

The pronoun

Pronouns are words that substitute for nouns or noun phrases. They sub-divide into:

(a) *Personal pronouns* (я 'I', ты 'you' (singular, familiar), он 'he, it', она́ 'she, it', оно́ 'it', мы 'we', вы 'you' (plural, formal), они́ 'they').

(b) *The reflexive pronoun* себя́.

(c) *Demonstrative pronouns* (э́тот 'this', то́т 'that').

(d) *Possessive pronouns* (pronominal adjectives) (мо́й 'my, mine, твой 'your, yours' (familiar), е́го 'his, its', е́ё 'her, hers, its', на́ш 'our, ours', ва́ш 'your, yours', их 'their, theirs').

(e) *The reflexive possessive pronoun* свой.

(f) *Interrogative and relative pronouns* (кто́ 'who', что́ 'what', ка́кой 'which', ко́торый 'who, which', че́й 'whose').

(g) *Indefinite pronouns* (кто́-то 'someone', кто́-нибу́дь 'anyone', что́-то 'something', что́-нибу́дь 'anything', etc.).

(h) *Quantifying pronouns* (ве́сь 'all' etc.).

(i) *Emphatic pronouns* (са́м 'oneself', са́мый 'the very').

(j) *Negative pronouns* (нико́то, ничто́, ника́кой, ниче́й, не́кого, не́чего).

I Personal pronouns

The personal pronouns decline as follows:

<i>Nom.</i>	<i>Acc.</i>	<i>Gen.</i>	<i>Dat.</i>	<i>Instr.</i>	<i>Prep.</i>
я	мен-я́	мен-я́	мн-е	мн-ой	мн-е
ты	теб-я́	теб-я́	теб-е́	тоб-ой	теб-е́
он	его́	его́	ем-у́	им	не́м
она́	её	её	ей	ей	не́й
оно́	его́	его́	ем-у́	им	не́м
м-ы	н-ас	н-ас	н-ам	н-а́ми	н-ас
в-ы	в-ас	в-ас	в-ам	в-а́ми	в-ас
они́	их	их	им	и́ми	них

The reflexive possessive pronoun **свой**

(a) **Свой** declines like **мой** and **твой** and refers back to subjects (nouns or pronouns) of any gender or either number:

Он потерял **свою** книгу He has lost **his** book

Она потеряла **свою** книгу She has lost **her** book

Они потеряли **свои** книги They have lost **their** books

(b) When there is a **third-person** subject, it is *essential* to differentiate between **свой** and **его** 'his', **её** 'her', **их** 'their', otherwise the wrong meaning will be conveyed (Он забыл **свой** номер телефона means 'He has forgotten **his (own)** telephone number', while 'Он забыл **его** номер телефона' means 'He has forgotten **his (someone else's)** telephone number'.

(c) The possessive pronouns **его**, **её**, and **их** (*not* **свой**) may constitute part of a multiple **subject**:

Мой брат и **его** друг обедают My brother and **his** friend are having lunch

(d) They may also refer to the subject of a new clause:

Она сказала, что **её** брат болен She said **her** brother was ill

(e) With **first-person** or **second-person** subjects (**я**, **ты**, **мы**, or **вы**), **мой**, **твой**, **наш**, and **ваш** *can* be used, but **свой** is *preferred*:

Я показal **свой** (мой) паспорт I showed **my** passport

Мы красили **свой** (наш) дом We were painting **our** house

Вы нашли **свою** (вашу) сумку? Have you found **your** bag?

(f) In references to parts of the body, possessive pronouns are usually omitted altogether:

Он вытирает руки He is drying **his** hands

Я порезал палец I cut **my** finger

Note: **свой**, **своя**, **свое**, **свои** are used to denote possession ('my own', 'his own', etc.):

У меня **свой** компьютер I have **my own** computer

У него **своя** мобилка He has **his own** mobile

У вас **свои** лыжи You have **your own** skis

thing with another to express the greatest degree of a quality, e.g. *cheapest* (Russian *самый дешёвый*), *most beautiful* (Russian *самый красивый*), *least desirable* (Russian *наименее желательный*). Cf.

Comparative.

Syllable: A unit of pronunciation that is normally less than a word but greater than a single sound, e.g. *abracadabra* has five syllables: *a-bra-ca-da-bra*, as does Russian *путеводитель* ('guide'): *пу-те-во-ди-тель*.

Tense: The relationship between the time of utterance and the time of an event described in the clause is expressed by verb tense forms or **inflections**, e.g. 'Anna *waits*' (present tense, Russian *Анна ждёт*), 'Anna *waited*' (past tense, Russian *Анна ждала*).

Transitive verb: A verb taking a **direct object**, e.g. *read* in 'She *was reading* a book' (Russian *Она читала книгу*). Cf. **Intransitive verb**.

Verb: A word that expresses an action, process, or state of affairs, e.g. 'He *closed* the door' (Russian *Он закрыл дверь*), 'She *laughs*' (Russian *Она смеётся*), 'They *were* at home' (Russian *Они были дома*).

Verbal noun: In Russian, a noun derived from a verb stem and describing the action of the verb from which it derives, e.g. *развитие* 'development', *приготовление* 'preparation', *обработка* 'processing'.

Verbs of motion: In Russian, a series of fourteen pairs of imperfective verbs that denote various types of motion, one in each pair (the 'unidirectional') describing movement in one direction (*Он идёт домой* 'He is on his way home'), the other (the 'multidirectional') describing movement in general (*Она ходит быстро* 'She walks fast'), movement in various directions (*Он ходит взад и вперёд* 'He is walking up and down'), or habitual movement (*Я часто хожу в кино* 'I often go to the cinema').

Vocative: In Russian, the form of a noun used in addressing someone. The nominative case usually fulfils this function: *Сергей Павлович!* 'Sergei Pavlovich!', but some truncated forms are used in colloquial Russian, e.g. *мам!* 'Mum!', *Вань!* 'Vanya!' *Бóже* in *Бóже мой!* 'My God!' is a relic of the former vocative case (the nominative form being *Бог*).

Voiced and voiceless consonants: Consonants pronounced, respectively, with and without vibration of the vocal cords. In Russian, the voiceless consonants are к, п, с, т, ф, х, ц, ч, ш, and щ. The other consonants are voiced.

Vowel: A basic speech sound that is produced by the unrestricted flow of air, e.g. *a* in *hat*, *ee* in *feet*, or *ow* in *how*. A vowel forms the nucleus of a **syllable**. Cf. **Consonant**.