

Norwegian on the Web



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Norwegian speech sounds compared to **Russian**

Russian and Norwegian speech sounds compared

Below you will find a comparison between Norwegian (NO) and Russian (RU) speech sounds, that is consonants, vowels and diphthongs.

Consonants

The column **Consonant** in the table below demonstrates Norwegian consonant sounds of Central East Norwegian. Column 2 and 3 show words of Norwegian (NO) and Russian (RU) that sound similar or quite similar. The words may have different meanings. In these words the consonants in question are used. The degree of similarity is indicated by +, ~ or – in the column **Overlap**:

- + The Norwegian consonant is **quite similar** to the Russian one
- ~ The Norwegian consonant is **to a certain extent similar** to the Russian one
- The Norwegian consonant has **no counterpart** in Russian

Russian consonants of the two first categories may be used when speaking Norwegian. Sounds of the second category implies stronger degree of foreign accent. Before front vowels, Russian consonants are often palatalized, less so before back vowels.

Consonant	Norwegian	Russian	Overlap	Comments
/p/	park	парк	+	Less aspirated in RU
/b/	boks	бокс	+	±palatalized, unvoiced in final position
/t/	tema	тема	+~	±palatalized, less aspirated in RU
/d/	doctor	доктор	+~	±palatalized, unvoiced in final position
/tʃ/			-	
/dʃ/			-	
/k/	kakao	какао	+~	±palatalized, less aspirated in RU
/g/	granat	гранат	+~	±palatalized, unvoiced in final position
/m/	masse	масса	+	
/n/	NATO	нато	+~	±palatalized
/ŋ/			-	
/ɲ/			-	
/f/	kafé	кафе	+	
/v/	vampyr	вампир	+~	May be unvoiced in final position
/s/	samovar	самовар	+	
/ʃ/	sjokolade	шоколад	+	
/ç/	kirurg	хирург	~	Letter <x> before <и>
/j/	jogg	йог	+	
/h/	hockey	хоккей	~	Before front vowel ~ [ç], back vowel ~ [x]
/r/	ris	рис	+	
/l/	metall	металл	+~	May be velarized, ±palatalized
/ʎ/			-	

Below you will find the same data in a shorter version using colour codes:

- White: The Norwegian consonant is quite close to the Russian one
- Grey: The Norwegian consonant overlaps to some degree with the Russian one
- Black: The Norwegian consonant has no counterpart in Russian

p	b	t	d	tʃ	dʃ	k	g	l	ʎ	r
m	n	ŋ	ɲ	f	v	s	ʃ	ç	j	h

The speech sounds in black and grey cells are sounds that Russian-speaking students should practice more in order to obtain a proper pronunciation of Norwegian. /t,d,k,g,n,v,l/ overlap some times.

Vowels

The column **Vowel** in the table below demonstrates Norwegian vowel sounds of Central East Norwegian. Column 2 and 3 show words of Norwegian (NO) and Russian (RU) that sound similar or quite similar. The words may have different meanings. In these words the vowels in question are used. The degree of similarity is indicated by +, ~ or – in the column **Overlap**:

- + The Norwegian vowel is **quite similar** to the Russian one
- ~ The Norwegian vowel is **to a certain extent similar** to the Russian one
- The Norwegian vowel has **no counterpart** in Russian

Russian vowel of the two first categories may be used when speaking Norwegian. Use of the second category implies stronger degree of foreign accent.

Vowel	Norwegian	Russian	Overlap	Comments
/i/	risk	риск	+	
/i:/	ris	рис	~	RU vowel is shorter than NO
/y/			-	
/y:/			-	
/e/	ekko	эхо	~	RU vowel is more central: [ə]
/e:/	tema	тема	~	RU vowel is shorter than NO
/ø/			-	
/ø:/			-	
/æ/			-	
/æ:/			-	
/ɑ/	alfabet	алфавит	+	RU vowel is more front than NO
/ɑ:/	da	да	~	RU vowel is more front than NO
/ɯ/			-	
/ɯ:/			-	
/u/	punkt	пункт	+	
/u:/	ord	ур	~	RU vowel is shorter than NO
/o/	koks	кокс	+	
/o:/	på	по	~	RU vowel is shorter than NO

Russian vowels resemble in general the short Norwegian vowels, but in stressed syllables they might be longer, so that they at times they might resemble long Norwegian vowels.

The table above is presented below in a shorter version using colour codes:

- White: The Norwegian vowel is quite close to the Russian one
- Grey: The Norwegian vowel overlaps to some degree with the Russian one
- Black: The Norwegian vowel has no counterpart in Russian

i	e	æ	ɑ	y	ɯ	ø	u	o
i:	e:	æ:	ɑ:	y:	ɯ:	ø:	u:	o:

The sounds in black and grey cells are speech sounds that Russian-speaking students should practice more in order to obtain a proper pronunciation of Norwegian. Observe that /æ/ and /ɑ/ are two different sounds in Norwegian. The Russian /ɑ/ is somewhat more front than the Norwegian /ɑ/.

Diphthongs

The column **Diphthong** in the table below demonstrates Norwegian diphthongs of Central East Norwegian. Column 2 and 3 show words of Norwegian (NO) and Russian (RU) that sound similar or quite similar. The words may have different meanings. In these words the diphthongs in question are used. The degree of similarity is indicated by +, ~ or – in the column **Overlap**:

- + The Norwegian diphthong is *quite similar* to the Russian one
- ~ The Norwegian diphthong is *to a certain extent similar* to the Russian one
- The Norwegian diphthong has *no counterpart* in Russian

Russian diphthongs of the two first categories may be used when speaking Norwegian. Use of the second category implies stronger degree of foreign accent.

Diphthong	Norwegian	Russian	Overlap	Comments
/ɑi/	mai	май	~	NO /ɑ/ is more back
/æi/	ei	эй	~	NO starts more open: /æ/
/øɥ/			–	
/æu/			–	
/oy/	Roy	рой	+	RU /o/ is longer than NO
/uy/	hoi	хуй	+	Rare in NO (NB: RU word is vulgar)
/ɥy/			–	Rare in NO

The table above is presented below in a shorter version using colour codes:

- White: The Norwegian diphthong is quite close to the Russian one
- Grey: The Norwegian diphthong overlaps to some degree with the Russian one
- Black: The Norwegian diphthong has no counterpart in Russian

/ɑi/	/æi/	/øɥ/	/æu/	/oy/	/uy/	/ɥy/
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The sounds in black and grey cells are speech sounds that Russian-speaking students should practice more in order to obtain a proper pronunciation of Norwegian.