

LOCATIVE Forms**Feminine declension nouns**

hard type: 'room'			soft type: 'week'	
singular	plural		singular	plural
кóмнате	кóмнатах		недéле	недéлях

-ь: 'talent'				
singular	plural			
спосóбности	спосóбностях			

Masculine declension nouns

hard type: 'courtyard'			soft type: 'nail'	
singular	plural		singular	plural
дворé	дворáх		гвоздé	гвоздýх

Neuter declension nouns

hard type: 'body'			soft type: 'schedule'	
singular	plural		singular	plural
тéле	телáх		расписáнии	расписáниях

Adjectives

hard type: 'first'				
feminine	masculine		neuter	plural
пéрвой	пéрвом		пéрвом	пéрвых

soft type: 'last'				
feminine	masculine		neuter	plural
послédней	послédнем		послédнем	послédних

Pronouns

'I'	'we'		'you' informal	'you'
мне	нас		тебé	вас

'she'	'he'		'it'	'they'
(н)ей	(н)ём		(н)ём	(н)их

'who'	'what'		'oneself'	
ком	чём		себé	

'this'				
feminine	masculine		neuter	plural
это́й	это́м		это́м	это́их

'all, every'				
feminine	masculine		neuter	plural
всёй	всём		всём	всех

Possessives

feminine	masculine		neuter	plural
'my'				
моéй	моём		моём	мо́их

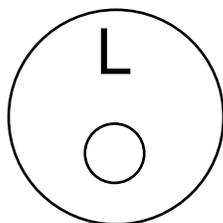
'our'				
на́шей	на́шем		на́шем	на́ших

Numerals

'one'				
feminine	masculine		neuter	plural
однóй	однóм		однóм	однóих

'two'	'three'		'four'	'five'
двух	трёх		четырёх	пяти́

LOCATIVE:



A PLACE

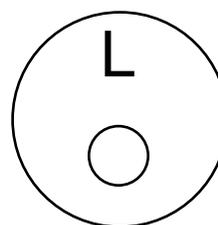
PROLOGUE

LOCATIVE: A PLACE is a setting, locating an item in space, time, or a metaphorical domain. The locative is the only case in Russian that always requires a preposition, and is therefore often called the “prepositional case”. Five prepositions are associated with LOCATIVE: A PLACE: в ‘in’, на ‘on’, при ‘at’, о ‘about’, and по ‘upon, after’. The uses of в, на, and при are based upon human experience of physical location in the domain of our three-dimensional environment. The domain of the preposition о is topics of thought or discourse, things that we think, talk, and write about. The use of the preposition по with the locative is relatively rare.

An overview of the locative case.

LOCATIVE: A PLACE 1—в ‘in’

В ‘in’ is by far the most common preposition used with the locative, and in its basic sense it identifies an enclosed place in three-dimensional space, a container. This place can be defined by boundaries, such as the walls of apartments, houses, an elevator, or even a plastic bag (as in the examples below), or it can be an enveloping substance (in this case, manure):



An item (small circle) is in a LOCATIVE: A PLACE (circle labeled L)

B + LOCATIVE: A PLACE means ‘in’ a container.

Он счита́ет, что в кварти́рах москвиче́й зимо́й тепле́е, чем в токийски́х дома́х, где нет центра́льного отопле́ния.
[He-NOM thinks, that in apartments-LOC Muscovites-GEN winter-INST warmer, than in Tokyo houses-LOC, where not central heating-GEN.]
He thinks that in winter it is warmer in Muscovites’ *apartments* than it is in *Tokyo houses*, where there is no central heating.

Он не переноси́л е́здить в ли́фте компáнией, остава́ться в за́мкнутом простран́стве с незнако́мым челове́ком.
[He-NOM not endured ride in elevator-LOC group-INST, stay in closed space-LOC with unknown person-INST.]
He could not endure riding in *an elevator* with others, staying in *a closed space* with an unknown person.

Он проме́рз, как свежеморо́женный ово́щ в целлофа́не.
[He-NOM froze, like fresh-frozen vegetable-NOM in cellophane-LOC.]
He was frozen, like a flash-frozen vegetable in *cellophane*.

Было очевидно, что он занимается умственным трудом, и очевидно, что его дед привык стоять по колено в *навозе* и шуровать лопатой.

[Was obvious, that he-NOM is-occupied intellectual work-INST, and obvious, that his grandfather-NOM accustomed stand up-to knee-ACC in manure-LOC and heave shovel-INST.]

It was obvious that he does intellectual work, and obvious that his grandfather is used to standing in *manure* up to his knees and heaving a shovel.

