

# [Bulgarian language - grammar]

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## български граматика

Basic Bulgarian Language rules  
English – Bulgaria

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## Introduction

This grammar is aimed at an extremely diverse group of potential readers that for different reasons have chosen to study Bulgarian. It is an **elementary** grammar, not an academic grammar of Bulgarian. It is designed to explain in a popular way the main grammatical particularities of Bulgarian. If you need more detailed information on Bulgarian grammar you should consult other books.

However, I tried not sacrifice the linguistic accuracy for the sake of simplicity. In general, I avoided to go into details that are not relevant to the aim of this grammar, i.e. to ease the comprehension of the grammatical categories introduced at the beginners' and intermediate levels of teaching Bulgarian as a foreign language. I hope that you will be able to find enough information on several topics of the grammar of Bulgarian.

I hope you will enjoy studying Bulgarian. Good luck!

## The Alphabet

The Bulgarian alphabet is a variant of the Cyrillic alphabet. It consists of 30 letters. In the table below you'll see how they look like, the names of the letters, as well as the letters or letter combinations of the English variant of the Latin alphabet that roughly correspond to the Bulgarian letters, and an English word that contains the same or almost the same sound. In this chapter, and throughout the whole "Elementary On-Line Bulgarian Grammar", the accented vowels are underlined.

Bulgarian Letter	Name of the Letter	English Letter/ Letter Combin.	Approx. Sound in English	Bulgarian Word
А, а	а	a	March (but shorter)	ма <u>р</u> т
Б, б	бъ	b	ba <u>b</u> y	бе <u>б</u> е
В, в	въ	v	vi <u>s</u> a	ви <u>з</u> a
Г, г	гъ	g	ga <u>g</u> arden	гра <u>д</u> ина
Д, д	дъ	d	do <u>d</u> ctor	до <u>к</u> тор
Е, е	е	e	Ed <u>e</u> ward	Е <u>д</u> уард
Ж, ж	жъ	s	mea <u>s</u> ure	жа <u>р</u> 'embers'
З, з	зъ	z	zo <u>z</u> ne	зо <u>н</u> a
И, и	и	i	id <u>i</u> ot	иди <u>о</u> т
Й, й	и кратко	Y	Ma <u>y</u>	ма <u>й</u>
К, к	къ	k, c, ck, q	ca <u>k</u> e, sto <u>ck</u> , qua <u>rtz</u>	ке <u>й</u> к, сто <u>к</u> a, ква <u>рц</u>
Л, л	лъ	l	Li <u>l</u> y, lo <u>t</u>	Ли <u>л</u> и, ло <u>д</u> ка 'boat'
М, м	мъ	m	mi <u>n</u> ute	ми <u>н</u> ута
Н, н	нъ	n	ne <u>t</u>	не <u>н</u> o'
О, о	о	o	Bo <u>o</u> b	бо <u>о</u> б 'beans'
П, п	пъ	p	Pe <u>t</u> er	Пе <u>т</u> ър
Р, р	ръ	r	ro <u>r</u> se	ро <u>з</u> a
С, с	съ	s	sa <u>s</u> lt	со <u>л</u>
Т, т	тъ	t	ti <u>t</u> le	ти <u>т</u> ла
У, у	у	u, oo	pu <u>u</u> t, bo <u>o</u> ok	бу <u>у</u> к 'beech'
Ф, ф	фъ	f, ph	fi <u>n</u> e, teleph <u>o</u> ne	фи <u>н</u> , теле <u>ф</u> он
Х, х	хъ	h	ho <u>h</u> tel	хо <u>т</u> ел

Ц, ц	цъ	ts, tz, zz	bets, quartz, pizza	цар 'king', кварц, пица
Ч, ч	чъ	ch	charm	чар
Ш, ш	шъ	sh	show	шоу
Щ, щ	щъ (штъ)	Sht	ash tray, washed	щастие 'happiness'
Ъ, ъ	ъ (ер голям)	u, a	a Bulgarian	българин
Ь, ь	ер малък	-	-	синьо 'blue'
Ю, ю	ю (йу)	u, ew	dune, New York	дюни, Нью Йорк
Я, я	я (йа)	Ya	yard	ярд

As you can see there are three types of letters:

- Some Bulgarian letters and the sounds they stand for are similar to the English ones:

Bulgarian		English	
А	фаза 'phase'	А	father
Е	пет 'five'	Е	pet
О	шорти 'shorts'	О	short
К	килим 'carpet'	К	kick
М	Мая	М	May
Т	Том	Т	Tom

- Others look like familiar English letters but stand for rather **different** sounds:

Bulgarian		English	
В	Валерия	V	Valerie
Н	Нора	N	Nora
Р	Роза	R	Rose
С	Сара	S	Sarah
У	бутам 'push'	U	butcher
Х	Хари	H	Harry

- The rest of the letters look unfamiliar but stand for sounds that are similar to English sounds:

Bulgarian		English	
Б	бебе	B	baby
Г	градина	G	garden
Д	доктор	D	doctor
Ж	жар	S	measure
З	зона	Z	zone
И	идиот	I	idiot
Й	май	Y	May
Л	лодка, Ли́ли	L	lot, Lily
П	Петър	P	Peter
Ф	фин	F	fine
Ц	кварц	TZ	quartz
Ч	чар	CH	charm
Ш	шоу	SH	show
Щ	щастие	SHT	ash tray
Ъ	българин	U	a Bulgarian
Ю	дюни	U	dune
Я	ярд	YA	yard

That leaves only the soft sign **Ь** completely without a counterpart in English. This is due to its specific function in [Bulgarian spelling](#).

## Basic Spelling Rules

Bulgarian orthography is regarded as based on the phonetic and the morphological principles, i.e. to a great extent there are direct correspondences between letters and sounds but not always. The most important exceptions to that rule refer to the [soft consonants](#), and to the [phonetic value of the letters Ъ, Ю, Я](#).

There are 38 (some linguists claim that there are 39) consonants in Bulgarian. Apart from the nasals *м, н*, the liquids *л, р* and the glide *й*, that do not participate in the opposition [voiced consonants : voiceless \(mute\) consonants](#), and the "hushes" *дж, ж, ч, ш* and the glide *й*, that do not participate in the opposition [hard \(non-palatalized\) consonants: soft \(palatalized\) consonants](#), all the other

consonants participate in those two main oppositions.

Thirty four consonants come in hard - soft pairs. The soft consonants are pronounced as though you were pronouncing the hard consonant and an 'y' simultaneously. As there are severe restrictions on the distribution of the soft consonants - they can occur only before the non-front vowels **а, ъ, о, у** but never in front of another consonant, or in word-final position (i.e. at the end of the word), or before the front vowels **е, и** - there are no separate letters assigned for them in the alphabet. The letters for the hard consonants are used instead followed by the special letters for the 4 vowels that can come after them: for **а, ъ** - **Я**, for **о** - **ЬО**, for **у** - **Ю**. Here are the hard - soft pairs in alphabetical order followed by some examples (the accented vowel is underlined):

**б - б'** **бал** - **бал** [бал - бал] (a ball (social event) - white)

**в - в'** **вал** - **вал** [вал - вал] (a shaft - inert)

**г - г'** **гол** - **гол** [гол - гол] (naked - a puddle)

**д - д'** **дал** - **дал** [дал - дал] (given - a share/a part)

**дз - дз'**

**з - з'** **коза** - **козя** [козь - коз'ь]<sup>1</sup> (the trump - to trump)

**к - к'** **куп** - **куп** [куп - куп] (a heap - a pot)

**л - л'** **лук** - **лук** [лук - лук] (an onion - an aperture)

**м - м'** **дима** - **димя** [димь - дим'ь]<sup>1</sup> (the smoke - to smoke)

**н - н'** **звѣна** - **звѣня** [звѣнь - звѣн'ь]<sup>1</sup> (the ringing - to ring)

**п - п'** **сипа** - **сипя** [сипа - сип'я]<sup>1,2</sup> ( he poured - I pour)

**р - р'** **спора** - **споря** [спорь - спор'ь]<sup>1</sup> (the argument - to argue)

**с - с'** **Сара** - **саря** [сара - сар'я] (Sarah - sulfur)

**т - т'** **та** - **та** [та - та] (and, so - she)

**ф - ф'** **фон** - **фон** [фон - фон] (a background - a warm wind)

**х - х'** **Хус** - **Хус** [хус - хус]

**ц - ц'** **цар** - **цар** [цар - цар] (a king, tzar - a cure, a remedy)

As you can see there is no example for the pair **дз - дз'**. You can hardly find one in the standard language, that is why some linguists question the existence of the sound **дз'** [dz'] at all, and assume that there are 38 consonants in Bulgarian. The existence of **х'** and **ф'** is also questionable as they only appear in words of foreign origin but we'll leave this matter open.

The consonants **дж** [dzh], **ж**, **ч**, **ш** are always hard, and they do not have soft counterparts. Consequently, **ьо**, **ю**, **я** never appear after them.

As it was mentioned before the soft consonants are pronounced as if the hard consonant and an 'y' (**й**) were pronounced simultaneously. So it is natural that the **й** itself also is not a member of a pair - as a matter of fact it does not participate in this opposition at all.

Now we can go back to the phonetic value of the letters **Ь, Ю, Я**. As it was explained above, they are used to mark the softness of the consonant preceding the vowels **о, у, а/ъ**. The letters **Ю, Я** have yet another phonetic value - if they are used at the beginning of the word or after a vowel they stand for the following combinations of sounds:

**ю=йу** **ю**ноша [йуноша](a teenager), ка**ю**та [кайута] (a cabin)

**я=йа** **я**бълка [йабълка](an apple), Ма**я** [майа]

**я=йъ** ге**р**оят [геройът](the hero)

There are two other particularities of the Bulgarian orthography:

- There are no special letters for the affricates [dzh], [dz](**dzh** sounds like the **g** in 'change', and **dz** sounds like the **z** in the name of the Italian film director Franco **Z**effirelli). A combination of letters is used instead: **дж, дз**:

джуд**ж**е (a dwarf), дж**о**б (a pocket), дз**ъ**н (ting), дз**и**фт (asphalt)

- The letter **ъ** can not stay at the end of the word. The letter **а** appears in stead of it:

чет**а** [четъ](I read 3<sup>rd</sup> p. sg, pres.t.), град**а** [градъ] (the town)

The sound **ъ** appears at the end of the word only in a limited number of morphological forms - [the forms for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural](#) in the present tense of the verbs from the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation, and the forms that have the hard variant of the [short definite article](#).

## Basic Rules of Pronunciation

When we discussed the basic spelling rules in Bulgarian it was mentioned that the Bulgarian orthography is regarded as based on the phonetic and the morphological principles. This means that, unlike in English, in general the words are pronounced the way they are spelled, and are spelled the way they are pronounced. There are two basic types of exceptions to that correspondence between letter and sound. One of them was discussed in the chapter on the [basic spelling rules](#). There we discussed sounds for which there are no letters and how you spell them, as well as letters that are associated with more than one sound and how you pronounce them.

In this chapter we are going to discuss letters and sounds that are basically meant to have one-to-one correspondence but in certain circumstances fail to do this. There are three, synchronic by nature, phonetic laws in Bulgarian that cause discrepancies between letters and sounds: [the reduction](#) of the unstressed vowels,

[the devoicing of the voiced consonants](#) at the end of the words, and [the adjusting of the voicing of consonant](#) clusters.

The vowel system of Bulgarian consists of six vowels: **А, Е, И, О, У, Ъ**. As there is no distinction between short and long vowels it can be assumed that they are all short. The accented vowels are engaged in different oppositions: **front (Е, И) : non-front (А, Ъ, О, У) vowels, labialized (О, У): non-labialized (А, Ъ) vowels, open (Е, А, О) : closed (И, Ъ, У) vowels**. However, when the vowels are not accented the opposition between open and closed vowels is lost, i.e. the unaccented **Ъ** and **А** sound the same, and the unaccented **У** and **О** sound more alike than the accented. Only the front vowels **Е** and **И** continue to oppose each other even when they appear in unaccented syllables. Here are some examples (the accented vowel is underlined):

ва<sup>д</sup>я (to take/to pull out) : в<sup>ъ</sup>д<sup>я</sup> (to breed)  
кат (a floor; a layer) : к<sup>ъ</sup>т (a nook, a corner)  
сам (alone) : с<sup>ъ</sup>м (am)

соча (to point to/at) : с<sup>у</sup>ча (to suck)  
ток (a heel of a shoe) : т<sup>у</sup>к (here)  
точ<sup>ен</sup> (exact) : т<sup>у</sup>ч<sup>ен</sup> (succulent)

белка (a marten) : б<sup>и</sup>лка (*med. herb*)  
лек (light) : л<sup>и</sup>к (an image)  
мене (me) : м<sup>и</sup>не (he passes, 3<sup>rd</sup> p. sg, pres.t.)

In the examples above **А** and **Ъ**, **О** and **У**, **Е** and **И** are stressed and they are fully opposed to each other. The **А** sounds like the **a** in 'father' but a bit shorter, and the **Ъ** sounds like the **e** in 'father' and even more closed. **О** sounds like the **o** in 'short', and **У** sounds like **oo** in 'book'. **Е** sounds like **e** in 'Edward' and **И** sounds like **i** in 'idiot'.

Now let's see what happens when these pairs of vowels appear in unaccented syllables:

бабата [бабьт<sup>ъ</sup>] (the grandmother)  
гълъбът [гълъбът] (the pigeon)

In the examples above all four unaccented vowels, i.e. the two unaccented **a**-sounds in the word 'бабата' and the two unaccented **ъ**-sounds in the word 'гълъбът' sound exactly the same way - almost as the accented **Ъ** but a little more open, just like the **e** in the English words 'mother', 'brother' etc. This pronunciation is correct for all unaccented 'a'-s and 'ъ'-s, with one exception only. If the 'a' or 'ъ' sounds appear in the syllable just before the accented syllable both are pronounced exactly



the same way - almost as the accented **А** but a little more closed, just like the **o** in the English words 'mother' and 'brother':

барабан [бърабан] (a drum)

кавърма [къварма] (Bulg. dish of highly seasoned meat)

България [балгарийъ] (Bulgaria)

For the pair **О : У** there is only one grade of reduction regardless of their position towards the stressed syllable. This means that the unaccented **О** sounds a little like the **У**, but that's all. It still is a recognizable **О**. A stronger reduction towards **У** is considered non-standard, dialectal. The same is valid for the unaccented **У**. It sounds a little like the **О** but just a little. Here are some examples:

глупак [глупак, **not** глопак] (a fool)

долу [долу, **not** доло] (down)

комин [комин, **not** кумин] (a chimney)

поле [поле, **not** пуле] (a field)

There is no reduction of the unstressed **Е** and **И**. This means that the unaccented **Е** doesn't sound at all like **И** and vice versa. Here are some examples:

пиле [пиле, **not** пили] (a chicken)

зеле [зеле, **not** зели] (cabbage)

билет [билет, **not** белет] (a ticket)

директор [директор, **not** деректор] (a director)

You probably remember that in the previous chapter it was mentioned that most of the consonants in Bulgarian are engaged in the opposition **voiced : voiceless (mute) consonants**. These consonants are otherwise identical, only when you pronounce the voiced consonants the vocal cords also participate, i.e. they are vibrating. When you pronounce the voiceless consonants the vocal cords are not vibrating. Most consonants in Bulgarian are paired in voicing. This means that for each voiced consonant there is a voiceless counterpart but not vice versa. In addition to that the nasals **М** and **Н**, the liquids **Р** and **Л**, and the glide **Й** do not participate at all in that opposition. Like the vowels, they are too sonorous for that. Here are the voiceless : voiced pairs of consonants in Bulgarian:

**П : Б**

**Т : Д**

**К : Г**

**Ф : В**

**С : З**

**Ш : Ж**

**Х : /**

Ц : ДЗ  
Ч : ДЖ

The palatal consonants form the same pairs but they are not listed because the opposition between voiced and voiceless palatal consonants is not relevant to what we are going to discuss as [they appear only before the non-front vowels](#).

In Bulgarian pronunciation, all voiced consonants at the end of the word are pronounced like their voiceless counterparts. This is called **devoicing of the consonants**. Here are some examples:

ро̀би - ро̀б [ро̀п] (slaves - a slave)  
ръ̀ка̀ви - ръ̀ка̀в [ръ̀ка̀ф] (sleeves - a sleeve)  
ро̀го̀ве - ро̀г [ро̀к] (horns - a horn)  
гра̀до̀ве - гра̀д [гра̀т] (towns - a town)  
та̀ра̀лѐжи - та̀ра̀лѐж [та̀ра̀лѐш] (hedgehogs - a hedgehog)  
ра̀зка̀зи - ра̀зка̀з [ра̀зка̀с] (stories - a story)

Whenever two or more consonants that participate in the opposition **voiced : voiceless** occur next to each other within a word or a cluster of words sharing a single accent (phonological word), the final consonant influences the voicing of the whole consonant cluster. This means that if the final consonant is voiced - the whole lot becomes voiced, and vice versa - if the final consonant is voiceless, all will be voiceless. This is called **consonant assimilation or adjusting the voicing of consonant clusters**. Here are some examples:

ро̀би - ро̀бски [ро̀пски] (slaves - slave, adj.)  
Мо̀ра̀ви́я - мо̀ра̀вска [мо̀ра̀фска] (Moravia - of /from Moravia)  
ро̀го̀ве - ро̀гче [ро̀кче] (horns - a small horn)  
гра̀до̀ве - гра̀дче [гра̀тче] (towns - a small town)  
дър̀жа - дър̀жка [дър̀шка] (to hold - a handle)  
вр̀зва̀м - вр̀зка [вр̀ска] (to tie/bind - a tie/link)  
пред о̀лта̀ра - пред с̀да [прѐт\_с̀дъ] (in front of the altar - in front of the court)  
без ам̀би́ция - без см̀исъл [бес\_см̀исъл] (without ambition - without reason)  
сва̀то̀ве - сват̀ба [сва̀дба] (in-laws - a wedding)  
съ̀бѝрам - съ̀бор [з̀бор] (to collect - a sum/a total)  
от Ѐвро̀па - от дру̀г гра̀д [од\_дру̀к\_гра̀т] (from Europe - from another city)  
с ам̀би́ция - с до̀бро̀та [з\_до̀бро̀та] (with ambition - with goodness)

The vowels, and the consonants that do not participate in the opposition **voiced : voiceless** (i.e. м, н, р, л, й), as well as the consonant **В** do not influence the voicing of the neighbouring consonants. (There is a simple explanation for the strange behaviour of 'В' - this sound descends from the Indo-European semivowel-U, so no wonder it sometimes behaves just like the Й, that descends from the Indo-European semivowel-I.) Here are some examples:

- in front of 'в':

роби - робство [ропство] (slaves - a slavery)

от вас [от\_вас] (from you)

без вас [без\_вас] (without you)

зад вас [зад\_вас] (behind you)

- in front of 'р', 'л', 'м', 'н', 'й':

от Рим [от\_рим] (from Rome)

без мене [без\_мене] (without me)

под небето [под\_небето] (under the sky)

изследвам - излизам - изисквам [исследвам - излизам - изисквам] (to research - to go out - to demand)

- in front of vowels:

пред олтара [пред\_олтаръ] (in front of the altar)

без амбиция [без\_амбиция] (without ambition)

с амбиция [с\_амбиция] (with ambition)

от Европа [от\_европа] (from Europe)

## Some Phonetic Rules

The phonetic rules that we are going to discuss in this chapter are more or less of a diachronic nature. This means that we deal with the reflections in the contemporary language of sounds or rules that existed in Bulgarian about a millennium ago. We'll pay special attention to three of them - [mutation of -Я-](#), [palatalization](#), and [elision of -Е,-Ъ-](#).

