

LESSON 35

The Genitive Singular Case of Feminine Nouns

The Genitive Case is the form of the noun used to express possession and attributes.

General statement

Polysyllabic genitive singular feminine nouns are for the most part identical to the dative singular forms. Except for a few irregular nouns the monosyllabic genitive singular feminine nouns are the same as the dative singular forms save for the addition of a terminal **e**.

Lesson 7 exemplifies the changes associated with the dative singular feminine nouns.

The definite article in all instances is **Na (Na h-** before a vowel).

The singular noun is never lenited in the genitive singular.

Only the genitive noun can have the definite article. The meaning of a preceding noun, whether **a** or **the**, is understood from the context.

If you are not sure or are looking for the genitive of any noun used in this course then go to the Vocabulary section.

Type 1

In monosyllabic nouns a final **e** added to the dative singular:

Dative Singular Indefinite

le circ - with a hen

air cois - on a leg

aig crìch - at a boundary

air làimh - on a hand

air luing - on a ship

le sgian - with a knife

Genitive Singular Indefinite

biadh circe - the food of a hen

cùl coise - the back of a leg

callaid crìche - the fence of a boundary
(- a boundary fence)

cùl làimhe - the back of a hand

neart luinge - the power of a ship
(- a ship's power)

oir sgeine - the edge of a knife
(- a knife edge)

Genitive Singular Definite

biadh na circe - the food of the hen
(- the hen's food)

cùl na coise - the back of the leg

callaid na crìche - the fence of the boundary
(- the boundary fence)

cùl na làimhe - the back of the hand

neart na luinge - the power of the ship
(- the ship's power)

oir na sgeine - the edge of the knife
(- the knife edge)

Type 2

Polysyllabic nouns are the same as the dative singular, with an optional terminal **e** (becoming less common in the spoken language):

Dative Singular Indefinite

ri caileig - to a girl

le caillich - with an old woman

Genitive Singular Indefinite

falt caileig(e) - the hair of a girl
(- a girl's hair)

ad caillich(e) - the hat of an old woman
(- an old woman's hat)

Genitive Singular Definite

falt na caileig(e) - the hair of the girl
(- the girl's hair)

ad na caillich(e) - the hat of the old woman
(- the old woman's hat)

le maraig - with a pudding
fo uinneig - under a window

milsead maraig(e) - the sweetness of a pudding
glainne uinneig(e) - the glass of a window

milsead na maraig(e) - the sweetness of the pudding
glainne na h-uinneig(e) - the glass of the window

Type 3

Nouns ending in **-ir** add **-rach/- reach**. A few monosyllabic nouns ending in **-ail** add **-lach**:

Dative Singular Definite

anns an litir - in the letter
anns an obair - in the work
leis an dàil - with the delay

Genitive Singular Definite

sgeul na litreach - the story of the letter
fallas na h-obrach - the sweat of the work
fad na dàlach - the length of the delay

Type 4

Many words which end in **-ainn** & **-eann** lose this syllable and add **-ne**:

Dative Singular Definite

fon abhainn - under the river

anns a' bhuidheann - in the group
anns a' mhadainn - in the morning
(- the morning light)

Genitive Singular Definite

bùrn na h-aibhne - the water of the river
(- the river water)
daoine na buidhne - the people of the group
solas na maidne - the light of the morning

Type 5

There is no change with nouns ending in **-chd**:

Dative Singular Indefinite

ann an rioghachd - in a kingdom

Genitive Singular Indefinite

ceann rioghachd - the head of a kingdom

Genitive Singular Definite

ceann na rioghachd - the head of the kingdom

Some common irregular genitives are best learned:

