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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.



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

Possessive 's - with people

Singular nouns

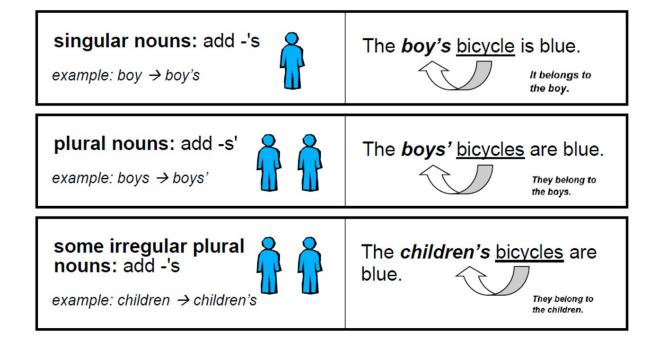
- 1. We can use 's to describe relationships between people or people and objects.
 - This is **Martin's** camera. (NOT: This is the camera of Martin.)
 - We spent the day at my **sister's** house.
 - These are my **boyfriend's** socks.
 - Mr Lewis's house is for sale.
- 2. Even if the singular noun 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: Mark's sister's names are...')
 - ('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 " \mathbf{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 (${}^{\prime}$ s) for the word closest to the noun.

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



 $\bullet \ \ \textit{The \textbf{English teacher's}} \ \ \textit{method is very effective}.$

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

See also:

<u>Possession: Adjectives, Pronouns, Apostrophe + s</u>

Possessive Pronouns