**Mutation of -Я-**. Under certain phonetic conditions the letters **Я** and **Е** appear alternatively in different forms of one word, or in related words. Not all the words that contain the letter **Я** follow this rule, only words in which the letter **Я** stands for the Old-Bulgarian 'ятъ'-vowel that sounded approximately like the English **a** in 'cat'. The letter **Я** appears only in forms where the 'ятъ' sound is accented, and provided there are no palatal consonants or **дж, ж, ч, ш, й** sounds in the same

syllable and in the next syllable, and no front vowels (**е, и**) in the next syllable. In case one of these requirements is not satisfied, the letter **Е** appears. Here are some examples (the accented vowel is underlined):

<b>Я</b>	<b>Е</b>	<b>Е</b>	<b>Е</b>
	In unaccented syllables	Preceding palatal consonant or <b>Е, И</b> in the next syllable	Preceding <b>ДЖ, Ж, Ч, Ш, Й</b>
б <u>я</u> л (white)	бел <u>о</u> т <u>а</u> (whiteness)	б <u>е</u> ля [б <u>е</u> л'ъ] (I bleach, I peel)	Б <u>е</u> л <u>ч</u> о (a name given to oxen)
п <u>я</u> х (I sang)	п <u>е</u> в <u>е</u> ц (a singer)	п <u>е</u> е (he/she sings)	п <u>е</u> я [п <u>е</u> й'ъ] (I sing)
ГО <u>л</u> я <u>м</u> а (big <i>f</i> )	ГО <u>л</u> е <u>м</u> и <u>н</u> а (size, magnitude)	ГО <u>л</u> е <u>м</u> и (big <i>pl</i> )	
л <u>я</u> т <u>о</u> (a summer)	л <u>е</u> т <u>а</u> (summers)	л <u>е</u> т <u>е</u> н (summer <i>attr. m</i> )	
м <u>я</u> р <u>к</u> а (a measure)	и <u>з</u> м <u>е</u> р <u>е</u> н <u>и</u> е (dimension)	м <u>е</u> р <u>к</u> и (measures)	
хл <u>я</u> б <u>о</u> в <u>е</u> (breads)	хл <u>е</u> б <u>а</u> р (a baker)	хл <u>е</u> б <u>е</u> н (bread <i>attr. m</i> )	
бр <u>я</u> г (shore, bank)	бр <u>е</u> г <u>в</u> е (shores, banks)	к <u>р</u> айб <u>р</u> е <u>ж</u> и <u>е</u> (coast-line)	к <u>р</u> айб <u>р</u> е <u>ж</u> н <u>а</u> (coastal)
гр <u>я</u> х (a sin)	гр <u>е</u> х <u>о</u> в <u>е</u> (sins)	гр <u>е</u> ш <u>е</u> н (sinful, mistaken <i>m</i> )	гр <u>е</u> ш <u>к</u> а (a mistake)
мл <u>я</u> к <u>о</u> (milk)	мл <u>е</u> к <u>а</u> р (dairyman)	мл <u>е</u> ч <u>е</u> н (milk, dairy <i>attr. m</i> )	мл <u>е</u> ч <u>н</u> а (milk, dairy <i>attr. f</i> )
см <u>я</u> х (laughter)	см <u>е</u> х <u>о</u> в <u>е</u> (laughter <i>pl</i> )	см <u>е</u> ш <u>е</u> н (funny)	см <u>е</u> й се (laugh! <i>imper. 2<sup>nd</sup> p. sg</i> )
сн <u>я</u> г (snow)	сн <u>е</u> г <u>о</u> в <u>е</u> (snow <i>pl</i> )	сн <u>е</u> ж <u>е</u> н (snowy, of snow <i>m</i> )	сн <u>е</u> ж <u>н</u> а (snowy, of snow <i>f</i> )

The palatalization of the velar consonants **К, Г, Х** occurs in three different variants called first, second and third palatalization.

As the name shows, the **first palatalization** took place before the other two, as early as Common Slavic. Its essence is that the velar consonants **К, Г, Х** changed into **Ч, Ж, Ш** when they occurred before certain front vowels. (It should be mentioned that there were at least twice as many front vowels in Common Slavic and in Old Bulgarian as in modern Bulgarian. In the contemporary language there are only two front vowels - **е** and **и**).

The results of the first palatalization can be seen in variety of morphological forms,

as well as in words derived by the means of certain suffixes. Here are some examples:

- in verb paradigms:

пека, пекат : печеш, пече, печем, печете (to bake, pres. t. 1<sup>st</sup> p. sg, 3<sup>rd</sup> p. pl : 2<sup>nd</sup> p. sg, 3<sup>rd</sup> p. sg, 1<sup>st</sup> p. pl, 2<sup>nd</sup> p. pl)

мога, могат : можеш, може, можем, можете (to be able, pres. t. 1<sup>st</sup> p. sg, 3<sup>rd</sup> p. pl : 2<sup>nd</sup> p. sg, 3<sup>rd</sup> p. sg, 1<sup>st</sup> p. pl, 2<sup>nd</sup> p. pl)

- in plural and vocative forms of some nouns:

око : очи (an eye, eyes); човек : човече (a man/person Nom : Voc.); ухо : уши (an ear, ears); Бог : Боже (God Nom : Voc.)

- in derivatives such as verbs from the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation, or verbs containing the suffix **-е-**; nouns with suffixes **-ец, -ество, -ило, -ина, -ица, -ище**; adjectives with suffixes **-ен, -ески, -ест, -и**:

мъка : мъчиш (a pain/torment : to torment 2<sup>nd</sup> p. sg, pres. t.); кръг : кръжиш (a circle : to circle around 2<sup>nd</sup> p. sg, pres. t.); сух : сушиш (dry attr. m : to dry 2<sup>nd</sup> p. sg, pres. t.); глух : оглушея (deaf : to become deaf 1<sup>st</sup> p. sg, pres. t.)

прах : прашец (dust : pollen/fine dust); човек : човечество (a man/person : mankind); плах : плашило (timid : a scarecrow); другар : другужина (a comrade/fellow : a battalion/party);

майка : майчица (a mother : a mother/mummy); търг : тържище (an auction : a market place)

ръка : ръчен (a hand : hand attr. m); книга : книжен (a book : paper attr.); страх : страшен (fear/dread : fearful); комик : комически (a comedian : comic m/pl); враг : вражески (an enemy : hostile/enemy m/pl); монах : монашески (a monk : monastic); сянка : сенчест (a shadow : shady); вълк : вълчи (a wolf : wolf's); враг : вражи (an enemy : hostile/enemy m/pl)

The **second palatalization** took place much later (but still in Common Slavic). Its essence is that the velar consonants **К, Г, Х** changed into **Ц, З, С** when they occurred in front of the front vowels **е** and **и** that came into existence after the first palatalization as a result of monophthongization of some diphthongs.

The results of the second palatalization can be seen mainly in the forms for the plural of the masculine nouns that end on **К, Г, Х** in the singular. Here are some examples:

вълк : вълци (a wolf : wolves); комик : комици (a comedian : comedians)  
биолог : биолози (a biologist : biologists); съпруг : съпрузи (a spouse : spouses)

МОНАХ : МОНАЦИ (a monk : monks); КОЖУХ : КОЖУСИ (a sheep-skin coat : sheep-skin coats)

The **third palatalization** took place even later but it did not have considerable impact on Bulgarian, especially from the point of view of a foreigner learning the contemporary language, so we'll skip it and move forward to the next item.

**The elision of the vowels -E- and -Ъ-** is another phonetic rule that is diachronic by its nature. If the vowels **Е**, **Ъ** happen to be in the final syllable of nouns or adjectives that belong to the masculine gender they disappear in the forms for the plural and the vocative of the nouns, in the forms for the feminine, the neuter and the plural of the adjectives as well as in the definite forms for the masculine gender of the adjectives. The reason for this is that the **-Ъ-** comes from Old-Bulgarian **-Ъ-**, and **-Е-** comes from Old-Bulgarian **-Ъ-**. According a phonetic rule that was in force in Old Bulgarian these vowels were pronounced when they were in a strong position and were not pronounced, i.e. disappeared, when they were in a weak position. We'll not go into details which position was strong, and which - weak, it is enough to point out that in the form for the masculine of the above-mentioned words they are in a strong position and in the rest of the forms they are in a weak position. Here are some examples:

МОМЪК : МОМЦИ; МОМКО, **but** МОМЪКЪТ (an young man : young men, young man *Voc.*, the young man)

ОГЪН : ОГНЬОВЕ, **but** ОГЪНЯТ (a fire : fires, the fire)

СТАРЕЦ : СТАРЦИ; СТАРЧЕ, **but** СТАРЕЦЪТ (an old man : old men, old man *Voc.*, the old man)

ОРЕЛ : ОРЛИ; ОРЛЬО, **but** ОРЕЛЪТ (an eagle : eagles, eagle *Voc.*, the eagle)

МАЛЪК : МАЛКА, МАЛКО, МАЛКИ, МАЛКИЯ(Т) (little/small *m : f, n, pl*)

ТОПЪЛ : ТОПЛА, ТОПЛО, ТОПЛИ, ТОПЛИЯ(Т) (warm *m : f, n, pl*)

ЛЕТЕН : ЛЯТНА, ЛЯТНО, ЛЕТНИ, ЛЕТНИЯ(Т) (summer *attr. m : f, n, pl*)

ЛУНЕН : ЛУННА, ЛУННО, ЛУННИ, ЛУННИЯ(Т) (moon *attr. m : f, n, pl*)

As always, there are exceptions to the rule. Thus, in adjectives like зелен, червен, стъклен, дървен, вълнен, копринен etc. the sound **e** does not disappear when the forms for the feminine, the neuter and the plural, as well as the forms with the definite article for the masculine are constructed:

зелен, зелена, зелено, зелени, зеления(Т) (green *m : f, n, pl*)

вълнен, вълнена, вълнено, вълнени, вълнения(Т) (woolen *m : f, n, pl*)

## The Parts of Speech

In Bulgarian the words are classified as belonging to different **part-of-speech** classes (**части на речта**), just like in English (or any other Indo-European language). Thus, for example, it is considered that words that refer to persons, objects, places, substances, concepts etc. are **nouns**. There are, though, some minor differences between the traditional classifications in Bulgarian and English.

In Bulgarian are recognized 10 part-of-speech classes - all the 9 classes that are recognized in English (i.e. **nouns, adjectives, numerals, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and particles**) and, in addition, the **interjection** is considered to be a separate class. Into this class fall exclamation words that express emotion, as well as onomatopoeic (i.e. sound imitating) words.

Besides, on the morphological level, a distinction is made between '*inflective*' and '*non-inflective*' parts of speech. Thus, the nouns, the adjectives, the numerals, the pronouns and the verbs belong to the '*inflective*' parts of speech because they have grammatical categories such as number, for example, they have forms for the singular and forms for the plural, i.e. they have two or more different forms. The rest of the part-of-speech classes are considered '*uninflective*'. Strange enough because the adverbs fall into this category despite the fact that they have forms for positive, comparative and superlative degrees (at least the qualitative adverbs).

On the syntactical level, a distinction is made between *independent* words and *function* words. Into the first category fall all the '*inflective*' part-of-speech classes and the adverbs because they can perform independently as a part of the sentence (i.e. a noun can be a subject, an object etc. of the sentence, a verb can be a predicate, an adjective can be an attribute, an adverb can be an adverbial and so on). The conjunctions, the prepositions and the particles can not function independently as any part of the sentence. Thus the conjunctions connect or otherwise indicate the relationship between clauses or other elements of a sentence, the prepositions indicate the relations (grammatical or in the space) between two nouns, or a verb and a noun, the particles are used for constructing different grammatical forms, for example the [future tense](#) of the verbs, [the comparative and the superlative degree](#) of the adjectives and the adverbs and so on. According to the traditional grammars of Bulgarian the *interjection* does not belong to any of these two categories. From a syntactical point of view it is considered to be sort of "extraneous" to the structure of the sentence. This is a bit strange because some, if not most of the interjections, can perfectly well perform as a predicate in the sentence. Anyhow, it is not the aim of this "opus" to solve this problem, and not even to set it.

Another difference between Bulgarian and English is that in Bulgarian, in general,

the part-of-speech class of a word tends to be invariable, only part of the adverbs that are derived from adjectives are homonymous to the forms for the neuter gender of the adjectives.

The different part-of-speech classes in Bulgarian are represented in the table below (the definitions and more details about the different classes will be given later in the introductory chapters on the different classes):

<b>Inflective</b> (изменяеми)	<b>Parts of Speech</b> (части на речта)	<b>Independent</b> (самостоялни)
Inflective	<p align="center"><b>NOUN</b> (съществително име)</p> <p align="center">Grammatical categories: gender, number, definiteness, relics of case system (vocative forms)</p>	Independent
Inflective	<p align="center"><b>ADJECTIVE</b> (прилагателно име)</p> <p align="center">Grammatical categories: gender, number, definiteness, degrees of comparison</p>	Independent
Inflective	<p align="center"><b>NUMERAL</b> (числително име)</p> <p align="center">Grammatical categories: definiteness. For ordinal numerals also: gender and number</p>	Independent
Inflective	<p align="center"><b>PRONOUNS</b> (местоимения)</p> <p align="center">A bit diverse class, as into it fall pronouns proper, "proadjectives", "proadverbs", "pro-verbs" etc. There are nine subclasses: personal, possessive, reflexive, interrogative, relative, indefinite, negative and generalizing pronouns. Grammatical categories: altogether - gender, number, definiteness, person and case relics. Naturally, not all of them are relevant for each subclass of the pronouns. Some are relevant for some subclasses and others are relevant for other subclasses.</p>	Independent
Inflective	<p align="center"><b>VERB</b> (глагол)</p> <p align="center">Grammatical categories: number, person, tense, aspect, voice, mood</p>	Independent



Non-inflective (!!!)	<b>ADVERB</b> (наречие) Grammatical categories (!!!): degrees of comparison	Independent
Non-inflective	<b>CONJUNCTION</b> (съюз)	Function
Non-inflective	<b>PREPOSITION</b> (предлог)	Function
Non-inflective	<b>PARTICLE</b> (частица)	Function
Non-inflective	<b>INTERJECTION</b> (междуметие)	Function
<b>Non-inflective</b> (неизменяеми)	<b>Parts of Speech</b> (части на речта)	<b>Function</b> (служебни)

## Gender of the Nouns

Each Bulgarian noun (**съществително име**) belongs to one of the following gender groups: **masculine, feminine, neuter**. Adjectives, pronouns, participles etc. agree in gender with the nouns they refer to.

Most of the nouns that belong to the **masculine** gender (**мъжки род**) end in a **consonant** in the singular. Here are some examples (the accented vowel is underlined):

роб (a slave), полуостров (a peninsula), биолог (a biologist *m*), град (a town), годеж (an engagement), коловоз (a track), герой (a hero), глупак (a fool *m*), сокол (a falcon), дом (a home), колан (a belt), сироп (syrup), рибар (a fisherman), класс (a class), живот (a life), пантоф (a slipper), монах (a monk), кладенец (a well), шивач (a tailor), разкош (luxury), плащ (a cloak)

There are few exceptions:

баща (a father), слуга (a servant), съдия (a judge), късметлия (a lucky fellow), дядо (a grandfather), ччо (an uncle), вуйчо (an uncle - mother's brother), глупчо (a fool), глезльо (a spoilt boy/man)

Most of the nouns that belong to the **feminine** gender (**женски род**) end in **-А** or **-Я**:

жена (a woman), маса (a table), градина (a garden), библиотека (a library), стая (a room), идея (an idea), чиния (a saucer), чакалня (a waiting-room), баня (a bathroom)

There are few exceptions that end in a consonant:

сутрин (a morning), вечер (an evening), нощ (a night), пролет (a spring - season), крв (blood), захарр (sugar), солл (salt), мед (метал) (copper)

as well as the nouns ending in the suffix **-ОСТ/-ЕСТ**:

радост (joy), младост (youth), болест (an illness), горест (sorrow)

The nouns that belong to the **neuter** gender (**среден род**) have endings **-О**, **-Е**, or end in **Е**, **И**, **У**, **Ю** (the latter are usually loan words):

място (a place), село (a village), езеро (a lake), лице (a face), момиче (a girl), общежитие (a hostel), кафене (a cafe), матине (a morning performance), уискии (whisky), такси (a taxi), бижуу (a jewel), меню (a menu), пардесю (an overcoat)

In other words - except for the nouns ending in the suffix **-ОСТ/-ЕСТ**, and some other exceptions that belong to the feminine gender - all the nouns that end in a **consonant** belong to the **masculine** gender.

Most of the forms that end in **-А**, **-Я** belong to the **feminine** gender, or to the masculine gender exceptions.

## Plural of the Nouns

There are three main ways to construct the plural (**множествено число**) forms of the nouns: by adding the endings **-И**, **-ОВЕ/ЕВЕ**, and **-А/ТА**. There are a lot of exceptions as well.

The most frequent ending for the plural of the nouns that belong to the masculine and the feminine gender is **-И**:

It is added to most of the nouns that end in a **consonant** regardless to their gender. Here are some examples (the accented vowel is underlined):

m: автобус (a buss) - автобуси, таван (a ceiling) - тавани  
f: вечер (an evening) - вечери, радост (joy) - радости

If the noun ends in **Й**, **-А**, **-Я** it is replaced by **-И**:

m: герой (a hero) - герои, баша (a father) - баши, съдия (a judge) - съдии  
f: библиотека (a library) - библиотеки, баня (a bathroom) - бани  
*Exception*: ръка (a hand) - ръце

Most masculine monosyllabic nouns join the ending **-ОВЕ/-ЕВЕ** in the plural:

град (a town) - градове, чай ((a cup of) tee) - чайове, курс (a course) - курсове, бой (a beating) - боеве

*Exceptions*:

мъж (a man) - мъже, цар (a king) - царе, крал (a king) - крале, кон (a horse) - коне  
път<sup>2</sup> (time, e.g. three times) - пъти, пръст (a finger) - пръсти, ден (a day) - днии, гост (a guest) - гости  
път<sup>1</sup> (a road) - пътища

The masculine nouns that end in **-О** join the ending **-ВЦИ** in the plural:

дядо (a grandfather) - дядовци, чичо (an uncle) - чичовци, глупчо (a fool) - глупчовци, глезльо (a spoilt boy/man) - глезльовци, Ваньо - Ваньовци

In other words, the masculine polysyllabic nouns that end in a **consonant** form the plural by adding the ending **-И**, the masculine polysyllabic nouns that end in **Й**, **-А**, **-Я** form the plural by replacing it with the ending **-И**, the masculine monosyllabic nouns (with some exceptions - see above) form the plural by adding the ending **-ОВЕ/-ЕВЕ**, and those that end in **-О** join the ending **-ВЦИ**.

The feminine nouns that end in a **consonant** (included those that end in suffixes **-ОСТ/-ЕСТ**) form the plural by adding the ending **-И**. The feminine nouns that end in **-А**, **-Я** form the plural by replacing it with **-И**.

The neuter nouns that end in **-О** form the plural by replacing it with the ending **-А**:

## Definite Article and the Nouns

There is only one article in Bulgarian - **the definite article** (**определителен член**). There is no equivalent, for example, to the English indefinite article or the French partitive article (article partitif). Another difference between Bulgarian and the most of the Indo-European languages which have definite article is that the definite article in Bulgarian is always added as an ending to the noun. Here are the forms for the definite article for the [masculine](#), [feminine](#), and [neuter](#) gender, and for the [plural](#):

There are long forms **-ЪТ/-ЯТ** (**пълнен член**) and short forms **-А/-Я** (**кратък член**) of the definite article for the nouns of the masculine gender. The long forms are used when the noun is the subject of the sentence, apposition or predicative. The short forms - when it is any other part of the sentence. Here are some examples (the accented vowel is underlined):

ВлакЪТ спря на гара София. (The train stopped at Sofia Station.)

Много пътници слязоха от влака. (Many passengers got off the train.)

Учителят говореше за Стефан Стамболов. (The teacher was talking about Stefan Stambolov.)

Слушахме с интерес учителяя. (We were listening to the teacher with interest.)

