

Russian Made *EASY!*



Podcast



Episode #14

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 number 14. Today we'll learn to talk about where we are at the moment. Certainly a useful thing to know when someone calls and asks where you are. So let's start by listening and repeating the following Russian word:

Где?

Hear that G-D combination at the beginning? Here it is again...

Где?

Can you figure out the meaning? Imagine a guy looking for his wallet. He's checking all the usual places...the table in the hall, his nightstand, his coat pocket. Still no wallet. Frustrated he asks himself...

"Ман, ГДЕ did I leave my wallet?"

In Russian, if you want to know the location of something, you'd ask: Где?

So, где translates as "where" in the sense of "in what location." There is no movement associated with the word. After all, remember in the last podcast, we learned this exchange:

Let's go!

Пошли!

And we asked: Where to?

Куда?

To the park!

В парк!

The Russian word "куда" *also* translates as "where" but it's **related to motion**.

Where to?

But our new word...do you remember it...

где

...means "where...in which location?"

Ask:

Where's Dasha?

Где Даша?

Or...imagine you're at a cafe with friends. You head to the bathroom, and when you come back, you notice that your soup is gone. In three words, ask:

Where's my soup?

Где мой суп?

So, let's see if you can retain this new word while we review our recent podcasts.

Imagine you've put on your coat, grabbed your keys and wallet and are opening the front door. Your Russian roommate asks you in just two words:

Ты куда?

What did he literally ask?

You....to where?

That's his way of asking, "Where're you going?" And that's all you need to say in Russian. Try it. Ask...

Where're you headed?

Ты куда?

Say:

To the center.

В центр.

Imagine your friend is showing you the little shoe store she just opened. Ask her...

Is this your store?

Это твой магазин?

And back to our new word for the day, imagine you've arrived to your friend's apartment. You thought her mom would be there, too, but she isn't, so you ask:

Where's your mom?

Где твоя мама?

Alright, so far so good. Here's our next new word:

сейчас

One more time:

сейчас

How would you translate it, based on this conversation:

Your roommate tells you: "We're out of milk. Wanna come with me to the store?"

"Sure. Сейчас or later?"

"Let's go сейчас. I've got some things to do later."

So, сейчас translates as "now" as in, "at this moment"

Imagine your friend calls your cellphone. How will she ask, in two words,

Where are you?
Ты где?

Listen to the native speaker say:
I'm now in the store.
Я сейчас в магазине.

Did you hear that? At the end of the word магазин he added a "yeh" sound. в магазине
Listen again:
в магазине.

He also added the word "v" before the word...So he had: "v-magazin-yeh"

в магазине

That's today's very important construction. Try saying:
I'm now in the park.
Я сейчас в парке.

We add "ff" before the word 'park' and add the "yeh" sound at the end. В парке
Я сейчас в парке.

That "yeh" sound is very important, and here's why. It tells the listener that you're *in* that location. Otherwise, as we learned in the last podcast time, the "ff" or "v" sound means "to" or "towards: and they'll think you're on your way to that place.

So, compare these two phrases:

Я сейчас в магазин.

There was no "yeh" sound at the end, so the speaker means:

I now to the store. He means, *I'm now **going to** the store*, or am about to head off there.

Compare that to this...

Я сейчас в магазине.

That little "yeh" sound at the end tells us they are located inside the store at this moment. So, that little sound "yeh" has a big impact on the meaning.

There's one exception that we should be aware of. The word *cafe* which in

Russian is: кафе does not change. Ever. That's because it's not really a Russian word. It's borrowed, probably from French, and it doesn't work well with Russian grammar. So, we don't add that "yeh" sound at the end. Of course, the next question is...Well, how will I know if the speaker is headed **to** the cafe or is actually there, when he says: Я сейчас в кафе.

Well, you don't. You'd have to ask a clarifying question, but that's kind of off the topic at this point.

So, your phone rings and your friend asks...
Ты где сейчас?

She was asking, "You...where...now?" In other words, Where are you now?

Tell her:
I'm now at Starbucks.
Я сейчас в Старбаксе.

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

Here's a universal fact worth noting about languages. Short words tend to have many meanings. Long words tend to have just one. And the reason is simple: Languages only have so many short words to go around, so they have to use them for lots of situations.

Take the word "on" in English. As in, "Is the TV on?" So, "on" means "currently operating"

Are the lights **on**? Are the lights **currently operating**?

Yet if I say, The book is on the table...

.."on" has a very different meaning. The book is *currently operating* the table?
No. The book is **located upon** the table.

Yet, when we say, "I'm **on** the train to Boston right now." Do you really mean you're **located upon** -- that is, on the upper surface of -- the train? Like you're riding on the roof of it? No. You actually mean that you're **riding inside of** the train.

I could go **on** and **on** about the different meanings of on.

The takeaway here is that little words have lots of meanings, so don't fix just one in your head. Instead, learn a whole construction which features each particular meaning.

Here are our last two words of today's podcast. Listen and repeat:

на работе

Let's get the meaning from context. (Just a heads up: The name Anton in Russian is "ahn-TONE").

My friend АНТОН has a standard, 9-to-5 job. So, it's no surprise that when I called his house on Tuesday at 11 in the morning, his wife answered and said...

АНТОН сейчас на работе.
Anton is now....na rabotyeh.

That first word, na, is forcing the next word to take on that "yeh" ending. Do you hear it?

на работе

But by itself, the word is just **работа**

работа

So let's look for a second at just the word работа in context. In English we have a saying:
All работа and no play makes Jack a dull boy.

So, rabota is the Russian word for "work."

And на работе translates as "at work."

Remember what I explained, though, in today's tip. Small words have lots of uses, so please don't fix the word "at" to the Russian word "на." Just learn the phrase:

I'm now at work.
Я сейчас на работе.

Let's work with it some more. You call your friend Sergei's apartment. A guy answers...

Алло?

Сергей?

Нет. Здравствуйте Марк. Это Владимир. Сергей сейчас на работе.

Did you catch what he said? Here it is again:

Нет. Здравствуйте Марк.

No. Hello Mark.

Это Владимир.

This is Vladimir.

Сергей сейчас на работе.

Sergei is now at work.

So ask him, "And where's Tanya?"

А где Таня?

Say: She's now at the store.

Она сейчас в магазине.

And then Vladimir asks you:

And where're you?

А ты где?

Say: I'm now downtown. Or....I'm in the city center.

Я сейчас в центре.

How about this situation. You overhear your girlfriend on the phone as she calls her house and talks to her sister. How will she say:

And where are Mom and Dad?

А где мама и папа?

How will her sister say:

Mom is now in a store, in the center whereas Dad is at work.

Мама сейчас в магазине в центре, а папа на работе.

Maybe her parents are traveling. How would she say:

My mom is now in Moscow.
Моя мама сейчас в Москве.

My dad is now in Kiev.
Мой папа сейчас в Киеве.

My friend is now in St. Petersburg.
Мой друг сейчас в Санкт Петербурге.

My female friend is now in Odessa.
Моя подруга сейчас в Одессе.

Your friend catches you on Skype and asks where you are:
А ты где сейчас?

Tell her:
I'm now in New York.
Я сейчас в Нью Йорке.

Add...
I'm now at work.
Я сейчас на работе.

If you got all these you're doing ~~куфддн~~ well. And all I can say is keep up the great work because if you do, you're going to become a conversational Russian speaker.

In the next episode we'll learn to talk about where we live, and ask our Russian friends the same question. Meanwhile, head over to RussianMadeEasy.com for today's transcript and audio downloads and I'll see you in the next episode.