

POSSESSIVE CASE

Proper names in –s normally have 's [ɪz], unless they are classical.

Charles's, St James's, Archimedes' Law, Phoebus' chariot

But less unusual names in –s often follow the classical model:

Pears' soap, Keats' (or Keats's) poetry

Compounds denoting one idea are treated as single words:

Jacob and Esau's quarrel; Gilbert and Sullivan's operas;
but Henry's and Herbert's books, or Henry's books and Herbert's

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1. Put into the possessive:

- 1 The father of James.
- 2 The clothes of the boys.
- 3 The coat of the boy.
- 4 The club of the women.
- 5 The fur of the fox.
- 6 The shop of Jones Brothers.
- 7 The orders of the Commander-in-Chief.
- 8 The glass of someone else.
- 9 The name of my sister-in-law.
- 10 The poems of Keats.
- 11 The Park of St James.
- 12 The countries of Caesar and Cleopatra.
- 13 The wedding of William and Mary.
- 14 The hats of ladies.
- 15 The toys of my children.

Read notes to Exercise 1.

Words in apposition: here the last word in the group usually takes the 's.

Hicks the plumber's daughter

(Compare: Betty, the plumber's daughter)

Of may replace almost any possessive case. It is useful for avoiding a complicated series of –s'.

'I am my friend's sister's second child's godmother'

Although it is a fantastic example hardly likely to occur, is better expressed

I'm godmother to the second child of my friend's sister

Of is the normal for inanimate objects. Exceptions are certain accepted idioms, mostly of time or measure: *I live a stone's throw from here; out of harm's way; three days' holiday; I'm at my wits' end.*

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2. Put into the possessive:

- 1 The typist of Mr Sims.
- 2 The new tie of my friend Cyril.
- 3 The War of a Hundred Years.
- 4 She's done the work of a whole day.
- 5 In the time of a week or two.
- 6 The crown of the King of England.
- 7 The birthday of the President of Chile.
- 8 The parents of all the other boys.
- 9 The famous shop of Fortnum and Mason.
- 10 The houses of Henry and Mr Jones.
- 11 During the holiday of two weeks of my friend Maisie.
- 12 A wrist-watch of a lady or gentleman.
- 13 At (the shop of) Murdoch, the bookseller.

- 14 The army of Cyrus.
 15 He's the favourite of the boss.
 Here is an old puzzle:
 'The son of Pharaoh's daughter was the daughter of Pharaoh's son.'
 It makes sense only if we read *daughter-of-Pharaoh* as one unit having
 the same meaning as *Pharaoh's daughter*.

The two words at the beginning of these sentences can be combined
 in one of three ways:

- i. using the Saxon genitive
- ii. using a phrase with *of*
- iii. as a plain sequence

3. Do whichever is required. The sequence may be the other way round from that given.

1. (hour, work) I must do another this evening.
2. (education, diploma) Recognised teachers must have either a(n) or a degree.
3. (moment, notice) The understudy had to take over at a
4. (hand, rail) No was provided.
5. (party, politics) I find it difficult to get excited about
6. (doll, house) One of the Queen's is on show to the public.
7. (summer, day) It was a beautiful
8. (wine, glass) What a pity I have broken that
9. (room, ceiling) The was crossed with ancient beams.
10. (today, newspaper) I read something fascinating in
11. (break, tea) Most workers insist on having a
12. (hair, breadth) He escaped by a
13. (matter, root) The is that he never had that slightest discipline instilled into him at home.
14. (worth, money) When you go out, you like to feel that you have got your
15. (ceiling, bedroom) I noticed yesterday that there was a big crack in my
16. (tray, tea) I bought her a for her birthday.
17. (door, death) When I went to see him I really thought he looked as if he was at
18. (magazine, women) The sentiment in most is so cloying that men find them unreadable.
19. (year, absence) He looked very different after his
20. (meeting, committee) A has been called for tomorrow afternoon.
21. (mouse, church) He's as poor as a but he gives himself the airs of a Nabob.
22. (cold, head) It is not so much 'flu as a very severe
23. (story, fairy) The Sleeping Beauty is one of the most charming I know.
24. (story, pirate) The enthralled his listeners.
25. (salt, bath) With all these I shall smell most exotic.
26. (service, dinner) She bought a very elegant
27. (journey, day) He lives about a from here.
28. (licence, wireless) I must get my renewed.
29. (state, mind) It is very difficult to determine his at the time of the crime.
30. (year, time) 'That thou may'st in me behold'.
31. (shirt, collar) His was decidedly frayed.
32. (milk, glass) He drank the straight off.
33. (wit, end) I really was at my to know what to do.
34. (fare, prison) is not very appetising.
35. (house, power) A big new has been built there.
36. (property, slum) There is still a great deal of in London.
37. (thought, second) He answered confidently after a
38. (car, seat) Most are adjustable nowadays.
39. (day, holiday) The boys had an extra
40. (memory, lapse) During his recital the pianist had an unfortunate