Most of the nouns that belong to the masculine gender take the **-ЪТ/-А** variant of the article:

куфар (a suitcase) - куфарът - куфара (the suitcase)

хотел (a hotel) - хотелът - хотела (the hotel)

влак (a train) - влакът - влака (the train)

студент (a student *m*) - студентът - студента (the student *m*)

The nouns that take the variant **-ЯТ/-Я** are the following:

- all the nouns that end in **Й** (**Й** is replaced by the article):

край (an end) - краят/я (the end), герой (a hero) - героят/я (the hero)

- all the nouns that end in the suffix-**ТЕЛ** both for persons and non-persons, and on the suffixes **-АР/-ЯР** for **persons**:

учител (a teacher *m*) - учителят/я (the teacher *m*), числител (a numerator) - числителят/я (the numerator),

but хотел (a hotel) - хотелът/а (the hotel) as 'тел' is not a suffix

златар (a jeweler/goldsmith) - златарят/я (the jeweler/goldsmith), юбиляр (a person celebrating an anniversary) - юбилярят/я (the person celebrating an anniversary)  
but куфар (a suitcase) - куфарът/а (the suitcase) as 'ар' is not a suffix, and 'куфар' is a non-person noun

- ten nouns that historically ended in a [palatal consonant](#) and, unlike the rest of the nouns that ended historically on a palatal consonant, persistently join the soft variant of the article. Here they are:

де<sup>н</sup> (a day) - де<sup>н</sup>ят/я (the day)  
зе<sup>т</sup> (a son in law) - зе<sup>т</sup>ят/я (the son in law)  
ко<sup>н</sup> (a horse) - ко<sup>н</sup>ят/я (the horse)  
кра<sup>л</sup> (a king) - кра<sup>л</sup>ят/я (the king)  
лак<sup>ъ</sup>т (an elbow) - лак<sup>ъ</sup>тят/я (the elbow)  
но<sup>къ</sup>т (a nail) - но<sup>къ</sup>тят/я (the nail)  
ог<sup>ъ</sup>н (a fire) - ог<sup>ъ</sup>нят/я (the fire)  
пъ<sup>т</sup> (a road) - пъ<sup>т</sup>ят/я (the road)  
съ<sup>н</sup> (a dream) - съ<sup>н</sup>ят/я (the dream)  
ца<sup>р</sup> (a king) - ца<sup>р</sup>ят/я (the king)

The nouns of the masculine gender that end in -А/-Я join the article morpheme for feminine -ТА (see below):

баща (a father) - бащата (the father), съдия (a judge) - съдията (the judge)

The nouns of the masculine gender that end in -О join the article morpheme for neuter -ТО (see below):

дядо (a grandfather) - дядото (the grandfather), чичо (an uncle) - чичото (the uncle), глезльо (a spoilt boy/man) - глезльото (the spoilt boy/man)

There is only one form of the definite article for the nouns of the feminine gender regardless to their role in the sentence - the morpheme -ТА:

маса (a table) - масата (the table), студентка (a student f) - студентката (the student f)  
баня (a bathroom) - банята (the bathroom), стая (a room) - стаята (the room)  
нощ (a night) - нощта (the night), вечер (an evening) - вечерта (the evening)  
радост (joy) - радостта (the joy), болест (an illness) - болестта (the illness)

There is only one form of the definite article for the nouns of the neuter gender regardless to their role in the sentence - the morpheme -ТО:

момиче (a girl) - момичето (the girl)  
място (a place) - мястото (the place)

уиски (whisky) - уискито (the whisky)  
бижу (a jewel) - бижуто (the jewel)  
меню (a menu) - менюто (the menu)  
училище (a school) - училището (the school)  
сърце (a heart) - сърцето (the heart)  
пътуване (a journey) - пътуването (the journey)  
събрание (a meeting) - събранието (the meeting)  
действие (an action) - действието (the action)  
време (time; weather) - времето (the time ; the weather)

There is only one form of the definite article for the nouns in plural regardless to their role in the sentence - the morpheme -**ТЕ**:

таван - тавани - таваните (a ceiling - ceilings - the ceilings)  
герой - герои - героите (a hero - heroes - the heroes)  
баща - бащи - бащите (a father - fathers - the fathers)  
вечер - вечери - вечерите (an evening - evenings - the evenings)  
радост - радости - радостите (joy - joys - the joys)  
библиотека - библиотеки - библиотеките (a library - libraries - the libraries)  
град - градове - градовете (a town - towns - the towns)  
мъж - мъже - мъжете (a man - men -the men)  
дядо - дядовци - дядовците (a grandfather - grandfathers - the grandfathers)  
око - очи - очите (an eye - eyes - the eyes)  
животно - животни - животните (an animal - animals - the animals)

The nouns of the neuter gender that have ending for plural -**А/-Я/-ТА** join the definite article for the feminine gender regardless to their role in the sentence:

село - села - селата (a village - villages - the villages)  
поле - полета - полетата (a field - fields - the fields)  
уиски - уискита - уискитата (a glass of whisky - (some) glasses of whisky - the glasses of whisky)  
бижу - бижута - бижутата (a jewel - jewels - the jewels)  
меню - менюта - менютата (a menu - menus - the menus)  
училище - училища - училищата (a school - schools - the schools)  
лице - лица - лицата (a face - faces - the faces)  
пътуване - пътувания - пътуванията (a journey - journeys - the journeys)  
събрание - събрания - събранията (a meeting - meetings - the meetings)  
действие - действия - действията (an action - actions - the actions)  
време - времена - времената (time - times - the times)  
дете - деца - децата (a child - children - the children)

## Use of the Definite Article

Although it seems that the only obvious difference between the use of the definite article in Bulgarian and in English is that in Bulgarian the [possessive pronouns can be used with](#) the definite article, it is useful to remember that there are three main reasons to use the definite article:

- If a certain object has already been mentioned once in the conversation or in the text, the second time we mention it we refer to it as we refer to something familiar, defined. For this reason we use the definite article. This function is called **individual qualificative** function. Here are some examples (the accented vowel is underlined):

Срецу нас с висока скорост се движеше огромен камион. Мислехме, че ще катастрофираме, но камионът успя да свие вдясно.

Towards us, at a high speed was coming a huge truck. We thought that we were going to collide but in the last moment the truck managed to turn to the right.

Мария имаше дете от предишен брак. Асен също имаше дете от предишен брак.

Maria had a child from a previous marriage. Asen also had a child from a previous marriage.

In the first two sentences we are talking about **one and the same** truck. First we mention that such an object appears, and after that we refer to the same object.

That is why we use the form with definite article. In the second two sentences we talk about different kids. First we mention Maria's child, then we mention **another** child, Asen's child, that is why we use the basic form, without a definite article.

- If we want to imply that all the people or the whole quantity of something is involved in the activity we use the definite article although the object might not have been mentioned before. This function is called **quantitative** function. Often in such cases we deal with plural forms (count nouns) but not always (non-count/mass nouns):

Романите на Михаил Булгаков са преведени на български.

The novels of Michail Bulgakov are translated into Bulgarian.

Агнешкото (в нашия магазин) е свършило.

The lamb (in the local shop) is sold out.

As the novels of Bulgakov are not mentioned before in the text and still the form with the definite article is used, it is clear that **all** his novels are translated in

Bulgarian. The meaning of the second sentence is that the **whole quantity** of lamb that was available in the local shop is sold out, finished.

- There is yet another function of the definite article which can be called **generalizing** function. In such cases we usually refer not to one single object but to all the objects in that class, especially in proverbs and maxims:

Кучето е най-добрият приятел на човекаа.  
Dog is man's best friend.

Пушенето е вредно за здраветоо.  
Smoking is harmful to the health.

What these sentences imply is that **any** dog is a better friend of yours than, for example, your boss, your spouse, or even your dearest friend; and no matter what you smoke - cigarettes, cigars or a pipe - smoking is harmful to your health.

If you feel the need to use something like the good old English indefinite article, you can always use the forms of the cardinal [numeral for 1](#) (or rather the forms of the indefinite pronoun *един, една, едно, едни*). There is even a form for plural corresponding to the English "some" (*едни*). Here are some examples:

Говорех с един приятел / една приятелка.  
I was talking to **a** friend (male/female).

Говорех с едни приятели.  
I was talking to **some** friends.

Срещнахме се в едно кафенее.  
We met at **a** cafe.

## Gender and Number of the Adjectives

Bulgarian adjectives (**прилагателни имена**) change in gender and number because they agree with the nouns they refer to. In the masculine gender the adjectives usually end in a consonant. The corresponding forms for the feminine, the neuter and the plural are constructed by adding **-А**, **-О**, **-И**. If the vowel in front of the final consonant in the masculine is **ь** or **е** it disappears in the forms for the feminine, the neuter and the plural; as usually there are exceptions to that rule. Here are some examples (the accented vowel is underlined):

висок, висока, високо, високи (tall)  
голям, голяма, голямо, големи (big)  
драг, драга, драго, драги (dear)  
евтин, евтина, евтино, евтини (cheap)



мек, мека, меко, меки (soft)

добър, добра, добро, добри (good)

малък, малка, малко, малки (small/little)

топъл, топла, топло, топли (warm)

вкусен, вкусна, вкусно, вкусни (tasty)

домашен, домашна, домашно, домашни (domestic)

летен, лятна, лятно, летни (summer *attr.*)

лунен, лунна, лунно, лунни (moon *attr.*)

старанен, старнана старнано старнани (strange)

*Exceptions:*

червен, червена, червено, червени (red)

зелен, зелена, зелено, зелени (green)

кожен, кожена, кожено, кожени (made of leather or fur),

but

кожен, кожна, кожно, кожни (of skin)

стаклен, стаклена, стаклено, стаклени (of glass)

дървен, дървена, дървено, дървени (of wood),

but

бетонен, бетонна, бетонно, бетонни (of concrete)

вълнен, вълнена, вълнено, вълнени (of wool)

копринен, копринена, копринено, копринени (of silk),

but

памучен, памучна, памучно, памучни (of cotton)

As you can see, apart from the adjectives like **червен** (red) and **зелен** (green) that are [qualificative](#), all the other adjectives that belong to the exceptions are [relative](#) **but** not all the relative adjectives belong to the exceptions.

There are some adjectives that end in **-И** in the masculine. It is the final vowel of the suffix **-СК-И**. The forms for the feminine, the neuter and the plural are constructed by replacing the **-И** of the suffix with **-А**, **-О**, **-И**. Naturally, the forms for the masculine and the plural are homonymous:

българСКИ, българСКА, българСКО, българСКИ (Bulgarian *attr.*)

техничеСКИ, техничеСКА, техничеСКО, техничеСКИ (technical)

## Definite Forms of the Adjectives. Adjective Comparison.

### Definite Forms of the Adjectives

In Bulgarian the adjectives, as well as the pronouns, the ordinal numerals etc., used as attributes in the sentence are usually placed in front of the nouns they qualify. In this case the [definite article](#), [if needed](#), is joined to the first attribute of the noun phrase.

**The forms of the article for masculine are:**

-**ЯТ**/**-Я** ([long form/short form](#)). The article is added not directly to the basic form for the masculine of the adjective but to a form extended with **-И**. The extended form looks exactly like the form for the plural. Do not forget that if the vowels 'Е', 'Ъ' happen to be in the final syllable of adjectives that belong to the masculine gender they [disappear](#). Here are some examples (the accented vowel is underlined):

слаб + **И** > сла**БИ** + **Я(Т)** = сла**БИЯ(Т)** (the thin/weak *m*)  
топъл + **И** > топл**И** + **Я(Т)** = топл**ИЯ(Т)** (the warm *m*)  
летен + **И** > летн**И** + **Я(Т)** = летн**ИЯ(Т)** (the summer *attr. m*)

If [the adjective ends in И](#) (the suffix **-СК-И**) the article is added directly to the basic form:

български + **Я(Т)** = български **Я(Т)** (the Bulgarian *attr. m*)

**The rest of the forms are:**

**-ТА** for the feminine, **-ТО** for the neuter, **-ТЕ** for the plural:

слаба**ТА**, слабо**ТО**, слаби**ТЕ** (the weak, thin *f, n, pl*)  
лятна**ТА**, лятно**ТО**, летни**ТЕ** (the summer *attr. f, n, pl*)  
топла**ТА**, топло**ТО**, топли**ТЕ** (the warm *f, n, pl*)  
българска**ТА**, българско**ТО**, български**ТЕ** (the Bulgarian *attr. f, n, pl*)

### Degrees of Comparison of the Adjectives

Bulgarian adjectives have three degrees of comparison (**степени за сравнение**) - positive (**положителна**), **comparative** (**сравнителна**), **superlative** (**превъзходна**). The comparative and the superlative degrees are formed by

placing the hyphenated particles **по-** (more), **най-** (most) in front of the positive form of the adjective. Here are some examples:

<b>masculine</b>	<b>feminine</b>	<b>neuter</b>	<b>plural</b>
слаб (thin/weak <i>m</i> )	слаба ( thin/weak <i>f</i> )	слабо (thin/weak <i>n</i> )	слаби (thin/weak <i>pl</i> )
слабия(т) (the thin/weak <i>m</i> )	слабата (the thin/weak <i>f</i> )	слабото (the thin/weak <i>n</i> )	слабите (the thin/weak <i>pl</i> )
<b>по-</b> слаб (thinner/weaker <i>m</i> )	<b>по-</b> слаба (thinner/weaker <i>f</i> )	<b>по-</b> слабо (thinner/weaker <i>n</i> )	<b>по-</b> слаби (thinner/weaker <i>pl</i> )
<b>по-</b> слабия(т) (the thinner/weaker <i>m</i> )	<b>по-</b> слабата (the thinner/weaker <i>f</i> )	<b>по-</b> слабото (the thinner/weaker <i>n</i> )	<b>по-</b> слабите (the thinner/weaker <i>pl</i> )
<b>най-</b> слаб (the thinnest/weakest <i>m</i> )	<b>най-</b> слаба (thinnest/weakest <i>f</i> )	<b>най-</b> слабо (thinnest/weakest <i>n</i> )	<b>най-</b> слаби (thinnest/weakest <i>pl</i> )
<b>най-</b> слабия(т) (the thinnest/weakest <i>m</i> )	<b>най-</b> слабата (the thinnest/weakest <i>f</i> )	<b>най-</b> слабото (the thinnest/weakest <i>n</i> )	<b>най-</b> слабите (the thinnest/weakest <i>pl</i> )
добър (good <i>m</i> )	добра (good <i>f</i> )	добро (good <i>n</i> )	добри (good <i>pl</i> )
добрия(т) (the good <i>m</i> )	добрата (the good <i>f</i> )	доброто (the good <i>n</i> )	добрите (the good <i>pl</i> )
<b>по-</b> добър (better <i>m</i> )	<b>по-</b> добра (better <i>f</i> )	<b>по-</b> добро (better <i>n</i> )	<b>по-</b> добри (better <i>pl</i> )
<b>по-</b> добрия(т) (the better <i>m</i> )	<b>по-</b> добрата (the better <i>f</i> )	<b>по-</b> доброто (the better <i>n</i> )	<b>по-</b> добрите (the better <i>pl</i> )
<b>най-</b> добър (best <i>m</i> )	<b>най-</b> добра (best <i>f</i> )	<b>най-</b> добро (best <i>n</i> )	<b>най-</b> добри (best <i>pl</i> )
<b>най-</b> добрия(т) (the best <i>m</i> )	<b>най-</b> добрата (the best <i>f</i> )	<b>най-</b> доброто (the best <i>n</i> )	<b>най-</b> добрите (the best <i>pl</i> )
силен (the strong <i>m</i> )	силна (strong <i>f</i> )	силно (strong <i>n</i> )	силни (strong <i>pl</i> )
силния(т) (the strong <i>m</i> )	силната (the strong <i>f</i> )	силното (the strong <i>n</i> )	силните (the strong <i>pl</i> )
<b>по-</b> силен (stronger <i>m</i> )	<b>по-</b> силна (stronger <i>f</i> )	<b>по-</b> силно (stronger <i>n</i> )	<b>по-</b> силни (stronger <i>mpl</i> )

<b>по-си́лния</b> (т) (the stronger <i>m</i> )	<b>по-си́лната</b> (the stronger <i>f</i> )	<b>по-си́лното</b> (the stronger <i>n</i> )	<b>по-си́лните</b> (the stronger <i>pl</i> )
<b>най-си́лен</b> (strongest <i>m</i> )	<b>най-си́лна</b> (strongest <i>f</i> )	<b>най-си́лно</b> (strongest <i>n</i> )	<b>най-си́лни</b> (strongest <i>pl</i> )
<b>най-си́лния</b> (т) (the strongest <i>m</i> )	<b>най-си́лната</b> (the strongest <i>f</i> )	<b>най-си́лното</b> (the strongest <i>n</i> )	<b>най-си́лните</b> (the strongest <i>pl</i> )

Such adjectives are called **qualitative adjectives** (**качествени прилагателни**). They express a quality, characteristic, property of a noun, and they may be not only compared but as well intensified (**добър** > **много добър** (good > very good)), and very often also adverbialized (**добър** > **добре** (good > well)) and nominalized (**добър** > **доброта** (good > goodness)).

Some adjectives, however, denote such qualities (properties) that are not comparable. For instance a wooden table can not be more wooden or less wooden, so although you can build forms like \***по-дървен**'(\*more wooden), \***най-дървен** (\*most wooden) you can't actually use them. Those adjectives are called **relative adjectives** (**относителни прилагателни**) and they identify the relation of one noun to another noun from which the adjective is derived. Usually they denote the material of which the object is made and can be replaced by a construction consisting of the preposition 'ОТ' (of) and the noun for the material: **дърво** > **дървен = от дърво** (wood > wooden = of wood) (**дървена маса = маса от дърво** (wooden table = table of wood)). At the same time if you use the adjective **дървен** (wooden) figuratively meaning for example that somebody is a clumsy dancer you can not only build the forms for comparison but use them as well:

**По-дървена** танцьорка от Наталия не съм виждала.  
I haven't seen a more clumsy dancer than Natalie.

Наталия е **най-дървената** танцьорка, която съм виждала.  
Natalie is the clumsiest dancer I have ever seen.

It is important to remember that the particles **по-**, **най-** have a stress of their own, i.e. they are always accented.

## Cardinal Numerals

The cardinal numerals (**бройни числителни имена**) for the numbers from 0 to 19 are (the accented vowel is underlined):

0	ну <u>л</u> а
1	ед <u>н</u> о
2	дв <u>е</u>
3	тр <u>и</u>
4	ч <u>е</u> тири
5	п <u>е</u> т
6	ш <u>е</u> ст
7	с <u>е</u> дем
8	о <u>с</u> ем
9	д <u>е</u> вет
10	д <u>е</u> сет
11	едина <u>д</u> есет (едина <u>й</u> сет)
12	двана <u>д</u> есет (двана <u>й</u> сет)
13	три <u>на</u> десет (три <u>на</u> йсет)
14	ч <u>е</u> тирина <u>д</u> есет (ч <u>е</u> тирина <u>й</u> сет)
15	п <u>е</u> тна <u>д</u> есет (п <u>е</u> тна <u>й</u> сет)
16	ш <u>е</u> стна <u>д</u> есет (ш <u>е</u> стна <u>й</u> сет)
17	с <u>е</u> демна <u>д</u> есет (с <u>е</u> демна <u>й</u> сет)
18	о <u>с</u> емна <u>д</u> есет (о <u>с</u> емна <u>й</u> сет)
19	д <u>е</u> ветна <u>д</u> есет (д <u>е</u> ветна <u>й</u> сет)

The cardinal number for 1 changes in gender and number. Although the idea of having a form for the plural of 1 may seem strange there is quite natural explication: the forms of the cardinal numeral for 1 are sometimes used in the function of the English indefinite article ; sometimes the plural form can mean one pair or one set. Here are some examples:

Имам са <u>м</u> о е <u>д</u> ин мо <u>л</u> ив.	I have only one (not more) pencil.
Говор <u>е</u> х с е <u>д</u> ин при <u>я</u> тел.	I was talking to a friend (male).
Проч <u>е</u> тох са <u>м</u> о е <u>д</u> на к <u>н</u> ига.	I read only one (not more) book.
Говор <u>е</u> х с е <u>д</u> на при <u>я</u> телка.	I was talking to a friend (female).