The container referred to by *в* in physical space need not have physical or fixed boundaries. Consider the political boundaries we project upon cities and countries, or the temporary container created by folding the fingers toward the palm, as in the following examples:

Мальчики во *всех странах* одинаково не хотят ходить в школу.

[Boys-NOM in all countries-LOC equally not want go to school-ACC.]

Boys in *all countries* equally dislike going to school.

До трамвая я дошёл благополучно, неся чемодан то в *правой*, то в *левой руке*.

[To tram-GEN I-NOM went successfully, carrying suitcase-ACC that in right-LOC, that in left hand-LOC.]

I made my way to the tram successfully, carrying my suitcase first in *my right hand* and then in *my left*.

В + LOCATIVE: A PLACE expresses wearing.

Clothing serves as a container for the body, inspiring the use of *в* to express wearing, which can be extended even to other worn items, such as glasses and beards. Here's a typical example with clothing, one with a clear parallel in English:

Она стояла в стороне, в *коротком пальто*, из которого давно выросла.

[She-NOM stood in side-LOC, in short coat-LOC, from which-GEN long-ago outgrew.]

She stood to one side, in *a short coat* which she had long ago outgrown.

The idiomatic use of *в* + LOCATIVE: A PLACE meaning 'at a distance of'.

The preposition *в* followed by a unit of distance constitutes an idiomatic expression translatable as 'at a distance of'. Here is an example:

Палау, архипелаг, состоящий из двухсот мелких островов, расположенный в *800 километрах* к юго-востоку от Филиппин, стал 185-м членом ООН.

[Palau-NOM, archipelago-NOM, consisting-NOM from two-hundred small islands-GEN, located-NOM in 800 kilometers-LOC to south-east from Philippines-GEN, became 185th member-INST UN-GEN.]

Palau, an archipelago consisting of two hundred small islands located at *a distance of 800 kilometers* to the south-east of the Philippines, became the 185th member of the UN.

When implemented in the domain of time, В + LOCATIVE: A PLACE tends to be associated with extended periods of time ‘in’ which events can be located, and the use is indeed very similar to the temporal use of ‘in’ in English:

Кажется маловероятным, чтобы он планировал в *будущем* бороться за президентское кресло.

[Seems unlikely-INST, that he-NOM planned in future-LOC fight for president’s seat-ACC.]

It seems unlikely that he was planning in the *future* to fight for the president’s seat.

В *детстве* она утверждала, что её мать не уборщица в магазине, а киноактриса.

[In childhood-LOC she-NOM claimed, that her mother-NOM not cleaning-lady-NOM in store-LOC, but movie-actress-NOM.]

In *her childhood* she claimed that her mother was not a cleaning lady in a store, but a movie actress.

Ещё один центр был открыт в *ноябре* в Хабаровске.

[Yet one center-NOM was opened-NOM in November-LOC in Khabarovsk-LOC.]

Another center was opened in *November* in Khabarovsk.

В + LOCATIVE: A PLACE can operate in many other domains, all of which are understood as metaphorical spaces. Marriage is a state of being which one can be ‘in’, as seen in the first example below. The numerical domain locates the position of inflation in the second example. The third sentence contains two examples of abstract locations, one is an emotional state of passion, and the other is a group of people constituting the diplomatic corps.

Печально, но тех, кто счастлив в *браке*, полностью игнорируют.

[Unfortunately, but those-ACC, who-NOM happy-NOM in marriage-LOC completely ignore.]

It’s unfortunate, but those who are happy in *marriage* are completely ignored.

Инфляция в *годовом исчислении* достигла 120 процентов.

[Inflation in annual calculation-LOC reached 120 percent-GEN.]

In *the annual calculation* inflation reached 120 percent.

В *пристрастии* к музыке он, пожалуй, лидирует в *дипломатическом корпусе*.

[In passion-LOC to music-DAT he-NOM, probably, leads in diplomatic corps-LOC.]

In *his passion* for music he is probably the leader in *the diplomatic corps* .

In the chapter on the accusative case it was noted that certain nouns referring to people with verbs meaning ‘go, join, play the role of’ have a special idiomatic accusative plural that looks just like the nominative plural, such as пойти в гости [go in guests-ACC] ‘go for a visit’, пойти в солдаты [go in soldiers-ACC] ‘become a soldier’. There are parallel idioms for expressing the state of being a guest, a soldier, etc. that use the locative plural; the most

В + LOCATIVE: A PLACE means ‘in’ in the domain of time.

В + LOCATIVE: A PLACE means ‘in’ in metaphorical domains.

The idiomatic use of *быть в гостях* 'be visiting'.

common of these is *быть в гостях* [be in guests-LOC] 'be visiting' (literally 'be a guest' at someone's place).

