



SOCIAL SCENARIOS



It is surprising, but sometimes knowing a few words can solve all your problems. You just need to know the right words and use them in appropriate situations!

You might have been convinced that in Russia it is quite common to address each other by *товарищ (comrade)*. But, surprisingly, **the address of товарищ is not used anywhere other than in the army for more than 20 years.** The address of a *господин (sir)* to a man and *госпожа (madam)* to a woman can be suitable at the official level, for example, *Господин Путин*. But it is not at all suitable on the Metro at rush hour! What can we do then? There is a way out: Russians address male strangers as *мужчина (literally – man)*, and females – *женщина (woman)*. There is another option for addressing people stressing the young age of people – молодой *человек (young man)* and *девушка (girl)* correspondingly. Addressing a woman on public transport «*Девушка, Вы выходите?» (Girl, are you getting off?)* is not at all considered to be rude, but saying «*Девушка, ты выходишь?» (Girl, are you getting off?)* will be rude. The thing is that **the address of ты (informal you) is used by friends. The address of Вы (formal you) – with strangers, in official cases.**

Any meeting with a person starts with a greeting *Здравствуйте (Hello)*. If you truthfully think that здравствуйте is impossible to pronounce, you can say a reduced form *Здрасьте* or *Доброе утро (Good morning)*, *Добрый день (Good day)*, *Добрый вечер (Good evening)*. A very informal greeting is: *Привет (Hi)*.

You are wrong if you think that the question «*как дела?» (How are you?)* is part of a greeting. For Russians that is the beginning of a conversation. As a response to a question «*как дела?»* you will most likely be told about how everything is and what the news are.

It is common to say *До свидания (Goodbye)* or informal *Пока (Bye)* when parting.

A full Russian name consists of three parts: *Фамилия (last name)*, *Имя (first name)*, *Отчество (patronymic)*. In application forms you can see an abbreviation of «*ФИО*», which means a full name, for example, *Владимир Владимирович Путин*.

A polite address will be *Владимир Владимирович*. Отчество is used less and less nowadays. More than that, in informal atmosphere the shortened versions of a name are used. The person will introduce himself: «*Меня зовут Вова (My name is Vova)*. Vova is a shortened version of the name *Владимир (Vladimir)*.

And finally, everyone is wondering: «Why do the Russians never smile?». There is an old Russian saying, «Laughing for no reason is a sign of stupidity». This is valid for smiling too. **In Russia a smile is not just a formal sign of polite communication.** If someone smiled at you, then, most likely, that is a sign of sincere sympathy!

TALKING TO RUSSIANS

Focal Dialogue

Peter came to Russia not just as a tourist. He decides to visit the Russian office of «Learning to Know» company to get acquainted and make business contacts. A dialogue in the office.

- P** **Добрый день! Господин Иванов?**
Good — day! — Mister — Ivanov?
- D** **Да, я Иванов... Мы знакомы?**
Yes, I [am] — Ivanov... — [Have] we met before?
- P** **Я Питер Смит из австралийского офиса...**
I [am] — Peter — Smith — from — the Australian — office...
- D** **А-а-а! Вы Питер! Здравствуйте!**
Uh! — You [are] — Peter! — Hello!
- P** **Извините, как Ваше отчество?**
Excuse me, — what [is] — your — patronymic name?
- D** **Денис Петрович. Можно просто — Денис**
Denis — Petrovich. — You can call me — Denis
- P** **Можно «на ты»?**
Can [I use] «informal you»?
- D** **Да, конечно! Мы в офисе «на ты»**
Yes, — of course! — In the office we [all use] — «informal you»
- P** **Хорошо! Я понял!**
Ok! — I understand!
- D** **Питер, ты знаком с Вовой?**
Peter, [have] — you — met — Vova?
- P** **Нет. Кто такой Вова?**
No. — Who [is] this — Vova?
- D** **Вова — директор компании...**
Vova — director — of the company...

Let's hope that Peter's knowledge of Russian is going to be enough to set up business and friendly contacts with the director and all the rest of the staff!

Learning to Know Russian! For your safety and comfort in Russian-speaking countries. This TEXT NOTE is an integral part of the "Travellers' Notes" learning program. The approach, design and efficiency of the program are intended to change your opinion about your own language learning abilities.

TEXT NOTE CONTEXT REPETITION TELLING

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