Изпих само едно кафе.	I had only one (no more) coffee.
Срещнахме се в едно кафене.	We met at a cafe.
(Имам само едни обувки.)	(I have got only one pair of shoes.)
Говорех с едни приятели.	I was talking to some friends.

The cardinal number for 2 changes in gender: the form '**два**' is used with the [numerical form](#) for the plural of the masculine nouns for non-persons, and the form '**две**' is used with the plurals of the feminine and the neuter nouns:

**два** молива (2 pencils), **две** книги (2 books), **две** жени (2 women), **две** деца (2 children), **две** села (2 villages)

Contracted forms like 'единайсет' (11), 'дванайсет' (12), 'шейсет' (60) etc. are used mainly in the colloquial speech. You should avoid, though, writing them. The formal 'единадесет', 'дванадесет', 'шестдесет' etc. should be used instead.

The cardinal numbers for the 'tens' are:

20	двадесет (двайсет)
30	тридесет (трийсет)
40	четиридесет (четирийсет)
50	петдесет
60	шестдесет (шейсет)
70	седемдесет
80	осемдесет
90	деветдесет

The forms for the 'hundreds' are:

100	сто
200	двеста
300	триста
400	четиристотин
...	...
900	деветстотин

The word for 1,000 - 'хиляда' belongs to the feminine gender, so it takes the form for the feminine of the numeral 2 - 'двѐ', while the words for 1,000,000 and for 1,000,000,000 - 'милион', 'милиард' belong to the masculine gender and they take the form for the masculine of the numeral 2 - 'два'. Naturally, after numerals 'милион', 'милиард' are used in their numerical form, not the ordinary form for the plural:

хиляда; **две** хиляди  
 (един) милион; **два** милиона  
 (един) милиард; **два** милиарда

Here are some examples how you read the cardinal numerals:

21	двадесет <b>и</b> едно
321	триста двадесет <b>и</b> едно
4 321	четири хиляди, триста двадесет <b>и</b> едно
12 345	дванадесет хиляди, триста четиридесет <b>и</b> пет
...	...
1 234 567	един милион, двеста тридесет <b>и</b> четири хиляди, петстотин шестдесет <b>и</b> седем

The conjunction **и** (and) is added between the second and the third member of each group of three digits.

The cardinal numerals have special forms called "male-person" cardinal numerals (**мъжколични бройни числителни**). They end in **-(и)ма** and are regularly derived for the numerals from 2 to 6: **двама** (2), **трима** (3), **четирима** (4), **петима** (5), **шестима** (6). They also appear in complex forms: **двадесет и двама** (22), **сто петдесет и петима** (153), etc. For the numerals for 7, 8, 9 there are forms that look like **седмина** (7), **осмина** (8), **деветмина** (9) but they are hardly used nowadays; the ordinary cardinal numerals are used instead. The "male-person" cardinal numerals are used only with nouns that denote male persons and after them the noun is in its regular plural form not the numerical form. To use this form for a group of people it is enough at least one of them to be male. Here are some examples:

В кафенето имаше петима души - един мъж и четири жени.  
 There were five persons at the cafe - one man and four women.

От четиримата съдии двама бяха мъже и две - жени.  
 Out of the four judges two were man, and two - women.

В театъра имаше сто двадесет и осем зрители и само сто и двадесет мesta.  
There were one hundred twenty eight spectators in the theatre and only one hundred and twenty seats.

If you do not know, or do not want to specify the exact number of the objects you talk about you can use some forms specialized to express approximate number. These forms are derived by joining two neighbouring or belonging to the same class numerals, e.g. един-два (една-две, едно-две) (one or two, a couple of), два-три (двама-трима, две-три) (two or three, a couple of), шест-седем, (six or seven) четиринадесет-петнадесет (14-15), осемдесет-деветдесет (80-90), двеста-триста (200-300). For the numbers 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90 and 100 there are special forms derived by adding the suffix -ина: десетина (about ten), двадесетина (about twenty), стотина (about one hundred). Here are some examples:

Иван няма много приятели - само двама-трима от студентските години.  
Ivan hasn't got a lot of friends - just a couple from the years at the university.

Селцето е малко - има седемстотин-осемстотин жители.  
The village is small - there are about seven-eight hundred residents.

Почаках петнадесетина минути и си тръгнах.  
I waited about fifteen minutes and left.

The cardinal numerals can join the definite article, if needed. Usually they join the article for the plural -ТЕ. The cardinal numerals that end in -А join the article -ТА. The cardinal numeral for 1 derives its forms with the article like the adjectives: единия(т), едната, едното, едните, and the cardinal numerals for 1,000,000 and 1,000,000,000 join the article like the masculine nouns: милиона/милионът, милиарда/милиардът. Here are some examples:

две - двете, четири - четирите, пет - петте, дванадесет - дванадесетте,  
тридесет - тридесетте, сто - стотте, хиляди - хилядите, милиони - милионите,  
милиарди - милиардите

два - двата, двама - двамата, трима - тримата, триста - тристата, стотина -  
стотината, хиляда - хилядата



## Ordinal Numerals

The ordinal numerals (**редни числителни**), just like the adjectives, are used as attributes in the sentence. They agree in gender and number with the nouns they qualify, so they have forms for the three genders and for the plural, and they can join the definite article. The forms for the ordinal numerals, as a rule, are derived from the form for the cardinal number by adding endings **-И**, **-А**, **-О**, **-И** for the masculine, the feminine, the neuter and the plural. Here are some examples (the accented vowel is underlined):

пет - петИ, петА, петО, петИ (fifth)  
шест - шестИ, шестА, шестО, шестИ (sixth)  
седем - седмИ, седмА, седмО, седмИ (seventh)  
осем - осмИ, осмА, осмО, осмИ (eighth)  
девет - деветИ, деветА, деветО, деветИ (ninth)  
десет - десетИ, десетА, десетО, десетИ (tenth)  
тридесет - тридесетИ, тридесетА, тридесетО, тридесетИ (thirtieth)

However, not all the ordinal numerals are derived like this. The ordinal numerals for the 'hundreds', for 'хиляда', 'милион', 'милиард' are derived by adding the suffix **-ЕН** (the **E disappears** in the forms for the feminine, the neuter and the plural):

сто - стотен, стотна, стотно, стотни (hundredth, 100<sup>th</sup>)  
хиляда - хиляден, хилядна, хилядно, хилядни (thousandth, 1,000<sup>th</sup>)  
милион - милионен, милионна, милионно, милионни (millionth, 1,000,000<sup>th</sup>)  
милиард - милиарден, милиардна, милиардно, милиардни (billionth, 1,000,000,000<sup>th</sup>)

The ordinal numerals for 200 and 300 - 'двестотен' ('two-hundredth', 200<sup>th</sup>), 'тристотен' ('three-hundredth', 300<sup>th</sup>) sound clumsily and are barely used.

The ordinal numerals for 1, 2, 3, 4 are more or less irregular. Here they are:

1 - първи, първа, първо, първи (first)  
2 - втори, втора, второ, втори (second)  
3 - трети, трета, трето, трети (third)  
4 - четвърти, четвърта, четвърто, четвърти (fourth)

In the complex forms of the ordinal numerals - all numbers over 20, only the last numeral is ordinal. It changes in gender and number, and joins the article, if needed. Here is an example:

123 - сто двадесет и **трети**(я(т)) /**трета**(та) /**трето**(то) /**трети**(те) ((the) one hundred twenty third)

## Fractions

The fractions (**дроби**) consist of two parts - numerator (**числител**, above the line) and denominator (**знаменател**, below the line). The numerator is always a cardinal numeral (in the feminine if the number is 1 or 2); the denominator is always an ordinal numeral (in the feminine if the numerator is 1, or in the plural if the numerator is any other number). Here are some examples (the accented vowel is underlined):

1/6	една <u>ш</u> еста
2/6	<u>д</u> ве <u>ш</u> ести
8/6	<u>о</u> сем <u>ш</u> ести
1/3	една <u>т</u> рета
2/3	<u>д</u> ве <u>т</u> рети
3/3	три <u>т</u> рети
1/100	една <u>с</u> тотна
2/100	<u>д</u> ве <u>с</u> тотни
3/100	три <u>с</u> тотни
1/123	една <u>с</u> то <u>д</u> вадесет и <u>т</u> рета
2/123	<u>д</u> ве <u>с</u> то <u>д</u> вадесет и <u>т</u> рети
108/123	<u>с</u> то и <u>о</u> сем <u>с</u> то <u>д</u> вадесет и <u>т</u> рети

The fraction 1/4 is read 'една **четвърт**', not 'една четвърта'. The fraction 1/2 is read '**една втора**' in mathematical context and '**половин(а)**' in other cases. Decimal fractions are read like other fractions: 0,1 - 'една десета', 0,01 - 'една стотна' etc. 'Половин' is used in front of a noun, and 'половина' is used independently:

половин час (half an hour)

два часа и половина (two hours and a half)

половин килограм (half a kilogram)

два килограма и половина (two kilograms and a half)

'Четвърт' is used both independently or in front of a noun:

четвърт час (a quarter of an hour)

час и четвърт (an hour and a quarter)

четвърт кило (a quarter of a kilo)

кило и четвърт (a kilo and a quarter)

## The Personal Pronouns

The **personal pronouns** (**лични местоимения**) are words that replace nouns or noun phrases, i.e. they are proper pronouns. They are called "personal" not because they stand for nouns for persons but because they have the grammatical category "person". They refer to something that was previously mentioned or that is clear from the situation:

Говорих с **Иван** и **той** се съгласи да дойде с **нас**.  
I spoke to **Ivan** and **he** agreed to come with **us**.

In the example above the personal pronoun "**той**" (he) replaces "**Иван**", i.e. something previously mentioned. The personal pronoun "**нас**" stands for "I and you" and it is clear from the situation that it refers to the person who is speaking and the person(s) that is (are) spoken to.

The personal pronouns have the following grammatical categories: **person**, **number**, and the forms for the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular have also **gender**. Although there are no declensions in Bulgarian, still there are in use some remnants of old **case** forms of the pronouns. The personal pronouns have forms for **the nominative**, **the accusative** and **the dative**. For the accusative and the dative there are two forms - long and short. The long forms for the dative case nowadays sound archaic and they are substituted by complex forms consisting of the preposition "**НА**" and the long form for the accusative case. All the forms are given in the table below:

### PERSONAL PRONOUNS

Case	Nom	Engl	Acc		Engl	Dat			Engl
Forms			Long	Short		Long	Complex	Short	
1 p. sg	<u>а</u> з	I	<u>ме</u> не	ме	me	<u>ме</u> не	на <u>ме</u> не	ми	to me
2 p. sg	<u>т</u> и	you	<u>те</u> бе	те	you	<u>те</u> бе	на <u>те</u> бе	ти	to you
2 p. sg polite	<u>В</u> ие	you	<u>В</u> ас	Ви	you	<u>В</u> ам	на <u>В</u> ас	Ви	to you
3 p. sg masc.	<u>т</u> ой	he	<u>не</u> го	го	him	<u>не</u> му	на <u>не</u> го	му	to him
3 p. sg fem.	<u>т</u> я	she	<u>не</u> я	я	her	<u>не</u> й	на <u>не</u> я	й	to her
3 p. sg neut.	<u>т</u> о	it	<u>не</u> го	го	it	<u>не</u> му	на <u>не</u> го	му	(to it)
1 p. pl	<u>н</u> ие	we	<u>н</u> ас	ни	us	<u>н</u> ам	на <u>н</u> ас	ни	to us
2 p. pl	<u>в</u> ие	you	<u>в</u> ас	ви	you	<u>в</u> ам	на <u>в</u> ас	ви	to you
3 p. pl	<u>т</u> е	they	<u>т</u> яx	ги	them	<u>т</u> яm	на <u>т</u> яx	им	to them

There is a special, polite form for the 2<sup>nd</sup> p. sg. It is used as a polite address to a stranger or a superior. Actually, it is the form for the 2<sup>nd</sup> p. pl, only it is capitalized. The short dative form for the feminine singular contains the **vowel "и"** but it is written like "й" to be distinguished from the conjunction "и". The short forms are, as a rule, unaccented. They are accented only when they appear after the negative particle "не", e.g. "Не те чух. Не ми викай! (I didn't hear you. Don't shout at me!)"

The short forms are used more often than the long forms. As a rule their position is in front of the verb. Sometimes, though, they appear after the verb because they cannot appear in clause-initial position. The position of the long forms is after the verb:

Аз те питаю. Питаю те. Аз питаю тебе.  
I (am) ask(ing) **you**.

Аз ти говорю. Говорю ти. Аз говорю на тебе.  
I (am) speak(ing) **to you**.

The short forms and the long forms are identical in meaning. The long forms for the dative case are considered archaic, so the complex forms are used instead. The forms for the accusative case are used with **transitive verbs** that have been used **transitively**. The forms for dative case are used with **intransitive verbs** or with **transitive verbs that have been used intransitively** (be aware that in one

language a verb may be transitive, and in another language the same verb may be intransitive!):

Аз питам тебе, не него.  
I (am) ask(ing) **you**, not **him**.

Аз питам за тебе.  
I (am)ask(ing) **about you**.

Аз вървя към тебе.  
I (am) walk(ing) **towards you**.

The short forms for the dative case substitute **only** the complex form, i.e. the combination of the preposition "**НА**" + the long form for the accusative. Combinations of other prepositions and the long form for the accusative cannot be substituted by the short form for the dative case, neither can the short forms appear after prepositions (there are some exceptions but we'll not go into such details). Here are some examples:

Аз говоря на него. Аз му говоря.  
I (am) talk(ing) **to him**.

Аз говоря за него.  
I (am) talk(ing) about him.

Иван живее на първия етаж. Аз живея точно над него, на втория етаж.  
Ivan lives on the first floor. I live right above him, on the second floor.

## The Possessive Pronouns

The possessive pronouns (**притежателни местоимения**) are words that indicate possession, and they replace either adjectives that denote personal possession, or possessive constructions of the type "preposition **НА** + noun", e.g. "**Марината** сестра =сестрата **на Мария** > **нейната** сестра, сестра **й** (**Maria's** sister=the sister **of Maria** > her sister)".

The possessive pronouns have the grammatical category "person", and special forms for the three genders and for the plural, as well as short forms. The long forms can join the definite article but the short forms cannot. All the forms are given in the table below:

## POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

Form	Masc.		Femin.		Neut.		Plur.		Short	English
	non-def.	definite	non-def.	definite	non-def.	definite	non-def.	definite		
1 <sup>st</sup> p. sg	<b>мой</b>	моя(т)	<b>моя</b>	моята	<b>моё</b>	моето	<b>мои</b>	моите	<b>ми</b>	my
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg	<b>твой</b>	твоя(т)	<b>твоя</b>	твоята	<b>твое</b>	твоето	<b>твои</b>	твоите	<b>ти</b>	your
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg polite	<b>Ваш</b>	Вашия(т)	<b>Ваша</b>	Вашата	<b>Ваше</b>	Вашето	<b>Ваши</b>	Вашите	<b>Ви</b>	your
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. m sg	<b>него</b> <b>в</b>	неговия(т)	<b>негов</b> <b>а</b>	неговата	<b>негов</b>	неговото	<b>негов</b> <b>и</b>	неговите	<b>му</b>	his
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. f sg	<b>нейн</b>	нейния(т)	<b>нейна</b>	нейната	<b>нейно</b>	нейното	<b>нейни</b>	нейните	<b>й</b>	her
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. n sg	<b>него</b> <b>в</b>	неговия(т)	<b>негов</b> <b>а</b>	неговата	<b>негов</b> <b>о</b>	неговото	<b>негов</b> <b>и</b>	неговите	<b>му</b>	its
1 <sup>st</sup> p. pl	<b>наш</b>	нашия(т)	<b>наша</b>	нашата	<b>наше</b>	нашето	<b>наши</b>	нашите	<b>ни</b>	our
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. pl	<b>ваш</b>	вашия(т)	<b>ваша</b>	вашата	<b>ваше</b>	вашето	<b>ваши</b>	вашите	<b>ви</b>	your
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. pl	<b>техе</b> <b>н</b>	техния(т)	<b>тяхна</b>	тяхната	<b>тяхно</b>	тяхното	<b>техни</b>	техните	<b>им</b>	their

There is a special, polite form for the 2<sup>nd</sup> p. sg. Just like the polite form of the personal pronouns it is used when you talk to a stranger or a superior. Again, it is the form for the 2<sup>nd</sup> p. pl, only it is capitalized. The short dative form for the feminine singular contains the vowel "и" but it is written like "й" to be distinguished from the conjunction "и". The short forms are, as a rule, unaccented.

The long forms agree in gender and number with the nouns they qualify, and **can be used with the definite article** as well. Their position is in front of the noun. The long form of the possessive pronouns can take any place among the attributes preceding the noun. In case it occupies the first position in the noun phrase, and the

definite article is needed, the definite article is joined to the possessive pronoun, as it is joined to the first attribute of the noun phrase. The long forms can also be used in the predicate. In other words, they behave exactly like the adjectives:

Този **ваш** навик е много лош.  
This habit **of yours** is very bad.

**Нейните** родители живеят в друг град.  
**Her** parents live in another city.

Обади се един **твой** приятел.  
A friend **of yours** phoned.

Иванови са **негови** приятели.  
The Ivanov family are friends **of his**.

Това няма да бъде **Ваш** проблем.  
This is not going to be **your** problem.

Тази книга е **моя**, а това списание е **тяхно**.  
This book is **mine** and this magazine is **theirs**.

There is only one short form for the three genders and the plural, i.e. it does not agree with the noun and cannot be used with the definite article. The position of the short forms is after the noun and it is used only after nouns that have definite article with exception of some nouns for relatives. Here are some examples:

През 1996 г. младият български писател Димитър Иванов публикува един роман, една пиеса, едно есе и няколко разказа. Роман**ът му** и разказите **му** имаха голям успех, но пиесата **му** и есе**то му** бяха пълен провал.

In 1996 the young Bulgarian writer D. I. published a novel, a play, an essay and some short stories. **His** novel and **his** short stories had great success but **his** play and **his** essay were a complete failure.

(Actually it is much better to say "Роман**ът** и разказите **му** имаха голям успех, но пиесата **и** есе**то му** бяха пълен провал." - "His novel and short stories had great success but **his** play and essay were a complete failure." but the version with the four possessive pronouns is also an option.)

Родителите **й** бяха възрастни и имаха нужда от постоянни грижи. Мъж**ът й** и деца**та й** много й помагаша, особено син**ът й**.

**Her** parents were elderly and needed constant care. **Her** husband and **her** children helped her a lot, especially **her** son.

(Again, it's better to say "Мъж**ът** и деца**та й** много й помагаша, особено син**ът (й)**." - "Her husband and children helped her a lot, especially the/**her** son." but once again the sentence in the example above is an option.)

- Къде живеят майка **ти** и баща **ти**?

- В Пловдив, там живеят и брат **ми** и сестра **ми**.
- Where are living **your mother** and (**your**) **father**?
- In Plovdiv, there live also **my brother** and (**my**) **sister**.

**Баба му** и **дядо му** много обичат **дъщеря му**.

**His grandmother** and (**his**) **grandfather** love very much **his daughter**.

*(In this case when the nouns for relatives do not join the definite article it is not possible to omit any of the short forms of the possessive pronouns because they define the nouns and, in a way, compensate the lack of the definite article.)*

As you have probably noticed the short forms of the possessive pronouns and the short forms of the personal pronouns for the dative case are the same. The only difference is that the short forms of the personal pronouns are used in front of the word they refer to, i.e. the **verb**, and the short forms of the possessive pronouns are used after the word they refer to, i.e. the **noun**. Thus it can happen that a form of the possessive pronoun is followed by a dative form of the personal pronoun for the same person and number, for example:

Приятелят **му** *му* представи Мария.

