

Хлопали друг друга по **спинам** (Aksenov)
They were slapping each other on the back

Собаки с поджатыми **хвостами** лезли в подворотни
(Rasputin)
Dogs were slinking into the gateways with their tails between
their legs

Вскрикивали, махали **шапками** (Trifonov)
They were screaming, waving their caps

(3) A similar alternative use of singular and plural is observed in the case of the noun **жизнь** 'life' (though the singular is more common in Russian, and the plural is used *far* more sparingly than in English). Compare

Я был капитаном «Кальмара» и отвечал за их **жизнь**
(Gagarin)
I was the captain of the 'Kalmar' and was responsible for their
lives

and

Люба, Володя и их товарищи оперировали в полевых
госпиталях, многим сохранили **жизни** (Rybakov)
Lyuba, Volodya and their comrades operated in the field
hospitals and saved many people's lives

Note

With numerals above four, only the genitive plural is possible (see 195):

Болезнь, которая уже унесла почти 15 тысяч **жизней**
(Sputnik)
A disease which has already claimed 15,000 lives

Case Usage

See 401–53 for prepositional usage.

77 The nominative

The nominative is used as follows.

(1) It denotes the subject of an action or state:

Мой брат читает книгу
My brother is reading a book

Наши дети довольны подарками
Our children are pleased with the presents

(2) It may be introduced

(i) by **это** 'this is, these are':

Это моя жена This is my wife
Это мои дети These are my children

(ii) by **вот** 'here is, here are, there is, there are':

Вот мой дом There is my house
Вот книги Here are the books

(3) It is used in possessive constructions:

У меня [есть] **книга** I have a book
У него был **брат** He had a brother

(4) It is used in comparative constructions after **чем**:

Я старше, чем моя сестра
I am older than my sister

(5) It is used in generalizing constructions after **как**:

в таких странах, как **Нигерия**
in countries such as Nigeria

Note

The meaning of the above example is 'in countries such as Nigeria is'.
Нигерия is therefore *not* in apposition to странах. Compare:

Наш завод специализируется по производству таких
изделий, как **шины и колёса**
Our factory specializes in the manufacture of products such as
tyres and wheels

(6) It is used in definitions:

Москва — столица СССР Moscow is the capital of the USSR

(7) It is used in apposition to various generic terms (see 72):

Я читаю роман «*Анна Каренина*»
I am reading the novel *Anna Karenina*

78 The vocative

Vocative meanings are expressed by the nominative: **Иван Фёдорович!** 'Ivan Fedorovich!'. Relics of the former vocative case survive only in certain ecclesiastical terms, now used as exclamations: **Боже мой!** 'My God!', **Господи!** 'Good Lord!'. Some truncated familiar forms are used as vocatives in colloquial Russian: **мам!** 'Mum!', **Нин!** 'Nina!', **Вань!** 'Vanya!', **Коль!** 'Kolya!', **Петь!** 'Pete!' (also **дядь!** 'Uncle!' etc.).

79 The accusative

The accusative case is used as follows.

(1) It denotes the object of a transitive verb:

Он любит **Машу** He loves Masha
Она учится водить **машину** She is learning to drive a car

Note

In colloquial Russian the verb may sometimes be 'understood': **Будьте добры!** (, попросите к телефону) Зюю 'Can I speak to Zoya, please'.

(2) It is used in certain impersonal constructions:

Девочку рвёт The girl feels sick
Дом зажёгло молнией The house was struck by lightning
Мне жаль (жалко) **сестру** I feel sorry for my sister (for жаль + genitive, see 80 (8))
Мне больно **руку** (colloquial) My hand is sore

For other impersonal constructions with the accusative, see 295 (1).

(3) It denotes:

(i) Duration in time:

Всю зиму было холодно It was cold all winter

(ii) Duration in space:

Всю дорогу они шли молча They walked in silence all the way

(iii) Repetition:

Он это говорил **тысячу** раз He has said that a thousand times

Он болеет **каждую весну** He is ill every spring

(iv) Cost, weight, measure etc.:

Книга стоит **рубль** The book costs a rouble

Уголь весит **тонну** The coal weighs a ton

Он мне должен **пять рублей** He owes me five roubles

Note

(a) For the use of the accusative after negated transitive verbs, see 87 (4).

(b) Some verbs which have traditionally governed the genitive may take the *accusative* of animate nouns in colloquial Russian: Он слушается **сестру** 'He obeys his sister', Дети боялись **мать** 'The children were afraid of their mother', Дожидались **Анну** 'They were waiting for Anna'. See also 88 (1) (ii) (a) and (2) (i).

80 The genitive: possession and relationship

The genitive case is used to denote the following:

(1) Possession:

дом **брата** my brother's house

(2) Relationships:

член **партии** a member of the Party

(3) The whole in relation to the part:

крыша **дома** the roof of the house

(4) The agent of an action or process:

выступление **артиста** the artiste's performance

(5) The object of an action or process:

уборка **урожа́я** the gathering in of the harvest

(6) Descriptive attributes:

час **обе́да** lunch time
бума́га **пе́рвого со́рта** first-grade paper

(7) The second item in a comparison:

Он мо́ложе **бра́та** He is younger than his
brother (see also **182** (1) (ii))

(8) The object of regret (constructions with **жаль**):

Мне жаль **де́нег** I grudge the money

81 The genitive: quantity

The genitive is used with:

(1) **Ма́ло** 'few', **мно́го** 'much, many', **нема́ло** 'not a little', **немно́го** 'not much, many', **не́сколько** 'a few', **ско́лько** 'how much, many', **сто́лько** 'so much, many':

мно́го **де́нег** a lot of money
ско́лько **ле́т?** how many years?
не́сколько **чело́век** several people

(2) **Доста́точно** 'enough', **недостава́ть** 'to be insufficient', **ско́питься** 'to accumulate', **хватáть/хватíть** 'to be enough': **Вре́мени** хватáет 'There is enough time', **Ему́** недостаёт **рубля́** 'He is a round short', доста́точно **сил** 'enough strength':

Хва́тит ли им **бензи́на** для но́чных блужда́ний? (Trifonov)
Will they have enough petrol for their nocturnal escapades?

