие люди	Russians are good people
77. теперь	now	Теперь надо идти	Now it is necessary to go (Now we must leave)
78. дом	house	из дома ; домá	from the house ; houses
79. пойти р	to go (on foot)	Я пошёл домой	I went home

	(идти́ i)			
80.	раз	once; a time	один раз ; два ра́за ; шесть раз	once ; twice; six times
81.	д(е)нь m	day	то́лько один день ; два дня	only one day ; two days
82.	или	or	Быть или не быть	To be or not to be
83.	рабо́тать i (по- р)	to work	Он рабо́тает здесь	He works here
84.	го́род	town, city	Они́ рабо́тают в э́том го́роде	They work in this town
85.	там	there	Жизнь там хоро́шая.	Life is good there
86.	сло́во	word	Я скажу́ одно́ сло́во	I shall say one word
87.	глаз	eye	два гла́за ; большо́е глаза́	two eyes ; large eyes
88.	пото́м	then, next	Он был в моём до́ме, потом он пошёл на рабо́ту	He was in my house, then he went to work
89.	ви́деть i +a (y- р)	to see	Я ви́жу дом; Ты ви́дишь её?	I see the house; Can you see her?
90.	их	their	в их до́ме	in their house
91.	под +inst	under	под до́мом	under the house
92.	да́же	even	Да́же Ива́н зна́ет э́то	Even Ivan knows that
93.	ду́мать i (по- р)	to think	Они́ ду́мают о жизни	They think about life
94.	хорошо́	well; it is good	Очень хорошо́!	Very good!
95.	мо́жно	it is possible	Мо́жно идти́?	Is it possible to go?
96.	ту́т	here (like здесь)	Ива́н ту́т , в на́шем до́ме	Ivan is here , in our house
97.	ты́сяча	thousand	две ты́сячи слов	two thousand words
98.	ли	(question word); whether	Зна́ете ли вы Ива́на? Я не зна́ю, здесь ли он	Do you know Ivan? I don't know whether he's here
99.	вода́	water	во́дка с водо́й ; пить во́ду	vodka with water ; to drink water
100.	ни́что/ a, g ни́чего [-vo]	nothing	Ни́что его́ не интересу́ет; Он ни́чего не зна́ет	Nothing interests him; He knows nothing
101.	мно́го +g	much, many, a lot	мно́го рабо́ты	a lot of work
102.	смотре́ть i (по- р)	to watch, (на +a) look at	Она́ смотре́т телеви́зор	She is watching television
103.	рука́	hand; arm	мо́я рука́	my hand/arm
104.	сто́ять i (по- р)	to stand	Он сто́ит за до́мом	He is standing behind the house

105. себя а pronoun	self	к себе; с собой	towards oneself; with oneself
106. молодой	young	молодые люди	young people
107. тоже	too	Он тоже ничего не сказал	He too said nothing
108. спросить р + а (спрашивать и)	to ask (s.o.)	Я спросил его, знает ли он Ивана	I asked him whether he knew Ivan
109. без +g	without	без молока	without milk
110. делать и + а (с- р)	to do, make	Мы ничего не делаем	We are doing nothing
111. три	three	три часа	three o'clock/three hours
112. всё	all; all the time	Он всё говорит о работе	He talks about work all the time
113. то	that; then	то есть; Если он здесь, то я уйду	that is (=i.e.); If he's here, then I'll leave
114. жить и	to live	Я хочу жить там, где она живёт	I want to live where she lives
115. труд	labour	с трудом	with difficulty
116. сделать р + а (делать и)	to do, make	Он сделал всю работу	He did all the work
117. сам m/самá f/ самó n/ сами pl	self	Он всё сделал сам	He did everything himself
118. хороший	good	Это хорошее вино	This is good wine
119. второй	second	второй день нового года	the second day of the New Year
120. через +а	across, via, after	через улицу; через час	across the street; in an hour's time
121. место	place	Здесь нет места	There is no place/room here
122. после +g	after	После работы мы идём домой	After work we go home
123. странá	country	в нашей странé	in our country
124. двадцать	twenty	двадцать домов	twenty houses
125. должен m/ должна f/ должно n/ должны pl	ought, obliged, must	Она должна идти; Мы должны быть там в десять	She must (is obliged to) go; We ought to be there at ten
126. прийти р (приходить и)	to arrive (foot)	Я пришёл первым	I arrived first
127. больше	more	Он знает больше; больше хлеба	He knows more; more bread
128. ваш	your	Дом ваш	The house is yours
129. дверь f	door	за дверью	behind the door
130. друг (nom pl)	friend	Мы с другом были	My friend and I were in

друзья)		в Москвѣ	Moscow
131. машіна	machine; car	Мы смотрѣли на вашу машіну	We were looking at your car
132. взять p +a (брать i)	to take	Я возьму таксі; Ты возьмѣшь эту кнйгу?	I shall take a taxi; Will you take this book?
133. кóмната	room	В кóмнате хóлодно	It's cold in the room
134. учіться i	to study	Иван учітся в университетѣ	Ivan studies at university
135. над +inst	above	над дóмом	above the house
136. головá	head	над вáшей головóй	above your head
137. почему	why	Почему вы не знáете?	Why don't you know?
138. земл́я	earth, land	жизнь на землѣ	life on earth
139. стол	table	Он сидіт за столóм	He is sitting behind (at) the table
140. давáть i +a +d (дать p)	to give (sth to s.o.)	Мы даѣм слóво, что всё сдѣлаем	We give (our) word that we shall do everything
141. пѣред +inst	in front of, before	Он стоіт пѣред дóмом	He is standing in front of the house
142. тогда	then, at that time	Он тогда работáл на завóде	He worked in a factory then
143. сидѣть i (по- p)	to sit	Кто сидіт в кóмнате?	Who is sitting in the room?
144. мáльчик	boy	В кóмнате сидят мáльчики	The boys are sitting in the room
145. дѣвушка	girl	К Ивану пришлá дѣвушка	A girl has come to (see) Ivan
146. лѣто (g pl лет)	summer; (after numbers) years	лѣтом; т́ысяча лет	in the summer; 1,000 years
147. сегóдня [-vo-]	today	Сегóдня нáдо работáть на этóй сторóнѣ	Today one must work on this side
148. сторóнá	side	Кáжется, всё хорóшо	It seems all is fine
149. кáзáться i (по- p)	to seem	Машіна совсѣм нóвая	The car is completely new
150. совсѣм	completely	Онй живóт в мáленьком дóме	They live in a small house
151. мáленький	small	нѣсколько дѣвушек	a few girls
152. нѣсколько +g	a few, some	Вдруг он спросіл о Стáлине	Suddenly he asked about Stalin
153. вдруг	suddenly	ни ... ни ...; Не б́ыло ни одногó	neither ... nor ...; There wasn't a single one
154. ни	not a	я дам; ты дашь; он даст; мы дад́им; вы дад́ите; онй дад́ут	I'll give; you'll give; he'll give; we'll give; you'll give; they'll give
155. дать p +a +d (давáть i)	to give (sth to s.o.)		