*(His friend introduced Maria to him.)*

Although the position of the short forms of the possessive pronouns is after the noun, in certain occasions it can occur before the noun. If the noun has got one or more attributes (usually placed in front of the noun) the short form of the possessive pronoun is placed after the first attribute:

Нейна**та** дълга черна коса блести на слънцето.=

=Дългата **й** черна коса блести на слънцето.

*(Her long black hair glitters at the sunshine.)*

## The Reflexive Pronouns

There are two types of reflexive pronouns (**възвратни местоимения**):

- personal
- possessive.

Both types have long forms and short forms.



The reflexive personal pronouns have forms only for accusative and dative cases. They have no forms for nominative, as their function is to refer the direct or the indirect object back to the subject of the sentence, i.e. they are never used in the role of subject of the sentence.

The reflexive possessive pronouns qualify objects and adverbial modifiers but never the subject of the sentence. The forms for the feminine, the neuter and the plural join the definite article following the same rules as the adjectives or the ordinary possessive pronouns. The long form for the masculine gender cannot join the long form of the definite article as it never modifies the subject. The forms of the reflexive possessive pronouns mean that the "possessor" and the subject of the sentence are the same. The short forms of the reflexive possessive pronouns are the same as the short dative forms of the reflexive personal pronouns.

Here are the forms:

Reflexive Personal Pronouns				
Accusative			Dative	
long form	short form		long form	short form
<u>се</u> бе си	се		(на) <u>се</u> бе си	си

  

Reflexive Possessive Pronouns				
masculine	feminine	neuter	plural	short form
<u>сво</u> й	<u>сво</u> я	<u>сво</u> е	<u>сво</u> и	си

Here are some examples how you use the reflexive pronouns:

**Е**лица оглежда **се**бе си в огледалото.=  
 =**Е**лица **се** оглежда в огледалото.  
 (Elitza is looking at **herself** in the mirror.)

**И**ван купува **за себе си** книга, а за Елица - цветя.=  
 = **И**ван **си** купува книга, а за Елица - цветя.  
 (Ivan buys **for himself** a book and for Elitza - flowers.)

**М**ила е приятелка на Елица.  
**М**ила говори с **нейната** сестра. = Мила говори със сестра **й**. (сестрата на Елица)  
 (Mila is Elitza's friend. Mila is talking with her sister. (the sister of Elitza))

**М**ила е приятелка на Елица.  
**М**ила говори със **своята** сестра. = **М**ила говори със сестра **си**. (сестрата на Мила)

(Mila is Elitza's friend. Mila is talking to **her own** sister. (the sister of Mila))

Децата обичат **своите** родители.=  
= Децата обичат родителите **си**.  
(The children love **their own** parents.)

Децата уважават родителите на Ани и Петър.  
Децата уважават техните родителите.=  
= Децата уважават родителите им. (родителите на Ани и Петър)  
(The children respect the parents of Annie and Peter. The children respect **their** parents. (the parents of Annie and Peter))

## The Interrogative Pronouns

There are several types of interrogative words that are traditionally included in the group of the interrogative pronouns (**въпросителни местоимения**). There are interrogative words for persons and objects - the proper pronouns; there are also interrogative words for qualities and possession - they are actually "proadjectives"; there are also "proadverbs" and even some "pro-verbs". Still, for practical purposes we'll continue to call them all interrogative pronouns. It is important to learn their forms well because they are the basis from which the forms for four other types of pronouns are derived. Here are the forms of the interrogative pronouns:

Pronouns and "Proadjectives"			
Forms	For Persons and Objects	For Qualities	For Possession
Masculine	ко <u>й</u> (Nom.)		
	ког <u>о</u> (Acc.)	как <u>ъ</u> в	ч <u>ий</u>
	ком <u>у</u> = на ког <u>о</u> (Dat.)		
Feminine	ко <u>я</u>	как <u>в</u> а	ч <u>ия</u>
Neuter	ко <u>е</u>	как <u>в</u> о	ч <u>ие</u>

<b>Plural</b>	<b><u>КОИ</u></b>	<b><u>КАКВИ</u></b>	<b><u>ЧИИ</u></b>
<b>English</b>	<b>who</b>	<b>what</b>	<b>whose</b>

<b>"Proadverbs"</b>		
<b>For Quantity</b>	<b>how much, how many</b>	<b><u>КОЛКО</u></b>
<b>For Place</b>	<b>where (to, from)</b>	<b><u>КЪДЕ</u> (<u>НАКЪДЕ</u>, <u>ОТКЪДЕ</u>)</b>
<b>For Time</b>	<b>when (since when, untill when)</b>	<b><u>КОГА</u> (<u>ОТКОГА</u>, <u>ДОКОГА</u>)</b>
<b>For Reason</b>	<b>why</b>	<b><u>ЗАЩО</u></b>
<b>For Manner</b>	<b>how</b>	<b><u>КАК</u></b>

## **The Bulgarian Verb**

So far I would like to believe that the grammar of Bulgarian was neither difficult nor challenging for most of the foreigners that have chosen to study Bulgarian. Apart from the verb, all the other part-of-speech classes in Bulgarian could be compared to planets within the solar system of Bulgarian grammar. Unfortunately, the verbal system of Bulgarian should be compared to nothing less but a galaxy. However, you have to master the verbal system of Bulgarian if you want to master Bulgarian, as the predicate is in the core of the communication, and the verb is the core of the predicate. It is of little consolation to be reminded that in other languages that have declination you have to master the declination as well. The richness and the complexity of the verbal system in Bulgarian is a complete "compensation" for the simplicity of its nominal system.

So, let's take a deep breath and face the beast!

A verb, as you know, is a word that describes, refers to an action, a state of being or experience of the subject of the sentence. It is the principal element of the clause

which connects the subject to the other words.

The verbs in Bulgarian have up to 3, 000 (!!!) different forms. This is due to the fact that there are six grammatical categories - **person** (with three subcategories - 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person), **number** (with two subcategories - sg and pl), **aspect** (with two subcategories - imperfective and perfective aspect), **tense** (with nine subcategories - present tense, aorist, imperfect tense, future tense, perfect tense, plu(squam)perfect, future perfect tense, future in the past tense and future perfect in the past tense), **voice** (with two subcategories - active and passive voice) and **mood** (with four subcategories - indicative, imperative, conditional and the so called "reported" mood). In addition to that there are five participles (three active participles - present, aorist and imperfect, and two passive participles - present and past) and a few other non-finite verb forms - the verbal adverbs, and the verbal nouns with the suffixes **-НЕ**, **-НИЕ**.

There are [three conjugations](#) according the present-tense stem and several (up to ten) classes according to the aorist stem. There are two auxiliary verbs (**сѣм** - "to be", and **ща** - "to want"), no infinitive, three sets of personal endings (one for the past tenses and two for the present tense) and two basic temporal stems from which all those 3, 000 forms are derived. Let's have a closer look at the stems first.

The verbs that belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation have two basic temporal stems - the **present-tense stem** and the **aorist stem**. Most often these stems are different, but sometimes it may happen that they appear to be identical (e.g. **моли|ш** > **моли-** for the present tense and **моли|х** > **моли-** for the aorist). The verbs that belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation **always** have identical stems for the present tense and the aorist, i.e. they have only one stem.

The present-tense stem is what is left when you remove the personal ending **-Ш** from the form for the present tense, 2<sup>nd</sup> person sg (the stem vowel doesn't appear in the forms for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person pl of the verbs that belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation, the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation is athematic). Here are some examples:

Basic Form	2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg	Stem
чет а (to read)	чете ш	чете-
отид а (to go)	отиде ш	отиде-
падн а (to fall)	падне ш	падне-
плач а (to cry, to weep)	плаче ш	плаче-
каж а (to say)	каже ш	каже-
пиш а (to write)	пише ш	пише-
пи я (to drink)	пие ш	пие-

живе я (to live)	живее ш	живее-
зна я (to know)	знае ш	знае-
вид я (to see)	види ш	види-
кан я (to invite)	кани ш	кани-
мол я (to ask, to beg)	моли ш	моли-
уч а (to study)	учи ш	учи-
слож а (to put)	сложи ш	сложи-
суш а (to dry)	суши ш	суши-
сто я (to stand)	стои ш	стои-
има м (to have)	има ш	има-
стреля м (to shoot)	стреля ш	стреля-
идва м (to come)	идва ш	идва-
разрушава м (to destroy, to demolish)	разрушава ш	разрушава-
заледява м (to ice over)	заледява ш	заледява-
купува м (to buy)	купува ш	купува-

This stem is used when the following forms are constructed: the present tense, the simple forms for the imperative mood, the present active participle, the imperfect tense, the imperfect participle and the verbal adverb. Actually all those forms, apart from the forms for the present tense and the imperative mood, are derived from the imperfect-tense stem. The imperfect-tense stem is what is left when you remove the personal ending **-X** from the form for the imperfect tense, 1<sup>st</sup> person sg. But the imperfect-tense stem is not considered to be a basic temporal stem of the verbs as it is derived from the present-tense stem by replacing the stem vowels **-е-**, **-и-** in the present-tense stem of the verbs from the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation with the suffix for the imperfect tense **-е/-я-** (**mutating Я**). The verbs that belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation have only one stem (as it was mentioned above). When you construct the imperfect-tense stem you should use as a basis the form for the present tense, 1<sup>st</sup> person sg, as the stem vowel does not appear in it and you have to remove only the personal ending. Here are some examples how the imperfect-tense stems of the verbs from the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation are constructed:

чет-**а** > чет-+**я/е**; > **четя**|х (I was reading)  
каж-**а** > каж-+**я/е**; > **каже**|х ((whenever) I said)  
зна-**я** > зна-+**я/е**; > **знае**|х (I knew; I used to know)  
вид-**я** > вид-+**я/е**; > **виде**|х ((whenever) I saw)  
суш-**а** > суш-+**я/е**; > **суша**|х (I was drying)  
бро-**я** > бро-+**я/е**; > **броя**|х (I was counting)

The aorist stem is what is left after you remove the personal ending **-X-** from the form for the aorist, 1<sup>st</sup> person sg of the verbs that belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation. As it was mentioned above, the verbs that belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation have only one stem. This stem is used when the following forms are constructed: the aorist, the aorist participle, the past passive participle and the verbal nouns with the suffixes **-НЕ, -НИЕ**. Here are some examples:

каза|х (I said) > **каза-**  
 скри|х (I hid) > **скри-**  
 видя|х (I saw) > **видя-**  
 суши|х (I dried) > **суши-**  
 брои|х (I counted) > **брои-**

The verbs that have the suffix **-О-** in the aorist stem (e.g. чето|х) show some irregularities when the aorist participles and the past passive participles are constructed. (For details go to the chapters on the aorist participle and the past passive participle.)

There are two sets of personal endings of the verbs in the present tense. Here they are:

**For the 1st and the 2nd conjugation:**

1 <sup>st</sup> p. sg	<b>-А/-Я</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg	<b>-Ш</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. sg	<b>-</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> p. pl	<b>-М</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. pl	<b>-ТЕ</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. pl	<b>-АТ/-ЯТ</b>

**For the 3rd conjugation:**

1 <sup>st</sup> p. sg	<b>-М</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg	<b>-Ш</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. sg	<b>-</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> p. pl	<b>-МЕ</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. pl	<b>-ТЕ</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. pl	<b>-Т</b>

From contemporary point of view the personal endings for the two simple past tenses - the aorist and the imperfect - are the same. Only in the aorist the forms for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person sg join no ending while the corresponding forms for the imperfect tense join the ending **-ШЕ**. The two tenses are differentiated by their stems. Here are the endings for the simple past tenses:

1 <sup>st</sup> p. sg	<b>-Х</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg	-(aorist)/ <b>-ШЕ</b> (imperfect)
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. sg	-(aorist)/ <b>-ШЕ</b> (imperfect)
1 <sup>st</sup> p. pl	<b>-ХМЕ</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. pl	<b>-ХТЕ</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. pl	<b>-ХА</b>

The two auxiliary verbs are **сѣм** (to be) and **щѣ** (to want). The verb **сѣм** is universal as an auxiliary verb and its forms are used widely to construct most of the complex verb forms. The verb has got suppletive (i.e. derived from different roots) stems for the present tense, the aorist and the future tense. Here follow the paradigms of the verb **сѣм** for the present tense, the future tense, the imperfect tense and aorist, as well as the aorist participle:

<b>Form</b>	<b>Pres.</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Imp.</b>	<b>Aor.</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> p. sg	сѣм	ще бѣда/ще сѣм	бѣх	бѣх
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg	си	ще бѣдеш/ще си	бѣ(ше)	бѣ
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. sg	е	ще бѣде/ще е	бѣ(ше)	бѣ
1 <sup>st</sup> p. pl	сѣме	ще бѣдем/ще сѣме	бѣхѣме	бѣхѣме
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. pl	сте	ще бѣдете/ще сте	бѣхѣте	бѣхѣте
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. pl	са	ще бѣдат/ще са	бѣхѣа	бѣхѣа
<i>aor. participle</i>		<i>бѣл, бѣла, бѣло, бѣли</i>		

The verb **щѣ** is used only to construct the forms for the future tenses. For the future tense and the future perfect tense is used the form for the 3<sup>rd</sup> person sg, present tense - **ЩЕ** for the whole paradigm, and from contemporary point of view it is considered a particle. The aorist participle **ЩЯЛ (ЩЯЛА, ЩЯЛО, ЩЯЛИ)** is used to construct the forms for the future tenses of the "reported" mood. The full paradigm of the verb **щѣ** in the imperfect tense is used to construct the forms for the future in the past tense and the future perfect in the past tense. Here is the paradigm of the verb **щѣ** for the imperfect tense:

1 <sup>st</sup> p. sg	<b>ЩЯХ</b>
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2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg	ЩЕШЕ
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. sg	ЩЕШЕ
1 <sup>st</sup> p. pl	ЩЯХМЕ
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. pl	ЩЯХТЕ
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. pl	ЩЯХА

## Aspect of the Verb

The aspect of the verb (**вид на глагола**) is a way of looking at the action. There are two aspects of the verb in Bulgarian (and in the other Slavic languages) - **imperfective** (**несвършен вид**) and **perfective** (**свършен вид**). Some languages do not express such kind of differences by grammatical means; other languages express by grammatical means different aspectual distinctions. In English, for instance, there are **perfective** (the perfect tenses) and **progressive** (the continuous tenses) aspects.

The main difference between the **imperfective** and the **perfective** aspects in Bulgarian is that the **perfective** aspect implies a **completed single action**, while the **imperfective** aspect **simply does not give any implication** whether the action is single or not, whether it is completed or not. Very often, though, when **opposed** to the perfective aspect, the **imperfective forms imply the opposite** of what the perfective forms imply - **a single but uncompleted action** (i.e. action in progress) or an action that has been successfully completed **more than once** (i.e. iterative, habitual action). Here are some examples:

Утре **ще се обадя** на майка си.

I'll **phone** my mother tomorrow. (The event is planned as a single completed action.)

Вече всяка седмица **ще се обаждам** на майка си.

From now on every week I'll **phone** my mother. (The action is intended to be completed successfully and repeated more than once.)

Утре следобед **ще се подготвям** за изпита по английски.

Tomorrow afternoon I'll **be preparing** myself for the English language test. (The action will be in progress by tomorrow afternoon.)



Most of the verbs have forms both for the perfective and the imperfective aspects. There are, however, some verbs that have forms only for the imperfective aspect (e.g. **викам** (to shout), **вървя** (to walk, to go), **гледам** (to look), **говоря** (to talk), **готвя** (to cook, to prepare), **живея** (to live), **мисля** (to think), **мия** (to wash), **пея** (to sing), **пиша** (to write), **пия** (to drink), **спя** (to sleep), **ходя** (to go, to walk), **уча** (to study), **чета** (to read)). We could call them "imperfectiva tantum", just like the nouns that have forms only for the singular or only for the plural are called "singularia tantum" or "pluralia tantum". These verbs are not derived from other verbs, they are "primary" verbs in that respect (but they can be derived from nouns, adjectives etc.). The fact that almost all the verbs in Bulgarian come in perfective-imperfective pairs means that those pairs are not two different verbs but two forms of one and the same verb. This also means that the verbs, unlike the Russian verbs, are not classified as verbs that belong to the perfective aspect and verbs that belong to the imperfective aspect. In Bulgarian verbs "change" in aspect, i.e. they have forms for both the imperfective and the perfective aspects. Although these forms belong to different [conjugations](#), they are considered forms of one and the same verb, not two close but different verbs.

Perfective verbs can easily be derived from "primary" imperfective verbs by adding **prefixes** or the **suffix -Н-**:

**пия** (to drink) > **пийна** (to take a drink), **допия** (to finish (o.'s drink)), **запия** се (to booze), **изпия** (to drink up), **напия** (се) (to get drunk)  
**викам** (to shout) > **викна** (to cry out), **завикам** (to begin to shout), **извикам** (to call, to cry out), **повикам** (to call in, to send for), **развикам** (се) (to burst into shouts)

It should be pointed out immediately that the basic imperfective verb (e.g. **пия**) and the verbs derived from it by the means of prefixes or the suffix **-Н-** (e.g. **пийна**, **допия**, **запия** се, **изпия**, **напия** (се)) are **different** verbs, **not** two or more forms of one and the same verb. Despite the fact that the basic verb and the derivatives belong to the same conjugation (except the derivatives with suffix **-Н-**) and the closeness of the meaning of the basic verb and the derivatives the latter are new verbs. The prefixes and the suffix **-Н-** not only change the aspect of the verb stem to perfective but also add to the lexical meaning of the new stem thus producing a new verb.

