

## Grammar 9—Motion and Location

Concepts of location, direction, and motion are very important in Russian. Careful study of the way Russians think about and talk about motion and location will provide you with a rich set of tools for expressing yourself.

### See Also

- [Language Generator 8—Motion and Location](#)
- [Video: Motion and Location](#)
- [Grammar 9—Motion and Location Slide](#)

Russian makes a distinction between being at a location and moving toward or away from it. This is a distinction which was lost in English around the time of World War I. In the table below we show the archaic English adverbs of motion in parentheses:

	<b>From Where</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>To Where</b>
<b>Question</b>	откуда? from where? (whence?)	где? where?	куда? to where? (whither?)
<b>Here</b>	отсюда from here (hence)	здесь here	сюда to here (hither)
<b>There</b>	оттуда from there (thence)	там over there	туда to there (thither)

This distinction holds even when we name the location:

	<b>From Where</b> Genitive Case	<b>Where</b> Prepositional Case	<b>To Where</b> Accusative or Dative Case
<b>Surface</b>	со стола́ off the table	на столе́ on the table	на стол onto the table
<b>Enclosed Space</b>	из ба́нки out of the can	в ба́нке inside the can	в ба́нку into the can
<b>Unpenetrated Space</b>	от челове́ка from the man	у челове́ка near the man	к челове́ку toward the man

### Examples

From a surface:	Дай тарелку со стола́.	Pass the plate from the table.
Into a space:	Сыпь сахар в ба́нку.	Pour sugar into the can.
Toward a space:	Я иду́ к врачу́.	I am going toward the doctor.

The classification of a space may at times surprise:

As a surface:	Он прие́хал на маши́не.	He arrived on an automobile.
As a surface:	Он пришёл на рабо́ту.	He arrived onto work.
As a surface:	Он пришёл на собра́ние.	He arrived onto the meeting.

The classification can depend on how the space is used:

An enclosed space:	из ко́робоки	from inside the cardboard box
A surface:	с ко́робоки	from on top of the cardboard box

Thus as the interaction with a space changes, the classification may have to change to match:

Seen as unpenetrated:	Он шёл к челове́ку.	He was walking toward the man.
Seen as a surface:	Он насы́пал на челове́ка песо́к.	He poured sand onto the man.
Seen as enclosed:	Он стреля́л в челове́ка.	He shot into a man. (Seen as enclosed)

# Russian Prepositions Expressing Motion and Location

