

Genitive

(Showing possession and close relationships)

Ich habe mit dem Sohn **des Bäckers** gesprochen. I talked to *the baker's* son.
Das ist die Frage **eines Kindes**. That is *a child's* question.
Die Farbe **der Wände** gefällt mir I like the color *of the walls*.

English shows possession or other close relationships by adding 's to a noun or by using a phrase with *of*. English generally uses the *s* form only for persons. For things and ideas, English uses the *of... construction*.

German uses the genitive case to show possession or other close relationships. The genitive is used for things and ideas as well as for persons. The genitive generally follows the noun it modifies (*die Frage eines Kindes*). It may precede the noun it modifies with proper names and kinship titles. With proper names simply add *-s* without the apostrophe. (Peters Freundin = Peter's girlfriend, Muttis Auto = mom's car)

In spoken German the genitive is frequently replaced by *von + dative*:

die Freundin *von meinem Bruder* (meines Bruders)
zwei *von ihren Freunden* (ihrer Freunde)
ein Freund *von Thomas* (Thomas' Freund)

Von + dative is considered standard in phrases similar to the English *of mine, of Nicole, etc.:*

ein Freund von mir
ein Freund von Nicole

The interrogative pronoun 'wessen'?

Wessen CD-Spieler ist das? *Whose* CD player is that?
Wessen CDs sind das? *Whose* CD's are those?

The question word to ask for nouns or pronouns in the genitive is **wessen**. It is the genitive form of *wer* and is equivalent to English *whose*.

Possessive adjectives

Theresa ist die Freundin **meines** Bruders. Theresa is *my brother's* girlfriend.
Hast du die Telefonnummer **seiner** Freundin? Do you have *his girlfriend's*
telephone number?

Possessive adjectives take the case of the noun they modify and takes the ein-word ending. Even though a possessive adjective already shows possession (*mein = my, sein = his*), it must itself be in the genitive case when the noun it goes with is in the genitive (**meines Bruders** = of my brother); **die Freundin meines Bruders** shows two possessive relationships.

Prepositions with the genitive

(an)statt	instead of	Kommt Anna (an)statt ihrer Schwester?
trotz	in spite of	Trotz des Regens fahren wir in die Berge.
während	during	Während des Sommers bleiben wir nicht in Boston.
wegen	on account of	Wegen des Regens fahren wir nicht in die Berge.

In colloquial usage many people use the prepositions **statt**, **trotz**, **wegen** and sometimes **während** with the dative.

wegen **dem** Regen vs. wegen des Regens
trotz **dem** Regen vs. trotz des Regens

Dative pronouns are considered standard with these prepositions:
trotz **ihm**, wegen **dir**, statt **ihr**

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21G.410 Advanced German: Professional Communication
Spring 2017

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