

Bulgaro - Bulgarisch Theorie

Sammlung Gramatik etc. Level 1-5

Lesson Notes

Definite and indefinite articles

In English, and many other languages, there are 2 types of articles: definite and indefinite.

The woman - A definite woman

A woman - An indefinite woman

There is no indefinite article in Bulgarian. See how the words "жена" (woman) and "куче" (dog) are used alone to refer to "a woman" or "a dog":

"Тя е жена" - She is a woman

"Това е куче" - This is a dog

(Sometimes, the word for "one", "едно", can be used in a way similar to an indefinite article.)

Basic forms of "to be"

In Bulgarian, verbs are conjugated according to the subject (I, you...) and the tense (present, past...). The conjugation is applied to the ending of the verb.

Bulgarian verbs do not have an infinitive form. When referring to a verb, we use the first person conjugation of that verb. This is the *citation form*: the form used to refer to a verb or to look it up in a dictionary, and is different from the infinitive in a grammatical sense.

For example, "to be" is "съм" in Bulgarian. "Съм" is used for the citation form and for "I am".

In this lesson, you will be introduced to these two conjugations of "съм":

English

Bulgarian

I am

аз съм

he/she/it is

той/тя/то е

Examples:

"Той е мъж" - He is a man

"Тя е жена" - She is a woman

"Това е куче" - This is a dog

Since conjugations are unique to each subject, the pronoun can generally be left out.

Instead of "аз съм жена" (I am a woman), you can say "жена съм".

Why did the verb suddenly change position?

It is a rule that you cannot start a sentence with a present form of the verb "съм" ("to be"). Therefore, if you omit the subject personal pronoun, the verb has to move in second position:

"Аз съм жена" or "Жена съм" - I am a woman

It is *incorrect* to say "съм жена".

Negation

"Не" means "no" in Bulgarian. It can also be used to negate a sentence:

"Ана не е мъж" - Ana is not a man

"Да" means "yes":

"Да, жена съм" - Yes, I am a woman

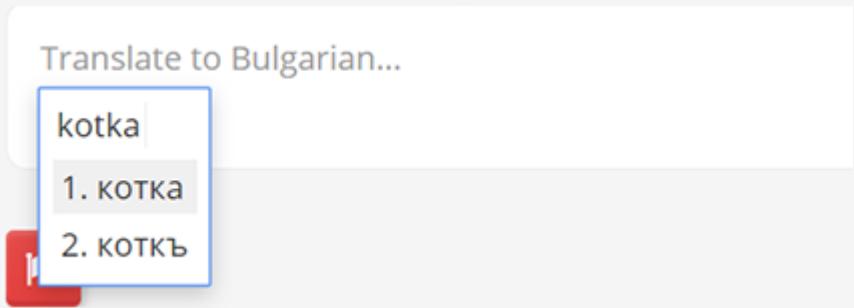
How to type Cyrillic on your keyboard?

In this exercise you will need to type sentences in Cyrillic.

If you already have a Cyrillic keyboard, that's great! Otherwise, don't worry, there's a way to type Cyrillic on your phone, tablet, or on your classic (say, QWERTY) keyboard.

Check out these links to find out how to install another keyboard layout (such as Bulgarian Cyrillic), on your operating system:

Another option, if you're on a computer, is to use our transliteration tool. With it you can just type in Roman letters and we'll convert that to Cyrillic for you!



Translate to Bulgarian...

kotka

1. котка

2. коткъ

For some Bulgarian letters that do not have a direct equivalent in Roman letters, you'll have to use a combination of letters like "ya" for "я" and "zh" for "ж". Please refer to the [Cyrillic](#) lesson for the romanization standard.

Lesson Notes

Formal and informal speech

In Bulgarian, like in French or in Spanish, there are 2 levels of speech that you can use when you address someone ("you"). We'll call them formal and informal:



ти You, singular and informal (friend, family, younger person...)



вие You, plural or formal (stranger, elder person, your boss...)

In short, formal speech means that you'll talk to someone like there's several of them! (use the plural "you").

When **вие**  is used for politeness (rather than for the informal plural), it is capitalized ("Вие").

Greetings

By politeness, can be used all day:

Здравей!  Hi! (most informal, to be used between friends and family)

Здравейте!  Hello! (used to greet one person, informal)

Здравейте!  Hello! (when addressing multiple people, or one person politely)

By time of the day, can be used for all levels of politeness:

Добро утро!  Good morning!

Добър ден!  Good day!

Добър вечер!  Good evening!

Farewells

The following expressions can be used to say goodbye. They work for all levels of politeness:

Довиждане! 

