

The Genitive Case

1. What is the Genitive Case?

The genitive case is used to show possession or relationship between things. In English, it is usually formed by adding 's (apostrophe + s) to a noun.

Example:

John's car = the car that belongs to John

2. When to Use the Genitive Case

You use the genitive case when:

- Showing possession

Sara's phone = the phone of Sara

- Talking about relationships

Mike's brother = the brother of Mike

- Referring to origins or authors

Shakespeare's plays = the plays written by Shakespeare

- Talking about time expressions

A day's work, two weeks' notice

3. How to Use the Genitive Case

A. With Singular Nouns

Add 's to the end:

The teacher's book

My friend's house

B. With Plural Nouns

If the plural ends in -s, just add an apostrophe ('):

The students' classroom

My parents' car

If the plural is irregular (doesn't end in -s), add 's:

The children's toys

The men's room

C. With Compound Nouns

Add 's to the end of the whole noun phrase:

My brother-in-law's car

The man next door's dog

D. With Two People

If they own something together, add 's to the second name only:

Jack and Jill's house (they share the house)

If they own things separately, add 's to both:

Jack's and Jill's books (they have their own books)

6. Exercises

A. Rewrite using the genitive case:

1. The car of my sister → _____

2. The toys of the children → _____

3. The house of James → _____

4. The name of the dog → _____

5. The office of the teachers → _____

B. Choose the correct form:

1. That is (John / John's) bike.
2. The (girls / girls') shoes are new.
3. The (cat's / cats) tail is fluffy.
4. The (men's / mens') restroom is on the right.
5. That is (Lisa's and Tom's / Lisa and Tom's) restaurant.

4. Genitive vs "of" Phrases

Sometimes, it's better to use "of" instead of the genitive:

For non-living things, we often use "of":

The cover of the book (not the book's cover)

The end of the road

For long noun phrases, "of" is more natural:

The title of the man who wrote the letter