LOCATIVE: A PLACE 2—Words that trigger *в*; the 2nd locative

A large number of words in Russian are typically followed by the preposition *в* + LOCATIVE: A PLACE. Some of them have obvious parallels to English phrases, but many do not and some might seem altogether counter-intuitive. Here is a list of *в* + LOC phrases you can expect to encounter:

Words that can trigger *в* + LOCATIVE: A PLACE

'assure of' заверять/заверить в заверение в 'assurance of'	'refuse, deny' отказывать/отказать в отказ в 'refusal of'	'lucky with' счастливым в счастье в 'luck with'
'consist, lie in' заключаться/заклечь в	'give an account of, report on' отчитываться/отчитаться в отчёт в 'account of, report on'	'convince (oneself) of' убеждать(ся)/убедить(ся) в убеждение в 'conviction'
'get tangled up in, get involved in' запутываться/запутаться в	'suspect of' подозревать/заподозрить в подозрение в 'suspicion of'	'certainty about' уверенность в уверен в 'certain of'
'confusion' путаница в	'need of' потребность в	'successful with' удачливый в удача в 'success with'
'excel in' изошряться/изошряться в изошрение в 'refinement in'	'confess to' признаваться/признаться в признание в 'confession of'	'assure oneself of' удостоверяться/удостовериться в удостоверение в 'attestation of'
'clever at' ловкий в ловкость в 'cleverness in'	'understand' разобраться/разбираться в	'reproach because of' упрекать/упрекнуть в упрек в 'reproach for'
'need' нуждаться в нужда в 'need of'	'be disappointed in' разочаровываться/ разочароваться в разочарование в 'disappointment in'	'succeed, make progress in' успевать/успеть в успевание в 'progress in'
'accuse of, charge with' обвинять/обвинить в обвинение в 'accusation of'	'confess to' сознаваться/сознаться в	'success in' успех(и) в
'be deceived, disappointed in' обманываться/обмануться в	'doubt' сомневаться в сомнение в 'doubt of'	'participate in' участвовать в участвующий в 'participant in' участие в 'participation in'
'find oneself in' оказываться/оказаться в	'consist in, lie in, be' состоять в	'be counted among' числиться в
'experienced in' опытный в опыт в 'experience in'		

Here are some examples of how these phrases work in real sentences:

Она́ никогда́ не удиви́лась тому́, что он почти́ не нужда́ется во *сне*.
 [She-NOM never not be-surprised that-DAT, that he-NOM almost not need in sleep-LOC.]
 It never surprised her that he hardly needed any *sleep* .

Ка́ждый день я обвиня́л её в *сме́ртных греха́х*.
 [Every day-ACC I-NOM accused her-ACC in mortal sins-LOC.]
 Every day I accused her of *mortal sins* .

Снача́ла над ним смея́лись, пото́м ста́ли отмеча́ть успе́хи в *психиатрии́* и *иску́стве*, а в конце́ концов́ позво́лили откры́ть “Дом худо́жников”.
 [At-first above him-INST laughed, then started notice successes-ACC in psychiatry-LOC and art-LOC, and in end-LOC ends-GEN allowed open “House-ACC artists-GEN”.]
 At first people laughed at him, but then they started to notice his successes in *psychiatry* and in *art*, and finally they allowed him to open a “House of Artists”.

Го́рький оказа́лся в весьма́ *неловко́м поло́жении*: Пастерна́к мог заподо́зрить его́ в *неу́скренности*.
 [Gorky-NOM found-self in very awkward position-LOC: Pasternak-NOM could suspect him-ACC in insincerity-LOC.]
 Gorky found himself in *a very awkward position* : Pasternak could suspect him of *insincerity* .

About 150 masculine nouns in Russian have an alternate locative singular ending in -ý/-ю́ (always stressed), sometimes called the “second locative”. The second locative only occurs with the prepositions *в* and *на*, but it spans the domains of space, time, and metaphorical space, as we see in these three examples:

Смех выраба́тывает в *мозгу́* челове́ка эндорфи́ны — вещества́, кото́рые посыла́ют сво́й сигна́лы лимфо́цитам, противосто́ящим ви́русам и инфе́кциям.
 [Laughter-NOM produces in brain-LOC person-GEN endorphines-ACC — substances-ACC, which-NOM send their signals-ACC lymphocytes-DAT, resisting-DAT viruses-DAT and infections-DAT.]
 Laughter creates in a person’s *brain* endorphines — substances which send their signals to the lymphocytes that resist viruses and infections.

Вся э́та рабо́та должна́ бы́ть заверше́на в *теку́щем году́*.
 [All this work-NOM should-NOM be completed-NOM in current year-LOC.]
 All this work should be completed in *the current year* .

