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A possessive noun is a <u>noun</u> that names who or what owns or has possession of something. To show possession, we usually add an apostrophe 's to the noun.

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via https://www.test-english.com/grammar-points/b2/compound-nouns-possessive-forms/

# **Possessive 's - with people**

#### **Singular nouns**

1. We can use 's to describe relationships between people or people and objects.

- This is Martin's camera. (NOT: This is the camera of Martin.)
- We spent the day at my **sister's** house.
- These are my **boyfriend's** socks.
- Mr Lewis's house is for sale.

2. Even if the singular noun is a <u>proper</u> noun (i.e. a name), we add **'s**.

- Tony is **Ann's** (=her) husband. (NOT: Tony is the husband of Ann.)
- Ann is **Tony's** (=his) wife.
- Ann is **Mark's** (=his) mother.
- Tony is Mark's (=his) father.

3. If a name ends in '-s', you can either add an apostrophe + s, or just an apostrophe. The first option is more common.

• This is **Charles's** car (or **Charles'** car).



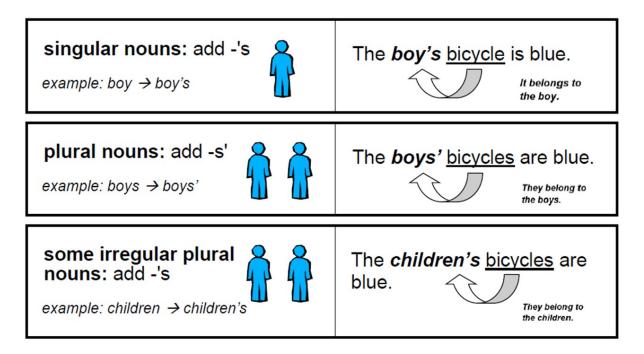
#### **Plural nouns**

- 1. When a <u>plural</u> noun ends in '**-s**' we write the apostrophe after the 's':
  - *The two sisters' house is next to mine.* (= the house of the two sisters)
  - *The plumbers' tools were rusty.* (= the tools of the plumbers)
  - Mark's **sisters'** names are Ann and Julia. (NOT: <u>Mark's sister's names are...'</u>)
  - ('Mark' is singular but 'sisters' is plural.)
  - Mark's **parents'** names are Ann and Tony.

2. If a plural noun doesn't end in 's' (irregular), use 's as normal:

- Ann is the **children's** mother.
- This shop only sells **women's** clothes.

Let's summarize how to form possessive form of singular and plural nouns:



## Possessive nouns as part of a phrase

1. Sometimes more than one word/noun are used to show possession. Here, we add 's to the word which is closest to the noun:



- The King of Sparta's wife was called Helen.
- I accidentally took **someone else's** phone by mistake.
- The **President of USA's** speech was very long.

2. If an object belongs to two people (joint possession), we just use one "s' and add it to the possessive closest to the noun:

- Mark is **Ann and Tony's** (=their) son. (NOT: Mark is Ann's and Tony's son.)
- Ann and Tony are **Sarah and Julia's** parents. (NOT: Ann and Tony are Sarah's and Julia's parents.)

3. BUT: If there is a separate possession of the same noun, we use the possessive form ('s) for each word:

• *Liza's* and *Kate's* books are full of useful information. (Liza and Kate have their books)

## **Possessive 's - with animals**

Like with people, we add an apostrophe + s after nouns denoting animals:

- This is the **dog's** food.
- One of the **cat's** feet is black.

# Using 'of' with objects

Do describe possession with things, ideas and places, we usually use 'of':

- The windows of that house are dirty. (NOT: That house's windows are dirty.)
- What is the name of this village? (NOT: What is this village's name?)
- We didn't see the first part of the movie. (NOT: We didn't see this movie's first part.)

## **Compound nouns**

With compound or hyphenated nouns, we use the possessive form ('s) for the word closest to the noun.

• My mother-in-law's gift is a diamond ring.



• The **English teacher's** method is very effective.

Here's a good video from Adam Lloyd explaining how to form possessive nouns:

See also:

Possession: Adjectives, Pronouns, Apostrophe + s

**Possessive Pronouns**