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## Foreword

I don't know the history of USSR passports before 1980s because at that time it was very difficult to travel for Soviet citizens (even to Eastern European countries). That is why such passports (pre1980s) are very rare and it's very difficult to find them (it's my opinion). The other reason why it's difficult to find is that the passport's holder didn't keep it at home. The passport was kept in the issuing authority and when you were going to travel abroad they gave you the passport. After the trip you must return the document again to the authority. After its expiration the passports were destroyed. These rules were until collapse of the USSR (in 1991).

## Passports of the USSR and Russian Federation for TRAVELS ABROAD

### 1980s - 1991

So, this is the first USSR passport for FOREIGN TRAVELS I have (see the pictures below). These passports were issued from the beginning of 1980s until 1991 (or maybe from middle of 1970s, I'm not sure). It doesn't have sophisticated security features (only watermarks) and 16 pages only.



- **Cover:** coat of arms of the USSR and words ОБЩЕГРАЖДАНСКИЙ ЗАГРАНИЧНЫЙ ПАСПОРТ (something like CITIZEN'S PASSPORT FOR TRAVELS ABROAD)



- **First Page:** name of the country in French and Russian languages

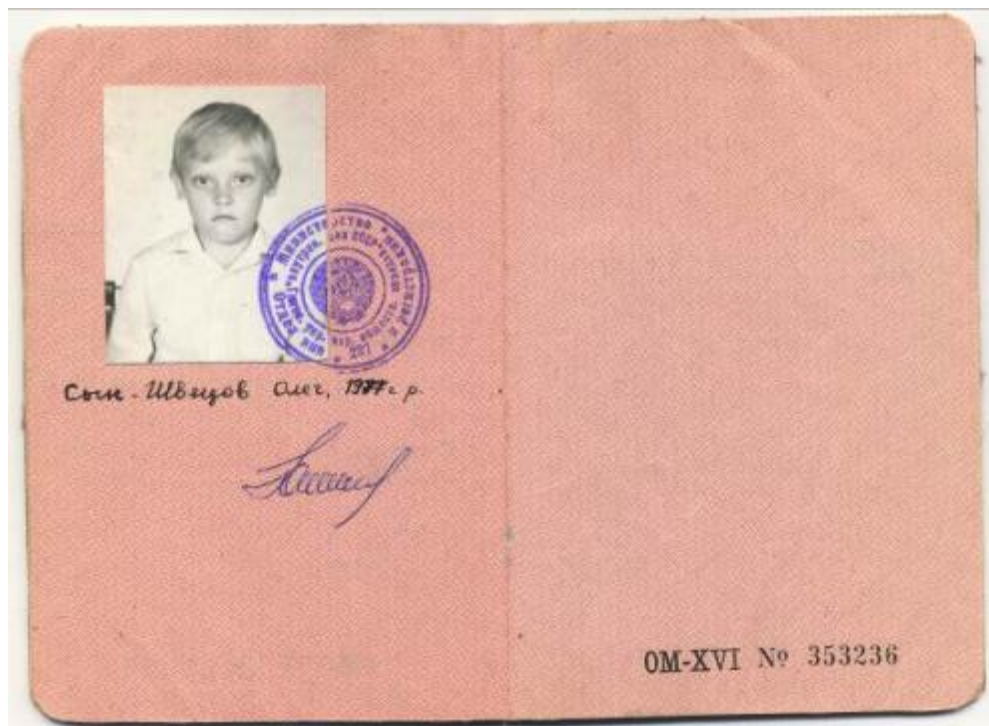


- **Personal Information:** last name, first name and patronymic names of the holder in Russian, year and place of birth in Russian, last and first name in French. Then photo of the holder with official seal, information about children included in the passport (in Russian), date of issue and date of expiry (as you can see, validity is 5 years), signature of authority officer





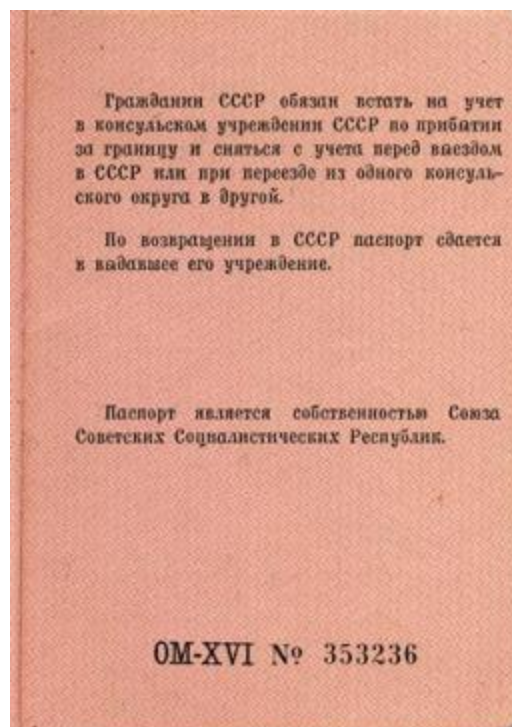
- **Approval for Travel:** Possible prolongation of the passport (for 5 more years). The following page is very interesting; it's like an EXIT VISA from the USSR. It has the following information: exit/entry Soviet stamps (Sheremetyevo airport), then it's written in Russian language 'exit until 22/12/1989 to FRG (Federal Republic of Germany) for the period of (not specified). Goal of the trip: PRIVATE TRIP (square stamp ЧАСТНАЯ ПОЕЗДКА), accompanying children: Shvetsov Oleg, then official stamp and signature of the authority officer. And not very good visible square stamp under the signature means that foreign currency for this trip was exchanged. Then several other pages have the same places for exit visas



- **Children:** this page is intended for visas of foreign countries but as the passport holder has accompanying children (son in this case), it has his photo with official seal, name and year of birth of the boy and signature of authority officer