The second locative ending -ý/-ю́ with *в* + LOCATIVE: A PLACE.

Я перека́тывала го́лову по поду́шке как в бреду́.
 [I-NOM turned head-ACC along pillow-DAT as in delirium-LOC.]
 I turned my head from side to side on the pillow as if in *a delirium* .

LOCATIVE: A PLACE 3—на ‘on, at’

In its basic spatial meaning, на ‘on’ + LOCATIVE: A PLACE refers to a two-dimensional surface where something is located.

На сту́льях и кровáти лежáли ве́щи, в́инутые из сундука́, а сундука́ нигде́ не́ было.

[On chairs-LOC and bed-LOC lay things-NOM, taken-out from chest-GEN, but chest-GEN nowhere not was.]

There were things that had been taken out of the chest lying on *the chairs* and *bed*, but the chest was nowhere to be found.

Ма́ма говорíт, что когдá-то я просыпáлся с улы́бкой на ли́це.

[Mom-NOM says, that once I-NOM woke-up with smile-INST on face-LOC.]

Mom says that I used to wake up with a smile on *my face* .

Since attachment is something that happens on a surface, на + LOCATIVE: A PLACE can also be used to express an attachment or connection to something; notice that English ‘on’ shares this capacity in this example and its translation below:

Их соба́ка, ма́ленькая, похóжая на лиси́цу, метáлась на це́пи, захлёбыва́ясь ла́ем.

[Their dog-NOM, small-NOM, similar-NOM on vixen-ACC, dashed-about on chain-LOC, choking bark-INST.]

Their small, vixen-like dog dashed about on *its chain* , choking on its barks.

The fact that на does not require boundaries (whereas в does), makes на the natural candidate for locations that are events or phenomena, or anything else that does not have defined limits; in this use the meaning of на is often better translated as ‘at’. However, because there is not a perfect fit between Russian на and English ‘at’, students are often told to assume that all locations use в + LOC, and that they must memorize a list of exceptions that use на instead. This is good advice, but it might also help to look at some of the categories that the so-called “на-words” tend to fall into. Here is a list representing common на-words (other than surfaces) that might make the task of mastering their use a bit easier:

на + LOCATIVE: A PLACE means ‘on’ a surface.

на + LOCATIVE: A PLACE can express attachment.

A categorization of common “на words”

Locations that are islands, peninsulas, mountain ranges, clearings:

на <i>Аляске</i> ‘in <i>Alaska</i> ’	на <i>площади</i> ‘in a <i>square</i> ’	на <i>улице</i> ‘in the <i>street</i> ’
на <i>Гава́йях</i> ‘in <i>Hawaii</i> ’	на <i>полу́острове</i> ‘on a <i>peninsula</i> ’	на <i>Ура́ле</i> ‘in the <i>Urals</i> ’
на <i>Кавка́зе</i> ‘in the <i>Caucasus</i> ’	на <i>поля́не</i> ‘in a <i>clearing</i> ’	на <i>фе́рме</i> ‘at/on a <i>farm</i> ’
на <i>Кýпре</i> ‘in <i>Cyprus</i> ’	на <i>стадиóне</i> ‘at/in a <i>stadium</i> ’	
на <i>óстрове</i> ‘on an <i>island</i> ’		

Points of embarkation for travel (passenger, freight, or mail):

на <i>аэродро́ме</i> ‘at an <i>aerodrome</i> ’	на <i>вокза́ле</i> ‘at a <i>train station</i> ’	на <i>по́чте</i> ‘at/in a <i>post office</i> ’
на <i>ба́зе</i> ‘at a <i>base</i> ’	на <i>останóвке</i> ‘at a <i>stop</i> (for buses or trams)’	на <i>ста́нции</i> ‘at/in a <i>station</i> ’

Events

на <i>балу́</i> ‘at a <i>ball</i> ’	на <i>конце́рте</i> ‘at a <i>concert</i> ’	на <i>съе́зде</i> ‘at a <i>congress</i> ’
на <i>вы́ставке</i> ‘at an <i>exhibition</i> ’	на <i>собра́нии</i> ‘at/in a <i>meeting</i> ’	на <i>экску́рсии</i> ‘on an <i>excursion</i> ’
на <i>заседа́нии</i> ‘at/in a <i>meeting</i> ’	на <i>спекта́кле</i> ‘at a <i>show</i> ’	на <i>я́рмарке</i> ‘at a <i>fair</i> ’
на <i>конфе́ренции</i> ‘at a <i>conference</i> ’		

Compass points and other generalized locations:

