

12 Possessive forms of nouns



1 Noun + 's or '

We use noun + 's or ' to show that something belongs to someone.

singular nouns	add 's	John → John's (car) James → James's (phone) my mother → my mother's (garden)
plural nouns that end in s	add '	boys → boys' (school) birds → birds' (eggs) parents → parents' (house)
plural nouns that don't end in s	add 's	children → children's (books) men → men's (clothes) people → people's (names)

We use noun + 's or ' for people and animals:

I'm using my friend's mobile phone. (the phone belongs to my friend)

Clara's brother is Marco's teacher. What is your cat's name? This is my parents' car.

We can use noun + 's or ' alone

- when the meaning is clear:
'Is this Lucy's mobile phone?' 'No, it's Amanda's.' (Amanda's phone)
That isn't our cat. It's our neighbours'. (our neighbours' cat)
- for people's homes:
Shall we go to Sally's? (Sally's house)
- to talk about some shops and services:
I need to go to the doctor's.
Are you going to the butcher's?

2 of + noun

We usually use *of* + noun for things and places:

We visited the centre of Madrid. What happens at the end of the film?

What's the size of the screen on your TV? What's the height of Mount Everest?

! We don't usually use *of* + noun for people:

✗ He is the brother of Clare. ✓ He is Clare's brother.

! We don't usually use noun + 's or ' for things:

✗ I didn't see the film's end. ✓ I didn't see the end of the film.