- **Visa:** empty pages for visas of foreign countries, it has visa of Bundesrepublik Deutschland and entry stamp

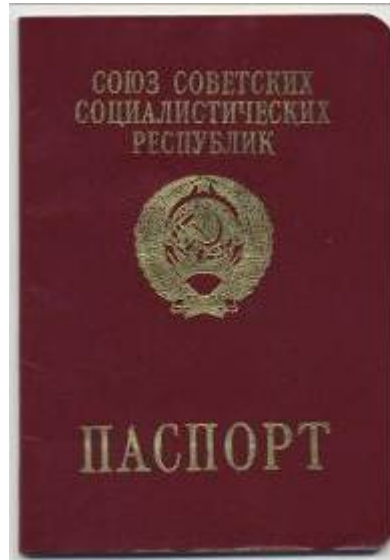


- **Last page:** it has the following statement in Russian language; Citizen of the USSR must register in consulate of the USSR abroad upon arrival and cancel the registration before returning to the USSR or when moving from one consulate to another one. Upon returning to the USSR the passport must be returned to the issuing authority. **The passport is a property of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.**

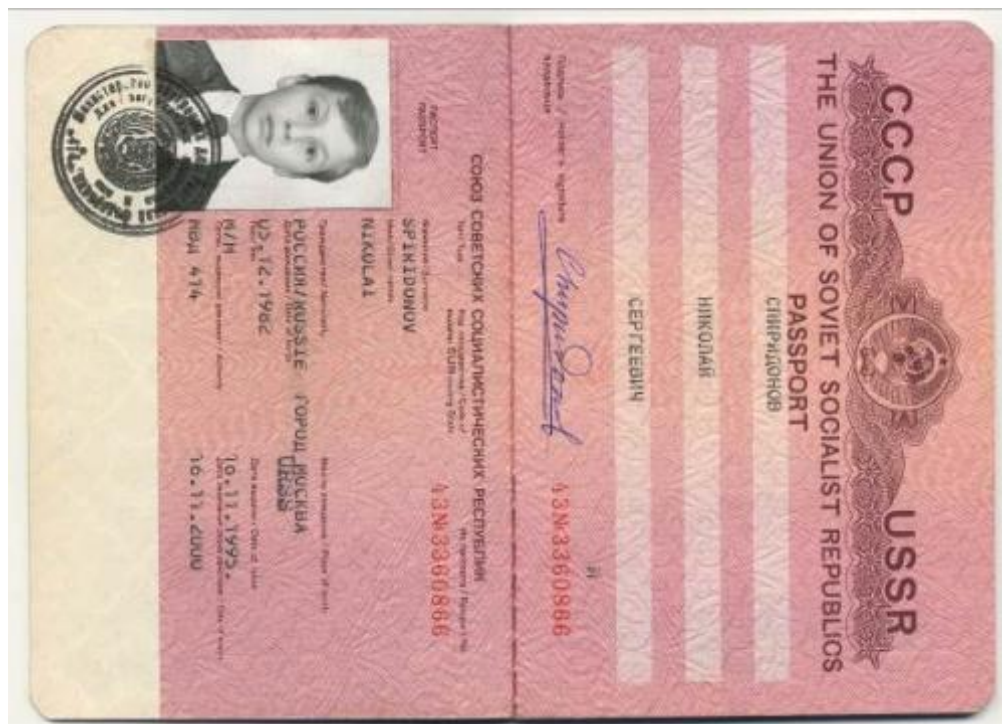


## 1991 - 2000

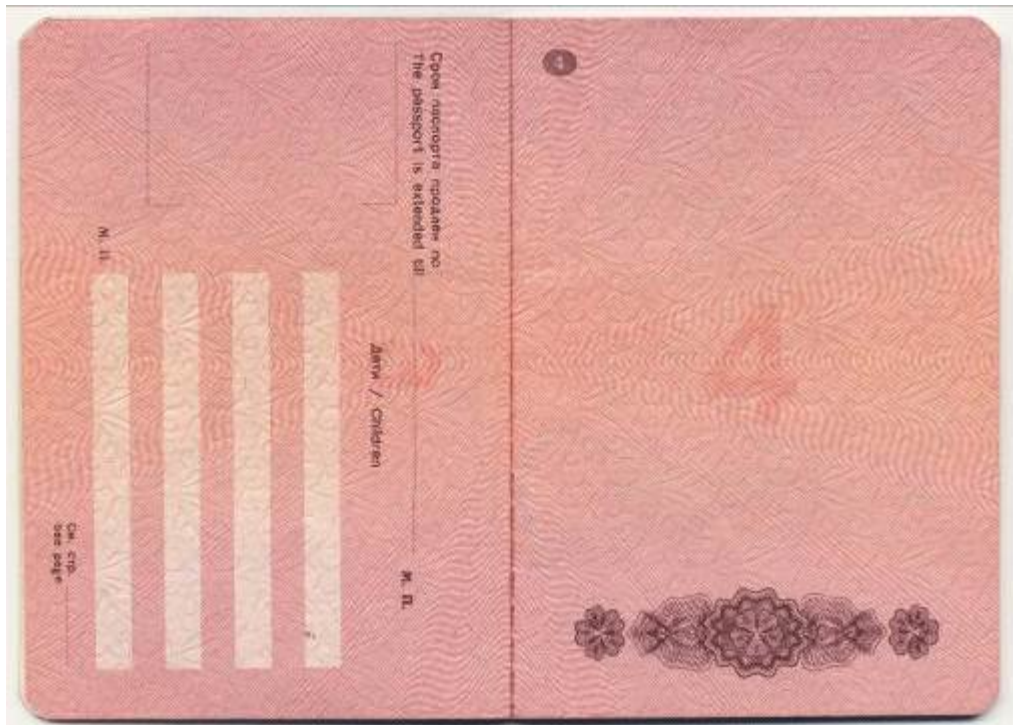
The second USSR passport (FOR TRAVELS ABROAD) is a type solely issued since 1991. As far as I understand, USSR government decided to issue this new passports type to have a modern passport design - compared to the previous design. So they did it in 1991 (just before the collapse of the USSR). Several million blank passports of this type were printed and started to be used by Soviet citizens. End of 1980s was a time when it became much easier to get such passport and travel abroad that is why you can find many passports on sale from this period.