на <i>во́здухе</i> ‘in the <i>open air</i> , <i>outside</i> ’	на <i>ме́сте</i> ‘in <i>place</i> ’	на <i>со́лнце</i> ‘in the <i>sunshine</i> ’
на <i>восто́ке</i> ‘in the <i>east</i> ’	на <i>све́те</i> ‘in the <i>world</i> ’	на <i>цели́не</i> ‘in the <i>virgin lands</i> ’
на <i>за́паде</i> ‘in the <i>west</i> ’	на <i>се́вере</i> ‘in the <i>north</i> ’	на <i>ю́ге</i> ‘in the <i>south</i> ’

Certain buildings, work/trade environments, and academic units:

на <i>би́рже</i> ‘at the <i>exchange</i> ’	на <i>ка́федре</i> ‘in a <i>department</i> (of university)’	на <i>скла́де</i> ‘at/in a <i>warehouse</i> ’
на <i>да́че</i> ‘at/in a <i>cottage</i> ’	на <i>предприя́тии</i> ‘at an <i>enterprise</i> ’	на <i>фа́брике</i> ‘at/in a <i>factory</i> ’
на <i>заво́де</i> ‘at/in a <i>factory</i> ’	на <i>ры́нке</i> ‘at the <i>market</i> ’	на <i>факульте́те</i> ‘in a <i>department/school</i> (of university)’

Upper floors of buildings:

на <i>балко́не</i> ‘in the <i>balcony</i> (of a theater); on a <i>balcony</i> ’	на <i>пе́рвом, второ́м,... эта́же</i> ‘on the <i>first, second, ... floor</i> ’	на <i>чердаке́</i> ‘in the <i>attic</i> ’
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There are a few words that can use either на or в without much difference in meaning; here are the most common ones:

Words that can use both на and в + LOCATIVE: A PLACE

на/в <i>душе́</i> ‘in one’s <i>soul</i> ’	на/в <i>ку́хне</i> ‘in the <i>kitchen</i> ’	на/в <i>по́ле</i> ‘in a <i>field</i> ’
на/в <i>кварты́ре</i> ‘in an <i>apartment</i> ’	на/в <i>не́бе</i> ‘in the <i>sky</i> ’	на/в <i>се́рдце</i> ‘in one’s <i>heart</i> ’
		на/в <i>суде́</i> ‘at a <i>trial</i> ’

Here are some examples of на used with “на-words”:

На *Моско́вской межба́нковской валю́тной би́рже* курс до́ллара США в пя́тницу не́сколько сн́зился.

[At Moscow inter-bank currency exchange-LOC exchange-rate-NOM dollar-GEN USA-GEN in Friday-ACC somewhat declined.]

At the Moscow inter -bank currency exchange the exchange rate for the US dollar declined somewhat on Friday.

На *заседа́нии* правительственных делегаций в Москве возросли трения по финансово-экономическим вопросам между Украиной и Россией.

[At meeting-LOC government delegations-GEN in Moscow-LOC increased friction-NOM along financial-economic issues-DAT between Ukraine-INST and Russia-INST.]

At the meeting of government delegations in Moscow there was increased friction between Ukraine and Russia concerning financial and economic issues.

Видно, на *пóчте* что-то перепутали.

[Apparently, at post-office-LOC something-ACC mixed-up.]

Apparently they got something mixed up *at the post office*.

На *суде́* уже шла о нём речь.

[At trial-LOC already went about it-LOC talk-NOM.]

They already talked about it *at the trial*.

на + LOCATIVE: A PLACE in the domain of time.

The use of на + LOCATIVE: A PLACE in the domain of time is restricted, being commonly used only with weeks and with the transitional times between day and night, as in the representative phrases in the table below:

на + LOCATIVE: A PLACE in time expressions

на <i>прошлой/этой/будущей неделе</i> ‘last/this/next week’	на <i>за́ре/рассвёте</i>	‘at dawn’
на <i>восхо́де</i>	‘at sunrise’	на <i>закáте</i>
		‘at sunset’

на + LOCATIVE: A PLACE in metaphorical domains.

The use of на + LOCATIVE: A PLACE in the domain of abstract locations is also relatively uncommon; here is an example of how an abstract point is conceived of as a location *on* or *at* rather than *in*:

Мне вдруг превыше всего захотелось коснуться правым плечом своего отца, а левым — своего сына: справа — прошлое, слева — будущее, а я на *живо́м сты́ке* двух времён.

[Me-DAT suddenly above all-GEN wanted touch right shoulder-INST own father-GEN, and left-INST — own son-GEN: on-right — past-NOM, on-left — future-NOM, and I-NOM at live juncture-LOC two times-GEN.]

