

Intrepid Travel Language Guides

Russian Language Guide Script

Scott: Excuse me, I'm Scott – I booked for the tour of the Winter Palace.

Dmitriy: Pri-vyet. You are the first one here. Come, we will wait over here.

Scott: Sure, no worries. Pri-vyet is hello right?

Dmitriy: Da – yes, that's right. Nyet is no. Come, I have your ticket here with the others, you will have to get a permit to take photos - wait until the others arrive and we can get them all at once.

Scott: Ok, no worries. This Square is unbelievable and the Palace – I can't even get my head around the scale of it – I can't wait to get inside!

Dmitriy: (Smiling) Da, the Winter Palace is the pride of Russia, you have booked for the Russian Ark tour. Sit, we will wait for the others here.

Scott: The film was incredible, it is the whole reason I've come to St Petersburg – one single shot, no edits, 300 years of Russian history – amazing!

Dmitriy: Da, I will take you through the rooms that the film was shot in and tell you some of the history of the Palace.

Scott: Fantastic! Hey, I don't suppose you'd teach me a few Russian phrases while we wait – I've found that a bit of local language helps and I know that I'm going to come back to the Museum a few times while I'm here.

Dmitriy: Sure. I'm Dmitriy, call me Dima.

Scott: I've heard people say K'ahk dyeh-lah (mis-pronounce badly) – a lot – what does this mean?

Dmitriy: (laughing) you mean k'ahk dyeh-lah – this means 'how are you?'

Scott: oh... so I could say Pri-vyet, k'ahk dyeh-lah for Hello, how are you?

Dmitriy: Da, very good. To say Goodbye in Russian is dah svee-dah-nyah

Scott: Dah svee-dah-nyah – that sounds so great – Dah svee-dah-nyah! What about "My Name is Scott" and "What's your Name"

Dmitriy: Meh-nyah za-voot Scott and "What's Your Name" is K'ahk tye-byah za-voot?

Scott: Please and thank you?

Dmitriy: Russians will respond to a foreigner being polite – please is pah-zhah-loo-stah and thank you is spa-see-bah.

Scott: So pah-zhah-loo-stah and spa-see-bah. Hey, is Babushka woman?

Dmitriy: Sort of – more like Grandmother or old lady – you wouldn't get very far if you referred to a girl at a club as a Babushka!

Scott: (laughing) ahh... that explains why I struck out so badly in Moscow! You said you've got my ticket – how do I say ticket in Russian?

Dmitriy: This is bee-let.

Scott: What about counting – how do I count to 10 in Russian?

Dmitriy: ah-deen, dvah, tree

Scott: ah-deen, dvah, tree

Dmitriy: che-ty-ree, pyat', shest'

Scott: che-ty-ree, pyat', shest'

Dmitriy: sem', vo-sem, de-vyat', de-syat'

Scott: sem', vo-sem, de-vyat', de-syat'

Dmitriy: Da, very good.

Scott: Well, I'm now set if I need to buy a round of up to 10 vodka's! Hey – I've noticed that locals always eat when they drink vodka – what are they eating?

Dmitriy: This is zakuski – snacks, locals will take some after each shot – it is usually pickled vegetables and black bread. Also, when you are drinking vodka make sure you keep your glass on the table when re-filling it, don't lift the glass to the bottle – many foreigners make this mistake.

Scott: Ok, so lack of zakusi also explains a few things! How do I say 'excuse me' and 'please may I have the bill'?

Dmitriy: This is eez-vee-nee-tyeh and shchyot, pah-zhah-loo-stah

Scott: ok so eez-vee-nee-tyeh and shchyot pah-zhah-loo-stah – so bill is shchyot?

Dmitriy: Da.

Scott: Speaking of the bill – how do I say 'how much' and 'too expensive'?

Dmitriy: How much is skol'-kah stoh-it and too expensive is eh-ta o-chen' doh-rah-gah

Scott: Skol'-kah stoh-it and eh-ta o-chen' doh-rah-gah. Are locals usually pretty rude to foreigners – I've sometimes found it hard to get small talk going in shops or hostels.

Dmitriy: Nyet, this is not rude, Russians are very direct and straightforward and we tend to skip the pleasantries – it is not considered rude.

Scott: Ah, ok – that makes sense. If I'm to be direct back – how do I say “I like this” and “I don't like this”

Dmitriy: You say mnye eh-ta nra-vee-tsa and mnye eh-ta nye nra-vee-tsa

Scott: So, mnye eh-ta nra-vee-tsa and mnye eh-ta nye nra-vee-tsa. Oh, what about “Where is” and “Which way to” – I will probably need these when I try to navigate the Hermitage on my own!

Dmitriy: This is gdyeh na-kho-dee-tsa and k'ahk pray-tee k

Scott: gdyeh na-kho-dee-tsa and k'ahk pray-tee k. I know, what about “Have you a room” and “May I see it”

Dmitriy: This is oo vas yest' svah-bod-ny no-mer and mozh-nah pa-smah-trets'

Scott: Wow, slow down – in fact how do I say “please say that slowly”

Dmitriy: This is - gah-vah-ry-tye med-len-ney-yeh

Scott: So, gah-vah-ry-tye med-len-ney-yeh. Dima, you've been very patient – I can only think of a few more things – what about today, tomorrow, yesterday and now?

Dmitriy: Se-vod-nya, zav-trah, vcheh-rah, se-chas

Scott: So, Se-vod-nya, zav-trah, vcheh-rah, se-chas. Bus, train, taxi and boat?

Dmitriy: Av-toh-boos, po-yezd, tah-xi, kah-ter

Scott: Av-toh-boos, po-yezd, tah-xi, kah-ter. Finally, what about police, hospital and doctor.

Dmitriy: Ah, very useful – but I hope you won't actually need them. Police is mee-lee-tsee-ya, hospital is bal-nee-tsa and doctor is vrach.

Scott: so, mee-lee-tsee-ya, bal-nee-tsa and vrach. Now, no more lesson, lets talk about Russian Ark!