



“Georgian Survival Guide” the pocket book is great source, who wish to learn very Basic Conversational Georgian just in 16 hours! “Language School” have tested the materials of the guide. And we are positive that this book will become your best friend in an everyday life.



Georgian Survival Guide

# Nana Shavtvaladze

## GEORGIAN SURVIVAL GUIDE

### საყველპური მართული

A course for beginners



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GEORGIAN SURVIVAL GUIDE  
საყველპურო ქართული

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Language School  
Tbilisi — 2016

## Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>The Georgian Language</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>LESSON 1: The Georgian Alphabet</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>LESSON 2: Greeting</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>LESSON 3: Greeting and Parting</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>LESSON 4: Courtesy</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>LESSON 5: Taxi</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>LESSON 6: Shopping – Fruits and Vegetables</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>LESSON 7: Shopping – Meat, Cheese and Bread</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>LESSON 8: Restaurant</b> .....	<b>43</b>
<b>LESSON 9: Directions</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<b>LESSON 10: Emergencies</b> .....	<b>54</b>

## Survival Georgians' short course's plan

- WEEK 1**      **Lesson 1:** The Georgian Alphabet
- WEEK 2**      **Lesson 2:** The Georgian Alphabet&Greeting
- WEEK 3**      **Lesson 3:** Greeting and Parting  
**Lesson 4:** Courtesy
- WEEK 4**      **Lesson 5:** Taxi  
**Lesson 6:** Shopping -Fruits and Vegetables
- WEEK 5**      **Lesson 7:** Shopping – Meat, Cheese and Bread  
**Lesson 8:** Restaurant
- WEEK 6**      **Lesson 9:** Directions  
**Lesson 10:** Emergencies
- Outside trip Practices all vocabulary

## Introduction

This guide is to provide students with information on basic transactions in the Georgian language. It only provides the bare minimum, and includes very little grammar. It includes an overview of the Georgian alphabet, to help students correctly read and pronounce Georgian words.

The guide is a six weeks course divided into twelve lessons, based on the current post language program schedule of two lessons per week.

## The Georgian Language

**Georgian** is the native language of Georgians and the official language for about 4 million people living in Georgia. The Georgian language is unique and is the most widespread language in the Kartvelian language family. Kartvelian languages are distinct, non-Indo-European languages and also include Svan, Megrelian, and Laz.

Short info about **Georgian script**:

1. The Nuskhuri (“minuscule”) or Kutkhovani (“squared”) script first appeared in the ninth century. Asomtavruli and Nuskhuri, collectively known as Khutsuri (**xucuri**, or “church script”), were used together to write re-

ligious manuscripts, with the Asomtavruli serving as capital letters. The oldest uncontroversial examples of Georgian writing are an Asomtavruli inscription in a church in Bethlehem from 430 CE.

2. The modern alphabet, called Mkhedruli (**mxedruli**, “secular” or “military writing”), first appeared in the eleventh century. It was used for non-religious purposes up until the eighteenth century, when it was completely replaced by Khutsuri. The orthography is phonemic. One of the more contentious is that the asomtavruli alphabet was invented in 412 BC by Georgian priests of the cult of Matra (Persian Mithra), and reformed in 284 BC by King Parnavaz I of Iberia.
3. The Asomtavruli alphabet is known also as Mrgvlovani (**mrgvlovani**, “rounded”). Examples of it are still preserved in monumental inscriptions, such as those of the Georgian church in Bethlehem (near Jerusalem, 430) and the church of Bolnisi Sioni near Tbilisi (4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries). Older Asomtavruli inscriptions have been claimed to date from pre-Christian times, the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD. These were found in Armaztsikhe (near Mtskheta) and Nekresi (in the Kakheti region of Eastern Georgia).

## Language – Grammar Structure

- **What is easy?**

- One sound - one letter
- No gender
- No capital letters
- No diphthongs
- 7 cases – more organized function (less postposition)
- Agglutination language – one marker explains one function
- Logical noun and verbal system for some verbs

Georgian has a **subject-verb-object** primary sentence structure, but the word order is not as strict as in some other **languages** such as English. Not all word orders are acceptable, but it is also possible to encounter the structure of subject-object-verb. Georgian has no **grammatical gender**; even pronouns are gender-neutral. The language also has no **articles**. Therefore, for example, “guest”, “a guest” and “the guest” are said in the same way.

There are many **consonant clusters** in Georgian, while all nouns in the nominative case end with a vowel. Many nouns in Georgian begin with two consonants.