Suddenly I wanted above all else to touch my father with my right shoulder and my son with my left shoulder: on the right is the past, on the left, the future, and I am at *the live juncture* between the two times.

LOCATIVE: A PLACE 4—Words that trigger на; the 2nd locative

The number of words associated with на + LOC is fewer than those for в. Many of the resulting phrases involve means of transportation or abilities such as speaking various languages or playing musical instruments. The words you are most likely to encounter are in this table:

Words that can trigger на + LOCATIVE: A PLACE

‘ride in (<i>a train/a bus, etc.</i>)’ éздить/éхать на (<i>пóезде/автóбусе</i>) поéздка на (<i>пóезде/автóбусе</i>) ‘trip by (<i>train/bus, etc.</i>)’	‘sail on (<i>a steamboat/a canoe, etc.</i>)’ плáвать/плы́ть на (<i>пароходе/челнѐ</i>)	‘be based on’ оснóвываться/основáться на
‘play (<i>the piano/flute/guitar, etc.</i>)’ игрáть на (<i>ро́йле/флѐйте/гитарѐ</i>) игрá на (<i>ро́йле/флѐйте/гитарѐ</i>) ‘playing (<i>the piano/flute/guitar, etc.</i>)’	‘speak (<i>Russian/English, etc.</i>)’ говори́ть/сказа́ть на (<i>ру́сском/англи́йском языке́</i>) говоря́щий на (<i>ру́сском/англи́йском языке́</i>) ‘speaker of (<i>Russian/English, etc.</i>)’	‘affect, have impact on’ отража́ться/отрази́ться на отраже́ние на ‘affect, impact on’
‘go (<i>ice-skating/boating, etc.</i>)’ ката́ться на (<i>конька́х/ло́дке</i>) ката́ние на (<i>конька́х/ло́дке</i>) ‘going (<i>ice-skating/boating, etc.</i>)’	‘get married to (when man takes a wife)’ жени́ться на жени́тьба на ‘marriage to (when man takes a wife)’	‘concentrate on’ сосредотóчиваться/ сосредотóчиться на
‘fly in (<i>a plane, etc.</i>)’ летáть/летѐть на (<i>самолѐте</i>) полѐт на (<i>самолѐте</i>) ‘flight in (<i>a plane, etc.</i>)’	‘insist on’ наста́ивать/насто́ять на наста́ивание на ‘insistence on’	‘go (<i>skiing/sailing, etc.</i>)’ ходи́ть на (<i>лы́жах/паруса́х</i>) ходи́ба на (<i>лы́жах/паруса́х</i>) ‘going (<i>skiing/sailing, etc.</i>)’
		‘economize on, save on’ эконо́мить/сэконо́мить на эконо́мия на ‘economizing on’

Here are a couple of sentences to demonstrate these phrases in action:

Ёсли в Япо́нии произойде́т сме́на приорите́тов, не отрази́тся ли э́то отрица́тельно на *отноше́ниях* ме́жду на́шими страна́ми?

[If in Japan-LOC happens change-NOM priorities-GEN, not affect whether this-NOM negatively on relations-LOC between our countries-LOC?]

If there is a change in priorities in Japan, won’t this have a negative impact on *relations* between our countries?

Рóдственники поги́бшего наста́ивали на *том*, что он был заб́ит ка́мня́ми.

[Relatives-NOM deceased-GEN insisted on that-LOC, that he-NOM was killed-NOM stones-INST.]

The relatives of the deceased insisted that he had been stoned to death.

Some idiomatic phrases also employ на + LOC; a representative sample of these phrases is in the following table:

на + LOC: a place in idiomatic phrases.

на + LOCATIVE: A PLACE in idiomatic expressions

‘(be) *outside*’
(бЫТЬ) на дворé

‘(be) worn around *one’s neck*’
(бЫТЬ) на шéе

‘(happen) *the other day*’
(случИТЬся) на днях

‘(be) on *pension, retired*’
(бЫТЬ) на пéнсии

‘*actually*’
на сáмом дéле

Words that can
trigger на or
в + LOCATIVE:
A PLACE.

A few words can combine with either на or в + LOC, such as специализироваться на/в ‘specialize in’ and сходить/сойтись на/в ‘agree on’, both of which are illustrated with на in the two examples below:

Игорь специализируется на *детской верхней одежде*.

[Igor-NOM specializes on children’s outer wear-LOC.]

Igor specializes in *children’s outer wear* .

Сходимся на *том*, что брюки глажу я, а он читает мне вслух.

[Come-together on that-LOC, that pants-ACC iron I-NOM, and he-NOM reads me-DAT out-loud.]

We agree that I’m to iron the pants and he’s to read to me out loud.

