

# Lesson 1.1

Lesson 1.1 – The Russian alphabet (part 1 : similar letters) / Stressed syllables / The letter O (pronunciation)

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## The Russian alphabet (part 1) : the letters that are similar to their English counterparts

**К / к**

**М / м**

**Т / т**

**А / а** – The Russian « **A** » sound is quiet similar to the « A » sound in the word « father ».

**С / с** – This letter is pronounced like in the word « nice ».

**О / о** – The Russian « **O** » sound is quiet similar to the « O » sound in the word « or », but in Russian, you have to exaggerate the lips' rounding.

Cognate words :

**Кот (kot)** – cat

**Такт (takt)** – tact

**Кома (koma)** – coma

**Тост (tost)** – toast

**Маска (maska)** – mask

**Мама (mama)** – mom / mommy

**Макака (makaka)** – macaque

## Stressed syllables

In Russian, stress can fall on any syllable of a word ; you have to learn it.  
Stress indicates emphasis : the stressed syllable has to be pronounced louder, more clearly, and for twice as long as the other syllables.

In Russian texts, the stressed vowel is marked with an acute accent ; but we do not normally write these stress marks, you won't find them in books or newspapers for example. They only appear in dictionaries and children's books to show you the correct pronunciation.

If the word is one syllable, we do not need any stress marks because there is only one vowel : it is this unique vowel that is automatically stressed.

## The pronunciation of the letter o (if it is not stressed)

If the letter **O** is stressed, it is pronounced « o ». However, if it is not stressed and follows the stressed syllable, it is pronounced like a very short « a ».

Examples :

**Атом** (atom) - atom

**Космос** (kosmas) - cosmos