- **Cover:** coat of arms of the USSR, name of the country in Russian and the word PASSPORT in Russian (ПАСПОРТ)



- **Personal Information:** It doesn't have lamination, black and white photos were used, official seal of issuing authority is on the photo of the passport's holder, and one page has last name, first name and patronymic name printed in Russian and signature of the bearer. The page with personal information has the following: surname and given names WRITTEN IN FRENCH, nationality, place of birth, sex, date of birth, date of issue, date of expiry, code of issuing authority (everything like in modern passports according to ICAO standards). But machine-readable zone is empty. Hand written issued documents are also available.



- **Children:** page where validity of the passport may be prolonged and accompanying children may be added



- **Visas:** you can see visa for the UK





- **Middle Pages:** you can see that it has sewing thread



- **Last Page:** passport contains 33 pages

The following passport was issued in 1995 when USSR were already obsolete. Why? The reason (in my opinion) is that many blank passports were printed (several millions) and we have to use it for a long time (it's not cheap to design and print several millions of new passports with new design!).

So, this passport type was used by USSR (only several months in 1991) and then ALL countries of the former USSR used blank passports of this type as their own first passports. For example, the passport you can see was issued by the Russian Federation in 1995.



As far as I know, in Russia this type were used until the end of 2000 (and they expired in the end of 2005). In other CIS countries these passports were issued until the middle of 1990s, I think and they were withdrawn from circulation until 2003 (in some countries earlier).

This passport (the images above) was issued by Ministry of Internal Affairs (МВД) of Russia. But there are passports issued by Ministry of Foreign Affairs (МИД) and abroad. As an example see the image below. It's slightly different because it's written IN ENGLISH language.



Browsing Delcampe I've recently found couple of passports of this type but slightly different. These passports have the following differences (see the images below):



- contain 21 pages instead of 33



- have metal clips instead of sewing thread

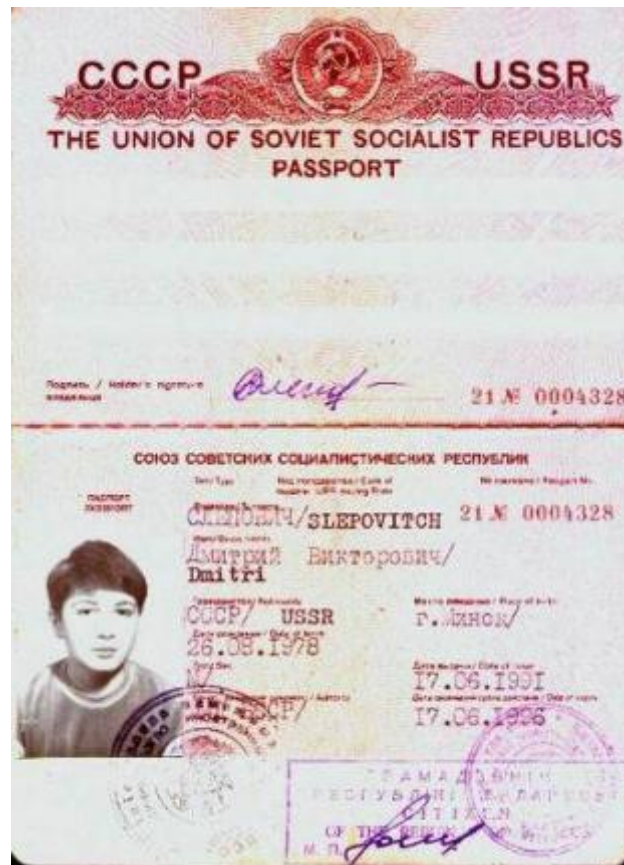


- have several pages intended for exit USSR visas

## Passports of the countries of the former USSR in 1990s

This part is about Soviet Union passports (FOR TRAVELS ABROAD) as they were used in other countries of the collapsed USSR. As said earlier, several millions blanks of passports were issued and a lot of them were in capitals and big cities of the republics of the former USSR. All these republics became independent states in the beginning of 1990's. As it's a huge effort to print high-quality passports of your own country with own design these countries had to use USSR passport types during the first years of independence.

Usually, they did some special stamping that the holder of the passport is a citizen of, let's say Belarus. These passports were issued until the middle of 1990's and remained valid until 2000 or so. Please see the following examples:



- **Belarus:** You can see a square stamp in the bottom of the passport that *"the holder is a citizen of Belarus"*





- Estonia:** In this case the nationality on the personal information page is difficult to determine. It has the nationality of USSR, but place of birth was Estonia. And it was issued in the middle of 1992 so at that time USSR didn't exist. Why? The reason is that (my opinion) the holder is not a citizen of Estonia but ALIEN CITIZEN of Estonia. Many Russian-speaking inhabitants of Estonia (even born in Estonia) were refused to grant Estonian citizenship and they had very strange status. The reason is they are not of Estonian origin and didn't speak Estonian language. Nowadays a lot of people still have alien passport <http://www.politsei.ee/en/nouanded/dokumentide-naidised/aliens-passport/aliens-passport-until-2007.dot>



- **Example:** You see the special stamp that 'the bearer has rights to return to Estonia' (it means that he is not a citizen of Estonia but permanent resident or something like this)



