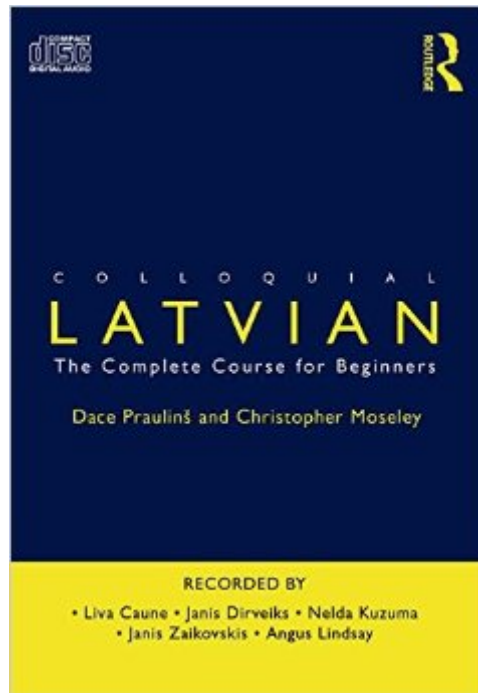


The book was found

Colloquial Latvian: The Complete Course For Beginners (Colloquial Series (CD))



Synopsis

First Published in 2009. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

Book Information

Series: Colloquial Series (CD)

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Average Customer Review: 3.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (13 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I did not find this course to be very helpful to an absolute beginner. There is little vocabulary building, and too few practical phrases presented. I don't speak any Latvian and I am about to leave for Riga for a year. I don't expect to be able to master this language in one year's time, but I would like to be able to ease my way into the culture by being able to communicate in some basic everyday situations. For example I would like to be able to hail a taxi, order coffee, or buy groceries. This course attempts to instruct by having you be an outside observer to situations, rather than having you learn as a direct participant. Furthermore, the cassette tapes have poor sound quality which makes them a bit difficult to understand. I did find this course somewhat useful for listening to basic pronunciation, inflection, and sentence structure. Since the number of available Latvian language courses is extremely limited, I would recommend using this course in conjunction with the Lonely Planet Baltic Phrasebook to give you a more practical and useful experience.

This book is too advanced for a beginner and too simple for anyone who is ready for its content. Latvian has a complex grammatical structure that is completely foreign to English speakers and this book makes that structure confusing. Furthermore, there aren't a lot of instantly accessible phrases that beginners would need to know in order to survive. The progression is too quick and can cause

frustration. The thing the book is good at is providing cultural information so that a newcomer gets a sense of the place and the people. The book follows a story of Latvian Australians coming to visit relatives and seeing the sights of Latvia and can, from this perspective, provide insight for those who don't know a lot about Latvia. The problem is that there are precious few materials out there to assist one to learn Latvian. If Colloquial Latvian is all you can find, then it is better than nothing. But do not place high hopes on it helping you to conquer Latvian because it simply won't.

Not a lot of ways to learn Latvian and many are out of print or in print but only in some godforsaken place. I currently live in Latvia and can tell you that although this book is not BAD! it is also not good. It drops you into very advanced grammatical concepts very early on (I think perfect tense is covered in chapter 2). There isn't a logical progression of vocabulary or concepts (wouldn't it be better to know past or present tense before perfect?). There is good inclusion of cultural information -- actual maps of Riga to learn directional vocabulary, newspaper ads, excerpts from Raina or Dainas. I guess when it comes down to it I wonder why I'm learning Latvian from a Brit/Aussie? I can tell you that the local University language immersion programs use the Dialogs series almost exclusively. But why can't someone get Trevor Fennel in print again? That would be the answer -- instead I have to visit the library to review his presentation of grammatical concepts.

I really do want to learn to speak Latvian but this book is way beyond me. I bought it 4 years ago and occasionally for a laugh I pull out the tape and listen in confusion to someone chattering along quickly in Latvian in lesson 1. I cannot imagine that anyone would find this helpful, unless they are just brushing up on their Latvian.

I speak 8 languages and I have experience of learning languages by myself. I thought it would be a great challenge to study Latvian but..... not with THIS book. This book is confusing, the sound is poor, the speakers talk too fast and it seems that there is no logic in the grammar at all.

I do recommend the "Teach Yourself"-book instead. I bought this book without a CD. This book covers important areas. For me, there's too little exercises and you continue too fast into the next area too soon. The "Teach Yourself"-book contained the CD.

This is a really first rate language book- and it's up to date, the grammar is covered very thoroughly (and very comprehensibly), there are lots of exercises, the cassettes are a big help (I would always

recommend getting the cassettes) and the theme is refreshing, too- the dialogues involve a family of Latvian origin living in Australia that goes back to the old country to rediscover its roots after Latvia regains its independence- an interesting variation on the usual tired plots and characters employed in language books. Incidentally, for those interested in travelling to the Baltic countries, I also highly recommend "Colloquial Estonian" by the same author.

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