

Language

CONTENTS

Pronunciation	310
Accommodation	310
Conversation & Essentials	311
Directions	311
Emergencies	312
Health	312
Language Difficulties	313
Numbers	313
Paperwork	313
Question Words	313
Shopping & Services	313
Time & Dates	314
Transport	315
Travel with Children	316

Modern Bulgarian belongs to the group of South Slavonic languages. It's the descendant of the oldest Slavonic literary language, Old Bulgarian (also called Old Slavic or Old Church Slavonic). Originally formulated in connection with the missionary work of the Salonica brothers, Cyril (after whom the Cyrillic script he created is named) and Methodius, during the 9th century AD, Old Bulgarian flourished in the Bulgarian lands for several centuries, giving rise to an original literary and cultural tradition that continues to thrive.

Today Bulgarian is the native language of more than seven million speakers who make up the Slavonic ethnic majority of the Republic of Bulgaria. It is the second language of several linguistic minorities in the country, including speakers of Turkish, Romany, Armenian, Greek and Romanian. While Contemporary Standard Bulgarian is the official language of the Republic of Bulgaria, historical and social factors have given rise to regional varieties in neighbouring areas. In Bulgaria itself, a number of regional dialects are common, and Bulgarian is spoken by sizable groups in the former USSR, Canada, Argentina and in some other countries.

Bulgarian has affinities with all the other Slavonic languages, and is closely related

THE BULGARIAN CYRILLIC ALPHABET

Cyrillic	Roman	Pronunciation
А а	a/uh	as in 'father'; as the 'a' in 'ago' in stressed syllables
Б б	b	as in 'boy'
В в	v	as in 'vice'
Г г	g	as in 'go'
Д д	d	as in 'door'
Е е	e	as in 'bet'
Ж ж	zh	as the 's' in 'pleasure'
З з	z	as in 'zoo'
И и	ee	as in 'feet'
Й й	y	as in 'yes'
К к	k	as in 'king'
Л л	l	as in 'let'
М м	m	as in 'met'
Н н	n	as in 'net'
О о	o	as in 'pot'
П п	p	as in 'pen'
Р р	r	like the trilled Scottish 'r'
С с	s	as in 'sit'
Т т	t	as in 'tip'
У у	oo	as in 'boot'
Ф ф	f	as in 'foot'
Х х	h	as breathy sound, as in 'hard'
Ц ц	ts	as in 'lets'
Ч ч	ch	as in 'chip'
Ш ш	sh	as in 'ship'
Щ щ	sht	as the '-shed' in 'pushed'
Ъ ъ	uh	a neutral vowel sound, roughly resembles the 'a' in 'ago'
Ю ю	yu	as the word 'you' but shorter
Я я	ya	as in 'yard' but shorter

to Russian. Unlike these languages, however, Modern Bulgarian has lost its grammatical case endings, making it a lot easier for English speakers to put together grammatically correct phrases.

Students in Bulgaria must learn at least one foreign language – either English, French, German or Russian – from an early age; many now opt for English. Older Bulgarians may speak Russian because it was a required school subject during the communist era, and a few others may also speak French or German. These days, young people, tourism workers and business people are more likely to speak English as a second language, although German is usually preferred in the Black Sea resorts.

It's essential to learn the Cyrillic alphabet, both the standard print (see p309) and written versions, because some letters are completely different and occasionally used interchangeably. You'll come across what might be called 'handwritten style' Cyrillic in printed form too, which can often cause confusion. In this popular style, the letter **д** ('d' sound) is represented by what looks like a small Latin 'g', the letter **т** ('t' sound) is represented by what looks like a small 'm' and the letter **л** ('l' sound) looks like an upside-down 'v'.

In this language guide we use the polite form unless otherwise indicated by the abbreviation 'inf' (informal) in brackets. If you'd like a more comprehensive language guide, get a copy of Lonely Planet's *Bulgarian Phrasebook*. Linguistic dictionaries in Bulgarian with English, German or French are also available from most bookshops throughout the country.

Bulgarians are generally friendly and very approachable. If you don't have the time to learn the intricacies of local etiquette and body language, rest assured that the use of the polite forms, accompanied by a friendly smile, will take you a long way in Bulgaria.

PRONUNCIATION

To a great extent Bulgarian spelling (unlike English) has an almost one-to-one letter-sound relationship. Most Bulgarian sounds occur in English as well – with a little practice you'll have no problem making yourself understood. The Bulgarian Cyrillic Alphabet chart on p309 shows the Roman letters we use to represent Cyrillic, and their approximate pronunciation.

ACCOMMODATION

Where's a/an ...?