Goodbye!

До скоро! 

See you soon! (literally, "till soon")

Лек ден! 

Have a good day! (literally, "light day")

Лека вечер! 

Have a good evening! (literally, "light evening")

Лека нош! 

Good night! (literally "light night")

Чао! 

Bye! (more casual)

"Чао  is not *too* casual. You can use it when leaving a shop.

Asking politely and saying thanks

Моля 

Please

Може ли ...?

Can I (have)...?

Благодаря 

Thank you

Мерси 

Thanks (more casual)

"Може ли  ...?" (literally "can it?") is a very useful phrase to ask something politely:

"Може ли две кафета?  - Can I have two coffees, please?

"Може ли да питам...?  - Can I ask ...?

To which the person might answer "Може ", for yes (literally, "it can")

"Мерси " (like in French!) is appropriate to say thanks for small things like getting your change in a shop, or saying "не, мерси " (no, thanks).

How to type Cyrillic on your keyboard?

In this exercise you will need to type sentences in Cyrillic.

If you already have a Cyrillic keyboard, that's great! Otherwise, don't worry, there's a way to type Cyrillic on your phone, tablet, or on your classic (say, QWERTY) keyboard.

Check out these links to find out how to install another keyboard layout (such as Bulgarian Cyrillic), on your operating system:

- [Android](#)
- [iOS](#)
- [Windows 10](#)
- [MacOS X](#)
- [Other Operating Systems](#)

Another option, if you're on a computer, is to use our transliteration tool.

With it you can just type in Roman letters and we'll convert that to Cyrillic for you!

Translate to Bulgarian...

kotka

1. котка

2. котъ

For some Bulgarian letters that do not have a direct equivalent in Roman letters, you'll have to use a combination of letters like "ya" for "я" and "zh" for "ж". Please refer to the [Cyrillic](#) lesson for the romanization standard.

Lesson Notes

Grammatical gender

In Bulgarian, nouns have a "gender". This is called the grammatical gender and is unrelated to the meaning of a word. Instead, it can generally be determined by looking at the ending of the word.

Every Bulgarian noun is of one of these 3 genders:

Genders

Masculine

Words ending in a consonant (e.g. мъж 

Feminine

Words ending in -a or -я (e.g. жена 

Neuter

Words ending in -о or -е (e.g. куче)

The letter й is a semi-vowel and words ending in -й, such as чай (tea), are usually masculine.

Unfortunately, those are just guidelines, and there will be exceptions, that you will learn throughout the course. Here's one exception that you've seen before: нощ (night, as in "лека нощ" - good night) is a feminine word.

One last thing: words ending in -и, -у and -ю are generally loan words (often coming from English), and are usually neuter. For example: меню (menu) and такси (taxi) are neuter words.

Plurals

The ending of a noun changes in its plural form:

Gender

Ending

Plural

Masculine

-consonant

-и or -ове

Feminine

-а or -я

-и

Neuter

-о or -е

-а or -та

As with the genders, those are general rules subject to exceptions. Here's the first one: the plural of мъж (man) is мъже (men).

For masculine words, "и" is added at the end of words having more than one syllable, whereas "ове" is added at the end of monosyllabic words.

приятел → приятели (friend/friends)

град → градове (city/cities)

мъж → мъже (man/men)

For feminine words, the final -а or -я is replaced with "и".

жена → жени (woman/women)

стая → стаи (room/rooms)

For neuter words ending in -о, the final "о" is replaced by "а". For those ending in -е, and for loan words, an extra "та" is added at the end:

село → села (village/villages)

кафе → кафета (coffee/coffees)

такси → таксита (taxi/taxis)

To be

In the [Basics 1](#) lesson, we saw how to use **съм** (to be) with "I" and "he/she/it". Here's the full conjugation of the present tense, along with all personal pronouns:

Съм - Present

I am

аз съм

you are*

ти си 

he/she/it is

той/тя/то е 

we are

ни сме 

you are*

вие сте 

they are

те са 

Remember that in Bulgarian, there are two ways to say "you":

The first (ти ) is used when talking to only one, familiar person (friend, family...). The second (вие ) is used when either talking to a group, or to one person when using formal speech (elder stranger, ...).

When вие is used for formality, it is capitalized ("Вие").

To like

In these exercises you will also practice using "ха crescам" , meaning "I like".

Lesson Notes

To have, or not to have

"Имам"  is the Bulgarian verb for "to have".

As we've seen before, a verb can usually be negated by using the **не** particle: **аз съм** (I am), **аз не съм** (I am not).

However, in the case of **имам**, there is a specific verb to mean "not to have": **нямам**.

