

Listening (Transcript)

PAUSE 00'30"

REPEAT

1) Man: Chances are you already know something about the country of Russia and its people. The first topic is general information about Russia. Between nineteen twenty-two and nineteen ninety-one, Russia was part of the region known as the United Soviet Socialist Republic, and its name for short, was the USSR. In nineteen ninety-one, it became an independent country. The name of the country today is the Russian Federation. Did you know that Russia is the largest country in the world? In fact, it shares a border with fourteen countries. The capital city, Moscow, has a population of around nine million people.

2) Woman: Russia has a long, rich history, and its sightseeing destinations are among the most beautiful in the world. For the next topic, I'll talk about tourist spots in Russia. Many people come to Saint Petersburg to visit the State Hermitage Museum. It's one of the oldest and largest fine art museums in the world. And in Moscow, the most popular tourist spots are the Kremlin and Red Square. The Kremlin is a medieval city inside of Moscow and has beautiful palaces, cathedrals, and museums. The cathedral in Red Square was built in the fifteen hundreds and is best known for its colorful exterior and its patterned arches, towers, and spires.

3) Man: I'm going to discuss the topic of greeting customs in Russia. In many countries, when people meet for the first time, they shake hands. This is true in Russia, too. But be careful! Don't shake hands in a doorway. It's bad luck. Guests must go inside, or the host must come outside of the house before they shake hands. In addition, Russians generally do not smile when they meet someone new. They shake hands but do not usually smile. So when you're in Russia, do as the Russians do: Don't smile when you meet someone. It won't mean you're unfriendly. It's just the Russian style of greeting.

4) Woman: The last topic is communication tips. When Russians introduce themselves, they use their full name. That is, they use three names: their first name, their family name, and their middle name. So, when you introduce someone in Russia, use the person's full name. Don't use only the person's first or last name. You should use first names only with close friends. Also, it's OK to touch the person you're talking to if you know the person fairly well. And as many people know, in Russia, hugging and kissing on the cheek are common among friends and between members of the same sex.