(3) Collective nouns:

ста́до **ове́ц** flock of sheep

(4) Nouns denoting measure:

ли́тр **молока́** a litre of milk

(5) Nouns denoting containers:

ча́шка **молока́** a cup of milk

82 The genitive with adjectives

The following adjectives (and their short forms) govern the genitive: **достойный** 'worthy', **лишённый** 'lacking in', **полный** 'full', **чуждый** 'devoid':

корзи́на, по́лная **ябло́к** a basket full of apples
Он досто́ин **награ́ды** He is worthy of an award
чело́век, чу́ждый **честолю́бия** a man devoid of ambition
Он лишён **остроу́мья** He is lacking in wit

83 The partitive genitive

(1) The genitive is used to denote part of a substance or liquid (Он **вы́пил молока́** 'He drank some milk') or to denote a quantity of objects (Он поё́л **яго́д** 'He ate some berries'). The accusative denotes *whole* rather than part: Он **вы́пил молоко́** 'He drank the milk'.

(2) The partitive genitive appears only as the *object* of a verb, never as the subject, cf. Она́ нали́ла госта́м **вина́** 'She poured her guests some wine' and На сто́ле е́сть **вино́** 'There is some wine on the table'.

(3) Except for constructions with verbs such as **хотеть/захотеть** 'to want' and **просить/попросить** 'to request', where either aspect may be used (Хочу́ **воды́** 'I want some water', Он **про́сит ме́да** 'He asks for some honey'), most partitive constructions involve *perfective* verbs only (Она́ **прине́сла дров** 'She brought some firewood', Он **доста́л де́нег** 'He acquired some money', Он **отме́рил са́тина** 'He measured out some satin'). With many imperfectives the partitive genitive is never used: Он **вы́пил воды́** 'He drank some water' but Он **пил во́ду** 'He was drinking some water'; Он **съел хле́ба** 'He ate some bread' but Он **ел хле́б** 'He was eating some bread'.

(4) Some perfectives with the quantitative prefix **на-** also take the partitive genitive: **нае́сться яго́д** 'to eat one's fill of berries',

накупить **книг** 'to buy some books', нарвать **цветов** 'to pick some flowers', нарубить **дров** 'to chop some wood'.

(5) Containers and quantitative words also appear in partitive constructions: ложка **мёда** 'a spoonful of honey'.

(6) Examples of partitive genitives:

Гриша привёз по её просьбе **овощей** (Trifonov)
Grisha brought some vegetables at her request

Налил ребятам **молока** (Rasputin)
She poured the kids some milk

Денег на дорогу вышлю (Shukshin)
I'll send some money for the journey

Я тебе дам **успокоительных капель** (Rybakov)
I'll give you some tranquillizers

84 The partitive genitive in -у/-ю

(1) Some masculine nouns, mainly those which denote substances, have genitives in **-а/-я** and in **-у/-ю**, e.g. сахар 'sugar', **сахара/сахару**; чай 'tea', **чая/чаем**. See 53.

(2) Other nouns with two genitives include бензин 'petrol', виноград 'grapes', горох 'peas', керосин 'paraffin', кипяток 'hot water', коньяк 'brandy', лук 'onions', мёд 'honey', мел 'chalk', песок 'sand', суп 'soup', сыр 'cheese', табак 'tobacco', творог 'cottage cheese', шёлк 'silk'.

(3) Genitive **-у/-ю** appears only in partitive constructions: налить **чаем** 'to pour some tea', тарелка **супу** 'a plate of soup':

Бабушка послала Вовку пощипать **лук** (Belov)
Grandma sent Vovka to pick some onions

Утром она взяла у хозяев **кипяток** (Rybakov)
In the morning she fetched some hot water from the proprietors

Достал бутылку **коньяку**
He got out a bottle of brandy

(4) If quantity is *not* implied, **-а/-я** are used: запах и цвет **табака** 'the smell and colour of tobacco', производство **сыра** 'the production of cheese', цена **чая** 'the price of tea'.

(5) Note that **-а/-я** are also used if the noun denoting the substance or liquid is qualified by an adjective: стакан **крепкого чая** 'a glass of strong tea'.

(6) The use of the partitive genitive in **-у/-ю** is decreasing, and **-а/-я** are now possible in all meanings and styles (чашка **чаем/чая** 'a cup of tea'), with the commonest nouns (e.g. сахар 'sugar', чай 'tea') most likely to be found with a genitive in **-у/-ю**. However, even with such nouns the partitive in **-а/-я** is usually acceptable:

Стою в очереди в кассу и прикидываю: килограмм **сахара**, пачка **чая** ... (Nedelya)
I stand in the queue to the cash-desk and calculate: a kilogram of sugar, a packet of tea ...