For these perfective verbs, as well as for the "primary" perfective verbs like **видя** (to see), **спра** (to stop), **кажа** (to say), **кача** (to lift up), **купя** (to buy), **платя** (to pay) imperfective **FORMS** can be constructed by adding the suffixes **-а/-я-, -ва-, -ава-/ява-, -ува-**. These suffixes add **NOTHING** to the lexical meaning of the stem, they only change the aspect of the verb to imperfective. The basic perfective forms and the derivatives are forms of one and the same verb despite the fact that most often they belong to different conjugations. If the perfective verb contains the suffix **-Н-** or the suffix **-А-** the suffix is first removed and after that the imperfectivating suffix (usually **-ВА-**) is added. Here are some examples:

видя (види|ш) > виждам (to see)  
 платя (плати|ш) > платщам (to pay)  
 спра (спре|ш) > сприрам (to stop)  
 хвърля (хвърли|ш) > хвърлям (to throw)  
 отговоря (отговори|ш) > отговарям (to open)  
 викна (викне|ш) > виквам (to cry out)  
 извикам > извиквам (to call, to cry out)  
 повикам > повиквам (to call in, to send for)  
 купя (купи|ш) > купувам (to buy)  
 сторя се (стори|ш се) > струвам се (to seem/to appear to be)  
 мина (мине|ш) > минавам (to pass)  
 реша (реши|ш) > решавам (to decide)  
 построя (построи|ш) > построявам (to build)  
 преброя (преброи|ш) > преброявам (to count (up))

These derivatives are called "secondary imperfective verbs" and they all belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation. If the basic perfective verb belongs also to the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation no phonetic changes take place in the verb stem. Otherwise most often the process of secondary imperfectivation (i.e. the derivation of secondary imperfective forms for the perfective verbs by the means of the suffixes **-а/-я-, -ва-, -ва/-ява-, -ува-**) is accompanied by a change of the vowel of the root of the verb or/and a change of the last consonant of the root. Let's have a closer look at those changes:

**1.** The vowel of the root of the basic verb is **е** and the vowel of the root of the secondary imperfective form is **и**. This kind of change takes place when the basic verb belongs to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation with accent on the ending (the accented vowel is underlined) and the imperfectivating suffix is **-а-**:

избера (избере|ш) > избирам (to choose)  
 събера (събере|ш) > събирам (to gather, to collect)  
 довлека (довлече|ш) > довличам (to drag up/in)  
 облека (облече|ш) > обличам (to dress)  
 измета (измете|ш) > измитам (to sweep (away/off/out))  
 помета (помете|ш) > помитам (to sweep up)  
 опека (опече|ш) > опичам (to bake)  
 изпера (изпере|ш) > изпирам (to wash (out))  
 заплета (заплете|ш) > заплитам (to begin knitting; to entangle)  
 изплета (изплете|ш) > изплитам (to knit)  
 нарека (нарече|ш) > наричам (to call, to name)  
 отсека (отсече|ш) > отсичам (to cut/crop off)  
 пресека (пресече|ш) > пресичам (to cross, to cut off)  
 изтека (изтече|ш) > изтичам (to flow/run out; to expire)  
 дочета (дочете|ш) > дочитам (to read/finish (a book))  
 почета (почете|ш) > почитам (to honour; to read a little)  
 прочета (прочете|ш) > прочитам (to read through)

This pattern is followed also by some other verbs - the prefixed perfective derivatives of the imperfective verbs **летя**, **меля**, also the verb **намеря** (they belong to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation) and the prefixed perfective derivatives of the verb **смея (се)** (that join the imperfectivating suffix **-ва-**):

прелетя (прелети|ш) > прелитам (to fly over)  
смеля (смели|ш) > смилам (to grind, to mill, to mince, to digest)  
намеря (намери|ш) > намирам (to find)  
засмея се (засмееш|ш се) > засмивам се (to smile; to begin to laugh)  
разсмея (разсмееш|ш) > разсмивам (to make s.o. laugh)

2. The vowel of the root of the basic verb is **o** and the vowel of the root of the secondary imperfective form is **a**. This kind of change takes place when the basic verb belongs to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation and the imperfectivating suffix is **-я-**(after **жд:** **-а-**):

съборя (събори|ш) > събарям (to bring down, to overturn)  
отговоря (отговори|ш) > отговарям (to answer)  
отровя (отрови|ш) > отравям (to poison)  
заровя (зарови|ш) > заравям (to bury)  
изгоря (изгори|ш) > изгарям (to burn out)  
уловя (улови|ш) > улавям (to catch, to take hold of)  
породя (породи|ш) > пораждам (to cause, to bring forth)

This pattern is followed also by the prefixed perfective verbs containing the root \***лож**. They join the imperfectivating suffix **-а-**:

сложа (сложи|ш) > слагам (to put)

3. The vowel of the root of the basic verb is **e** and the vowel of the root of the secondary imperfective form is **я [ 'а ]**. This kind of change takes place when the basic verb belongs to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation and contains the suffix **-н-**. The imperfectivating suffix is **-а-** and it **replaces** the suffix **-н-**:

легна (легне|ш) > лягам (to lie down)  
метна (метне|ш) > мятам (to throw, to cast)  
седна (седне|ш) > сядам (to sit)

4. There is no vowel in the root of the basic verb and the vowel of the root of the secondary imperfective form is **и**. This kind of change takes place when the basic verb contains one of the following roots - **-вр<sub>1</sub>-** (to shove), **-вр<sub>2</sub>-** (to boil), **-зр-**, **-мр-**, **-пр-**, **-стр-** (all those verbs belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation except the verb **вря** (to boil) from the root **-вр<sub>2</sub>-**, which belongs to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation). The imperfectivating suffix is **-а-**:

извря (извр<sub>2</sub>и|ш) > изв<sub>и</sub>рам (to boil away)  
навра (навр<sub>1</sub>е|ш) > нав<sub>и</sub>рам (to thrust in/into, to shove)  
съзра (съзр<sub>е</sub>ш) > съз<sub>и</sub>рам (to catch sight of)  
умра (умре|ш) > ум<sub>и</sub>рам (to die)  
спра (спре|ш) > сп<sub>и</sub>рам (to stop)  
простра (простре|ш) > прост<sub>и</sub>рам (to stretch out; to hang out (clothes/washing))

5. The root of the basic verb ends in **ш** or **ж** and the root of the secondary imperfective form ends in **с** or **з**. This kind of change takes place when the basic verb belongs to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation and the imperfectivating suffix is **-ва-**. (These verbs have the same alternation of consonants also in the [aorist stem](#), e. g. кажа (to say) > ка<sub>з</sub>ах):

кажа (ка<sub>ж</sub>е|ш) > ка<sub>з</sub>вам (to say)  
нарежа (наре<sub>ж</sub>е|ш) > наре<sub>з</sub>вам (to cut into pieces, to slice)  
препиша (препи<sub>ш</sub>е|ш) > препи<sub>с</sub>вам (to copy)  
помириша (помири<sub>ш</sub>е|ш) > помири<sub>с</sub>вам (to smell)

6. The root of the basic verb ends in **ч** or **ж** and the root of the secondary imperfective form ends in **к** or **г**. This kind of change takes place when the basic verb belongs to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation and the imperfectivating suffix is **-ва-**:

подстрижа (подстри<sub>ж</sub>е|ш) > подстри<sub>г</sub>вам (to cut/trim s.o.'s hair)  
заплача (запла<sub>ч</sub>е|ш) > запла<sub>к</sub>вам (to start crying)

7. The root of the basic verb ends in **к/ч** and the root of the secondary imperfective form ends in **ч**. This kind of change takes place when the basic verb belongs to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation and the imperfectivating suffix is **-а-**, and is simultaneous to the alternation [**е:и**] of the vowel of the root:

довлека (довле<sub>ч</sub>е|ш) > довл<sub>и</sub>чам (to drag up/in)  
облека (обле<sub>ч</sub>е|ш) > обл<sub>и</sub>чам (to dress)  
опека (опе<sub>ч</sub>е|ш) > оп<sub>и</sub>чам (to bake)  
нарека (наре<sub>ч</sub>е|ш) > нар<sub>и</sub>чам (to call, to name)  
отсека (отсе<sub>ч</sub>е|ш) > отс<sub>и</sub>чам (to cut/crop off)  
пресека (пресе<sub>ч</sub>е|ш) > прес<sub>и</sub>чам (to cross, to cut off)  
изтека (изте<sub>ч</sub>е|ш) > изт<sub>и</sub>чам (to flow/run out; to expire)

8. The root of the basic verb ends in **т** or **д** and the root of the secondary imperfective form ends in **щ** or **жд**. This kind of change takes place when the basic verb belongs to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation and the imperfectivating suffix is **-а-** or **-ава-** (from **-я-**, **-ява-**). The same pattern is followed also by the prefixed perfective derivative verbs of the basic imperfective verb **в<sub>о</sub>дя** (to lead) (e.g. доведе<sub>а</sub> (доведе<sub>ш</sub>), 1<sup>st</sup> conj. (to bring along, to fetch)):

изпратя (изпрати|ш) > изпращам (to send; to see off)  
 заплатя (заплати|ш) > заплащам (to pay (for))  
 посетя (посети|ш) > посещавам (to visit)  
 съкратя (съкрати|ш) > съкращавам (to abbreviate, to reduce)  
 предвидя (предвиди|ш) > предвиждам (to foresee)  
 породя (породи|ш) > пораждам (to cause, to bring forth)  
 победя (победи|ш) > побеждавам (to defeat, to overcome)  
 убедя (убеди|ш) > убеждавам (to persuade)  
 доведа (доведе|ш) > довеждам (to bring along, to fetch)

## Present Tense

(сегашно време)

There are three classes or conjugations of verbs in Bulgarian according to their stem in the present tense. The classification of the verbs in the practice is determined by the final vowel in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person sg: **Е** for the first conjugation, **И** for the second conjugation, and **А/Я** for the third conjugation. The first and the second conjugations have a long history. They are thematic, i.e. they have a stem vowel - **Е** and **И**. Unfortunately, the stem vowel does not appear in the forms for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person pl. As in the dictionaries appears the basic form of the verb, i.e. the form for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg, present tense, it is not directly obvious to which conjugation the verb belongs. The third conjugation has a relatively short history, and it is athematic, i.e. the final vowel in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person sg **А/Я** is not a proper stem vowel but a part of a suffix or the suffix itself. Here are some examples and some practical rules how to determine the conjugation of the verb:

Conj.	1 <sup>st</sup> p. sg	3 <sup>rd</sup> p. sg	Final Vowel in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> p.sg
1 <sup>st</sup>	чета (to read)	чете	e
1 <sup>st</sup>	отидя (to go)	отиде	e
1 <sup>st</sup>	падна (to fall)	падне	e
1 <sup>st</sup>	плача (плаках) (to cry, to weep)	оплаче	e
1 <sup>st</sup>	кажа (казах) (to say)	каже	e

1 <sup>st</sup>	пи <u>ш</u> а (пи <u>с</u> ах) (to write)	пи <u>ш</u> е	е
1 <sup>st</sup>	(to drink) пи <u>я</u>	пи <u>е</u>	е
1 <sup>st</sup>	(to live) жив <u>е</u> я	жив <u>е</u> е	е
1 <sup>st</sup>	(to know) зна <u>я</u>	зна <u>е</u>	е
2 <sup>nd</sup>	ви <u>д</u> я (to see)	ви <u>д</u> и	и
2 <sup>nd</sup>	ка <u>н</u> я (to invite)	ка <u>н</u> и	и
2 <sup>nd</sup>	мо <u>л</u> я (to ask, to beg)	мо <u>л</u> и	и
2 <sup>nd</sup>	уч <u>а</u> (уч <u>и</u> х) (to study)	уч <u>и</u>	и
2 <sup>nd</sup>	сло <u>ж</u> а (сло <u>ж</u> их) (to put)	сло <u>ж</u> и	и
2 <sup>nd</sup>	су <u>ш</u> а (су <u>ш</u> их) (to dry)	су <u>ш</u> и	и
2 <sup>nd</sup>	(to stand) сто <u>я</u>	сто <u>и</u>	и
2 <sup>nd</sup>	(to count) бро <u>я</u>	бро <u>и</u>	и
2 <sup>nd</sup>	(to build) стро <u>я</u>	стро <u>и</u>	и
3 <sup>rd</sup>	и <u>м</u> а <u>м</u> (to have)	и <u>м</u> а	а
3 <sup>rd</sup>	стрел <u>я</u> м (to shoot)	стрел <u>я</u>	я
3 <sup>rd</sup>	ид <u>в</u> а <u>м</u> (to come)	ид <u>в</u> а	а
3 <sup>rd</sup>	разруш <u>а</u> в <u>а</u> м (to destroy, to demolish)	разруш <u>а</u> в <u>а</u>	а
3 <sup>rd</sup>	залед <u>я</u> в <u>а</u> м (to ice over)	залед <u>я</u> в <u>а</u>	а
3 <sup>rd</sup>	куп <u>у</u> в <u>а</u> м (to buy)	куп <u>у</u> в <u>а</u>	а

As you can see from the table above if the personal ending for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg is **М** the verb belongs to the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation. This is evident even from the basic form because the ending for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg is **-М** and this is typical **only** for the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation.

If the personal ending for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg is **-А** the verb belongs to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation. There are some exceptions to that rule - some verbs like **уча**, **слож**а, **суш**а have personal ending for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg **-А** but belong to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation. This happens always after the sounds **Ч, Ж, Ш** as after them **you cannot write Я (or Ю)**. But be careful: not every verb that has **Ч, Ж, Ш** in front of the personal ending **-А** for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg belongs to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation. Verbs like **плач**а, **каж**а, **пиш**а still belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation. So, how can you tell which verbs that have **Ч, Ж, Ш** in front of the personal ending **-А** for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation and which - to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation. Well, there is a tip for that also: if you happen to know how the form for the **aorist** looks like (which is possible, although highly improbable, usually it is the other way around - the students know the forms for the present tense, but not for the aorist),

you will notice that the verbs that belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation do not preserve the **Ч, Ж, Ш** in the form for the aorist - they switch to **К, З, С** e.g. плача (плаках), кажа (казах), пиша (писах), while the verbs that belong to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation preserve the **Ч, Ж, Ш** in the form for the aorist, e.g. уча (учих), сложа (сложих), суша (суших).

If the personal ending for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg in the present tense is **-Я** the verb belongs either to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation or to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation. If the sound in front of the **-Я** is a consonant - the verb belongs to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation (exceptions: кьпя (to bath) - кьпе, дремя (to drowse) - дреме, сипя (to pour) - сипе). If the sound in front of the **-Я** is a vowel - the verb belongs to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation, **except** for the verbs that have the vowel **-О** in front of the ending **-Я** and the stress falls on the ending, e.g. стоя, броя, строя. They belong to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation.

In the table below you will see the full paradigms for the present tense of the verbs that belong to the 1<sup>st</sup>, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation:

### PRESENT TENSE

Form	1 <sup>st</sup> conjugation	2 <sup>nd</sup> conjugation	3 <sup>rd</sup> conjugation
1 <sup>st</sup> p. sg	чет- <b><u>а</u></b> ка <u>ж</u> - <b><u>а</u></b> зна- <b><u>я</u></b>	ви <u>д</u> - <b><u>я</u></b> су <u>ш</u> - <b><u>а</u></b> бро- <b><u>я</u></b>	купу <u>в</u> а- <b><u>м</u></b> стрел <u>я</u> - <b><u>м</u></b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg	чет- <b><u>е</u></b> - <b><u>ш</u></b> ка <u>ж</u> - <b><u>е</u></b> - <b><u>ш</u></b> зна- <b><u>е</u></b> - <b><u>ш</u></b>	ви <u>д</u> - <b><u>и</u></b> - <b><u>ш</u></b> су <u>ш</u> - <b><u>и</u></b> - <b><u>ш</u></b> бро- <b><u>и</u></b> - <b><u>ш</u></b>	купу <u>в</u> а- <b><u>ш</u></b> стрел <u>я</u> - <b><u>ш</u></b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. sg	чет- <b><u>е</u></b> - ка <u>ж</u> - <b><u>е</u></b> - зна- <b><u>е</u></b> -	ви <u>д</u> - <b><u>и</u></b> - су <u>ш</u> - <b><u>и</u></b> - бро- <b><u>и</u></b> -	купу <u>в</u> а- стрел <u>я</u> -
1 <sup>st</sup> p. pl	чет- <b><u>е</u></b> - <b><u>м</u></b> ка <u>ж</u> - <b><u>е</u></b> - <b><u>м</u></b> зна- <b><u>е</u></b> - <b><u>м</u></b>	ви <u>д</u> - <b><u>и</u></b> - <b><u>м</u></b> су <u>ш</u> - <b><u>и</u></b> - <b><u>м</u></b> бро- <b><u>и</u></b> - <b><u>м</u></b>	купу <u>в</u> а- <b><u>м</u></b> е стрел <u>я</u> - <b><u>м</u></b> е
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. pl	чет- <b><u>е</u></b> - <b><u>те</u></b> ка <u>ж</u> - <b><u>е</u></b> - <b><u>те</u></b>	ви <u>д</u> - <b><u>и</u></b> - <b><u>те</u></b> су <u>ш</u> - <b><u>и</u></b> - <b><u>те</u></b>	купу <u>в</u> а- <b><u>те</u></b> стрел <u>я</u> - <b><u>те</u></b>

	зна- <b>е-те</b>	бро- <b>и-те</b>	
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. pl	чет- <b>-ат</b> каж- <b>-ат</b> зна- <b>-ят</b>	вид- <b>-ят</b> суш- <b>-ат</b> бро- <b>-ят</b>	купува- <b>т</b> стреля- <b>т</b>

## Future Tense

The forms for the future tense (**бъдеще време**) consist of the **particle ЩЕ** for the positive paradigm, or the construction **НЯМА ДА** for the negative paradigm followed by the forms for the **present tense**. The particle **ЩЕ** originates from the verb "**ЩА**" (to want). In the tables below you will find the positive and the negative paradigms of some verbs (**чета** (to read), **кажа** (to say), **зная** (to know), **видя** (to see), **суша** (to dry), **броя** (to count), **купувам** (to buy), **стрелям** (to shoot)) in future tense:

### FUTURE TENSE

Positive paradigm			
Form	1 <sup>st</sup> conjugation	2 <sup>nd</sup> conjugation	3 <sup>rd</sup> conjugation
1 <sup>st</sup> p. sg	ще чет- <b>-а</b> ще каж- <b>-а</b> ще зна- <b>-я</b>	ще вид- <b>-я</b> ще суш- <b>-а</b> ще бро- <b>-я</b>	ще купува- <b>м</b> ще стреля- <b>м</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg	ще чет- <b>е-ш</b> ще каж- <b>е-ш</b> ще зна- <b>е-ш</b>	ще вид- <b>и-ш</b> ще суш- <b>и-ш</b> ще бро- <b>и-ш</b>	ще купува- <b>ш</b> ще стреля- <b>ш</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. sg	ще чет- <b>е-</b>	ще вид- <b>и-</b>	ще купува-



	ще <u>каж</u> - <b>е</b> - ще <u>зна</u> - <b>е</b> -	ще суш- <u>и</u> - ще бро- <u>и</u> -	ще стреля-
1 <sup>st</sup> p. pl	ще чет- <u>е</u> - <b>м</b> ще <u>каж</u> - <b>е</b> - <b>м</b> ще <u>зна</u> - <b>е</b> - <b>м</b>	ще <u>вид</u> - <b>и</b> - <b>м</b> ще суш- <u>и</u> - <b>м</b> ще бро- <u>и</u> - <b>м</b>	ще купува- <b>ме</b> ще стреля- <b>ме</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. pl	ще чет- <u>е</u> - <b>те</b> ще <u>каж</u> - <b>е</b> - <b>те</b> ще <u>зна</u> - <b>е</b> - <b>те</b>	ще <u>вид</u> - <b>и</b> - <b>те</b> ще суш- <u>и</u> - <b>те</b> ще бро- <u>и</u> - <b>те</b>	ще купува- <b>те</b> ще стреля- <b>те</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. pl	ще чет- <b>-ат</b> ще <u>каж</u> - <b>-ат</b> ще <u>зна</u> - <b>-ят</b>	ще <u>вид</u> - <b>-ят</b> ще суш- <b>-ат</b> ще бро- <b>-ят</b>	ще купува- <b>т</b> ще стреля- <b>т</b>

Negative paradigm			
Form	1 <sup>st</sup> conjugation	2 <sup>nd</sup> conjugation	3 <sup>rd</sup> conjugation
1 <sup>st</sup> p. sg	няма да чет- <u>а</u> няма да <u>каж</u> - <b>а</b> няма да <u>зна</u> - <b>я</b>	няма да <u>вид</u> - <b>я</b> няма да суш- <u>а</u> няма да бро- <u>я</u>	няма да купува- <b>м</b> няма да стреля- <b>м</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg	няма да чет- <u>е</u> - <b>ш</b> няма да <u>каж</u> - <b>е</b> - <b>ш</b> няма да <u>зна</u> - <b>е</b> - <b>ш</b>	няма да <u>вид</u> - <b>и</b> - <b>ш</b> няма да суш- <u>и</u> - <b>ш</b> няма да бро- <u>и</u> - <b>ш</b>	няма да купува- <b>ш</b> няма да стреля- <b>ш</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. sg	няма да чет- <u>е</u> - няма да <u>каж</u> - <b>е</b> - няма да <u>зна</u> - <b>е</b> -	няма да <u>вид</u> - <b>и</b> - няма да суш- <u>и</u> - няма да бро- <u>и</u> -	няма да купува- няма да стреля-
1 <sup>st</sup> p. pl	няма да чет- <u>е</u> - <b>м</b> няма да <u>каж</u> - <b>е</b> - <b>м</b>	няма да <u>вид</u> - <b>и</b> - <b>м</b> няма да суш- <u>и</u> - <b>м</b>	няма да купува- <b>ме</b> няма да стреля-

	няма да зна-е-м	няма да бро-и-м	ме
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. pl	няма да чет-е-те няма да каж-е-те няма да зна-е-те	няма да вид-и-те няма да суш-и-те няма да бро-и-те	няма да купува-те няма да стреля-те
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. pl	няма да чет-ат няма да каж-ат няма да зна-ят	няма да вид-ят няма да суш-ат няма да бро-ят	няма да купува-т няма да стреля-т

## Imperfect

The imperfect (**минало несвършено време**) is a past tense that is used alongside the [aorist](#) to express:

- An action that is simultaneous to some other action in the past:

Когато се върнах (Aor.), Елица (още) спеше (Imp.).  
When I came back Elitza was (still) sleeping.

