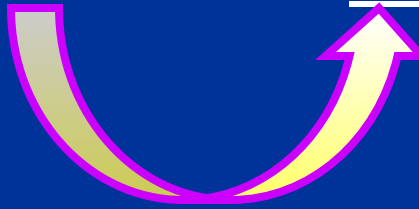


# The category of case

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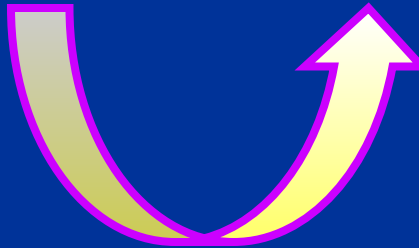
*The common case*

*is unmarked, it has no inflexion*  
*(zero inflexion)*



*The genitive case*

*is marked by the **apostrophe s***  
*(**'s**).*



## SINGULAR GENITIVE:

**NOUN + ' + S = A FRIEND'S FLAT**

## PLURAL GENITIVE (zero form):

**NOUN + S + ' = MY FRIENDS' FLAT**

- Irregular plural nouns forming their plural by vowel change also have the regular [z] in the genitive:  
*children's games, women's faces.*
- Nouns ending in –s form the genitive case in two ways:  
*Burns' (Burns's) poems, Dickens' (Dickens's) novels.*

# The genitive case is used:

I))

With nouns denoting persons and animals:  
*John's idea, the swallow's nest, the mare's back.*

2))

With nouns denoting time and distance:  
*a moment's delay, an hour's drive, today's newspaper.*

3))

With the names of countries and towns:  
*Britain's national museums, Canada's population.*

4))

With the names of newspapers and nouns denoting different kinds of organizations:  
*the Guardian's analysis, the Tribune's role, the company's plans,*

- **5. Often with the nouns *world, nation, country, city, town*:**  
*the world's top guitarists, the nation's wealth.*
- **6. With the nouns *ship, boat, car*:**  
*the ship's crew, the car's wheel.*
- **7. With nouns denoting planets: *sun, moon, earth*:**  
*the sun's rays, this earth's life.*
- **8. With some inanimate nouns in the following set expressions:**  
*to one's heart's content (desire), at death's door, at arm's length, out of harm's way, a hair's breadth, a needle's eye, at a stone's throw, to move at a snail's pace, at the water's edge.*

# Group genitive

when 's can be joined:

- 1) to a group of two coordinated nouns if such a group refers to a single idea:

*Mum and Dad's room, John and Mary's car.*

- 2) to a more extensive phrase which may even contain a clause:  
*the Duke of Norfolk's sister, the secretary of state's private room,  
the man I saw yesterday's son.*

- 3) to a noun (pronoun) + a pronoun group:  
*someone else's benefit.*

- 4) to a group ending in a numeral:  
*in an hour or two's time.*

# Absolute genitive = NOUN + ' + S – HEADWORD

- To avoid repetition: *Our house is better than Mary's* (than Mary's house).
- After the preposition of: *an old friend of my mother's, that cousin of my husband's*.
- To denote shops such as *the butcher's, the baker's, the grocer's, the chemist's*, or institutions, where the genitive is usually a saint's name: *St Paul's (Cathedral), St James's (Palace)*, or places of residence: *at Timothy's, at Old Jolyon's, at my uncle's*.

Compound nouns have 's  
joined to the final component:

- *the editor-in-chief's office,*
- *my mother-in-law's garden,*
- *a passer-by's comment.*