

# Russian Cases [Nominative]

[!] Russian has six cases.

[!] The nominative case is the *base form* of nouns.

More clearly, this is the form presented in textbooks and dictionaries.

[!] Knowing the gender is essential to declining a noun.

Russian has three genders: **masculine**, **feminine** and **neuter**.  
Luckily, identifying gender is very easy – the noun's ending indicates it.

## Masculine

### ○ consonant

**МОСТ** [bridge], **ДОМ** [house], **КЛЮЧ** [key], **СНЕГ** [snow], etc.

### ○ й

**май** [May], **рай**, [paradise], **урожа́й** [harvest], **музе́й** [museum], etc.

### ○ soft sign

**ОГОНЬ** [fire], **ДОЖДЬ** [rain], **МЕДВЕДЬ** [bear], **КРЕМЛЬ** [Kremlin], etc.

## Feminine

### ○ а

**КНИГА** [book], **ВОДА** [water], **ЗВЕЗДА** [star], **ГОЛОВА** [head], etc.

### ○ я

**НЕДЕЛЯ** [week], **ЗЕМЛЯ** [Earth], **СТАТЬЯ** [article], etc.

### ○ soft sign

**ПОМОЩЬ** [help], **ВЕЩЬ** [thing], **СИБИРЬ** [Siberia], etc.

## Neuter

### ○ е/ё

**МОРЕ** [sea], **ПЛАТЬЕ** [dress], **ЗДАНИЕ** [building], etc.

### ○ о

**ОЗЕРО** [place], **ПАЛЬТО** [coat], **ОБЛАКО** [cloud], **МЫЛО** [soap], etc.

### ○ мя

**ВРЕМЯ** [time], **ИМЯ** [name], etc.

Both masculine and feminine nouns can end in the soft sign.

For that reason, you should memorize the gender of every such noun.

Only ten nouns in the entire Russian language end in **-мя**.

Many neuter nouns are of foreign origin. Some are even indeclinable – they never change.

To really help you, I've compiled a list of common nouns ending in the soft sign and separated them by gender.

### Masculine

**алкоголь** [alcohol], **руль** [steering wheel]  
**день** [day], **корень** [root] **олень** [deer],  
**камень** [stone], **гость** [guest]  
**лосось** [salmon], **картофель** [potato],  
**портфель** [wallet], **словарь** [dictionary],  
**ремень** [belt], **спектакль** [spectacle],  
**календарь** [calendar], **путь** [path], etc.

### Feminine

**любовь** [love], **роль** [role]  
**обувь** [footwear], **жизнь** [life]  
**кость** [bone], **дверь** [door]  
**речь** [speech], **церковь** [church]  
**постель** [bed], **боль** [pain]  
**бровь** [eyebrow], **грудь** [chest]  
**очередь** [line], **соль** [salt], **ночь** [night], etc.

Before concluding this lesson, here is one last bit of essential information.

If a noun refers to a masculine being, it's masculine regardless of the ending: **мужчина** [man], **дядя** [uncle], **папа** [dad], **парень** [male in his 20s or 30s].

**Кофе** [coffee] can be either masculine or neuter. More often, it's masculine.

If a noun has a weird ending, such as one we didn't learn above, it's of foreign origin and neuter: **киви** [kiwi], **каратэ** [karate], etc.

**Quiz 1**

Mark the proper gender of each noun.

|                               |                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. сообщение</b> [message] | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>2. дерево</b> [tree]       | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>3. карандаш</b> [pencil]   | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>4. урожай</b> [harvest]    | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>5. постель</b> [bed]       | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>6. время</b> [time]        | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>7. вещь</b> [thing]        | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>8. арбуз</b> [watermelon]  | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>9. парк</b> [park]         | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>10. любовь</b> [love]      | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |

**Quiz 2**

Mark the proper gender of each noun.

|                                      |                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. мужчи<u>н</u>а</b> [man]       | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>2. Ита<u>л</u>ия</b> [Italy]      | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>3. к<u>и</u>ви</b> [kiwi]         | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>4. пра<u>в</u>о</b> [right]       | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>5. пла<u>т</u>ье</b> [dress]      | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>6. со<u>л</u>ь</b> [salt]         | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>7. па<u>р</u>ень</b> [male]       | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>8. жи<u>л</u>ьё</b> [living area] | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>9. ко<u>ф</u>е</b> [coffee]       | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |
| <b>10. ча<u>с</u></b> [hour]         | <input type="radio"/> masculine<br><input type="radio"/> feminine<br><input type="radio"/> neuter |

## **Answers:**

### **Quiz 1:**

1. neuter
2. neuter
3. masculine
4. masculine
5. feminine
6. neuter
7. feminine
8. masculine
9. masculine
10. feminine

### **Quiz 2:**

1. masculine
2. feminine
3. neuter
4. neuter
5. neuter
6. feminine
7. masculine
8. neuter
9. masculine or neuter
10. masculine