- **Example 2:** Some another Estonian stamps in USSR passport





- **Latvia:** The same passport of ALIEN CITIZEN of Latvia (nationality is USSR), you can see a stamp with Latvian coat of arms on the photo

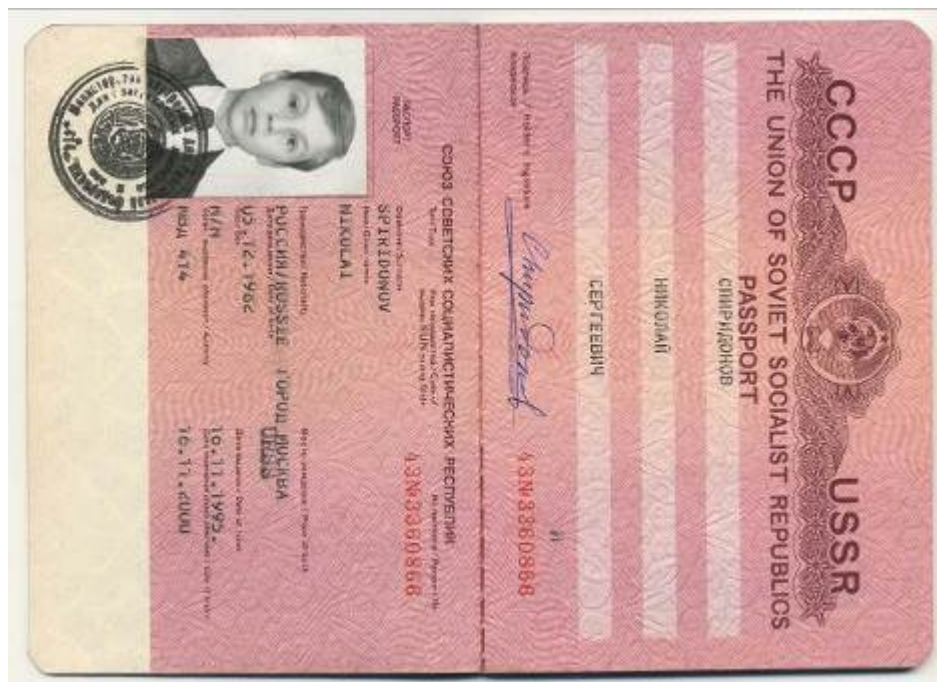


- **Example:** official Latvian stamp about validity of the passport





- **Example 2:** official Latvian stamp about limitation of validity of the passport (new passports were issued that time and old passports must be changed)



- **Russia:** I've already showed this passport in my previous article





- **USSR Service Passport:** interesting example, Soviet Union service passport but issued in 1993 by Ukraine. It has stamps with Ukrainian coat of arms and the word СЛУЖБОВИЙ in Ukrainian (English word for SERVICE)

### 1997 - 2004

The very first RUSSIAN passport with Russian coat of arms and new design were issued from 1997 till the beginning of 2004 and contains 36 pages, it doesn't have lamination on the personal information page and validity was 5 years.



- **Cover:** coat of arms of the Russian Federation - РОССИЙСКАЯ ФЕДЕРАЦИЯ (Russian Federation) and ПАСПОРТ (passport)



- **First page:** inside the cover





- Useful information: ...for the passport holder



- Pages for Visas: pages for visas



- **Children:** pages for children of the passport holder



- **Personal Information:** page with personal information of the bearer. All information is printed in ENGLISH (not in FRENCH like previous passports).

There are some variations of this type of passports:





- **Handwritten:** personal information is handwritten, not printed



- **Issued in Embassy:** passports issued in Russian embassies/consulates abroad have slightly different font, official seal on the photo and another issuing authority (on this scan you can see words П-ВО РОССИИ, ЛАТВИЯ; it means EMBASSY OF RUSSIA, LATVIA)



- **Machine-Readable Zone (MRZ):** the same passport but with machine-readable zone. These passports were issued in short period of time in Kaliningrad district of Russia. It's an exclave of Russia between Lithuania and Poland. The reason of issuing such passports was that inhabitants of this region have to travel a lot through Poland or Lithuania and it was made to speed up the process of border crossings. But unfortunately according to the picture, officials used wrong font for the MRZ (it's not OCR-10BT, it's something another)



- **Strange Cover:** also I found a picture of a cover of this passport but another type (it has words ЗАГРАНИЧНЫЙ ПАСПОРТ which means something like “passport for travels abroad” instead of ПАСПОРТ which means just “passport”). I have never see passports with this cover in real life. Maybe just a sample, I don't know.



## 2000 – Modern Time

The next Russian passport (intended for TRAVELS ABROAD) is issued by Russian embassies/consulates abroad and branches of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia since the beginning of 2000 till today, and by branches of Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs (inside Russia) since 2004 till today. These passports are the same like the previous ones but have more sophisticated security features. The passport contains 36 pages, validity is 5 years, page with personal information has lamination. Passports issued inside Russia and abroad have some differences (like font used on the pages with personal information and serial numbers of the passports). Some explanation and images see below (I don't show scans of inside pages for visas etc. because they look absolutely the same like pages of the previous passport):



- **Cover:** as you can see, the cover is absolutely the same like the previous passport I told



- **Issued by MIA:** page with personal information issued by Ministry of Internal Affairs inside Russia



- **Hologram:** the hologram on the photo of the passport's holder



- **Under UV:** the passport shines under ultraviolet



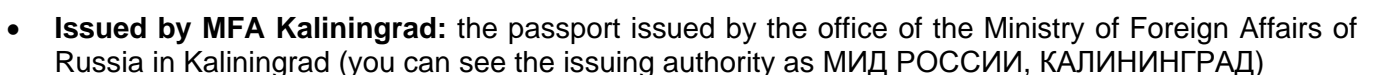


- **Watermarks:** watermarks of the page intended for visas



- **Issued by Embassy Switzerland:** the passport issued by the Russian Embassy in Switzerland (you can see the issuing authority as ПОСОЛЬСТВО РОССИИ, ШВЕЙЦАРИЯ)