(7) Genitive **-у/-ю** is most consistently found in end-stressed diminutives: сварить **кофейку** (from кофе́к) 'to boil some coffee', Хочешь **чайку**? (from чаёк) 'Would you like some tea?' (others include **коньячку** from конья́к/коньячо́к 'brandy', **лучку** from лук/лучо́к 'onions', **сырку** from сыр/сыро́к 'cheese', **табачку** from табак/табачо́к 'tobacco').

(8) Partitive constructions involving perfective verbs and genitives in **-у/-ю** are also very common: добавить **сахару** 'to add some sugar', заварить **чаем** 'to make some tea', поесть **супу** 'to eat some soup', положить **чесноку** 'to put in some garlic'.

(9) **-у/-ю** are also found with **нет**, with indefinite numerals and with measures and containers: килограмм **винограду** 'a kilo of grapes', нет **коньяку** 'there is no brandy', много **народу** 'many people', пачка **сахару** 'a packet of sugar', кусок **сыру** 'a piece of cheese'; **-а/-я** are also possible in such cases:

Осталось лишь полпачки **чая** (Povoluyev)
Only half a packet of tea remained

Only occasionally is the partitive governed by an *imperfective* verb:

Изредка мать набивала **творогу** в баночку (Rasputin)
Now and again mother would cram some cottage cheese into a little jar

85 Genitive in -y in set phrases

(1) Genitives in -y appear in certain idioms and set phrases:

до зарéзу нýжно	very necessary
ни рáзу	not once
ни слýху ни дýху	neither sight nor sound
ни шáгу наза́д	not a step back
с бóку на́ бок	from side to side
с гла́зу на́ глаз	tête-à-tête
танцевáть до упáду	to dance till one drops
упускáть из виду	to lose sight of

(2) The genitive in -а/-я has had very little impact on such phrases, except for **без про́маху/-а** 'unerringly' and **без разбóру/-а** 'indiscriminately'.

(3) In some causal expressions **от** combines with -а/-я (от **гóлода** 'from hunger', от **испýга** 'from fright', от **смéха** 'with laughter') and **с** with -у/-ю (умерéть **с гóлоду** 'to starve to death', кри́кнуть **с испýгу** 'to scream with fright', пры́снуть **с смеху** 'to burst out laughing', умерéть **со стра́ху** 'to die of fright'). Some forms in -у/-ю appear in spatial expressions: уй́ти из **дому** 'to leave home' (cf. уй́ти из **дóма** 'to leave the house'), вы́йти из **лесу** 'to emerge from the forest'.

86 Genitive and negative

(1) **Нет** 'there is not', **не́ было** 'there was not' and **не́ будет** 'there will not be' combine with the genitive to denote **non-existence** or **non-availability**:

Нет дéнег	There is no money
Не́ было врéмени	There was no time
Не́ будет войны́	There will be no war

Note

- (a) Compare frequentative usage in **Все́ ча́ще Лили́ не́ бывáет дóма** (Kazakov) 'Lilya is out more and more often'.
- (b) Compare constructions which involve **identification**, where the **nominative** is used: **Это́ не́ мо́я жена́** 'That is not my wife', **Это́ не́ были́ мо́и дéти** 'Those were not my children'.

(c) Constructions of the type: **Родите́ли** (nominative) **не́ дóма** 'The parents are out' (for the normal **Родите́лей** **нет дóма**) may be used when actual whereabouts are indicated: **Они́ не́ дóма, а в гóстях** 'They are not in, but out visiting'.

(2) The genitive is also used in possessive phrases: **У меня́ нет́ компýтера** 'I have no computer', **У нас не́ было́ дeтeй** 'We had no children', **У вас не́ бýдет проблем** 'You will not have any problems'.

(3) Other negated verbs denoting non-availability, non-occurrence or non-appearance may be used in this construction: **Лезвий не́ имéется** 'There are no blades in stock', **Дéнег не́ остáлось** 'There was no money left', **Таких́ людeй не́ сущeствýет** 'Such people do not exist', **Встрéчных машин не́ попада́лось** 'No oncoming vehicles were encountered'.

(4) In some negative constructions a nominative indicates the absence of *specific* objects, a genitive the absence of *all* objects of a particular type, cf. **Докумeнтов не́ сохрани́лось** 'No documents were preserved' (at all) and **Докумeнты, о котóрых шла́ рeчь, не́ сохрани́лись** 'The documents in question were not preserved'.

(5) The genitive construction is also used after **не́ видно́** 'cannot be seen', **не́ замéтно** 'cannot be discerned', **не́ слы́шно** 'cannot be heard':

Из-за́ дýма **дверeй не́ видно́** (Abramov)
You can't see the doors for the smoke

Ни **собáки, ни гóлосóв не́ было́ слы́шно** (Trifonov)
Neither the dog nor people's voices could be heard

(6) It is also used with **не́ нáдо, не́ нýжно** etc.:

Не́ нáдо ни **дров, ни углeя́** (*Rabotnitsa*)
Neither firewood nor coal is necessary

Note

Compare the use of the *genitive* case in the general statement: **Пóмощи не́ нýжно** 'No help is required' and the *nominative* in the specific **Вáша пóмощь не́ нýжна** 'Your help is not required'.

(7) The genitive case is used in negative passive constructions: **Кни́г не́ выпуска́ется** 'No books are issued', **Подтвержде́ния не́ полу́чено** 'No confirmation has been received'.

