

## SOME USEFUL PHRASES IN TATAR

**Sälam. İsimim Djon.**  
[sæ'la:m. 'isi,mim dʒon]  
/Salam. Isimim Jon./  
*Hi. My name is John.*

**İsimigiz niçik?**  
[i'simi,giz 'niçik]  
/İsimigiz nichik?/  
*What is your name?*

**Niçiksiz?**  
['niçiksiz]  
/Nichiksiz?/  
*How are you doing?*

**Bik eybetmin, räxmät.**  
[bik ey'betmin, ræx'mæt]  
/Bik eybetmin, rakh-mat./  
*I'm fine, thanks.*

**Qayan bulasız?**  
[qai'jan 'bula,sız]  
/Qayan bulasız?/  
*Where are you from?*

**Min Indianadan.**  
[min indi'ana,dan]  
/Min Indianadan./  
*I'm from Indiana.*

**Bädräf qayda?**  
[bæ'dræf qai'da]  
/Badraf qayda?/  
*Where is the bathroom?*

**Küp räxmät.**  
[kyp ræx'mæt]  
/Kup raxmat./  
*Thank you very much.*

**Saw buliğiz.**  
[saw 'buli,ɣız]  
/Saw buliğiz./  
*Good bye.*

## FIVE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD LEARN MORE ABOUT TATAR AND THEIR LANGUAGE

1. The Tatar population is estimated to be about 6,600,000, and can be found throughout Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Tatar is spoken natively in nearly 20 countries, with the largest population in Russia (in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and Moscow), and other significant populations in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, and Ukraine.
2. A member of the Kipchak-Bolgar language group, Tatar shares many structural similarities to other Altaic languages such as Bashkir (agglutinative, SOV structure, vowel harmony, etc).
3. Tatarstan is one of Russia's foremost centers for foreign investment and boasts a multitude of foreign employers such as Ford, Isuzu, Intel, IBM, Cisco, Ikea, and Johnson & Johnson.
4. Home to more than 50 institutions of higher education and 75 scientific research institutes and design centers, Tatarstan has arguably the most highly educated labor pool of all the regions in Russian.
5. Like many Euroasian peoples, Tartars are big soccer fans, however Tatarstan is probably best known for their hockey prowess, featuring not one, but two Kontinental Hockey League (KHL) teams.

## ABOUT US

The Center for Languages of the Central Asian Region (CeLCAR) at Indiana University develops materials for learning and teaching a wide variety of Central Asian languages.

For more information, go to [celcar.indiana.edu](http://celcar.indiana.edu).



238 Eigenmann Hall, 1900 East 10th Street,  
Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47406  
Phone: (812) 856-1230  
E-mail : [celcar@indiana.edu](mailto:celcar@indiana.edu)  
Website: <https://celcar.indiana.edu>

# TATAR



Center for Languages of the  
Central Asian Region (CeLCAR)

## WHO ARE THE TATARS AND WHERE DO THEY LIVE?



Tatars are a Turkic ethnic group living throughout Eastern Europe and Central Asia, most prominently in the Republic of Tatarstan located in the Volga Federal District of Russia. Geographically, Tatarstan is located in the center of the East European Plain, right between the Volga and Kama Rivers and extending east into the Ural mountains.

Today, the Tatar population is estimated to be about 7 million with approximately 5.5 million living in Russia, significant populations in Uzbekistan (468,000), Kazakhstan (203,000), Ukraine (73,000), Turkmenistan (36,000), Kyrgyzstan (32,000), and Tajikistan (20,000), and smaller, but still significant populations of Tatars living in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Turkey, and the People's Republic of China.

## WHAT KIND OF LANGUAGE IS TATAR?

Tatar belongs to the Altaic group of languages, which includes languages such as Turkish, Mongolian, and arguably Korean and Japanese. Altaic languages have historically been spoken across areas of Asia and Eastern Europe, and are named



after the Altai Mountains in Central Asia. More specifically, Tatar belongs to the Kypchak branch of the Turkic language family, which includes other Central Asian languages such as Kazakh and Kyrgyz. But more specifically, Tatar belongs to the Kipchak-Bolgar language group, along with its most closely related language, Bashkir. Tatar has three main dialects: Eastern (Siberian), Middle (Kazan), and Western (Mişär).

Similar to other Altaic languages, Tatar uses a subject-object-verb word order and is an agglutinative language, where one root word has multiple suffixes added to indicate discrete grammatical functions. And like many other Central Asian languages, Tatar features vowel harmony, wherein the vowel quality of a vowel in a word directly affects the vowel quality of the other vowels within the word.

## WHAT ALPHABET DO THE TATARS USE?

Throughout history, Tatar has been written using several alphabet variations. The earliest records of Tatar are written using the Orkhon (also known as Old Turkic) alphabet. Then around the 10th century, Tatars adopted the Arabic alphabet, which was used until 1920 when for a short period a modified Arabic alphabet called *Yaña imlâ* was used. Subsequently, Tatar was written in a modified Latin script (*Jañalif*), then a modified Cyrillic script (*татар әлифбасы*), then yet another modified Latin script (*tatar әlifbası*), before finally adopting in 2002 the Cyrillic alphabet that is still used today.



## WHAT IS TATAR CULTURE LIKE?

Due to past historical tensions with neighboring peoples, Tatar communities tend to be very close knit, relying on strong networks of family, friends, and business associates.

Most Tatar families are very large, and it is not unusual for three or more generations to live together under one roof. Additionally, many Tatars encourage endogamy, the practice of marrying within their own ethnic group in order to preserve their ethnicity and keep their culture alive.

Most Tatars identify themselves as Sunni Muslim, with the second largest religious affiliation being Russian Orthodox Christianity.

Over time, Tatar cuisine has been influenced by several groups, including the ancient nomadic Volga Bulgars, Russians, Uzbeks, and Tajiks, and it relies heavily on the main agricultural products of Tatarstan – grains and livestock (usually beef and mutton). Popular dishes include *pilmän* (a ceremonial meat dumpling soup), *pilaw* (*pilaf*), *tutırğan tawıq* (a chicken stuffed with eggs in milk), and *çelpek* (deep fried pancakes).