- 







- **Issued by MFA Moscow:** the passport issued by the central office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia (in Moscow) (you can see the issuing authority as МИД РОССИИ)

### The First Russian E-passport (2006-2010)

The first Russian E-passport (with RFID chip) was introduced in 2006 and issued until March 2010 (passport of this type). The passport contains 38 pages, validity is 5 years, RFID chip is inside the page with personal information, many modern security features were used for these passports (like laser engraving, OVI etc.). Pictures were taken from Keesing Identity Checker









### Current Russian E-passport (2010)

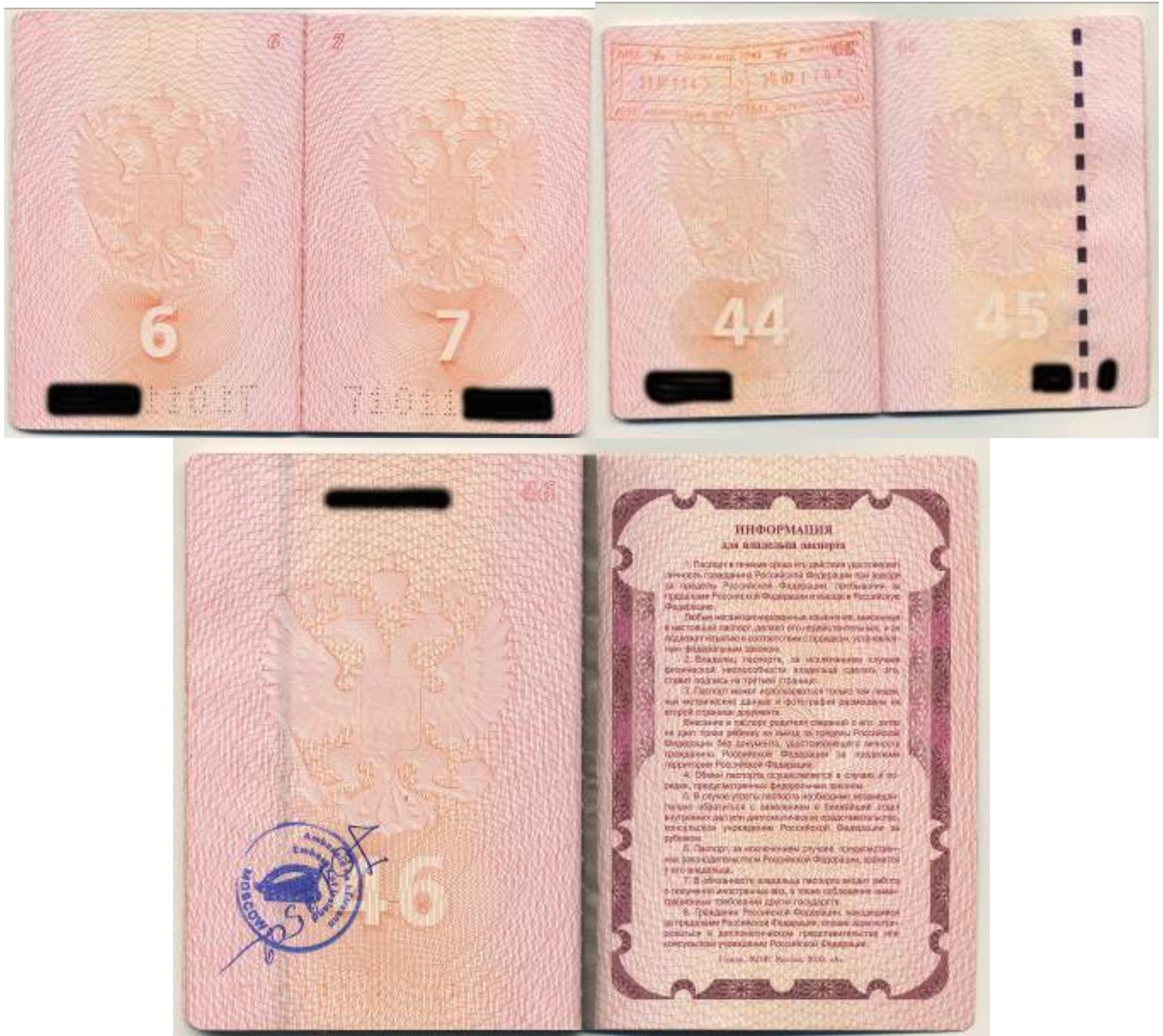
The current Russian E-passport is issuing from March 2010 till now. The passport contains 46 pages, validity is 10 years, RFID chip is inside the page with personal information. Design is the same like of the previous E-passport I told you but some other security features were added.

The RFID chip doesn't contain any 'biometric' personal information (like your fingerprints or iris scan) but Russian Government has plans to add such kind of information from 2012-2014.