(8) It is also used in time expressions:

И **пяти минут** не прошло (Orlov)
Not five minutes had passed

Мы поженились, когда мне ещё не исполнилось **восемь-надцати** (*Russia Today*)
We got married when I had not yet **turned 18**

87 The genitive and accusative after negated verbs

(1) Both the genitive and the accusative can be used after a negated transitive verb:

Он не посещал **город/города** He did not visit the town

(2) While in case of doubt it is advisable to use a genitive, there are situations where one case or the other is preferable.

(3) The **genitive** is preferred:

(i) In generalized statements:

Я не вижу **стола**
I don't see a (i.e. *any*) table

(ii) With compound negatives:

Он никогда и никому не говорил **неправды** (Trifonov)
He has never told lies to anyone

(iii) With the emphatic negative particle **ни**:

Он не прочитал **ни одной книги**
He has not read a single book

(iv) With abstract nouns: Она не скрывает **своего раздражения** 'She does not conceal her irritation'. Many set expressions are involved: не играть **роли** 'to play no part', не иметь **понятия** 'to have no idea', не иметь **права** 'not to have the right', не иметь **смысла** 'not to have any point', не обращать **внимания** 'not to pay any attention', не придавать **значения** 'not to attach significance to', не принимать **участия** 'not to take part', не производить **впечатления** 'to make no impression', не терять **времени** 'not to waste time'.

(v) With a negative gerund: не скрывая своей **радости** 'without concealing his joy', не дослушав **спора** до конца 'without hearing out the argument'.

(vi) With **это**: **Этого** я не допущу 'I won't allow that', and after negated verbs of perception: Он не знал **урока** 'He did not know the lesson', Он не понял **вопроса** 'He did not understand the question', Он не чувствовал **боли** 'he did not feel any pain'.

(4) The **accusative** is preferred:

(i) When a specific object or objects are involved:

Я не вижу **стол**
I do not see *the* table

Он не получил **письмо**
He did not receive *the* letter (cf. Он не получил **письма** 'He did not receive *a* letter')

(ii) When the object denotes a person:

Он не встретил **мою сестру**
He did not meet my sister

(iii) With 'false' negatives such as **едва не/чуть не**, 'almost', **не могу не** 'I can't help, cannot but':

Он чуть не пропустил **трамвай**
He almost missed the tram

Не могу не простить его **поведение**
I cannot but forgive his behaviour

(iv) When the noun is qualified by an instrumental predicate:

Я не считаю **эту статью** интересной
I do not consider this article interesting

(v) When a part of the sentence other than the verb is negated:

Он не **вполне** усвоил урок
He has not **completely** assimilated the lesson

Не **я** придумал новый порядок
It was not **I** who devised the new regime.

(vi) In set phrases: **палец о палец** не ударить 'not to do a stroke of work'.

(5) If none of the above criteria apply, then **either case** is usually possible. Factors which influence choice include:

(i) Word order, the accusative being preferred when the noun precedes the verb (**Идею** она не поняла 'She did not understand the idea') and the genitive when it follows (Она не поняла **идеи** 'She did not understand the idea').

(ii) An accusative is often regarded as the more colloquial alternative: Я не читал **вчерашнюю газету** 'I have not read yesterday's newspaper'.

(iii) Nouns in **-а** and **-я** are more prone to appear in the accusative case after a negated transitive verb than are other nouns.

(iv) When an infinitive appears between the negated verb and the object, the latter usually appears in the accusative:

Он не хотёл смотреть **эту пьесу**
He did not want to see this play

Я не умею писать **стихи**
I can't write verse

However, the genitive is also possible:

Вы же никому не даёте раскрыть **рта** (Трифонов)
Why, you don't give anyone a chance to get a word in edgeways

Note

To avoid ambiguity, it is better to replace, say, Он не читает **книги** either by Он не читает **книгу** 'He is not reading the book' or by Он не читает **книг** 'He does not read books' (since it is otherwise not clear whether **книги** is genitive singular or accusative plural).

(6) In cases of doubt it is advisable to use the *genitive* after a negated transitive verb:

Пригнувшись, чтобы не задеть головой **потолка** (Zalygin)
Stooping, so as not to hit his head on the ceiling

Note

Verbs which take a case other than the accusative are not affected by the negative-genitive rule: Он помогает брату 'He helps his brother', Он не помогает брату 'He does not help his brother'; Он гордится своим полком 'He is proud of his regiment', Он не гордится своим полком 'He is not proud of his regiment'.

88 Verbs that take the genitive

Verbs which govern the genitive case belong to four principal categories:

(1) Verbs of asking, waiting, seeking, achieving etc.:

(i) Verbs that take only the genitive. These include **добиваться** 'to strive for', **достигать** 'to achieve', **жаждать** 'to crave for', **желать** 'to desire', **заслуживать** 'to deserve':

добиваться	успеха	to strive for success
достигать	своей цели	to achieve one's aim
жаждать	славы	to crave for glory
желать	счастья	to desire happiness
заслуживать	похвалы	to deserve praise

Note

(a) The perfective **заслужить** 'to earn' takes the accusative: заслужить **доверие** 'to earn someone's confidence'.

(b) **Желать** 'to wish' is 'understood' in such phrases as **Счастливого пути!** 'Bon voyage!' and **И вам того же!** 'The same to you!'.

(ii) Verbs that take the genitive *and* the accusative. Generally speaking, such verbs take the genitive of nouns denoting general and abstract concepts, and the accusative of nouns denoting persons and specific inanimate objects. The verbs include:

(a) **Дождаться** 'to wait until'.