Georgian has seven noun cases: **nominative, ergative, dative, genitive, instrumental, adverbial** and **vocative**. The subject cases are **nominative, ergative, dative**. Which one is used depends mainly on the character of the verb.

Unlike most Indo-European languages, Georgian is a post-positional language. This means that changes to the different parts of speech to reflect the proper case are made at the end. For example, in English, one can say, ‘I put the apple on the table.’ In Georgian, ‘on the table’ would be expressed by the adding the post-position ‘ze’ to the word for table, magida. So, ‘magida-ze’ would be the equivalent of ‘on the table’.

## LESSON 1: The Georgian Alphabet

### Letters Not Found in English

The Georgian alphabet consists of 33 letters - 5 vowels, 28 consonants; 8 of which are not found in the English alphabet:

ღ – pronounced “gh”, like a french ‘r’ sound

ყ – pronounced “qkh”, like a strong ‘k’ but made in the back of the throat

ც – pronounced “ts”, like ‘czar’ but with a small ‘t’ at the beginning

ძ – pronounced “dz”, close to a ‘z’ sound

წ – pronounced “ts’”, like ც, but is harder and the air is stopped in the throat.

ჭ – pronounced “tch”, similar to ‘ch’ in ‘charlie’, but a harder sound

ხ – pronounced “kh”, sounds like an ‘h’, but made in the back of the throat

ჰ – pronounced “h”, like ‘house’


**PRACTICE: Repeat after the instructor and pronounce each of the above letters.**

- \* Note
- Each letter is considered to be a single sound in Georgian.
  - The names of the consonant letters are mostly pronounced with a sound. The names of the vowels are pronounced as spoken.
  - The guide below provides basic pronunciation rules. More complicated exceptions and variations will be dealt with in the lessons.
  - Shaded letters are vowels
  - The accent in Georgian words - the stress, or accent, in Georgian words is very light and usually on the first syllable
  - If the word has three or more syllables, the accent usually falls on the third syllables from the end.

**READ & PRACTICE: Repeat after the instructor say each letter, along with the example words in the right column.**



## The Georgian Alphabet

Alphabet	Translation	Name's of Letters	Pronunciation
<b>a</b> 	<b>A</b>	აბ	<b>Pronounced "a" as in <u>f</u>ather.</b>
b	B	ბან	As in <u>b</u> oy.
g	G	გან	As in <u>g</u> ood (never as in <u>g</u> enie).
d	D	დონ	As in <u>d</u> og.
<b>e</b>	<b>E</b>	ენ	<b>As in <u>e</u>gg.</b>
v	V	ვინ	As in <u>v</u> ery.
z	Z	ზენ	As in <u>z</u> oo.
T	T	თან	As in <u>T</u> im. (soft sound)
<b>i</b>	<b>I</b>	ინ	<b>Pronounced "i" as in <u>s</u>ee<u>k</u> or as in <u>f</u>lip.</b>
k	K	კან	As in <u>k</u> ite.
l	L	ლას	As in <u>l</u> ike.
m	M	მან	As in <u>m</u> om.
n	N	ნარ	As in <u>n</u> ose.
<b>o</b>	<b>O</b>	ორ	<b>As in <u>o</u>pen.</b>
p	P	პარ	As in <u>p</u> ark. (hard sound; strong "p")

J	ZH	ჟან	As in <u>treasure</u> .
r	R	რაე	Pronounced as a “flipped” Spanish “r”.
s	S	სან	As in <u>sit</u> .
t	T'	ტარ	As in <u>telephone</u> .
<b>u</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>უნ</b>	<b>Pronounced “u” as in <u>super</u>.</b>
f	PH	ფარ	Pronounced soft “ph”
q	Q	კან	Pronounced soft “q”
R	GH	ღარ	Pronounced soft “gh” in a throught
y	QKH	ყარ	Pronounced hard “qkh” in a throught
S	SH	შინ	As in <u>shoe</u> .
C	CH	ჩინ	As in <u>church</u> .
c	TS	ცინ	As in <u>its</u> .
Z	DZ	ძილ	As in <u>dz</u> .
w	TS'	წილ	Pronounced hard “ts”
W	TCH	ჭარ	Pronounced hard “tch”
x	KH	ხან	Pronounced hard “kh”
j	J	ჯან	As in <u>judge</u> .
h	H	ჰაე	As in <u>hat</u> .