Къде има ...?	kuh-de ee-ma ...
accommodation agency	
квартирно бюро	kvar-teer-no byoo-ro
camping ground	
къмпинг	kuhm-peeng
guesthouse	
пансион	pan-see-on
hotel	
хотел	ho-tel
private room	
частна квартира	chast-na kvar-tee-ra
youth hostel	
хостел	hos-tel

Do you have a ... room?

Има ли стая ...?	ee-ma lee sta-ya ...
single	
с едно единично легло	s ed-no e-dee-nee-ch-no leg-lo
double	
с едно двойно легло	s ed-no dvoyn-no leg-lo
twin	
с две легла	s dve leg-la

How much is it per ...?

Колко е на ...?	kol-ko e na ...
night	
вечер	ve-cher
person	
човек	cho-yek

Can I pay by ...?

Мога ли да платя с ...?	mo-guh lee da plat-yuh s ...
credit card	
кредитна карта	kre-deet-na kar-ta
travellers cheque	
пътнически чек	puht-nee-ches-kee chek

What's the address?

Какъв е адресът?
ka-kuhv e a-dre-siht

I'd like to book a room, please.

Искам да взема една стая, моля.
ees-kam da vze-muh ed-na sta-ya mol-yuh

I have a reservation.

Имам резервация.
ee-mam re-zer-va-tsee-ya

For (three) nights/weeks.

За (три) нощи/седмици.
za (tree) nosh-tee/sed-mee-tsee

From (2 July) to (6 July).

От (втори юли) до (шести юли).
ot (vto-tee yoo-lee) do (shes-tee yoo-lee)

May I see it?

Мога ли да я видя?
mo-guh lee da ya veed-yuh

I'll take it.

Ще я взема.
shte ya vze-muh

I'm leaving now.

Тръгвам сега.
truhg-vam se-ga

Is breakfast included?

Включена ли е закуската?
vkluyoo-che-na lee e za-koos-ka-ta

Is there hot water all day?

Има ли топла вода през целия ден?
ee-ma lee top-la vo-da prez tse-lee-yuh den

There's no hot water.

Няма топла вода.
nya-ma top-la vo-da

Is the water drinkable?

Водата може ли да се пие?
vo-da-ta mo-zhe lee da se pee-e

Can I use the ...?

Мога ли да използвам ...?	mo-guh lee da izpolzvam ...?
internet	
Интернета	een-ter-ne-tuh
kitchen	
кухнята	kooh-nya-ta
laundry	
пералнята	pe-ral-nya-ta
telephone	
телефона	te-le-fo-nuh

CONVERSATION & ESSENTIALS

Hello.

Здравейте. (pol) zdra-vey-te

Hi.

Здравей. (inf) zdra-vey

Good morning.

Добро утро. dob-ro oot-ro

Good day/afternoon.

Добър ден. do-buhr den

Good evening.

Добър вечер. do-buhr ve-cher

Goodbye.

Довиждане. do-veezh-da-ne

Bye.

Чао. (inf) cha-o

See you later.

До скоро виждане. do sko-ro veezh-da-ne

Good night.

Лека нощ. le-ka nosht

Yes.

Да. da

No.

Не. ne

Please.

Моля. mol-yuh

Thank you (very much).

(Много) Благодаря. (mno-go) bla-go-dar-yuh

You're welcome.

Няма защо. nya-ma zash-to

Sorry.

Съжалявам. suh-zhal-ya-vam

Excuse me. (to get past)

Извинете. eez-vee-ne-te

Excuse me. (to get attention, or before a request)

Моля. mol-ya

How are you?

Как сте/си? (pol/inf) kak ste/see

Fine, thanks. And you?

Добре, благодаря. dob-re bla-go-dar-yuh
А вие? a vee-e

SIGNS

Свободни Стаи	Rooms Available
Квартири	Quarters (rooms in private houses)
Отворено	Open
Затворено	Closed
Забранено	Prohibited
Полицейско Управление	Police Station
Тоалетни	Toilets/WC
Мъже (М)	Men
Жени (Ж)	Women

What's your name?

Как се казвате/? (pol) kak se kaz-va-te/kaz-vash
Как се казваш? (inf) kak se kaz-va-te/kaz-vash

My name's ...

Казвам се ... kaz-vam se ...

I'm pleased to meet you.

Приятно ми е да се пазпозна с вас. pree-yat-no mee e da se za-poz-na-yuh s vas

Where are you from?

Откъде сте? ot-kuh-de ste

I'm from ...

Аз съм от ... az suhm ot ...

I (don't) like ...