Genitive дождаться **победы** to wait till victory comes

Accusative дождаться **сестру** to wait till one's sister comes

(b) **Ждать** 'to wait for'.

Genitive Жду **ответа** I am awaiting an answer

Жду **приказа** I am awaiting an order

Жду **решения** I am awaiting a decision

Ждём **писем** о самых интересных клубах (*Russia Today*)
We are expecting letters about the most interesting clubs

Она ждала от меня **комплимента** (Avdeenko)
She was expecting a compliment from me

Accusative Жду **сегодняшнюю** I am waiting for
пóчту today's mail

Сидел за столом, занимался, ждал **жену** (Grekoва)
He sat at the table, worked, waited for his wife

Note

Ждать **автобус** No. 5 'to wait for the number 5 bus' (a particular bus), but Жду **автобуса** 'I am waiting for a bus' (any bus; but Жду **автобус** is also possible, especially in spoken Russian).

(c) **Искать** 'to seek, look for'.

Genitive ('to try to achieve')

искать **возможности** to seek an opportunity
искать **помощи** to seek assistance

Accusative ('to try to find')

искать **упавшую иголку** to look for a dropped needle
искать **свое место** в зале to look for one's place in the hall
искать **правду** to seek the truth
искать **дорогу** to try to find the way

Note

Работа is found in either case (искать **работы/работу** 'to look for work'), with the accusative (the more usual form) referring to more specific work.

(d) **Ожидать** 'to wait for, expect'.

Genitive ожидать **случая** to wait for an opportunity
ожидать **автобуса** to wait for a bus (cf.
ждать (b) note)

Втянул голову в плечи, будто ожидая **удара** со спины
(Gagarin)
He hunched his shoulders, as if expecting a blow from behind

Accusative ожидать **маму** to wait for, expect Mum

(e) **Просить** 'to ask for'.

Genitive Прошу **помощи** I ask for assistance (also
прошу о помощи)

Прошу **прощения** I ask forgiveness

See 83 (3) for usage with the partitive genitive.

Accusative Прошу **деньги** I ask for the money (cf.
Прошу **денег** 'I ask
for some money')

Прошу **маму** I ask Mum to open the
открыть окно window

(f) **Требовать** 'to demand'.

Genitive требовать **внимания** to demand attention
требовать **прибавки** to demand an increment
требовать **книг** to demand some books

Accusative требовать **свою книгу** to demand one's book

(g) **Хотеть** 'to want'.

Genitive Хотим **мира** We want peace

See 83 (3) for usage with the partitive genitive.

Accusative Хочу **булку** I want a roll

(2) Verbs of fearing, avoiding etc. Such verbs usually take the genitive of abstract, impersonal and inanimate nouns, but may now govern the accusative of animate nouns.

(i) **Бояться** 'to fear'.

Genitive бояться **темноты** to be afraid of the dark
бояться **грозы** to be afraid of a thunderstorm

Он боялся **города**, не хотел в него (Rasputin)
He was afraid of the town, did not want to go there

Accusative бояться **бабушку** to be afraid of grandmother

(ii) Other verbs include дичиться 'to be shy of', избегать 'to avoid', опасаться 'to fear', остерегаться 'to beware of', пугаться 'to be scared of', стесняться 'to be shy of', сторониться 'to shun', стыдиться 'to be ashamed of', чуждаться 'to avoid':

избегать **неприятностей** to avoid trouble
избегать **тещу** to avoid one's
mother-in-law

опасаться **осложнений** to fear complications

остерега́ться зара́зы	to beware of an infection
пуга́ться гро́ма	to be scared of thunder
стесня́ться общества́	to shun society
стороня́ться недо́брых люде́й	to shun wicked people
стыди́ться своего́ ви́да	to be ashamed of one's appearance
чужда́ться дурно́й компа́нии	to avoid bad company

(3) Verbs of depriving etc.

лиша́ть родите́льских прав	to deprive of parental rights
лиша́ться свобо́ды	to be deprived of one's freedom

(4) Verbs denoting conformity or non-conformity. These include держа́ться 'to adhere to', ослу́шиваться 'to disobey', приде́рживаться 'to hold to', слу́шаться 'to obey':

держа́ться мне́ния	to stick to one's opinion
ослу́шиваться прика́за	to disobey an order
приде́рживаться то́чки зре́ния	to hold to a point of view
слу́шаться совета́	to heed advice

Note

In colloquial styles the accusative is possible with an animate object: слу́шаться **ма́тери** or **ма́ть** 'to obey one's mother'.

Other verbs that take the genitive include **каса́ться** 'to touch, touch on' and **стои́ть** 'to be worth':

каса́ться стола́	to touch the table
каса́ться вопро́са	to touch on a question
это стои́т награ́ды	that is worth an award

89 The dative as indirect object of a verb

The dative case denotes the indirect object of a verb, i.e. the person for whom an action is performed, the recipient or beneficiary: дава́ть де́ньги **касси́ру** 'to give the money to the cashier', звони́ть **сестре́** на рабо́ту 'to ring one's sister at work', отвеча́ть **сосе́ду** 'to answer a neighbour' (cf. отвеча́ть **на** письмо́ 'to answer a letter'), писа́ть письмо́ **бра́ту** 'to write a letter to one's brother', плати́ть **дру́гу** 'to pay one's friend', пожима́ть ру́ку **солда́ту** 'to shake the

soldier's hand', посла́ть де́ньги **сы́ну** 'to send money to one's son' (note, however, use of the preposition **к** when the object sent is animate: отпра́вить дете́й **к** ро́дственника́м 'to send the children to stay with relatives'), сказа́ть **отцу́** пра́вду 'to tell one's father the truth'.