Dative Singular Indefinite

ann am bùth - in a shop

le caora - with a sheep

ann an sùil - in an eye
air tràigh - on a beach

le màthair - with a mother

ri piuthar - to a sister

le seanmhair - with a grandmother

Genitive Singular Indefinite

uinneag bùtha - the window of a shop
(- a shop window)

ceann caorach - the head of a sheep
(- a sheep's head)

oisean sùla - the corner of an eye
allt tràghad - the stream of a beach
(- a beach stream)

mac màthar - the son of a mother
(- a mother's son)

leabhar peathar - the book of a sister
(- a sister's book)

cidsin seanmhar - the kitchen of a grandmother
(- a grandmother's kitchen)

Genitive Singular Definite

uinneag na bùtha - the window of the shop
(- the shop window)

ceann na caorach - the head of the sheep
(- the sheep's head)

oisean na sùla - the corner of the eye
allt na tràghad - the stream of the beach
(- the beach stream)

mac na màthar - the son of the mother
(- the mother's son)

leabhar na peathar - the book of the sister
(- the sister's book)

cidsin na seanmhar - the kitchen of the grandmother
(- the grandmother's kitchen)

Where there is more than one noun in the genitive then only the final one can take the genitive form and only this noun can have a definite article, e.g.

blas bùrn na h-aibhne - the taste of the water of the river (- the taste of the river water)

blàths gainmheach na tràghad - the warmth of the sand of the beach

The possessive adjective can also be used with a genitive noun, e.g.
bean mo charaid - the wife of my friend (- my friend's wife)
bràthair mo mhàthar - my mother's brother (- my maternal uncle)
cùis ar litreach - the subject of our letter

NEW WORDS

Nouns

blas (m) - accent, taste

fad (m) - length

guth (m) - voice

neart (m) - energy, strength

smal (m) - mark

ad (f) - hat

buidheann (f) - group

glainne (f) - glass

piuthar (f) - sister

seanmhair (f) - grandmother

cùl (m) - back side

fallas (m) - sweat

milsead (m) - sweetness

oisean (m) - corner

bas (f) - palm (of hand)

callaid (f) - fence

ite (f) - feather

saothair (f) - labour, toil

Verbs

glais/glas, glasadh - lock

EXERCISE 1 Translate into English

1. Dh' fhuirich màthair na caileig aig an taigh
2. Bhris am balach uinneag na bùtha
3. Tha bùrn na h-aibhne seo salach
4. Bha doras na h-eaglais glaiste
5. Bha na daoine aig iasgach na mara
6. Nach robh iad a-staigh fad na h-ùine?
7. Bha solas na grèine a' tighinn tron uinneig
8. Tha smal ann air cùl a làimhe
9. Tha falt na caillich fada
10. Tha blas na Gàidhlig aca

EXERCISE 2 Translate into English

1. bus na h-oidhche; ad mo mhàthar; loch na mara; dèideag a pheathar
2. guth na h-uisge; biadh na maidne; fuaim na mara
3. doras na sgoile; làmh na sgeine; casan na leapa
4. fàileadh toite; gob circe; ite sgèithe; glainne na h-uinneig
5. callaid na pàirce; saothair obrach; neart na stoirme
6. dath a sùla; gainmheach na tràghad; eun coille
7. mullach na beinne; pian bochdainn; milsead a pòige
8. dath na h-ite; meud a h-aid; fallas mo shaotrach

1. The girl's mother stayed at home
2. The boy broke the shop window
3. The water of this river is dirty
4. The church door was locked
5. The men were at sea fishing
6. Weren't they in(side) all (of) the time?
7. The sunlight was coming through the window
8. There is a mark on the back of her hand
9. The old woman's hair is long
10. They have a Gàidhlig accent

LESSON 35: ANSWERS 2

1. the night bus; my mother's hat; the sea loch; his sister's toy

LESSON 35: ANSWERS 1

2. the lark's voice; the morning meal; the sound of the sea
3. the school door; the handle of the knife; the legs of the bed
4. smell of smoke; a hen's beak; a wing feather; the window glass
5. the park's fence; toil of work; the power of the storm
6. the colour of her eye; the beach sand; a forest bird
7. the top of the mountain; pain of poverty; the sweetness of her kiss
8. the colour of the feather; the size of the hat; the sweat of my labour