This is my own passport that is why I hide some information







## Passports of the USSR and Russian Federation for INTERNAL USE

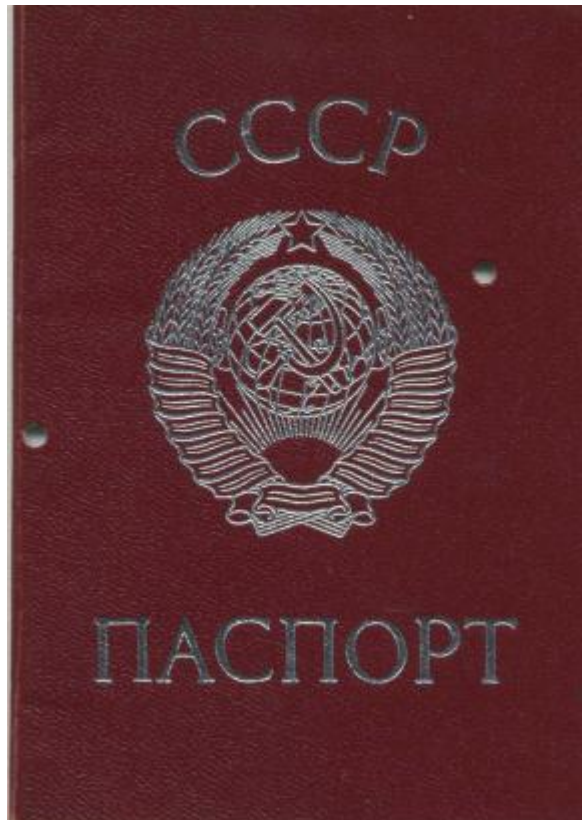
### 1970s - 1993

I would like to introduce USSR passports (FOR INTERNAL USE!). These passports were issued from ~1975 until ~1993 (see images 1975-1993, scans of all pages of a passport of my father) and were in circulation till 2003. In the middle of 1970s in the USSR these passports were introduced and all citizens must change older ones and had these new internal passports. All passports were bilingual (Russian + local language of the territory where you live). So, many different types of passports existed (Russian-Uzbekistani in Uzbek SSR, Russian-Latvian in Latvian SSR etc.) and even Russian-Hebrew in Jewish Autonomous District. The example you see is a passport issued in Chuvash Republic (or more exactly it was issued in Chuvash Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. That is why it's in Russian and Chuvash languages.

These passports were used inside the country (USSR) only and people couldn't travel abroad using these documents.

These passports were issued for lifetime of the holder. You must receive yours when you become 16 years old firstly, then when you are 25 years old, your new photo will be glued and when you are 45 years old one more photo will be glued. All the passports were handwritten!

My explanation of each page:



- **Cover:** cover with Soviet Union coat of arms, and words СССР (USSR) and ПАСПОРТ (Passport). Images were made by silver foil.



- **Under front cover:** the word СССР (USSR)



- **Page 1:** the words Passport of the citizen of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, then surname, given name and patronymic name (handwritten)



- **Page 2:** date of birth, place of birth, nationality (not citizenship in this case but your origin like Russian or Chuvash or Jew or even Negro (like in one photo you showed on your website [www.passport-collector.com](http://www.passport-collector.com)), issuing authority, official stamp, signature of the officer, date of issue
- **Page 3:** the same information like on page 1 but in local language (Chuvash in this case)

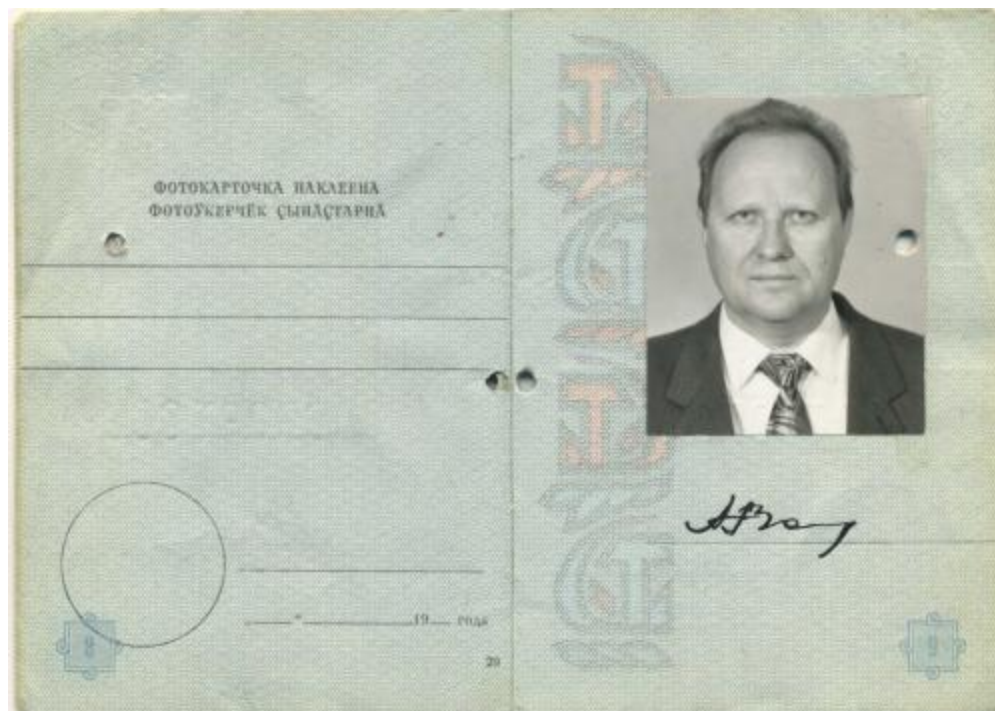


- **Page 4:** the same information like on page 2 but in local language (Chuvash in this case)

- **Page 5:** photo of the passport's holder and his/her signature at the age of 16 years old (there is no photo because my father was older when got this passport in 1978 (exchanged his old passport and got this newer one))



- **Page 6:** empty
- **Page 7:** photo of the passport's holder and his/her signature at the age of 25 years old (my father is about 30 years old here)