90 Verbs that take the dative

Verbs which take the dative denote:

(1) Conforming, rendering assistance or other service; conversely, causing a hindrance: **аккомпани́ровать** 'to accompany' (music), **аплоди́ровать** 'to applaud', **вреди́ть** 'to harm', **изменя́ть** 'to betray', **меша́ть** 'to hinder', **напомина́ть** 'to remind', **повинова́ться** 'to obey', **позволя́ть** 'to allow', **покрови́тельствова́ть** 'to patronize', **помога́ть** 'to help', **препятствова́ть** 'to hinder', **противоре́чить** 'to contradict', **служи́ть** 'to serve', **совета́ть** 'to advise', **соде́йствова́ть** 'to co-operate', **способствова́ть** 'to foster', **угожда́ть** 'to please'.

Note

- (a) **Запреща́ть** 'to forbid' and **разреша́ть** 'to permit' take the dative of the person (**запреща́ть/разреша́ть солда́там** **кура́ть** 'to forbid/permit the soldiers to smoke') and the accusative of an action or process (**запреща́ть/разреша́ть** **обго́н** 'to forbid/permit overtaking').
- (b) **Учи́ть** 'to teach' takes the dative of the subject taught: **учи́ть дете́й му́зыке** 'to teach the children music'. **Учи́ть** + accusative means 'to learn': **учи́ть ру́сский язы́к** 'to learn Russian'.

(2) Attitude: **ве́рить** 'to believe', **доверя́ть(ся)** 'to trust', **грози́ть** 'to threaten', **досажда́ть** 'to annoy', **зави́довать** 'to envy', **льсти́ть** 'to flatter', **мсти́ть** 'to take vengeance on' (cf. **мсти́ть за** + accusative 'to avenge someone'), **надоеда́ть** 'to bore', **подража́ть** 'to imitate', **поража́ться** 'to be amazed at', **ра́доваться** 'to rejoice at', **сочу́вствова́ть** 'to sympathize with', **удивля́ться** 'to be surprised at'. Note also **смея́ться**, **улыба́ться шу́тке** 'to laugh, smile at a joke' (but **смея́ться над** **ке́м-нибудь** 'to laugh at someone').

(3) Other meanings: **насле́дова́ть** 'to succeed' (someone), **предше́ствова́ть** 'to precede', **принадлежа́ть** 'to belong to' (in the

meaning of possession; cf. принадлежать к 'to belong to' (a group, society etc.)), равняться 'to equal', следовать 'to follow' (advice etc.).

Note

Many verbal and other nouns cognate with the above verbs also take the dative: обучение **русскому языку** 'the teaching of Russian', подражание **сказке** 'imitation of a folk tale', помощь **жертвам землетрясения** 'help for the victims of the earthquake', служение **науке** 'service to science', содействие **флоту** 'co-operation with the navy', сочувствие **чужому горю** 'sympathy for others' grief, угроза **миру** 'a threat to peace'.

91 Adjectives that take the dative

Adjectives (long *and* short forms) which take the dative include:

благодарный	grateful to
верный	loyal to
знакомый	known to
известный	well known to
подобный	similar to
послышный	obedient to
присущий	inherent in
рад (short form only)	glad (я рад гостям 'I am glad to see the guests')
свойственный	characteristic of, inherent in
Предусмотрительность	свойственна этому человеку Prudence is inherent in this person

92 Impersonal constructions using the dative

(1) Most impersonal constructions involving the dative case denote a state of mind, feeling, inclination or attitude:

Ученику весело, грустно, душно, жарко, лучше, скучно, стыдно, тепло, удобно, холодно, хуже
The pupil feels cheerful, sad, stifled, hot, better, bored, ashamed, warm, comfortable, cold, worse

(2) Some constructions involve verbs: **Брату** кажется, что тепло 'My brother thinks it is warm', **Брату** надоело работать 'My brother is bored with working', **Брату** нездоровится 'My brother feels off colour', **Брату** нравится танцевать 'My brother likes dancing', **Брату** приходится много работать 'My brother is obliged to work hard', **Брату** удалось достать деньги 'My brother managed to get the money', **Брату** хотелось уйти 'My brother felt like leaving'.

(3) Note also:

(i) Constructions with reflexive verbs that denote disinclination:

Сестре не поётся, не работается, не сидится
My sister does not feel like singing, working, sitting still

(ii) The impersonal predicate **жаль** also combines with the dative: **Отцу** жаль 'My father feels sorry' (for жаль with accusative see 79 (2) and for жаль with genitive see 80 (8)).

(4) The dative is also used in denoting age: **Сыну** (исполнилось) 20 лет 'My son is (has turned) 20'.

93 The dative as the logical subject of an infinitive

(1) A noun or pronoun in the dative case may function as the logical subject of an infinitive: **Что детям** делать? 'What are the children to do?', **Не вам** решать 'It is not for you to decide', **Брату** некуда идти 'My brother has nowhere to go'.

(2) The dative can also be used to express a peremptory command: **Всем сотрудникам** собраться в час! 'All employees meet at one!'

94 The instrumental of function

A noun is placed in the instrumental case to denote that the object it represents is being used to perform a function: мыться **горячей водой** 'to wash with hot water', писать **карандашом** 'to write with a pencil', резать **ножом** 'to cut with a knife', рубить **топором** 'to chop with an axe'.