- An action that was habitual or regularly repeated in the past:

Те често се караха. Като студентка четях много.  
They often (used to) quarreled. When I was a student I used to read a lot.

As you can see from the examples the Bulgarian imperfect tense is very often translated in English with the past progressive tense when we refer to **uncompleted** actions that are presented as a developing process at some intermediate stage. The action (presented as a process) that has started in the past is not necessarily uncompleted. The form itself gives no information whether the action still continues or is already terminated:

- Миналата година Елица все още **живееше** в София. Още ли живее там?
- Да, още живее там. / Не, вече не живее в София.
- Last year Elitza **was** still **living** in Sofia. Is she still living there?
- Yes, she is still living there. / No, she no longer lives in Sofia.

Sometimes it is translated with the past simple tense when we refer to a habitual or regularly repeated action in the past which every time was **completed** and then repeated again.

The imperfective verbs can be used freely in the imperfect tense. The perfective verbs can be used in the imperfect tense with the same restrictions that are valid for their use in the **present tense**. This is one of the reasons the imperfect tense to be called also "present in the past".

The imperfect tense forms for the verbs that belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugations are constructed by adding the suffix **-Е-/-Я-** (**mutating Я**) to the **present-tense stem**. After the stem are added the personal endings for the simple past tenses **-Х, -ШЕ, -ШЕ, -ХМЕ, -ХТЕ, -ХА**. The easiest way to do this is to remove the ending from the form for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg for the present tense, and then add the suffix and the proper personal ending:

чет-**а** (to read) >чет**я-** (чет**е-**); каж-**а** (to say) >каж**е-**; скри-**я** (to hide) >скри**е-**; зна-**я** (to know) >зна**е-**;  
 вид-**я** (to see) >вид**е->**; суш-**а** (to dry) >суш**а-<sup>1</sup>** (суш**е-**); бро-**я** (to count) >бро**я-** (бро**е-**);

The imperfect tense forms for the verbs that belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation are constructed by adding the personal endings for the simple past tenses directly to the present-tense stem:

купува-**м** (to buy) >купува-; стреля-**м** (to shoot) >стреля-;

In the table below you will see the full paradigms for the imperfect tense of verbs that belong to the 1<sup>st</sup>, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation:

### IMPERFECT (PRESENT IN THE PAST)

Form	1 <sup>st</sup> conjugation	2 <sup>nd</sup> conjugation	3 <sup>rd</sup> conjugation
1 <sup>st</sup> p. sg	чет- <b>я-х</b> каж- <b>е-х</b> скри- <b>е-х</b>	вид- <b>е-х</b> суш- <b>а-х<sup>1</sup></b> бро- <b>я-х</b>	купува- <b>х</b> стреля- <b>х</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg	чет- <b>е-ше</b>	вид- <b>е-ше</b>	купува- <b>ше</b>

	каж- <u>е</u> -ше скри- <u>е</u> -ше	суш- <u>е</u> -ше бро- <u>е</u> -ше	стреля-ше
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. sg	чет- <u>е</u> -ше каж- <u>е</u> -ше скри- <u>е</u> -ше	вид- <u>е</u> -ше суш- <u>е</u> -ше бро- <u>е</u> -ше	купува-ше стреля-ше
1 <sup>st</sup> p. pl	чет- <u>я</u> -хме каж- <u>е</u> -хме скри- <u>е</u> -хме	вид- <u>е</u> -хме суш- <u>я</u> -хме бро- <u>я</u> -хме	купува-хме стреля-хме
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. pl	чет- <u>я</u> -хте каж- <u>е</u> -хте скри- <u>е</u> -хте	вид- <u>е</u> -хте суш- <u>я</u> -хте бро- <u>я</u> -хте	купува-хте стреля-хте
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. pl	чет- <u>я</u> -ха каж- <u>е</u> -ха скри- <u>е</u> -ха	вид- <u>е</u> -ха суш- <u>я</u> -ха бро- <u>я</u> -ха	купува-ха стреля-ха

## Aorist

Bulgarian aorist (**минало свършено време**) is a simple past tense that is predominantly used for narration. Both the perfective and the imperfective forms can be used in the aorist without any restrictions:

Вчера следобед **се прибрах (св.в.)** към 3 часа. Бях много уморена и **легнах (св.в.)** да спя. **Спах (несв.в.)** до 5 часа, след това **четох (несв.в.)** малко,

**написах (св.в.)** едно писмо, **вечерях (несв.в.), гледах (несв.в.)** телевизия.

**Обадих се (св.в.)** на Елица и **говорих (несв.в.)** с нея около един час.

Yesterday I **came (perfective)** home about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. I was very tired and **lied down (perfective)** for a nap. I **slept (imperfective)** until 5 o'clock, after that I **read (imperfective)** a bit, I **wrote (perfective)** one letter, **ate (imperfective) supper**, and **watched (imperfective)** TV. I **phoned (perfective)** Elitza and **spoke (imperfective)** with her about an hour.

The forms for aorist are constructed by adding the personal endings for the simple past tenses to a special stem of the verb called **aorist (or infinitive) stem**. From this stem are derived also some of the participles and the infinitive (when there was an infinitive in Bulgarian). There is, unfortunately, no practical rule how to determine the aorist stems for the verbs that belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugations if you use as a starting point the **present-tense stem**. The aorist stem of the verbs that belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation is the same as the present-tense stem. The past-tense personal endings are the same that are used for the **imperfect tense**, only the ending **-ше** is not added to the forms for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person sg. Here are some examples:

## AORIST

Form	1 <sup>st</sup> conjugation	2 <sup>nd</sup> conjugation	3 <sup>rd</sup> conjugation
1 <sup>st</sup> p. sg	чѐто- <b>х</b> каза- <b>х</b> скри- <b>х</b>	видя- <b>х</b> суши- <b>х</b> брои- <b>х</b>	купува- <b>х</b> стреля- <b>х</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. sg	чѐте- каза- скри-	видя- суши- брои-	купува- стреля-
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. sg	чѐте- каза- скри-	видя- суши- брои-	купува- стреля-
1 <sup>st</sup> p. pl	чѐто- <b>хме</b> каза- <b>хме</b> скри- <b>хме</b>	видя- <b>хме</b> суши- <b>хме</b> брои- <b>хме</b>	купува- <b>хме</b> стреля- <b>хме</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> p. pl	чѐто- <b>хте</b>	видя- <b>хте</b>	купува- <b>хте</b>

	каза- <b>хте</b> скри- <b>хте</b>	суши- <b>хте</b> брои- <b>хте</b>	стреля- <b>хте</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> p. pl	че <b>то</b> - <b>ха</b> каза- <b>ха</b> скри- <b>ха</b>	видя- <b>ха</b> суши- <b>ха</b> брои- <b>ха</b>	купува- <b>ха</b> стреля- <b>ха</b>

## Mood:

### Imperative and Conditional

#### The Imperative (повелително наклонение)

If you want to ask or make somebody do something you have to use the forms for the imperative mood. There are special simple forms for the imperative only for the 2<sup>nd</sup> person sg and pl. There are, however, other ways of expressing commands and orders for all the persons in the singular and the plural. We'll go back to them later. Now, here is a practical rule how to construct the simple forms for the imperative:

- Take the form for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg, present tense, and remove the personal ending:

чет|а (to read) > чет-  
падн|а (to fall) > падн-  
каж|а (to say) > каж-  
пиш|а (to write) > пиш-  
куп|я (to buy) > куп-  
мол|я (to ask, to beg) > мол-  
уч|а (to study) > уч-  
пи|я (to drink) > пи-  
живе|я (to live) > живе-  
сто|я (to stand) > сто-  
идва|м (to come) > идва-  
стреля|м (to shoot) > стреля-

- a) If the stem (what is left when you have removed the suffix) ends in a **consonant** add the following endings: **-и** for the 2<sup>nd</sup> person sg and **-ете** for the 2<sup>nd</sup> person pl. Remember that the stress **always** falls on the ending **-и** and on the first **e** from the ending **-ете**. Here are some examples (the accented vowel is underlined):

чет- + **-и/-ете** > **чети!/четете!**  
 падн- + **-и/-ете** > **падни!/паднете!**  
 каж- + **-и/-ете** > **кажи!/кажете!**  
 пиш- + **-и/-ете** > **пиши!/пишете!**  
 куп- + **-и/-ете** > **купи!/купете!**  
 мол- + **-и/-ете** > **моли!/молете!**  
 уч- + **-и/-ете** > **учи!/учете!**

- b) If the stem ends in a **vowel** add the following endings: **-й** for the 2<sup>nd</sup> person sg and **-йте** for the 2<sup>nd</sup> person pl (the stress is never on the ending):

пи- + **-й/-йте** > **пий!/пийте!**  
 живе- + **-й/-йте** > **живей!/живейте!**  
 сто- + **-й/-йте** > **стой!/стойте!**  
 идва- + **-й/-йте** > **идвай!/идвайте!**  
 стреля- + **-й/-йте** > **стреляй!/стреляйте!**

*There are also some exceptions:*

видя (to see) > **виж!/вижте!**  
 вляза (to come in, to enter) > **влез!/влезте!**  
 изляза (to go out, to exit) > **излез!/излезте!**  
 сляза (to come/get down, to descend) > **слез!/слезте!**  
 дойда (to come) > **ела!/елате!**  
 отида (to go) > **иди!/идете!**  
 държа (do hold) > **дръж!/дръжете!**  
 съм (to be) > **бъди!/бъдете!**

It is a curious fact that the verbs **мога** (can, be able to) and **ща** (want) haven't got at all forms for the imperative. You can use the imperative forms of some other, close in meaning, verb like **умея** (can, be able, know how to) and **искам** (want).

The negative forms for the imperative are constructed by adding the negative particle **НЕ** in front of the positive imperative form. However, the negative forms for the perfective forms cannot be used. The negative forms for the corresponding imperfective form is used instead:

**кажа** > **кажи!/кажете!**; **не казвай!/не казвайте!**

казвам > казвай!/казвайте!; не казвай!/не казвайте!

изпия > изпий!/изпийте!; не изпивай!/не изпивайте!

изпивам > изпивай!/изпивайте!; не изпивай!/не изпивайте!

дойда > ела!!елате!; не идвай!/не идвайте!

идвам > идвай!/идвайте!; не идвай!/не идвайте!

отида > иди!!идете!; не отивай!/не отивайте!

отивам > отивай!/отивайте!; не отивай!/не отивайте!

изляза > изляз!!излезте!; не излязай!/не излязайте!

излязам > излязай!/излязайте!; не излязай!/не излязайте!



## Some Non-finite Verb Forms:

### Verbal Adverbs

#### Verbal Nouns with the Suffixes -НЕ, -НИЕ

There are four fully developed participles in Bulgarian and the present passive participle is in a process of restoring its place in the system. However, we'll talk in details about the participles later. Now we'll look at two other non-finite verb forms - the verbal adverbs (called in English also adverbial participles and even gerunds) (**деепричастия**) and the verbal nouns with the suffixes **-НЕ, -НИЕ** (**отглаголни съществителни със суфиги -не, -ние**).

**The verbal adverb** doesn't change at all and it denotes an action that is simultaneous to the action of the verb-predicate. It always has the same subject as the verb. Here are some examples:

Те прекарваха вечерите си, **гледайки** телевизия или **говорейки** за политика.  
They (used to) spend their evenings **watching** TV or **talking** politics.

Деца тичаха из училищния двор, **смеейки се** и **вдигайки** страшен шум.  
The children were running around the school yard **laughing** and **making** terrible noise.

It is not advisable to use a lot of verbal adverbs. You can substitute them with a clause containing a finite verb form:

Те прекарваха вечерите си, като **гледаха** телевизия или **говореха** за политика.  
They (used to) spend their evenings **watching** TV or **talking** politics.

Деца тичаха из училищния двор, **смееха се** и **вдигаха** страшен шум. /  
Деца тичаха из училищния двор, като **се смееха** и **вдигаха** страшен шум.  
The children were running around the school yard, (were) **laughing** and (were) **making** terrible noise. / The children were running around the school yard **laughing** and **making** terrible noise.

As you can see the verbal adverb is translated in English with an **-ing** form (which, when used more like a verb in English, is sometimes called present participle). The verbal nouns with the suffix **-НЕ** are also translated in English with an **-ing** form (that one which is often called gerund and is used more like a noun).

The forms of the verbal adverbs are derived only from imperfective verb stems. They are built by adding the suffix **-ЙКИ** to the **present-tense stem** of the verb. The suffix is added directly to the stems of the verbs that belong to the 1st and the

3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation. For the verbs that belong to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation the stem vowel is replaced with **Е** and then the suffix is added. For practical purposes we can assume also that the form for the verbal adverb is constructed by adding the suffix **-ЙКИ** directly to the imperfect-tense stem but then you have to remember that the stem vowel **-Я/-Е-** is always in -Е- variant because of the front vowel И in the suffix, i.e. you have to take the variant of the stem that appears in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or the 3<sup>rd</sup> person sg. Here are some examples:

- using the present-tense stem:

чете|ш > чете+йки > четейки (reading)  
маже|ш > маже+йки > мажейки (smearing, spreading)  
знае|ш > знае+йки > знаейки (knowing)  
моли|ш > моле+йки > молейки (begging, asking)  
суши|ш > суше+йки > сушейки (drying)  
брои|ш > брое+йки > броейки (counting)  
купува|ш > купува+йки > купувайки (buying)  
стреля|ш > стреля+йки > стреляйки (shooting)

- using the imperfect-tense stem:

чете|ше > чете+йки > четейки  
маже|ше > маже+йки > мажейки  
знае|ше > знае+йки > знаейки  
моле|ше > моле+йки > молейки  
суше|ше > суше+йки > сушейки  
брое|ше > брое+йки > броейки  
купува|ше > купува+йки > купувайки  
стреля|ше > стреля+йки > стреляйки

**The verbal nouns** with the suffixes **-НЕ, -НИЕ** are translated in English usually with a gerund (**-ing** form) and they denote actions or states with no regard to any possible subject of the action or the state. Here are some examples:

**Пушенето** е вредно за здравето. Цветята имат нужда от **поливане**.

**Събранието** е насрочено за утре. Апартаментът има парно **отопление**.

**Smoking** is bad for the health. The flowers need **watering**. **The meeting** is scheduled for tomorrow. The flat has central **heating**.

The verbal nouns with the suffixes **-НЕ, -НИЕ** are considered to be non-finite verbal forms, i.e. part of the verbal paradigm, because, unlike other verbal nouns that are derived sporadically, the verbal nouns with the suffix **-НЕ are derived regularly** from all the imperfective verb stems. They describe the action or the state as a process, and are "more verbal" than the verbal nouns with the suffix -

**НИЕ.** From some verbs both verbal nouns - with the suffixes **-НЕ** and **-НИЕ** - can be derived. Here are some examples:

държа > държа**не**; държа**ние** (holding; behaviour)  
зная > знае**не**; зна**ние** (knowing; knowledge)  
мълча > мълча**не**; мълча**ние** (silence)  
пиша > писа**не**; писа**ние** (writing; scripture)  
страдам > страда**не**; страда**ние** (suffering)  
творя > творе**не**; творе**ние** (creation)

The verbal nouns with the suffix **-НИЕ** are more or less sporadic and they are derived from both the imperfective and the perfective stems. They have deep roots in the history of Bulgarian. Most of them are derived from the aorist stems that existed on an earlier stage of the development of the language. They have forms for the plural and can join the definite article. Here are some examples:

събера > събра**ние** (meeting)  
закъснея > закъсне**ние** (delay)  
отмъстя > отмъще**ние** (revenge)  
принудя > прину**жде**ние (compulsion)  
осветя > осветле**ние** (lighting)  
представя > представле**ние** (performance, show)  
поразя > пораже**ние** (defeat)  
прося > проше**ние** (petition)

Historically the verbal nouns with the suffix **-НЕ** are derived from the imperfective [aorist stems](#) and are related to the [past passive participle](#) which is clear from the suffix **-Н-**. However, for practical purposes, it is easier nowadays to derive some of them from the [imperfect-tense stem](#). Here are some practical rules and some examples:

- If the verb belongs to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation and ends in **-НА**, derive the verbal noun by adding **-НЕ** to the **imperfect-tense stem**. Most of these verbs are perfective and you cannot derive a verbal noun with the suffix **-НЕ** from them. There are, however, about twenty verbs that are imperfective, like бръсна, вехна, гасна, мръзна, мъкна, шепна etc.:

бръсна > бръсне|х > бръсне**не** (shaving)  
мръзна > мръзне|х > мръзне**не** (freezing)  
шепна > шепне|х > шепне**не** (whispering)

- If the verb belongs to the 1<sup>st</sup> or the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugations and the stem ends in a vowel (before the stem vowel **e** or **и**), derive the verbal noun by adding **-НЕ** to the **imperfect-tense stem**:

броя > броя|х > бро<sup>е</sup>не (counting)  
 живея > живее|х > живе<sup>е</sup>не (living)  
 зная > знае|х > зна<sup>е</sup>не (knowing)  
 мия > мие|х > ми<sup>е</sup>не (washing)  
 пея > пее|х > пе<sup>е</sup>не (drinking)  
 строя > строя|х > стро<sup>е</sup>не (building)

- In all other cases derive the verbal noun by adding **-НЕ** to the **aorist stem**. If the vowel in front of the **-X** is different from **-А-** or **-Я-** replace it with an **-Е-**:

бера > бра|х > бра<sup>е</sup>не (picking)  
 мажа > маза|х > маза<sup>не</sup> (smearing, spreading)  
 пиша > писа|х > писа<sup>не</sup> (writing)  
 плача > плака|х > плака<sup>не</sup> (crying, weeping)  
 стрижа > стрига|х > стрига<sup>не</sup> (hair cutting)  
 горя > горя|х > гор<sup>е</sup>не (burning)  
 лежа > лежа|х > лежа<sup>не</sup> (lying)  
 летя > летя|х > лет<sup>е</sup>не (flying)  
 мълча > мълча|х > мълча<sup>не</sup> (silence)  
 седя > седя|х > сед<sup>е</sup>не (sitting)  
 викам > вика|х > вика<sup>не</sup> (shouting)  
 стрелям > стреля|х > стреля<sup>не</sup> (shooting)  
 моля > моли|х > моле<sup>не</sup> (begging, asking)  
 суша > суши|х > суше<sup>не</sup> (drying)  
 плета > плето|х > плете<sup>не</sup> (knitting)  
 чета > чето|х > чет<sup>е</sup>не (reading)

The verbal nouns with the suffix **-НЕ** can join the definite article and have forms for the plural. Some of them have two forms for the plural - one that follows the [exceptions-model](#) for constructing the plural forms for nouns that belong to the neuter gender, and one that follows the [rule](#) for constructing the plural forms for the nouns that belong to the neuter gender:

SG		PL	
Undefined	Defined	Undefined	Defined
бръс <sup>не</sup> не (shaving)	бръсненето	бръснения	бръсненията
ми <sup>е</sup> не (washing)	миенето	миенета/миения	миенетата/миенията
плащан <sup>е</sup> (payment)	плащането	плащания	плащанията
стреля <sup>не</sup> (shooting)	стрелянето	стреляния	стрелянията
стро <sup>е</sup> не (building)	строенето	(строения)	(строенията)
чет <sup>е</sup> не (reading)	четенето	четения	четенията

## Present Active Participle

The present active participle (**сегашно деятелно причастие**) is relatively new in the history of contemporary Bulgarian. It existed in Old Bulgarian, then disappeared, and later was reintroduced into the language from Russian and Church-Slavic when the standards of contemporary Bulgarian were being set up.