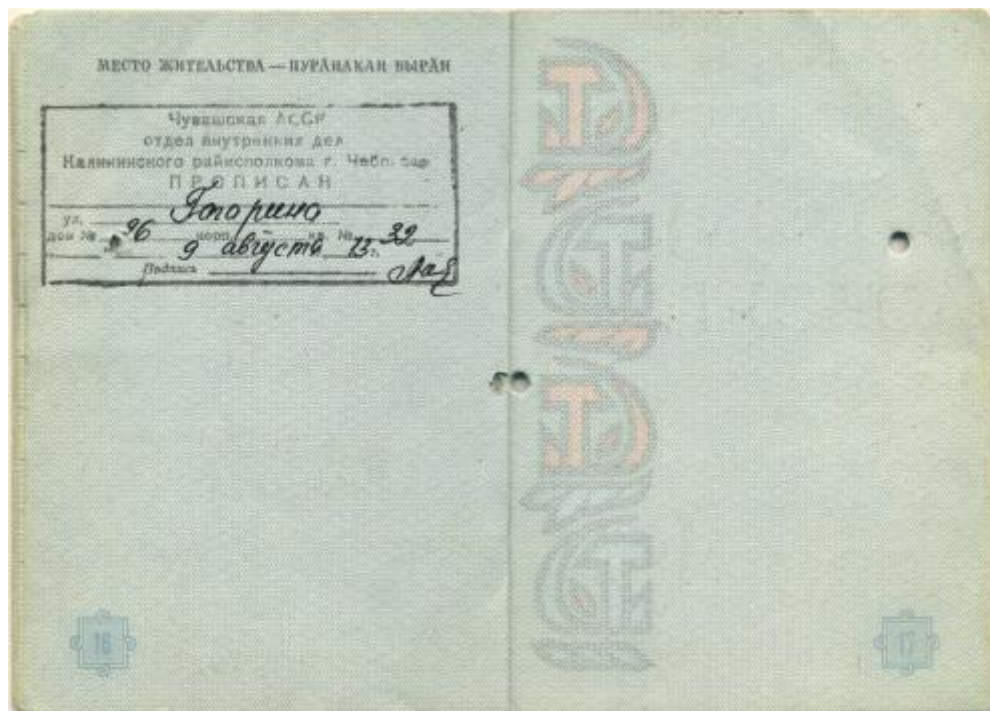
- **Page 8:** information about when and by which authority the photo on the page 7 was glued (but I don't know why this page is empty here)
- **Page 9:** photo of the passport's holder and his/her signature at the age of 45 years old







- **Page 14:** information about children
- **Page 15:** status of your military duty



- **Pages 16-17:** information about your residence address





- **Pages 18-19:** information about your residence address



- **Pages 20-21:** information about your residence address



- **Pages 22-23:** information about your residence address



- **Page 24:** information about your residence address (but there is a stamp about money exchanging in 1993 (when new banknotes were introduced and only limited amount of money in cash can be exchanged))
- **Page 25:** information about your residence address



- [illegible]

- 14/09/11

### 1993 - 1997

After 06 February 1992 all citizens of the USSR who had official registration (propiska) on the territory of the RSFSR became citizens of the Russian Federation. Old Soviet Union passports were valid but in 1993 design of the passports changed slightly. These passports were issued from ~1993 till 1997 and were completely withdrawn from circulation in 2003. These passports are very similar to older ones but have some changes:



- **Cover:** Gold foil instead of silver foil



- **Under front cover:** You see words that the holder is a citizen of the Russian Federation



When somebody wanted to travel to countries of the former USSR (e.g. Ukraine) and he/she had old USSR passport, he/she must receive a special sticker confirming that the passport's holder was really a citizen of Russia (see the image below)



#### 1997 - 2007

First passports (FOR INTERNAL USE!) were introduced in Russia in 1997. These passports are still valid and in circulation but they were issued until 2007 or 2008. All citizens of Russia must have this passport. You must receive it when you are 14 years old firstly, then when you are 20 years old you must get a new one, and the last one you must receive when you are 45 years old. Handwritten and printed passports exist.

These passports are not intended for foreign travels but you are able to visit the following former USSR countries:

- Abkhazia (partly recognized state)
- Belarus
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyzstan
- South Ossetia (partly recognized state)
- Tajikistan
- Transdniestria (non-recognized state)
- Ukraine

Explanation of each page:



- **Cover:** cover with coat of arms of Russia and the words РОССИЙСКАЯ ФЕДЕРАЦИЯ (Russian Federation) and ПАСПОРТ (Passport)



- **Page 1:** coat of arms of Russia and the words РОССИЙСКАЯ ФЕДЕРАЦИЯ (Russian Federation) and ПАСПОРТ (Passport)





- **Page 2:** issuing authority, date of issue, code of issuing authority, signature and seal of authority, passport's holder signature
- **Page 3:** photo of the holder, surname, given name, patronymic name, sex, date of birth, place of birth