Note

- (a) Analogous use of the instrumental in бросать **камями** 'to throw stones' (at a target), говорить **громким голосом** 'to speak in a loud voice', дышать **кислородом** 'to breathe oxygen', платить **советскими деньгами** 'to pay in Soviet money'.
- (b) Use of the instrumental of function (e.g. резать **ножом** 'to cut with a knife') must be distinguished from с + instrumental ('with' in the meaning 'holding'): он сидел **с ножом** в руке 'he sat with a knife in his hand'.
- (c) Кормить **рыбой** 'to feed on (= with) fish', награждать **премией** 'to reward with a bonus', наполнять **водой** 'to fill with water', снабжать **нефтью** 'to supply with oil' also belong in the category 'instrumental of function'.

95 The instrumental in constructions denoting movements of the body

The instrumental is used in constructions denoting movements of the body:

- (1) Двигать **рукой** 'to move one's arm' (cf. двигать **стол** 'to move a table'), качать/кивать **головой** 'to shake/nod one's head', махать **рукой** 'to wave one's hand', мигать **глазами** 'to blink one's eyes', пожимать **плечами** 'to shrug one's shoulders', топтать **ногами** 'to stamp one's feet', щёлкать **языком** 'to click one's tongue'.
- (2) The construction also applies to objects held with the hand (размахивать **палкой** 'to brandish a stick', хлопать **дверью** 'to slam a door', щёлкать **бичом** 'to crack a whip') and to the figurative expressions И **брóвью** не повёл 'He did not turn a hair', шевелить **мозгами** 'to use one's brains'.

96 The instrumental in passive constructions

The instrumental is used to denote the agent in a passive construction:

Дом строится **рабочими** The house is being built by
workers

Гора покрыта **снегом** The mountain is covered
with snow
Ветром сорвало крышу The roof was torn off by
the wind

See also **359** and **360** (2) for the use of the instrumental with passive participles.

97 The instrumental in adverbial expressions

The instrumental is used to denote:

(1) The type of route covered in a journey: идти **берегом** 'to walk along the shore', ехать **лесом** 'to ride through the forest', **морем** 'by sea', ехать **полем** 'to ride through the fields', **сухим путём** 'overland'. Note also идти **своей дорогой** 'to go one's own way' (fig.).

(2) Time:

(i) Parts of the day: **утром, днём, вечером, ночью** 'in the morning, daytime, evening, at night' (**глубокой ночью** 'at dead of night', **однажды утром** 'one morning', **вечерами** 'in the evenings', **ночами** '(at) nights').

Note

Днём may also mean 'in the afternoon' (also rendered as во второй половине дня).

(ii) Seasons of the year: **весной, летом, осенью, зимой** 'in the spring, summer, autumn, winter' (однажды **зимой** 'one winter', **поздней осенью** 'in late autumn' etc.).

(iii) Others: **целыми часами/днями** 'for hours/days on end'.

(3) The **manner** in which or the **means** by which an action is performed, in terms of:

(i) Position: вверх **дном** 'upside down', вниз **головой** 'head first', стоять **спиной** к огню 'to stand with one's back to the fire'.

(ii) Movement: **бегом** 'at a run', **шагом** 'at walking pace'.

(iii) Group activity: уехать **семьей** 'to leave in a family group', пение **хором** 'singing in chorus'.

(iv) Utterance: **другими словами** 'in other words', **петь басом** 'to sing bass', **шепотом** 'in a whisper'.

(v) Means of transport: **ехать поездом**, **лететь самолётом** 'to go by train, by air'.

(vi) Degree of effort: **любой ценой** 'at any cost'.

(vii) Quantity: **Домá не стрóбили тысячами**, как сейчас (Rybakov) 'Houses were not built in thousands as they are now'.

(viii) Form, manner: **каким образом?** 'in what way?', **Снег падает на зéмлю большими хлопьями** (Rasputin) 'The snow falls to earth in large flakes'.

98 Use of the instrumental to denote similarity

The instrumental is also used to express similarity: **выть волком** 'to howl like a wolf', **умереть гербом** 'to die like a hero', **шипеть змеей** 'to hiss like a snake', **Снег лежит ковром** 'The snow lies like a carpet', **лететь стрелой** 'to fly like an arrow', **усы щёткой** 'toothbrush moustache':

За кустарником **тёмной стеной** выросло чернолесье
(Abramov)

Deciduous forest grew up beyond the bushes like a dark wall

99 Verbs that take the instrumental

Verbs that take the instrumental case denote:

(1) **Use or control**: **владеть** 'to own, have a command of' (a language), **дирижировать** 'to conduct' (an orchestra), **заведовать** 'to be in charge of', **злоупотреблять** 'to abuse, misuse', **командовать** 'to command', **обладать** 'to possess', **пользоваться** 'to use', **править** 'to rule', **располагать** 'to have at one's disposal', **распоряжаться** 'to manage', **руководить** 'to run', **управлять** 'to control'.

(2) **Attitude**: **восхищаться** 'to be delighted with', **гордиться** 'to be proud of', **грозить** 'to threaten with', **довольствоваться** 'to be satis-

fied with', **дорожить** 'to value', **интересоваться** 'to be interested in', **любоваться** 'to admire' (also на + acc.), **наслаждаться** 'to delight in', **обходиться** 'to make do with', **пренебрегать** 'to disregard', **увлекаться** 'to be obsessed with', **хвастаться** 'to boast of', **щеголять** 'to flaunt'.