The second
locative ending -
ý/-ió with на +
LOCATIVE: A
PLACE.

Like в, на can appear with the so-called second locative ending in stressed -ý/-ió to express locations in various domains and in the idiom на ходу [on gait-LOC] ‘while on *the move*’. Here are some examples:

Миша вопил пéсню про шикарнЫй гóрод Ялту на южнóм берéгу.

[Misha-NOM wailed song-ACC about splendid town Yalta-ACC on southern coast-LOC.]

Misha wailed a song about the splendid town of Yalta on *the southern coast* .

Лётчик оглядéлся по сторóнам, как бы мЫсленно прощáясь со всéм, с пóлем, с простЫм деревяннЫм срубóм на краю́ пóля.

[Pilot-NOM looked-around along sides-DAT, as if mentally saying-farewell with everything-INST, with field-INST, with simple wooden cabin-INST on edge-LOC field-GEN.]

The pilot looked about from side to side, as if mentally saying farewell to everything, the field, the simple wooden cabin at *the edge* of the field.

Мáльчик усáживается на полу́ с кúбиками.

[Boy-NOM seats-self on floor-LOC with blocks-INST.]

The boy seats himself on *the floor* with the blocks.

LOCATIVE: A PLACE 5—при ‘by, at’

The sense of association that allows us to use *на* to describe a dog on a chain is the central idea of the preposition *при* ‘at’, and this idea of association gets extended to space, time, and metaphorical domains. In the domain of space, the meaning of *при* is usually best translated as ‘by’ or ‘at’, as in the following example:

В Брюсселе открывáется постоянное представителъство Росси́и при НАТО.
[In Brussels-LOC opens permanent representation-NOM Russia-GEN at NATO-LOC.]

Permanent representation for Russia is being established at *NATO* in Brussels.

If an item is permanently connected to another item, then *при* can have a meaning closer to ‘with’, ‘given’, or ‘having’, as in this example, where *пéчка* refers to the traditional Russian stove that serves as a furnace and is attached to an exterior wall:

До мо́их шестна́дцати лет мы жи́ли в полубара́ке на свáях, в гну́сной коммуна́лке, в одной ко́мнате втроём, при *пéчке*, но без ва́нны и горя́чей воды́.

[To my sixteen years-GEN we-NOM lived in semi-barrack-LOC on piles-LOC, in disgusting communal-apartment-LOC, in one room-LOC three-together, at stove-LOC, but without bathtub-GEN and hot water-GEN.]

Until I was sixteen we lived in a semi-barrack built on pilings, in a disgusting communal apartment, all three of us in one room, with *a stove*, but without a bathtub or hot water.

This use of *при* is most commonly encountered in the phrase *при себе́* [with self-LOC], which you can use to say whether you have a given thing with *you* at the present moment.

A condition is something that can be attached to an item in metaphoric space, as in this example:

Федерáльная казнá выделя́ет рабо́тникам полови́ну де́нег в фо́рме бюдже́тной ссúды, при *усло́вии*, е́сли региона́льная казнá выпла́чивает друго́ю полови́ну.

[Federal treasury-NOM allots workers-DAT half-ACC money-GEN in form-LOC budgetary grant-GEN, at condition-LOC, if regional treasury-NOM pays-off other half-ACC.]

The federal treasury allots half of the money to the workers in the form of a budgetary loan, on *the condition* that the regional treasury pays off the other half.

Here is another example of the ‘with/given’ meaning of *при* in a metaphoric domain:

Устано́вить конта́кт с други́ми мира́ми при *ны́нешнем отноше́нии* к космона́втике не уда́тся.

при + LOCATIVE:
A PLACE means
‘by, at’ in the
domain of space.

при + LOCATIVE:
A PLACE means
‘with, having’.

при + LOCATIVE:
A PLACE in
metaphorical
domains.

[Establish contact-ACC with other worlds-INST at current attitude-LOC to space-exploration-DAT not succeed.]

We won't succeed in establishing contact with other worlds given *the current attitude* toward space exploration.

при + LOCATIVE:
A PLACE means
'at, while, when'
in the domain of
time.

By far the most common use of *при* is, however, in the domain of time, where this preposition temporally connects two items, giving us to understand that they are simultaneous. In the first two examples below, we see that English 'at' can serve the same purpose as *при*, but often this preposition is translated with words such as 'while' or 'when', as in our third example:

При *сло́ве* “о́чень”, мо́й глаза́ напóлнились непроли́вшимися слеза́ми.

[At word-LOC “very” my eyes-NOM filled unshed tears-INST.]

At *the word* “very”, my eyes filled with unshed tears.

