

9 Possessive 's, possessive of, etc.

We can show the relationship of possession between nouns/noun phrases in several ways.

Possessive 's

- We usually use the possessive 's for people, groups of people and animals. We add 's to singular nouns and plural nouns that don't end in -s, and an apostrophe (') to plural nouns that end in -s: *Sarah's shoes* *the government's policy* *the cat's whiskers* *my friend's mother* (one friend) *my friends' mothers* (two or more friends) *men's clothing* *Liam and Chloe's home*
- We can omit the second noun when the meaning is clear from the context: when we are talking about where someone lives or works, or for some shops and businesses: 'Did you go to **John's party?**' 'No, I went to **Roger and Clare's.**' (= Roger and Clare's party) *We had dinner at **Barbara's.*** (= Barbara's house) *He's going to **the chemist's.*** (= the chemist's shop)
- We can use 's or an apostrophe in some expressions with periods of time: *today's weather* *yesterday's newspaper* *this term's results* *a week's holiday* *three minutes' silence*
- When a proper name ends in -s, we can use 's or an apostrophe: *Charles'/Charles's flat*

noun + of + noun

- We usually use noun + of + noun to talk about things: *the back of the house* (Not *the house's back*) *the top of the mountain*
- We prefer 's when the first noun/noun phrase is much shorter than the second noun/noun phrase: *the school's rules regarding truancy and lateness* (Not *the rules regarding truancy and lateness of the school*)
- We sometimes use of + 's together: *a cousin of my mother's* (= my mother's cousin)

noun + noun

- We often use noun + noun, especially when we are talking about parts of things: *the bathroom door* *a computer screen*

PRACTICE

9a Circle the correct answer.

- A: Have you heard *the news of yesterday* / *yesterday's news* about the plane crash?
B: No. Where did it happen?
- 1 A: I've only read *the book's first chapter* / *the first chapter of the book* so far.
B: Keep going. It's a really interesting story.
- 2 A: Are you going to *Jane's and Mark's* / *Jane and Mark's* wedding on Saturday?
B: No, we're going to *Nathan and Alison's* / *Nathan's and Alison's*. They're *friends of my parent's* / *friends of my parents*'.
- 3 A: Have you got *the front door's key* / *the key of the front door* in your bag?
B: No. Haven't you got it?

- 4 A: I've got a toothache. I have to go to *the dentist's / the dentists*.
 B: Good luck. When I tried to make an appointment, I had to wait for three weeks.
- 5 A: Do you know what *the university's policy on handing in late assignments / the policy on handing in late assignments of the university* is?
 B: No, but why don't you ask the secretary?

9b Complete the sentences. Use the words in brackets.

- 0 I'm going to my *aunt's house* tonight. It's her eightieth birthday. (aunt / house)
- 1 The to the film was positive. (audience / reaction)
- 2 Yesterday we celebrated my (parents / wedding anniversary)
- 3 They've closed the for refurbishment. (women / changing room)
- 4 We spent the weekend at my It's a lovely place. (friend / cottage)
- 5 are predicted to be even higher than (next year / sales figures, this year)
- 6 is going to Leeds University next year. (James / daughter)
- 7 The gave each child a small present. (boys / teacher)
- 8 The are well known. (city / problems of crime and unemployment)
- 9 I'm taking in (two weeks / holiday, a week / time)
- 10 Don't pull the It's cruel and besides, the dog might bite you. (dog / tail)

9c Complete the sentences. Use one word from each box in each sentence.

centre children computer
 daughter front kitchen table top

city friends leg page party
 queue screen window

- 0 They waited for ages to get to the *front of the queue* but the performance was worth the wait.
- 1 We invited our youngest to the house for a when she turned ten years old.
- 2 He opened the to let out the smoke from the burnt roast.
- 3 Public transport will take you into the , where you will find many shops and restaurants.
- 4 Before you start the test, write your name at the
- 5 That is broken so don't put anything on the table or it will collapse.
- 6 She gets headaches if she stares at a for many hours.