

Do You Know These 20 Facts About Russia?

1. The official name for Russia is the Russian Federation.
2. Russia shares borders with many countries, including China, Ukraine, North Korea and Norway.
3. In terms of land area, Russia is the largest country in the world. The Russian Federation stretches across two continents, Europe and Asia. It is the largest country in the world. The climate is bitterly cold in the winter, and because of this cold climate the country is not heavily populated.
4. Russia is located across 9 time zones.
5. At the beginning of 2013, Russia was estimated to have a population of around 143 million.
6. Russian is the official language of Russia but there are many other languages used in various parts of the country.
7. Russians drive on the right-hand side of the road.
8. The currency used in Russia is the ruble.
9. The world's first satellite, named Sputnik, was launched by the Soviet Union in 1957.
10. Russia has over 40 national parks and 100 wildlife reserves. Russia has the world's largest area of forests.
11. Basketball, ice hockey and football (soccer) are popular sports in Russia.
12. The forests of Russia are home to reindeer, wolves, bear, lynx, Russia has been a leader in literature, arts, and music. It is home to some of the most famous composers including Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, and Stravinsky. The Bolshoi Ballet of Moscow and the Kirov Ballet of St. Petersburg are two of the most famous ballet companies in the world. Ballet was first introduced to Russia from France more than 150 years ago.
13. Chess is a national obsession. Other pastimes include the card game *Durak* (Russian Fool) and the computer game Tetris, which was invented in Russia.
14. In Russia, grandmothers—*babushkas*—are famous for the strong role they play in families, public life and fairy tales.
15. Borscht, a traditional food, is a beet soup served hot or cold. Pelmeni is a small, moist dumplings filled with chopped meat and is often served with butter, sour cream and vinegar.
16. The European mink, a small, solitary animal famed for its beautiful coat lives in Russia. Its feet are semi-webbed
17. The polar bear, whose three- to four-inch layer of fat keeps it warm lives in northern Russia.
18. On Defenders of the Motherland Day, February 23, families honor men and boys with cards, gifts and other special treats. Women and girls are celebrated on International Women's Day.
19. St. Basil's Cathedral is located in Moscow's Red Square. It is a popular tourist destination because of its history and interesting architecture.
20. One of the best ways to see the country of Russia is on the Trans-Siberian Railway. The railway extends from Moscow to the Pacific Coast. A train trip the entire distance takes 6 days.