- **Page 4:** empty
- **Page 5:** page for registration of residence addresses



- **Pages 6-7:** pages for registration of residence addresses



- **Pages 8-9:** pages for registration of residence addresses





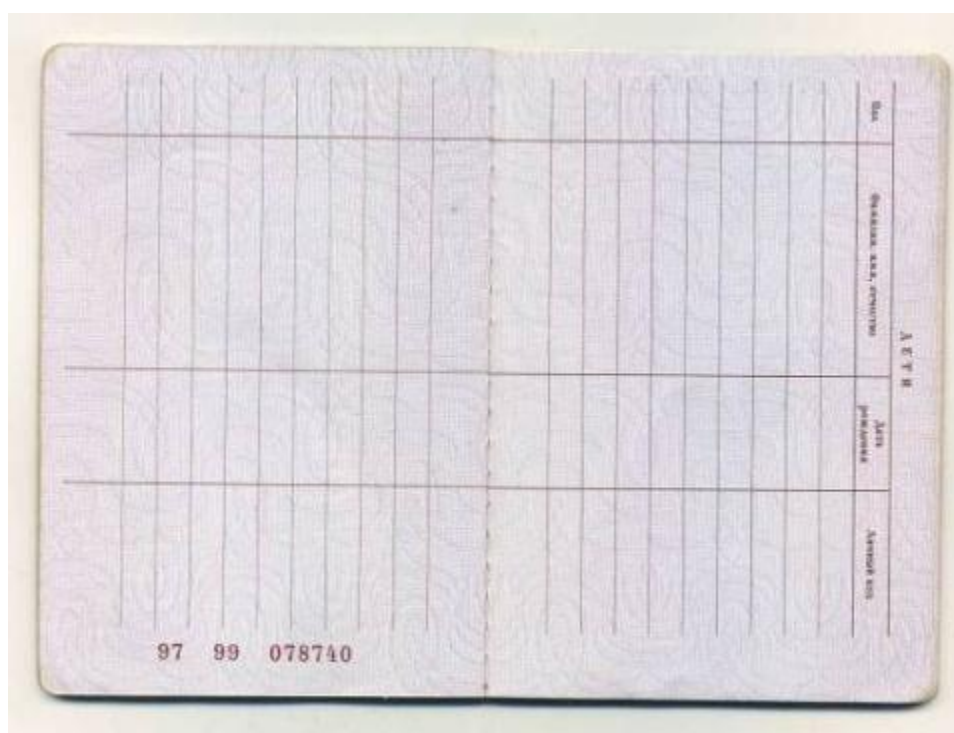
- **Pages 10-11:** pages for registration of residence addresses



- **Page 12:** page for registration of residence addresses
- **Page 13:** page for your military status



- **Pages 14-15:** pages for registration of marital status

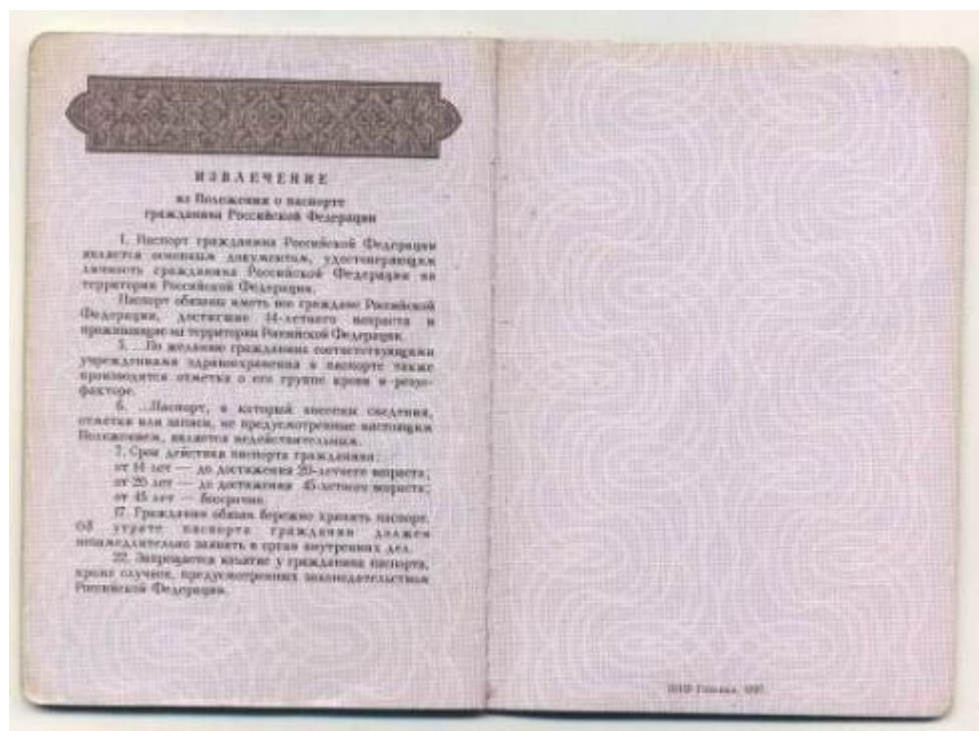


- **Pages 16-17:** pages for information about children





- **Pages 18-19:** pages for any additional official stamps



- **Page 20:** page with some articles from Russian passports law

Stamps on pages 18-19 may be the following ones (see the picture below):



- Taxpayer identification number (ИНН) – optional, on the page 18
- Passports for foreign travels - obligatory if issued earlier, on page the 18 (for the passport issued in 2010)
- Blood group – optional, on the page 19
- Passports for foreign travels - obligatory if issued earlier, on page the 19 (for the passport issued in 2000)
- Internal passports which you previously held - obligatory if you had other passports earlier, on the page 19
- Passports for foreign travels - obligatory if issued earlier, on the page 19 (for the passport issued in 2005)

Also two regions of Russia (Bashkortostan and Tatarstan) issued in 2001-2002 passports of this type but with 4 extra pages (see the pictures below for Bashkortostan, I didn't find in Internet how extra pages of Tatarstan look like).



These pages have the same information like in Russian language but in their local language (Bashkir or Tatar)



## 2007 – Modern time

These Russian passports (FOR INTERNAL USE!) are issuing from 2007/08 till today. They are the same like previous ones but have some modern security features: OVI on the page with personal information, lamination with holograms and stripe on the last page.



All information (with your residence address, marital status etc.) are printed and not any longer stamped (but it looks like stamps).

These passports are not intended for foreign travels but you are able to visit the following former USSR countries:

- Abkhazia (partly recognized state)
- Belarus
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyzstan
- South Ossetia (partly recognized state)
- Tajikistan
- Transdnistria (non-recognized state)
- Ukraine

Also our Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs issues passports of this type but with Machine-Readable Zone (since 01 July 2011).

### **ID-Cards – The Possible Future**

The Russian government is planning to introduce ID cards (see the picture below) in 2012-2014. These cards will be for identification purposes and will be used like payment cards.