(3) **Reciprocal action**: **делиться** 'to share', **обмениваться** 'to exchange'.

(4) **Other meanings**: **болеть** 'to be sick', **жертвовать** 'to sacrifice' (cf. **жертвовать** + acc. 'to donate'), **заниматься** 'to busy oneself with', **изобиловать** 'to abound in', **ограничиваться** 'to limit oneself to', **отличаться** 'to be distinguished by', **пахнуть** 'to smell of', **прославляться** 'to be renowned for', **рисковать** 'to risk', **страдать** 'to suffer from' (chronically) (cf. **страдать от** 'to suffer from' (a temporary ailment)), **торговать** 'to trade in'.

Note

Participial, verbal and other nouns cognate with many of the above also take the instrumental: **владение домом** 'ownership of a house' (but **владелец дома** 'house owner'), **злоупотребление властью** 'abuse of power', **командование армией** 'command of the army', **командующий армией** 'army commander' (but **командир дивизии** 'divisional commander'), **руководство партией** 'leadership of the party' (as an action or process, cf. **руководство партии** 'the leadership (i.e. 'the leaders') of the party', **руководитель группы** 'leader of the group'), **торговля наркотиками** 'drugs trade', **увлечение математикой** 'obsession with mathematics'.

100 Adjectives that take the instrumental

These include long *and* (where available) short forms: **беременная (третьим ребёнком)** 'pregnant' (with her third child), **богатый** 'rich in', **больной** 'sick with', **гордый** 'proud of', **довольный** 'pleased with', **известный** 'famous for', **обязанный** 'obliged':

Своими успехами они были обязаны собственному
трудолюбию (Rybakov)

They owed their success to their own industriousness

101 The instrumental of dimension

The instrumental is used to express dimension: гора́ **высотой** в 1 000 метров 'a mountain 1,000 m high', река́ **длиной** в сто километро́в 'a river 100 km long', челове́к **ростом** в метр **восемьдесят** 'a man one metre eighty tall'.

Note

- (a) The preposition **в** may be omitted, especially in technical styles.
- (b) Questions to which these are the notional answers appear in the *genitive*: **какой высоты** гора́? 'how high is the mountain?', **какой длины́** река́? 'how long is the river?', **какого он роста́**? 'how tall is he?'

102 The instrumental as predicate

(1) The instrumental is used as predicate to the infinitive, future tense, imperative, conditional and gerund of the verb **быть** 'to be': Я **хочу́ быть врачом** 'I want to be a doctor', **если́ бы я был врачом** 'if I were a doctor', **Когда-нибудь вы́ будете стариком** 'One day you will be an old man', **Не будь трусом** 'Don't be a coward', **Не будучи знатоком**, не могу́ судить 'Not being a connoisseur I cannot judge'.

Note

The *nominative*, not the instrumental, is used when no part of **быть** is present: Она́ врач 'She is a doctor'.

(2) In the *past* tense:

(i) The nominative denotes **permanent** state, occupation, nationality etc.: По профессии он был **ботаник** 'By profession he was a botanist', Она́ была́ **испанка** (Granin) 'She was a Spaniard', Смоля́нов был **саратовец** (Trifonov) 'Smolyanov was a native of Saratov'.

(ii) The instrumental denotes **temporary** status: Во время́ войны́ я был **офице́ром** 'During the war I was an officer' (the verb **быть** is sometimes omitted: Я потеря́л роди́телей (когда́ я был/будучи) **ребёнком** 'I lost my parents as a child').

Note

Permanent status may *also* be denoted by the instrumental: Она́ была́ **сестрой** Полево́го (Propp), 'She was Polevoi's sister', Пу́шкин был **величайшим русским поэ́том/величайший русский поэт** 'Pushkin was the greatest Russian poet'.

(3) Of two nouns (or noun and pronoun) linked by the verb **быть** the more specific appears in the nominative, the more general in the instrumental:

Ключом к успе́ху была́ гра́мотность
The key to success was literacy

В на́шем до́ме немецкий был **тре́тним язы́ком** (Rybakov)
In our house German was the third language

Одно́й из на́ших гла́вных пробле́м был транспорт
One of our main problems was transport

Note

The subject may be an infinitive: **Учи́ться** бу́дет е́го́ це́лью 'His aim will be to study', **Пе́рвым** е́е́ побужде́нием было́ **помо́чь** до́чери 'Her first impulse was to help her daughter'.

(4) The rule described in (3) also applies to **явля́ться** 'to be':

Осно́вной фо́рмой рабо́ты в шко́ле явля́ется уро́к (*Russia Today*)
The lesson is the basic form of work in school

(5) An instrumental predicate also appears with verbs such as **запи́сываться** 'to enrol', **рабо́тать** 'to work', **служи́ть** 'to serve':

Запи́сался **доброво́льцем**, да́ли ему́ ко́ня (Rybakov)
He signed on as a volunteer, and they gave him a horse

(6) A number of verbs which denote state, appearance or manner also take an instrumental: **вы́глядеть** 'to look', **каза́ться** 'to seem', **называ́ться** 'to be called', **ока́зывать** 'to turn out to be', **остава́ться** 'to remain', **расстава́ться** 'to part', **роди́ться** 'to be born', **состоя́ть (чле́ном)** 'to be' (a member), **станови́ться** 'to become', **счита́ться** 'to be considered', **чу́ствовать** себя́ 'to feel':

Ещё́ с войны́ она́ **вдово́й** оста́лась (Shcherbakov)
She had been left a war widow