

LESSON 9

“HISSING” CONSONANTS X, Ж, Ш, Ц



These consonants are sometimes called “hushers”. Most of them are quite easy to pronounce because they have similar sounds in English. The only problem is that in English you need several letters to represent these sounds.

X [kh] – Russian sound X is pronounced much more harshly than English H in words like ‘harp’ and ‘hat’. Remember that we don’t have aspiration in Russian? There is a little trick to understand articulation here. Try to pronounce the sound K, then HOLD your tongue in the same position, and exhale strongly making the long [khhhhh] sound.

Ц [ts] – Russian Ц resembles the sound TS in the word “cats”. However, it’s much harsher and the first T is slightly shorter. Try to pronounce words ‘БАЦ’ and ‘ЦАЦА’.

Ш [ʃ] [sh] – Russian Ш resembles the English sound in words like ‘shall’ and ‘Russia’. Guess what? As usual, it’s harsher! Try it in words ‘ШАНС’ and ‘ШТАТ’.

Ж [zh] – Russian Ж resembles the sound in English words ‘pleasure’ and ‘vision’. First, you need to master Russian Ш, because in fact, Ж is simple a voiced version of Ш. Try the exercises from the video and add some voice.

Now let’s talk about **hardness and softness**.

Russian X follows all the common rules of hardness and softness.

It’s hard in words like **ХАМ** and **ХУЛА**, and it’s soft in words like **ХИМИЯ** and **ХЮГЕ**.

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“HISSING” CONSONANTS X, Ж, Ш, Ц

Ш, Ж, Ц are ALWAYS hard, no matter what letter follows them.

ШЕ = ШЭ
ЖЕ = ЖЭ
ЦЕ = ЦЭ

ШИ = ШЫ
ЖИ = ЖЫ
ЦИ = ЦЫ

ШЁ = ШО
ЖЁ = ЖО
ЦЁ is rare

Good news – you will almost **NEVER** see the following combinations:

ШЯ
ШЮ

ЖЯ
ЖЮ

ЦЯ
ЦЮ

Exercise

Listen and repeat:

ОХ, ОХ, ОХ, ХАМОН, ХАМОН, ХАМОН, МУХА, МУХА, МУХА, ХОП, ХОП, ХОП,
ХУДОЙ, ХУДОЙ, ХУДОЙ;

БАЦ, БАЦ, БАЦ, ЦАЦА, ЦАЦА, ЦАЦА, ЦУКАТ, ЦУКАТ, ЦУКАТ, ЦУМ, ЦУМ,
ЦУМ;

ШОТ, ШОТ, ШОТ, ШУМ, ШУМ, ШУМ, КАША, КАША, КАША, ШАНС, ШАНС,
ШАНС, ШТАТ, ШТАТ, ШТАТ;

ЖАТВА, ЖАТВА, ЖАТВА, ЖУК, ЖУК, ЖУК, ЖАЖДА, ЖАЖДА, ЖАЖДА,
ПИЖОН, ПИЖОН, ПИЖОН, КОЖА, КОЖА, КОЖА, ПЕЖО, ПЕЖО, ПЕЖО.

Hardness and softness:

ХИТ, ХИТ, ХИТ, ХЕК, ХЕК, ХЕК, ХИМИЯ, ХИМИЯ, ХИМИЯ, ХЮГГЕ, ХЮГГЕ,
ХЮГГЕ, ХЁНДАЙ, ХЁНДАЙ, ХЁНДАЙ, СТИХИ, СТИХИ, СТИХИ.

LESSON 9



“HISSING” CONSONANTS Х, Ж, Ш, Ц

ШЕ, ШЕ, ШЕ, ШЕЯ, ШЕЯ, ШЕЯ, ШЕФ, ШЕФ, ШЕФ, ЖЕ, ЖЕ, ЖЕ, ЖЕНА, ЖЕНА, ЖЕНА, ЖЕСТЬ, ЦЕ, ЦЕ, ЦЕ, ЦЕНТ, ЦЕНТ, ЦЕНТ, ЦЕПЬ, ЦЕПЬ, ЦЕПЬ;

ШИ, ШИ, ШИ, МАШИНА, МАШИНА, МАШИНА, ШИШКА, ШИШКА, ШИШКА, ЖИ, ЖИ, ЖИ, ЖИТЬ, ЖИТЬ, ЖИТЬ, ЖИВОТ, ЖИВОТ, ЖИВОТ, ЦИ, ЦИ, ЦИ, ЦИТАТА, ЦИТАТА, ЦИТАТА, ЦИНК, ЦИНК, ЦИНК;

ШЁ, ШЁ, ШЁ, ШЁПОТ, ШЁПОТ, ШЁПОТ, ШЁЛК, ШЁЛК, ШЁЛК, ЖЁ, ЖЁ, ЖЁ, ЖЁЛТЫЙ, ЖЁЛТЫЙ, ЖЁЛТЫЙ, ЖЁСТКИЙ, ЖЁСТКИЙ, ЖЁСТКИЙ.