Я отвеча́ю и при *этом* ищú в её глаза́х второ́й смы́сл.

[I-NOM respond and at this-LOC search in her eyes-LOC other meaning-ACC.]

I respond and at *the same time* search for some other meaning in her eyes.

Собира́емся перерегистривать телефо́н при *наследовании* кварти́ры.

[Intend re-register telephone-ACC at inheritance-LOC apartment-GEN.]

We intend to change the registration of the telephone when *we inherit* the apartment.

при + LOCATIVE:
A PLACE in
idiomatic
phrases.

При participates in two important idiomatic expressions: *при чём* [at what-LOC] 'why' and *не при чём* [not at what-LOC] 'irrelevant'.

LOCATIVE: A PLACE **о**—о 'about'

о + LOCATIVE: A
PLACE means
'about' in the
domain of topics
of conversation
or thought.

The primary domain of the preposition *о* 'about' is topics for oral and written communication and thought. As we see in the four examples below, this preposition introduces items that we hear, talk, write, and think about:

Неде́лю наза́д я слы́шала по ра́дио переда́чу о *сча́стье*.

[Week-ACC ago I-NOM heard along radio-DAT program-ACC about happiness-LOC.]

A week ago I heard a radio program about *happiness*.

А́ся расска́зывает о *Серёже* печа́льные, трóгательные исто́рии.

[Asya-NOM tells about Seryozha-LOC sad, touching stories-ACC.]

Asya tells sad, touching stories about *Seryozha*.

— Вот, — усмеха́ется он, — написáл ромáн о *рабо́чем клáссе*, как все.

[“Here,” grins he-NOM, “wrote novel-ACC about working class-LOC, like everyone-NOM.”]

“Here,” he grins, “I’ve written a novel about *the working class*, like everyone else.”

Я решил подписаться на газету <<Известия>>, не думая ни о какой лотерее — просто потому что понравилась газета.

[I-NOM decided subscribe on newspaper-ACC “Izvestia”-NOM, not thinking not about what lottery-LOC — simply because pleased newspaper-NOM.]

I decided to subscribe to the newspaper “Izvestia” without thinking about *any lottery* — simply because I liked the newspaper.

Like *при*, *о* can mean ‘with’. This use is restricted to describing how many things an item has, and it appears only in formulaic phrases such as *стол о трёх ножках* [table-NOM about three legs-LOC] ‘a *three-legged* table’, *домик о двух этажах* [house-NOM about two stories-LOC] ‘a *two-story* house’.

О + LOCATIVE: A PLACE means ‘with’ in the domain of space.

LOCATIVE: A PLACE 7—по ‘after’

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the locative case can be used with the preposition *по* to mean ‘after, upon’. The combination of *по* + LOCATIVE: A PLACE is a historical left-over in modern Russian, limited to the domains of time and of emotional longing. In the domain of time, *по* + LOC tends to have a bureaucratic flavor, as in the following phrases:

ПО + LOCATIVE: A PLACE means ‘after, upon’ in the domain of time.

ПО + LOCATIVE: A PLACE in the domain of time

‘after the deadline *is passed*’
по истечении срока

‘after/upon *arrival*’
по прибытии

‘upon *examination*’
по рассмотрении

‘after (*the end* of) work’
по окончании работы

In the domain of emotional longing, the locative is an alternative ending in the two phrases *скучать по* ‘miss (a person, place, thing)’ and *тоска по* ‘longing for’, which can be followed with either the dative or the locative case.

ПО + LOCATIVE: A PLACE expresses the object of emotional longing.

The Russian Academy Grammar offers the following quote from Turgenev, demonstrating the use of *по* + LOC in the domain of time:

По *возвращении* в деревню бурмистр повёл нас посмотреть веялку.

[After return-LOC to village-ACC bailiff-NOM led us-ACC look winnowing-machine-ACC.]

After his *return* to the village, the bailiff took us to look at the winnowing machine.

EPILOGUE

Russian views most locations as containers (with *в*) or as surfaces (with *на*). However, since even in physical space many locations are not unambiguously either containers or surfaces, Russian uses conceptual conventions to choose between these two options. Thus any location that is understood as bounded is a potential container. Any location that is unbounded and/or has some vertical elevation can be construed as a surface. Time is usually understood as a container, whereas events are surfaces (at least when we attend them — however, we can talk about their contents with *в*). With the preposition *при* we see that the concept of physical contiguity is translated into the domain of time as simultaneity. Thinking and talking have their own domain, with topics serving as locations for pondering and discussing. The locative case demonstrates very clearly how agile Russian is in taking locational concepts derived from spatial relations and implementing them in other domains. Indeed, this is a recurrent theme all through the case system.