It is derived from the [present-tense stem](#) (**only imperfective stems**) but for practical purposes it is easier to derive it from the corresponding [imperfect-tense stem](#) (which doesn't contradict to what was said above). The ending **-X** in the form for the imperfect tense, 1<sup>st</sup> person sg is replaced by the suffix **-Щ** (**-ЩА** for the feminine, **-ЩО** for the neuter and **-ЩИ** for the plural). Here are some examples:

чета (to read) > четя|х > четя|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (reading)  
плача (to cry, to weep) > плаче|х > плаче|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (crying, weeping)  
режа (to cut) > реже|х > реже|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (cutting)  
пиша (to write) > пише|х > пише|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (writing)  
пия (to drink) > пие|х > пие|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (drinking)  
каня (to invite) > кане|х > кане|щ, -ща, -що, канещи (inviting)  
седя (to sit) > седя|х > седя|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (sitting)  
моля (to ask, to beg) > моле|х > моле|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (begging)  
уча (to study) > уче|х > уче|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (studying)  
суша (to dry) > суша|х > суша|щ<sup>1</sup>, -ща, -що, -щи (drying)  
стоя (to stand) > стоя|х > стоя|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (standing)  
има (to have) > има|х > има|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (having)  
стрелям (to shoot) > стреля|х > стреля|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (shooting)  
идвам (to come) > идва|х > идва|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (coming)  
купувам (to buy) > купува|х > купува|щ, -ща, -що, -щи (buying)

It should be pointed out that the **-е/-я-** sound ([mutating Я](#)) in the imperfect-tense stem of the verbs that belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugations follows "double standards". As far as the formation of the imperfect-tense stem is concerned, it follows the rules for the mutating of **Я**. But after you derive the participle by adding the suffix **-Щ**, it no longer obeys the rules. Here are some examples:

плача > плаче|х > плаче|щ, плачещия(т), плачещи  
режа > реже|х > реже|щ, режещия(т), режещи  
пиша > пише|х > пише|щ, пишещия(т), пишещи  
пия > пие|х > пие|щ, пиещия(т), пиещи  
моля > моле|х > моле|щ, молещия(т), молещи  
уча > уче|х > уче|щ, учещия(т), учещи

When the verb has the suffix in **-е-** variant in its imperfect-tense stem as in the examples above there is no formal problem - the form for masculine with article and the form for plural preserve the **-е-** and this doesn't contradict the rules for mutation of the **"ят"**-sound.

But when the stress falls on the suffix it is in **-я-** variant (**-а-** if the sound in front of the vowel is **ч, ж, ш**<sup>1</sup>) in the imperfect-tense stem. Still, it doesn't change into **-е-** when the forms for the plural or for the masculine with the definite article are constructed despite the fact that the next syllable contains a front vowel:

чета > четя|х > четя|щ, четящият, четящи  
седя > седя|х > седя|щ, седящият, седящи  
стоя > стоя|х > стоя|щ, стоящият, стоящи  
суша > суша|х > суша|щ, сушащия(т), сушащи<sup>1</sup>

The present active participle is used only attributively. It denotes an active feature of the object it refers to, i.e. that the object is engaged in activity denoted by the verb stem. For example, "пещото момиче"(the **singing** girl) means that the girl **sings**. The name **present** active participle is not very precise because the activity may have taken place in the past or may be due in the future. It is rather a **simultaneous** active participle, for example:

Преди половин час **видях** в градината няколко **играещи** деца, но сега няма никого.

Half an hour ago I saw in the garden several **playing** children but there is no one now. (The children were playing simultaneously to my seeing them half an hour ago, not now.)

Оттук **виждам** добре **играещите** деца.

From here I can see well the **playing** children. (The children are playing now simultaneously to my seeing them now.)

Когато влезеш в парка, **ще видиш** до езерото няколко **играещи** деца.

When you enter the park you'll see next to the lake several **playing** children. (The children will be playing in the future.)

The present active participle behaves like an adjective, agrees in gender and number with the noun it defines, and the negative particle **НЕ** is written **always together** with the participle. It can [join the definite article, if needed](#). Here are some examples:

Умиращата стара жена извърна към влизащия свещеник невиждащите си очи и протегна треперещите си ръце.

The **dying** old lady turned towards the **incoming** priest her **unseeing** eyes and reached out with her **trembling** hands.

## Aorist Participle

The aorist participle (**минало свършено деятелно причастие**) is one of the two past active participles in Bulgarian. As a general rule, is formed by adding **-л** for masculine, **-ла** for feminine, **-ло** for neuter, **-ли** for plural to the **aorist stem** of the verb. As a practical rule you can remember that the aorist stem of the verb is what is left after you remove the ending **-X** from the form for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg in the aorist. Here are some examples how you construct the aorist participle:

падна|**x** (I fell) > падна**л**, паднала**а**, паднало**о**, паднали**и** (fallen)

пи|**x** (I drank) > пи**л**, пила**а**, пило**о**, пили**и** (drunk)

видя|**x** (I saw) > видя**л**, видяла**а**, видяло**о**, видяли**и**<sup>1</sup>(seen)

идва|**x** (I came) > идва**л**, идвала**а**, идвало**о**, идвали**и** (come *pp*)

Naturally, there are some exceptions. These are mainly verbs that end in **-ОХ** in the aorist, the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg. There are two such groups:

- verbs that in the present tense have the stress on the ending (the stressed vowel is underlined) and the stem ends in **-Т**, **-Д**. In this case you have to remove not only the personal ending for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg for the aorist **-X**, but also the suffix **-О-** and the final consonant of the stem, i.e. **-Т**, **-Д**. In other words you have to remove the whole **-тох** or **-дох** lot:

чет|**а**, (to read) > чет**тох** > чел**л**, чела**а**, чело**о**, чели**и** (read)

плет|**а** (to knit) > плет**тох** > плел**л**, плела**а**, плело**о**, плели**и** (knitted)

превед|**а** (to translate) > превед**дох** > превел**л**, превела**а**, превело**о**, превели**и** (translated)

(ям), яд|**еш** (to eat) > яд**ох** > ял**л**, яла**а**, яло**о**, яли**и** (eaten)

(дам), дад|**еш** (to give) > дад**ох** > дал**л**, дала**а**, дало**о**, дали**и**(given)

- verbs that have in present tense a stem that ends in **-К**, **-З**, **-С**, regardless of the stress. In this case you have to remove not only the personal ending for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg in the aorist **-X**, but also the suffix **-О-**, i.e. the whole **-ох** lot. Then you can add the suffixes for the aorist participle **-л** for the masculine, **-ла** for the feminine, **-ло** for the neuter, **-ли** for the plural. But there is yet another thing to be done - as consonant combinations like **кл**, **зл**, **сл** cannot stay at the end of the word, you have to insert an **-Ъ-** in front of the suffix **-л** in the form for the masculine:

река (to say) > рекох > рекъл, рекла, рекло, рекли (said pp)  
вляза (to come in, to enter) > влязох > влязъл, влязла, влязло, влезли<sup>1</sup> (entered)  
донеса (to bring) > донесох > донесъл, донесла, донесло, донесли (brought)

- To the irregularities also belong the verbs съм, ща, отида, дойда:

съм (to be) > би|х > бил, била, било, били (been)  
ща (to want) > щя|х > щял, щяла, щяло, щели<sup>1</sup> (wanted)  
отида (to go) > отидох > отишъл, отишла, отишло, отишли (gone)  
дойда (to come) > дойдох > дошъл, дошла, дошло, дошли (come pp)

The aorist participles are used widely. They constitute a part of the form for the **perfect tenses**, as well as of some of the forms for the **reported mood**. Besides, just like the adjectives, they can have attributive and predicative use. If the participle is a part of a complex verb form, e.g. of the reported mood, the negative particle **НЕ** is written **separately** from the participle. In case of attributive use the negative particle **НЕ** is written **together** with the participle. The aorist participles can also **join the definite article, if needed**:

Вече бях **решил** да не чакам повече и да си тръгна, когато най-накрая Мария дойде.

I had already decided not to wait any longer and leave when Maria finally came.

Принцесата **не искала** да се ожени за просяка, но нищо **не можела** да направи.

The princess didn't want to marry the beggar but there was nothing she could do about it.

Годината **била** студена и черешите **не узрели** до края на юли. Не **яжте** **неузрели** плодове!

The year was cold and the cherries didn't become ripe until the end of July. Don't eat unripe fruits!

Те са **още незрели** за такава мъдрост. Те **още не са дозрели** за такава мъдрост.

They are immature for such wisdom. They haven't reached maturity yet for such wisdom.



## Imperfect Participle

The imperfect participle (**минало несвършено деятелно причастие**) is one of the two past active participles in Bulgarian. It is formed by adding **-л** for the masculine, **-ла** for the feminine, **-ло** for the neuter, **-ли** for the plural (i.e. the same suffixes that are used for building the [aorist participle](#)) to the [imperfect-tense stem](#) of the verb. As a practical rule you can remember that the imperfect-tense stem of the verb is what is left after you remove the ending **-X** from the form for the 1<sup>st</sup> person sg in the imperfect tense. Here are some examples of how you construct the imperfect participle:

четя|х (< to read) > четя**л**, четя**ла**, четя**ло**, четя**ли**<sup>1</sup>  
каже|х (< to say) > каже**л**, каже**ла**, каже**ло**, каже**ли**  
скрие|х (< to hide) > скрие**л**, скрие**ла**, скрие**ло**, скрие**ли**  
виде|х (< to see) > виде**л**, виде**ла**, виде**ло**, виде**ли**  
суша|х (< to dry) > суша**л**, суша**ла**, суша**ло**, суше**ли**<sup>2</sup>  
броя|х (< to count) > броя**л**, броя**ла**, броя**ло**, брое**ли**<sup>1</sup>  
купува|х (< to buy) > купува**л**, купува**ла**, купува**ло**, купува**ли**  
стреля|х (< to shoot) > стреля**л**, стреля**ла**, стреля**ло**, стреля**ли**<sup>3</sup>

It should be pointed out that the aorist participles and the imperfect participles of all the verbs that belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation and some of the verbs that belong to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation are identical. This is due to the fact that the suffixes are identical and when the stems are also identical (that is the case with the above mentioned verbs) naturally the participles are identical as well. However, they have different functions and can easily be distinguished in the text.

The imperfect participle does not exist in the other Slavic languages, nor - in Old Bulgarian. It came into existence later in the history of Bulgarian and it is used **only** to construct the forms for the present tense and the imperfect tense in the [reported mood](#). It is **never** used as an attribute but nevertheless, as a part of a complex verb form, it agrees in gender with the subject of the sentence, hence it has got forms for all the three genders. As it is never used as an attribute it never joins the definite article, and the negative particle **НЕ** is **always** written **separately** from the participle. Here are some examples:

През ранната каменна епоха хората **живеели** в пещери и **се хранели** с каквото намерят или уловят. Единствените домашни животни **били** кучетата. In the early Stone Age the people **lived** in caves and **ate** whatever they could find or hunt. The only domestic animals **were** dogs.

## Past Passive Participle

The past passive participle (**минало страдателно причастие**) is another non-finite form of the verb that is formed from the [aorist stem](#). Past passive participles are regularly formed from [transitive verbs](#) (and for some [intransitive verbs - only forms for neuter](#)) by replacing the personal ending for the aorist, 1<sup>st</sup> person sg **-X**, with the suffix **-Н** (**-НА** for the feminine, **-НО** for the neuter and **-НИ** for the plural) or the suffix **-Т** (**-ТА** for the feminine, **-ТО** for the neuter, **-ТИ** for the plural). Here are some practical rules how to do this:

- If the verb belongs to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation and ends in **-НА**, add the suffix **-Т**:

брѣсна (to shave) > брѣсна|х > брѣсна|т, -та, -то, -ти (shaven)

вдигна (to lift, to raise) > вдигна|х > вдигна|т, -та, -то, -ти (lifted, raised *pp*)

метна (to throw) > метна|х > метна|т, -та, -то, -ти (thrown)

сметна (to count; to consider) > сметна|х > сметна|т, -та, -то, -ти (counted; considered *pp*)

спомена (to mention) > спомена|х > спомена|т, -та, -то, -ти (mentioned *pp*)

стигна (to reach) > стигна|х > стигна|т, -та, -то, -ти (reached *pp*)

- If the verb belongs to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation and the stem ends in a vowel (before the stem vowel), add the suffix **-Т**. This rule applies only to disyllabic verbs and their prefixed derivatives, e.g. **мия**, **измия**, **пия**, **допия**, **изпия** etc., but not **живея**:

бия (to beat) > би|х > би|т, -та, -то, -ти (beaten)

мия (to wash) > ми|х > ми|т, -та, -то, -ти (washed *pp*)

измия (to wash out) > изми|х > изми|т, -та, -то, -ти (washed\_out *pp*)

пия (to drink) > пи|х > пи|т, -та, -то, -ти (drunk)

допия (to drink up) > допи|х > допи|т, -та, -то, -ти (drunk (up))

изпия (to drink up) > изпи|х > изпи|т, -та, -то, -ти (drunk (up))

ляя (pour) > ля|х > ля|т, лята, лято, лети<sup>1</sup> (poured *pp*)

изляя (pour out) > изля|х > изля|т, излята, излято, изле<sup>1</sup> (poured\_out *pp*)

пяя (to sing) > пя|х > пя|т, пята, пято, пети<sup>1</sup> (sung)

изпяя (sing (to the end)) > изпя|т > изпя|т, изпята, изпято, изпети<sup>1</sup> (sung (to the end))

- In all other cases add the suffix **-Н**. If the vowel in front of the **-X** is different form **-А-** or **-Я-** replace it with an **-Е-**:

видя (to see) > видя|х > видя|н, -на, -но, видени<sup>1</sup> (seen)

гледам (to look) > гледа|х > гледа|н, -на, -но, -ни (looked *pp*)

живея (to live) > живя|х > живя|н, -на, -но, живени<sup>1</sup> (lived *pp*)  
 избира (to choose) > избра|х > избра|н, -на, -но, -ни (chosen)  
 пиша (to write) > писа|х > писа|н, -на, -но, -ни (written)  
 спра (to stop) > спря|х > спря|н, -на, -но, спре<sup>1</sup>ни (stopped *pp*)  
 дам (to give) > дадо|х > даде|н, -на, -но, -ни (given)  
 донеса (to bring) > донесо|х > донесе|н, -на, -но, -ни (brought *pp*)  
 чета (to read) > чето|х > чете|н, -на, -но, -ни (read *pp*)  
 моля (to ask, to beg) > моли|х > моле|н, -на, -но, -ни (asked *pp*)  
 построя (to build) > построи|х > постро<sup>е</sup>|н, -на, -но, -ни (built *pp*)  
 счупя (to break) > счупи|х > счупе|н, -на, -но, -ни (broken)

Pay attention that, contrary to the adjectives, the vowel **-Е** in front of the **-Н** **does not disappear** in the forms for the feminine, the neuter and the plural.

The past passive participles are used when the forms for the **passive voice** are constructed. They can be used as attributes as well. In such case, like the adjectives, they agree in gender and number with the noun they refer to and they can join the **definite article, if needed**. In such cases the negative particle **НЕ** is written **together** with the participle:

**Недописаното** писмо, **отворената** книга, **забравената незагасена** цигара в пепелника - всичко показваше, че **той** много е бързал, когато е излизал.  
 The **unfinished** letter, the **opened** book, the **unextinguished** cigarette **forgotten** in the ash-tray - everything showed that he was in a great hurry when he was leaving.

## Present Passive Participle

There used to be two passive participles in Bulgarian - the present passive participle (**сегашно страдателно причастие**) and the **past passive participle** (**минало страдателно причастие**). The present passive participles were derived from the **present-tense stem** of the **transitive verbs** by adding the suffix **-М**. However, most of them disappeared and they are no longer considered to be a separate class of non-finite verb forms. In modern Bulgarian there are just a few of them. They all end on **-М** in the masculine (**-МА, -МО, -МИ** for the feminine, the neuter and the plural) and are considered to be adjectives. Their meaning is close to the meaning of the English adjectives with the suffix **-able**. Here are some examples of present passive participles:

любя > любим (beloved), пренеса > преносим (portable), (не) узнавам > неузнаваем (unrecognizable), накажа > наказуем (punishable)

There are some practical rules how to derive the forms of the present passive participles for the verbs that belong to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation:

- If the verb belongs to the 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation, add the suffix **-М** directly to the stem of the verb:

вид|я (to see) > види- > види|м, -ма, -мо, -ми (visible)  
вред|я (to harm) > вреди- > (не)вреди|м, -ма, -мо, -ми ((un)harmful)  
дел|я (to divide) > дели- > дели|м, -ма, -мо, -ми (divisible)  
люб|я (to love) > люби- > люби|м, -ма, -мо, -ми (beloved)  
поправ|я (to repair, to correct) > поправи- > поправи|м, -ма, -мо, -ми (repairable, corrigible)  
прост|я (to pardon) > прости- > прости|м, -ма, -мо, -ми (pardonable)  
търп|я (to bear) > търпи- > търпи|м, -ма, -мо, -ми (bearable)  
улов|я (to catch) > улови- > улови|м, -ма, -мо, -ми (\*catchable, possible to catch)  
усто|я (resist) > устои- > устои|м, -ма, -мо, -ми (resistible)

- If the verb belongs to the 3<sup>rd</sup> conjugation the suffix is not a bare **-М**, but **-ЕМ**:

изменя|м (to change) > изменя- > изменя|ем, -ема, -емо, -еми (changeable)  
исползва|м (to use) > исползва- > исползва|ем, -ема, -емо, -еми (usable)  
мачка|м (to crease) > мачка- > мачка|ем, -ема, -емо, -еми (\*creaseable, cf. crease-proof - немачкаем)  
познава|м (to recognize) > познава- > познава|ем, -ема, -емо, -еми (cognizable)  
разбира|м (to understand) > разбира- > разбира|ем, -ема, -емо, -еми (understandable)  
сгъва|м (to fold) > сгъва- > сгъва|ем, -ема, -емо, -еми (collapsible, folding)  
узнава|м (to learn, to find out, to recognize) > узнава- > узнава|ем, -ема, -емо, -еми (recognizable)

If the verb contains the suffix **-ава-/-ява-**, it is reduced to **-а-/-я-**:

(промока(ва)|м) > промока- > промока|ем, -ема, -емо, -еми (permeable, not waterproof)  
(проница(ва)|м) > проница- > проница|ем, -ема, -емо, -еми (permeable)  
разглобя(ва)|м (to disassemble, to dismount) > разглобя- > разглобя|ем, -ема, -емо, -еми (dismountable)

- It is hard to predict what suffix will take the verbs that belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation - some take the suffix **-ИМ**, some take the suffix **-УЕМ**. Some changes to the stem also take place. It is advisable just to learn these

participles as separate words and not to try to derive them from the verb.  
Here are some examples:

понес|а (to bear) > понес- > понос|им, -има, -имо, -ими (bearable)

пренес|а (to carry, to transport) > пренес- > пренос|им, -има, -имо, -ими (portable)

накаж|а (to punish) > наказ- > наказ|уем, -уема, -уемо, -уеми (punishable)

опис|а (to describe) > опис- > опис|уем, -уема, -уемо, -уеми (describable)

The present passive participles can be used as attributes and as predicates, and they agree in gender and number with the noun they refer to. They can join the [definite article](#), [if needed](#). Very often they are used in their negative form. The negative particle **НЕ** is **always** written **together** with the participle:

Хаосът в класната стая беше **неописуем**.

The chaos in the classroom was **indescribable**.

Той не обичаше да взема лекарства, но **непоносимата** болка в зъба го принуди да изпие един аспирин.

He didn't like to take medicines but **the unbearable** toothache forced him to take an aspirin.