

LESSON 39

The Genitive Plural of Nouns

Consistent Grammatical Features:

The genitive plural definite article is **nam** before **b, f, m** or **p** and **nan** in all other situations. Whenever possible the indefinite plural genitive noun is lenited.

General Pattern

The rule is for the final vowel of the genitive plural to be broad.

This means if the nominative plural noun has a final broad vowel then the genitive plural noun is identical, else the genitive plural noun will be same as the nominative singular noun. The latter is mostly confined to masculine nouns.

For Masculine Nouns

| Nominative Plural | | Nominative Singular | Genitive Plural |
|--------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Final narrow vowel | balaich - boys | balach - a boy | nam balach - of the boys |
| | | | bhalach - of boys |
| | pinn - pens | peann - a pen | nam peann - of the pens |
| | | | pheann - of pens |
| Final broad vowel | bogsaichean - boxes | bogsa - a box | nam bogsaichean - of the boxes |
| | | | bhogsaichean - of boxes |
| | iasgairean - fishermen | iasgair - a fisherman | nan iasgairean - of the fishermen |
| | | | iasgairean - of fisherman |
| | taillearan - tailors | taillear - a tailor | nan taillearan - of the tailors |
| | | | thaillearan - of tailors |

For Feminine Nouns

| Nominative Plural | | Nominative Singular | Genitive Plural |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Final broad vowel in nominative plural | caileagan - girls | caileag - a girl | nan caileagan - of the girls |
| | | | chaileagan - of girls |
| | cearcan - hens | cearc - a hen | nan cearcan - of the hens |
| | | | chearcan - of hens |
| | cùisean - matters | cùis - matter | nan cùisean - of the matters |
| | | | chùisean - of matters |
| | eaglaisean - churches | eaglais - a church | nan eaglaisean - of the churches |
| | | | eaglaisean - of churches |
| | sgoiltean - schools | sgoil - a school | nan sgoiltean - of the schools |
| | | | sgoiltean - of schools |

Some older speakers and older literature may apply an older rule for feminine nouns. The basic model is if the final vowel of the nominative singular is broad then the genitive plural is identical to it, else both nominative and genitive plurals are the same. Some are preserved in familiar combinations such as Taigh chearc - Henhouse. Compare the following to the above table:

| Nominative Singular | | Nominative Plural | Genitive Plural |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Final broad vowel in nominative singular | caileag - a girl | caileagan - girls | nan caileag - of the girls |
| | | | chaileag - of girls |
| | cearc - a hen | cearcan - hens | nan cearc - of the hens |
| | | | chearc - of hens |
| Final narrow vowel in nominative singular | cùise - a matter | cùisean - matters | nan cùisean - of the matters |
| | | | chùisean - of matters |
| | eaglais - a church | eaglaisean - churches | nan eaglaisean - of the churches |
| | | | eaglaisean - of churches |
| sgoil - a school | sgoiltean - schools | nan sgoiltean - of the schools | |
| | | sgoiltean - of schools | |

EXERCISE 1 Make the following plural

1. màthair na caileig; uinneag na bùtha; bùrn na h-aibhne
2. doras na h-eaglais; cùl a làimhe; falt na caillich
3. làmh a' bhalaich; doras an taighe; cù an tuathanaich
4. ceann a' bhogsa; dath a' phinn; spòg cait; cas a' bhùird

EXERCISE 2 Make the following plural

1. dèideag a pheathar; guth na h-uisge; biadh na maidne
2. doras na sgoile; làmh na sgeine; casan na leapa
3. gob circe; ite sgèithe; glainne na h-uinneig
4. callaid pàirce; neart na stoirme; dath Sùla

EXERCISE 3 Make the following plural

1. gainmheach na tràghad; mullach na beinne
2. mìlsead na pòige; dath na h-ite; meud na h-aid
3. fallas an t-saothrach; làmh a' bhodaich
4. doras an t-seòmair; botal bainne; cas balaich
5. bràthair m' athar; bogsa guail
6. làr an talla; dath a chòta

EXERCISE 4 Make the following plural

1. meud an rùm; earball an èisg; allt a' chladaich
2. mullach an t-sabhail; dath an t-solais; làmh copain
3. obair saoir; doras a' bhanca; gunna saighdeir
4. searmon an t-sagairt; sgeul bàird; cat a' bhoireannaich

LESSON 39: ANSWERS 2

1. dèideagan am peathraichean; guthan nan uisge; biadh nam maidnean
2. dorais nan sgoiltean; làmhan nan sgeinean; casan nan leapanan
3. guib chearc; itean sgiathan; glainne nan uinneag
4. callaidean phàircean; neart nan stoirmean; dathan shuillean

LESSON 39: ANSWERS 1

1. màthraichean nan caileag; uinneagan nam bùth; bùrn nan aibhnichean
2. dorais nan eaglaisean; cùil an làmhan; falt nan cailleach
3. làmhan nam balach; dorais nan taighean; coin nan tuathanach
4. cinn nam bogsaichean; dathan nam peann; spògan chat; casan nam bòrd

LESSON 39: ANSWERS 4

1. meud nan rùm; earballan nan èisg; ullt nan cladach
2. mullàichean nan sabhal; dathan nan solas; làmhan chopan
3. obair shaor; dorais nam bancaichean; gunnathan shaighdear
4. searmonan nan sagart; sgeòil bhàrd; cait nam boireannach

LESSON 39: ANSWERS 3

1. gainmheach nan tràighean; mullàichean nam beanntan
2. mìlsead nam pòigean; dathan nan itean; meud nan ad(an)
3. fallas nan saothraichean; làmhan nam bodach
4. dorais nan seòmair; botail bhainne; casan bhalach
5. bràithrean ar n-athraichean; bogsaichean guail
6. làir nan tallachan; dathan nan còtaichean