



# RUSSIAN TABLE

## Coordinating Conjunctions



### Set phrases and idioms in Russian that use coordinating conjunctions

- жили-были дед **да** баба.  
ZHEEli BYli dyed da BABA.  
Once upon a time there was an old man **and** an old woman.  
(A traditional beginning for Russian fairy tales)
- кожа **да** кости  
KOzha da KOSTi  
skin **and** bones  
(Used just like the English expression, for a skinny person)
- **ни** себе **ни** людям  
ni siBYE ni LYUdyam  
**neither** for oneself, **nor** for people  
(Said of someone who is not giving access to something they don't need anyway, like the English expression "a dog in the manger")
- **ни** то **ни** сѐ  
ni TO ni SYO  
**neither** this, **nor** that  
(a Russian equivalent of "neither here nor there")
- **ни** пуха **ни** пера  
ni POOkha ni piRA  
**neither** down **nor** feather  
(Used to wish someone luck, especially before a test/exam, much like "break a leg")
- **и** стар **и** млад  
i star i mlat  
**both** the old **and** the young  
(Used to refer to a large group of people of different ages)
- **и** смех **и** грех  
i smyekh i gryekh  
**both** fun **and** sin  
(Used when you don't know whether to laugh or cry)
- мал **да** удал  
mal da oODAL  
little **but** dashing  
(Equivalent to "a little goes a long way")
- рад бы в рай, **да** грехи не пускают  
rad by v ray da griKHEE nye poosKAYut  
would gladly go to paradise, **but** the sins don't allow  
(Equivalent to "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak,"  
used to talk about someone who wants to do something  
but instead is being lazy or doing something else instead)



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- **ни** себе **ни** людям  
ni siBYE ni LYUdyam  
**neither** for yourself, **nor** others
- **ни** больше **ни** меньше  
ni BOLshe ni MYENshe  
nothing more nor less
- **ни** жив **ни** мертв  
ni zhyf ni myortf  
**neither** alive **nor** dead
- **ни** ответа **ни** привета  
ni atVYEta ni priVYEta  
**no** reply  
(lit: no answer, no hi)
- **ни** рыба **ни** мясо  
ni RYba ni MYAsa  
**neither** fish **nor** fowl  
(lit: neither fish nor meat)
- **ни** дать **ни** взять  
ni dat no vzyat  
exactly  
(lit: **nothing** less, **nothing** more)
- **ни** пуха **ни** пера  
ni POOkha ni piRA  
break a leg  
(lit: **neither** fluff **nor** feather)
- **ни** слуху **ни** духу  
ni SLOOkhoo ni DOOkhoo  
quiet, no news  
(lit: **neither** hearing **nor** spirit)
- **ни** свет **ни** заря  
ni svyet ni zaRYA  
at the crack of dawn  
(lit: **neither** light **nor** dawn)

