

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	bogsas - 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 sgoiltèan; 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 taighnean; 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 tràighnean; 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