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Vocabulearn Russian Level 1



Synopsis

Easy and effective, VocabuLearn presents useful vocabulary words (the building blocks of language) and expressions designed to greatly increase comprehension and improve pronunciation of the foreign language. Plus, VocabuLearn's unique reversible/bilingual format allows non-English speaking students to learn English in the same way English speakers learn the target language -- using the same cassettes and word lists. Level One emphasizes basic vocabulary and simple expressions. This music-enhanced edition includes a carefully selected classical background for optimal learning.

Book Information

Series: VocabuLearn

Audio CD: 4 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

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Customer Reviews

I will review this product by answering some of the questions I've asked my self before buying the product and by reading some of the reviews written by others.

Q. What is inside the box? A. The level 1 box contains 4 CDs and a booklet with all the words and expressions heard on them. Each CD contains a different part of speech. disc1 contains nouns, cd2 adjectives and adverbs, cd3 expressions, and cd4 verbs.

Q. I heard some reviewers complain about the background music by saying it is loud, annoying, and makes listening to pronunciation more difficult. Is that true? A. First of all, the music starts at the beginning of each track and runs for only 4 minutes or less while the speakers say the words. The music then stops and the speakers keep saying the words without the background music. Each CD has 4 tracks with each running for about 15 minutes. So you roughly get 11 minutes in each track without music, which is a good thing because I think it is annoying. I

personally had no problem with the music being a bit loud since I have some background about Russian pronunciation. However, this might cause a problem for the total beginner. But once one becomes familiar with the Russian pronunciation, it shouldn't be a problem. In fact, it might be a good practice to hear Russian while there's some kind of distraction. This will improve the comprehension skills in the long run, which is what one will encounter in most real situations.

Q. Are the CDs for Russian speakers learning English or for non-Russian speakers learning Russian? A. It can work both ways since each CD uses two approaches. For the first two tracks you hear a word said in English then followed by Russian. For the other two tracks you hear the word in Russian first followed by the English translation. In my opinion this reverse method is effective for both understanding and making your own expressions.

Q. Why did I give it 4 stars instead of 5? A. I had few minor complaints that made this product miss the 5 star rating. First, I compared the quality of sound, music, and clarity of pronunciation with the Berlitz earworms CD, which I think sets the benchmark in how language learning CDs should be. It would be unfair to give them both 5 stars since the vocabulearn CD falls short in terms of the mentioned qualities compared to earworms. Also, the volume is a bit low for a cd so you have to raise your volume a bit to hear clearly. Second, the booklet that came with the CDs looks cheap. It says cassette on it. It seems that they had many cassette copies remaining so they said why not save on printing and just put them in the CD version. I just thought they could have improved the quality a bit by updating the booklet. Third, they should have included a sample track on their website in order to make it easier for us to decide if we need this product or not. Again, for the sake of comparison, earworms have full downloadable track samples on their website plus they have a free PDF download of the booklet included with their cd. I found some websites that had sample audio for vocabulearn CDs other than Russian. But I think the quality differs for each language depending on the speakers. So don't expect the same quality in the Russian CDs if you've listened to Arabic or Polish vocabulearn CDs.

Q. So after buying the CDs, would I have still bought them if I've listened to them before I bought them? A. Yes, I think overall and despite some of the shortcomings, I would have still bought the CDs. Level 1 alone has tons of words and expressions to fill up a dictionary. If you have the cash (around \$32 on) to buy the whole set of Three levels then go ahead and buy it since it will save you money in the long run. However, I recommend learning one track and one level at a time since there is a lot of words to learn in each level. So if you don't wanna spend lots of money, just buy level 1. I'm sure it will take you lots of time to master all the words in one level.

One last thing worth mentioning, the CDs are made to help you develop correct pronunciation, increase vocabulary and improve listening skills only so it should be used to compliment some other Russian course book. I think it will be difficult to just listen to

random Russian words without understanding how they are pronounced and why they change when used in a phrase. Hope this review will help you make an informed buying decision.

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