(Не) Харесвам ... (ne) ha-res-vam ...

Local Talk

Hey!	Хей!	hey
Great!	Супер!	soo-per
Sure.	Естествено.	es-test-ve-no
Maybe.	Може би.	mo-zhe bee
No way!	Няма начин!	nya-ma na-cheen
Just a minute.	Един момент.	e-deen mo-ment
Just joking.	Шегувам се.	she-goo-vam se
It's OK.	Добре.	do-bre
No problem.	Няма проблем.	nya-ma prob-lem

DIRECTIONS

Where can I find a/the ...?

Къде се намира ...?
kuh-de se na-mee-ra ...?

Where's a/the ...?

Къде има ...?
kuh-de ee-ma ...

How far is it?

На какво разстояние е?
na kak-vo ras-to-ya-nee-e e

How do I get there?

Как да стигна дотам?
kak da steeg-nuh do-tam

Can you show me (on the map)?

Можете ли да ми покажете (на картата)?
mo-zhe-te lee da mee po-ka-zhe-te (na kar-ta-ta)

police	
полиция	po-lee-tsee-ya
post office	
поща	posh-ta
supermarket	
супермаркет	soo-per-mar-ket
public toilet	
обществена тоалетна	obsh-test-ve-na to-a-let-na
telephone centre	
телефонна централа	te-le-fon-na tsen-tra-la
tourist information office	
бюро за туристическа информация	byoo-ro za too-rees-tee-ches-ka infor-ma-tsee-ya

change money	
обменя пари	ob-men-yuh pa-ree
Do you accept ...?	
Приемате ли ...?	pree-e-ma-te lee ...
credit cards	
кредитни карти	kre-deet-nee kar-tee
debit cards	
дебитни карти	de-beet-nee kar-tee
travellers cheques	
пътнически чекове	puht-nee-ches-kee che-ko-ve

more	повече/още	po-ve-che/osh-te
less	по-малко	po-mal-ko
smaller	по-малък	po-ma-luhk
bigger	по-голям	po-go-lyam

TIME & DATES

What time is it?	
Колко струва?	kol-ko stroo-va
It's one o'clock.	
Частъ е един.	cha-suht e e-deen
It's (two) o'clock.	
(Два) часа е.	(dva) cha-suh e
Quarter to (three).	
(Три) без петнайсет.	(tree) bez pet-nai-set
Twenty to (three).	
(Три) без двайсет.	(tree) bez dvai-set
At what time ...?	
В колко часа ...?	v kol-ko cha-suh ...

am	сутрин	soo-treen
pm	следобед	sle-do-bed
today	днес	dnes
tonight	двечера	do-ve-che-ra

this ...	днес ...	dnes ...
tomorrow ...	утре ...	oo-tre ...
morning	сутринта	soo-treen-ta
afternoon	следобед	sle-do-bed
evening	вечер	ve-cher

Monday	понеделник	po-ne-del-neek
Tuesday	вторник	vtor-neek
Wednesday	сряда	srya-da
Thursday	четвъртък	chet-vuhr-tuhk
Friday	петък	pe-tuhk
Saturday	събота	suh-bo-ta
Sunday	неделя	ne-del-ya

January	януари	ya-noo-a-ree
February	февруари	fev-roo-a-ree
March	март	mart
April	април	ap-reel
May	май	mai

June	юни	yoo-nee
July	юли	yoo-lee
August	август	av-goost
September	септември	sep-tem-vree
October	октомври	ok-tom-vree
November	ноември	no-em-vree
December	декември	de-kem-vree

TRANSPORT**Public Transport**

bus terminal	
депо	de-po
(central) bus station	
(централната)	(tsen-tral-na-ta)
автогара	av-to-ga-ra

left-luggage office	
има гардероб	ee-ma gar-de-rob
luggage locker	
има гардероб	ee-ma gar-de-rob
timetable	
разписание	raz-pee-sa-nee-e

boat	кораб	ko-rab
bus	автобус	av-to-boos
ferry	ферибот (м)	fe-ree-bot
minibus	маршрутка	marsh-root-ka
trolleybus	тролейбус	tro-ley-boos

How much is it?	
Колко струва?	kol-ko stroo-va
How long does the trip take?	
Колко трае пътуването?	kol-ko tra-ye puh-too-va-ne-to
What's the next station?	
Коя е следващата спирка?	ko-ya e sled-vash-ta-ta speer-ka

Do I need to change?	
Трябва ли да се превървя на друг влак?	tryav-va lee da se pre-hvuhr-lyuh na droog vlak
Which bus goes to (Pomorie)?	
Кой е автобус за (Поморие)?	ko-ya av-to-boos za (po-mo-ree-ye)
What time does it leave?	
В колко часа тръгва?	v kol-ko cha-suh truhg-va

