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words for numbers in Slavic languages

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Like English, the Slavic languages derive most of their words for integers from a few words for the numbers 1 to 9 and selected powers of 10.

Also like English, the teens $10 < n < 20$ get their own irregular words which don't follow the pattern established for $20 < n < 100$. However, these words are irregular in different ways among the different languages. Note also the special Russian word for 40, whereas most of the other Slavic languages use a word which is obviously "four tens."

The Slavic languages developed from Old Russian and Church Slavonic, adapting the Greek alphabet for their own purposes, coming up with the Cyrillic alphabet.

Modern Russian is of course written in the Cyrillic alphabet, which is still used for some of the other slavic languages. PlanetMath has facilities for including Russian text in entries, however, for the sake of easier comparison, I've decided to transliterate the Russian words to the Roman alphabet. Note however that I've tried to do so as a speaker of some Slavic language would do, and not as an English-speaker.

If it's not too much of a digression, I'd like to mention that the Slavic languages using the Roman alphabet are fairly consistent about using "c" only for a "ts" sound (any other sound being indicated by the addition of a diacritical mark). The cited books have much more detailed information on pronunciation than can be given here.

In the following table, the first word given is the cardinal (e.g., "twelve"), and if a second word is given, it's the ordinal (e.g., "twelfth").

<i>n</i>	Russian (translit.)	Polish	Serbo-Croat
0	nul'	zero	nula
1	odín, perviy	jeden, pierwszy	jedan
2	dva, vtoróy	dwa, drugi	dva, drugi
3	tri, trétiy	trzy, trzeci	tri, treći
4	četire, četvyortiy	cztery, czwarty	četiri, četvrti
5	pyat', pyatiy	pięć, piąty	pet, peti
6	šest', šestóy	sześć, szósty	šest, šesti
7	sem', sedimóy	siedem, siódmy	sedam, sedmi
8	vosém', vosemóy	osiem, ósmy	osam, osmi
9	devyat', devyatiy	dziewięć, dziewiąty	devet, deveti
10	desyat', desyatiy	dziesięć, dziesiąty	deset, deseti
11	odinnadcat', odinnadcatiy	jedenaście, jedenasty	jedanast, jedanasti
12	dvenádcát', dvenádcatiy	dwanaście, dwunasty	dvanaest, dvanaesti
13	trinádcát', trinádcatiy	trzynaście, trzynasty	trinaest, trinaesti
14	četirnádcát', četirnádcatiy	czternaście, czternasty	četirnaest, četirnaesti
15	pyatnádcát', pyatnádcatiy	piętnaście, piętnasty	petnaest, petnaesti
16	šestnádcát', šestnádcatiy	szesnaście, szesnasty	šestnaest, šestnaesti
17	semnádcát', semnádcatiy	siedemnaście, siedemnasty	sedamnaest, sedamnaesti
18	vosemnádcát', vosemnádcatiy	osiemnaście, osiemnasty	osemnanaest, osiemnaesti
19	devyatnádcát', devyatnádcatiy	dziewiętnaście, dziewiętnasty	devetnaest, devetnaesti
20	dvadcat', dvadcatiy	dwadzieścia, dwudziesty	dvadeset, dvadeseti
21	dvadcat' odín	dwadzieścia jeden, , dwudziesty pierwszy	dvadeset i jedan, dwadeseti prvi
30	tridcat', tridcatiy	trzydzieści, trzydziesty	trideset, trideseti
40	sorok, sorokovóy	czterdzieści, czterdziesty	četrdeset, četrdeseti
50	pyat'desyat'	pięćdziesiąt, pięćdziesiąty	pedeset, pedeseti
60	šest'desyat	sześćdziesiąt, sześćdziesiąty	šezdeset, šezdeseti
70	sem'desyat	siedemdziesiąt, siedemdziesiąty	sedamdeset, sedamdeseti
80	vocem'desyat	osiemdziesiąt, osiemdziesiąty	osamdeset, osamdeseti
90	devyanósto	dziewięćdziesiąt, dziewięćdziesiąty	devedeset, devedeseti
100	sto	sto, setny	sto, stoti
200	dvesti	dwieście, dwusetny	dvjest, dvjesti
300	trista	trzyście, trzysetny	trista, tristoti
1000	tisyača	tysiąc, tysięczny	hiljad, hiljaditi
2000	dve tisyači	dwatysiące	dve hiljade, dvie hiljade
1000000	millión	milion	milijun

In Serbo-Croat, they say “comma” where we would say “point,” reflecting the European preference for the decimal comma instead of our decimal point.

For example, $3.5 =$ “tri koma pet.” The fractions in Serbo-Croat are as irregular as in most other languages. A few examples:

$\frac{1}{2}$	polovina
$\frac{1}{3}$	trećine
$\frac{1}{4}$	četrvina
$\frac{1}{100}$	stotinka

References

- [1] Anonymous, *Serbo-Croat Phrasebook* Bristol: Hadder & Stoughton Ltd. (1982): 77 - 79
- [2] Hania Forss, *Polish Phrase Book* Lincolnwood: NTC Publishing Group (1996): 114 - 117
- [3] Della Thompson, ed., *Oxford Russian Starter Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press