Имам котка - I have a cat

Нямам котка - I don't have a cat

Here's the conjugation of both verbs at the present tense:

		имам	нямам
I	аз	имам	нямам
you	ти	имаш	нямаш
he/she/it	той/тя/то	има	няма
we	ние	имаме	нямаме
you	вие	имате	нямате
they	те	имат	нямат

This is a standard example of conjugation of verbs of the 3rd group. These are verbs that end in **-ам**, such as **харесвам** (to like) and **искам** (to

want). So you can conjugate these two, and many others, exactly the same way:

		харесвам	искам
I	аз	харесвам 	искам 
you	ти	харесваш 	искаш 
he/she/it	той/тя/то	харесва 	иска 
we	ние	харесваме 	искаме 
you	вие	харесвате 	искате 
they	те	харесват 	искат 

There is

The 3rd person singular of имам  is also used to mean "there is". Unlike English, it remains singular even when followed by a plural:

Има котка  - There is a cat

Има много котки  - There are many cats

Няма котки  - There are no cats

Asking closed questions

Asking a closed question (such as one that can be answered by yes or no), is quite simple. For this, we use the **ли** particle, which is added after the focus of the question. Usually, the focus of the question is the verb.

Имаш ли куче?  - Do you have a dog?

Харесваш ли котки?  - Do you like cats?

Note that with the present tense of the verb "to be", the focus of the question is the subject complement (in the example below, "момче") and that the subject complement comes before the verb (which means that "ли" is effectively placed before the verb):

Момче ли си?  - Are you a boy?

Bulgarian is more specific than English when asking question, and the same question can be asked in different ways, by placing **ли** after the focus of the question. For example:

Момчето тук ли е?  - Is the boy here? (no emphasis)

Тук ли е момчето?  - Is the boy *here*, or somewhere else?

Момчето ли е тук?  - Is it *the boy* who is here, or someone else?

Lesson Notes

Cardinal numbers

Let's see the first 10 numbers in Bulgarian. These are cardinal numbers (like "one"). Ordinal numbers (like "first") will be seen in a later lesson.

0 нула 

1 един  (m), една  (f), едно  (n)

2 два  (m), две  (n/f)

3 три 

4 четири 

5 пет 

6 шест 

7 седем 

8 осем 

9 девет 

10 десет 

As you know, nouns in Bulgarian have a **grammatical gender** (masculine, feminine or neuter). Only numbers "one" and "two" vary slightly based on the gender of the following noun:

едно кафе  - one coffee (neuter)

една ябълка  - one apple (feminine)

две къщи  - two houses (feminine)

Numerical plural

Some masculine nouns take a special plural ending when they follow a number or an expression such as колко (how many?) or няколко (a few).

In this case, the plural ending is -a:

един месец  - one month

два месеца  - two months

един ден  - one day

няколко дена*  - a few days

This is called the *numeral plural* or *counting form* (бройна форма) and only applies to masculine nouns that do not represent people.

* Bulgarians often use **дни** , the normal plural, instead of **дена** , the numeral plural. Therefore we'll consider both **два дена**  and **два дни**  as correct. **Дни**  is much more commonly heard, despite **дена**  being the grammatically correct version.

Lesson Notes

Remember that in Bulgarian, **there is no indefinite article** such as the English *a*. The word for cat, "котка", can be used alone to mean "a cat" (an *indefinite* cat).

In English, that same cat can be made definite by using *the*: "the cat" (a specific one).

In Bulgarian, the definite article is added at the end of the noun, attached to it:

"котка" - a cat

"котката" - the cat

The article will vary depending on the gender and ending of the word:

Ending	Article	Examples
	e	
Masculine nouns	-ът/-а*	мъж → мъжът / мъжа*
Feminine nouns	-та	котка → котката, нощ → нощта
Neuter nouns	-то	кафе → кафето
Plural nouns ending in -a or -я	-та	кафета → кафетата

All other plural nouns

-те

градове → градовете

* Why are there 2 different articles for masculine words?

Masculine words ending in a consonant will use the long -ът article when they are the subject of the sentence, and the short -a article when they are not:

"Мъжът говори" - The man is talking

"Аз говоря с мъжа" - I'm talking with the man

In the first sentence, "the man" is the subject, so "мъж" gets the -ът definite article.

In the second sentence, "I" is the subject, so "мъж" gets the -a definite article.

The long definite article (-ът) is also used for the subject complement after a linking verb (that is, a verb that is used to re-identify or describe its subject, like "to be"):

"Той е мъжът" - He is the man

In this case, "he" is the subject, but "he" and "the man" are the same person.