What time does it get to (Kyu-stendil)?	
В колко часа пристига в (Кюстендил)?	v kol-ko cha-suh prees-tee-ga v (kyoo-sten-deel)
Please tell me when we get to (Plovdiv).	
Кажете ми моля кога когато пристигнем в (Пловдив).	ka-zhe-te mee mol-yuh ko-ga-to prees-teeg-nem v (plov-deev)
Please stop here.	
Моля, спрете тук.	mol-yuh spre-te took

When's the ... bus?	Кога тръгва ... автобус?	ko-ga truhg-va ... av-to-boos
first	първият	puhr-vee-yuht
last	последният	po-sled-nee-yuht
next	следващият	sled-vash-tee-yuht

A ... ticket (to Rila).	Един ... билет (за Рила).	e-deen ... bee-let (za ree-la)
1st-class	първокласен	puhr-vo-kla-sen
2nd-class	второкласен	vto-ro-kla-sen
one-way	еднопосочен	ed-no-po-so-chen
return	двупосочен	dvoo-po-so-chen
student	студентски	stoo-dent-skee

Is this taxi available?	Таксито свободно ли е?	tak-see-to svo-bod-no lee e
Please take me to (this address).	Моля да ме закарате до (този адрес).	mol-yuh da me za-ka-ra-te do (to-zee ad-res)

Please put the meter on.	Моля да включите таксиметъра.	mol-yuh da vkl-yoo-chee-te tak-see-me-tuh-ra
---------------------------------	-------------------------------	--

How much is it to (the airport)?	Колко струва до (летището)?	kol-ko stroo-va do (le-teesh-te-to)
---	-----------------------------	-------------------------------------

Private Transport

Except for **Cron** (Stop), you'll hardly see any written road signs in Bulgaria – pictorial signs are used instead.

I'd like to hire a car/motorbike/bicycle.	Искам да взема под наем кола/мотопед/колено.	ees-kam da vze-muh pod na-em ko-la/mo-to-ped/ko-le-lo
--	--	---

How much for ... hire?	Колко струва ...?	kol-ko stroo-va ...
daily	на ден	na den
weekly	на седмица	na sed-mee-tsa

Is this the road to (Blagoevgrad)?	Това ли е пътят за (Благоевград)?	to-va lee e puht-yuht za (bla-go-ev-grad)
Where's a petrol station?	Къде има бензиностанция?	kuh-de ee-ma ben-zee-no-stan-tsee-ya

Please fill it up.	Моля напълнете го до края.	mol-yuh na-puhl-ne-te go do kra-ya
I'd like (25) litres.	Искам (двайсет и пет) литра.	ees-kam (dvai-set ee pet) leet-ra

Can I park here?

Мога ли да паркирам тук?
mo-guh lee da par-kee-ram took

How long can I park here?

Колко време мога да паркирам тук?
kol-ko vre-me mo-guh da par-kee-ram took

Do I have to pay?

Плаща ли се?
plash-ta lee se

diesel	дизел	<i>dee-zel</i>
leded	оловен бензин	<i>o-lo-ven ben-zeen</i>
LPG	газ	<i>gaz</i>
regular	обикновен	<i>o-beek-no-ven</i>
	бензин	<i>ben-zeen</i>
unleaded	безоловен	<i>bez-o-lo-ven</i>

I need a mechanic.

Трябва ми монтьор.
tryab-va mee mon-tyor

I've had an accident.

Имах злополука.
ee-mah zlo-po-loo-ka

The car/motorbike has broken down (at ...).

Колата/Мотопедът претърпя авария (в ...).
ko-la-ta/mo-to-ped-uh-t pre-tuhr-pya a-va-ree-ya (v ...)

I've run out of petrol.

Нямам бензин.
nya-mat ben-zeen

I have a flat tyre.

Пукна ми се гумата.
pook-na mee se goo-ma-ta

TRAVEL WITH CHILDREN

Do you sell ...?

Продавате ли ...?
pro-da-va-te lee ...

disposable nappies

пелени за еднократка употреба
pe-le-nee za ed-no-krat-ka oo-po-tre-ba

painkillers for babies

болкоуспокоителни лекарства за бебета
bol-ko-oo-s-po-ko-ee-tel-nee le-kars-tva za be-be-ta

infant milk formula

рецепта за приготвяне на храна за бебета
re-tsep-ta za pri-got-nya-ne na hra-na za be-be-ta

Is there a ...?

Има ли ...?
ee-ma lee ...

I need a/an ...

Трябва ми ...
tryab-va mee ...

baby seat (for the car)

детска седалка (за кола)
det-ska se-dal-ka (za ko-la)

children's menu

детско меню
det-sko men-yoo

(English-speaking) babysitter

бавачка (говореща английски)
ba-vach-ka (go-vo-resh-ta an-gleey-skee)

booster seat

детска седалка
det-ska se-dal-ka

highchair

високо детско столче за хранене
vee-so-ko det-sko stol-che za hra-ne-ne

potty

гърне
guh-r-ne

pushchair/stroller

детска количка
det-ska ko-leech-ka

Are there any good places to take children around here?

Има ли в района добри места за разходка с деца?
ee-ma lee v ra-yo-nuh do-bree mes-ta za raz-hod-ka s de-tsa

Are children allowed?

Разрешено ли е за деца?
raz-re-she-no lee e za de-tsa

Where can I change a nappy?

Къде мога да сменя бебешките пелени?
kuh-de mo-guh da smen-yuh be-besh-kee-te pe-le-nee



Also available from Lonely Planet:
Bulgarian Phrasebook

Glossary

For food and drink terms see the Food & Drink chapter (p55). For general terms see the Language chapter (p309).

aleya – alley, lane
apteka – chemist or pharmacy
avtogara – bus station

Balkantourist – the former government-run tourism organisation
balneology – therapeutic bath of mineral waters, often enjoyed in a balneocentre
banya – bath; often signifies mineral baths in general
BDZh – abbreviation for the Bulgarian State Railways
besplatno – free (of charge)
bul – abbreviation of *bulevard*; main street or boulevard

chalga – upbeat Bulgarian folk-pop music, based on traditional melodies but played on modern instruments
charshiya – a street or area of traditional craft workshops
cherga – a traditional, colourful, hand-woven rug

dvorets – palace
dzhumaya – mosque

etazh – numbered floor (storey) of a building
ezero (m), **ezera** (f) – lake

fonokarta – phonecard for use in public telephones

gara – train station
gradina – garden; often referring to a public park

haidouks – Bulgarian rebels who fought against the Turks in the 18th and 19th centuries
hali – indoor market
hizha – hut; often refers to a mountain hut
house-museum – a home built in a style typical of the Bulgarian National Revival period and turned into a museum

iconostasis (s), **iconostases** (pl) – a screen, partition or door in an Eastern Orthodox church that separates the sanctuary from the nave; often richly decorated
iskhot – ‘exit’ (displayed on doors in public buildings)
iztok – east

kâshtha – house
khan – king within a Bulgar tribe, or the subsequent Bulgarian empires; also known as a *tsar*

kilim – hand-woven woolen carpet, normally with colourful geometric patterns
kino – cinema
knyaz – prince
konak – police station built during Turkish rule
krepost – fortress
kurdjali – Turkish gangs that raided several Bulgarian towns during the 18th and 19th centuries
kvartiri – quarters/accommodation; often meaning private rooms for rent

lev (s), **leva** (pl) – monetary unit of Bulgaria; shortened to lv; equals 100 *stotinki*

malko – minor, small
manastir – monastery
mehana – tavern
more – sea
most – bridge

obshtina – municipality; also another word for town hall

pasha – high official during Turkish rule
peron – railway platform
peshtera – cave
pl – abbreviation of *ploshtad*; town or city square
planina – mountain
plazh – beach
Pomaks – literally ‘helpers’; Slavs who converted to Islam during the era of Turkish rule

rakia – Bulgarian brandy, normally made from grapes, occasionally from plums or other fruit
reka – river

sever – north
spirka – bus stop/shelter
stotinka (s), **stotinki** (pl) – one-hundredth of a *lev*
sveti (m), **sveta** (f) – saint
svobodni stai – ‘free rooms’: advertised rooms for rent in private homes

toaletna – toilet
Troyanska kapka – ‘Trojan droplet’; traditional glazed pottery with a distinctive ‘drip’ design
tsar – see *khan*
tsârkva – church
turisticheski dom – ‘tourist home’; a fairly comfortable hotel with double rooms

turisticheska spalnya – ‘tourist bedroom’; a more basic, dorm-style hostel

ul – abbreviation of ulitsa: street

varosha – centre of an old town

veliko – great, large

vhot – ‘entrance’ (displayed on doors in public buildings)

vilayet – a province of the Ottoman Turkish empire in the 19th century

vlak – train

vrâh – mountain peak

yug – south

zakuska – breakfast

zapad – west

© Lonely Planet Publications. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'