



# RUSSIAN GENITIVE: ITS FORMS AND USAGE

**N. Ryan**



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Пособие, ориентированное на учащихся вузов, дает полное представление о русском родительном падеже. Книга состоит из трех частей. В первой и второй главах описана грамматика родительного падежа (образование форм и грамматические функции), приводятся многочисленные примеры. Третья глава посвящена предложным конструкциям. Все примеры переведены на английский язык.

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# Chapter 1. Genitive case formation

## 1.1. Masculine nouns in the genitive case singular

The possible inflections for masculine nouns in the genitive case singular are: **-а/-я**, **-и/-ы** and **-у/-ю**. The inflection taken by a particular noun is determined as follows.

### 1.1.1. The **-а/-я** ending

#### 1.1.1.1. Zero-ending nouns and those ending in **-й** or **-ь**

Both animate and inanimate **zero-ending** masculine nouns add the ending **-а**. Those ending in **-й** or **-ь** have these endings replaced by **-я**.

|                    |                        |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| город — города     | city — of a city       |
| стол — стола       | table — of a table     |
| студент — студента | student — of a student |
| герой — героя      | hero — of a hero       |
| дождь — дождя      | rain — of rain         |
| музей — музея      | museum — of a museum   |
| учитель — учителя  | teacher — of a teacher |

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**NB:** The masculine noun **путь** — **way, path, road** is an exception to the above rule: **путь** — **пути**.

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#### 1.1.1.2. Masculine nouns with stressed **о**, **е**, **ё** in the final syllable of the stem

Most masculine nouns with stressed **о**, **е**, **ё** in the final syllable of the stem (they are called ‘fleeting’ **о/е**<sup>1</sup>) lose these vowels in the genitive case. This rule also applies to the other following nouns: **ветер** — wind, **дёготь** — tar, **замок** — castle, **камень** — stone, **коготь** — claw, **ноготь** — nail, **палец** — finger, **поршень** — piston, **ребёнок** — child, **угол** — corner, **уголь** — coal.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Fleeting vowel’ — the vowel in the final syllable of many nouns which end in a hard consonant or soft sign does not appear in oblique cases.

ветер — ветра  
 дёго́ть — дёгтя  
 день — дня  
 за́мок — за́мка  
 замо́к — замка́  
 ка́мень — камня  
 кого́ть — когтя  
 кусо́к — куса́  
 ло́б — лба  
 молодё́ц — молодца́  
 ного́ть — ногтя  
 ого́нь — огня  
 осёл — осла  
 оте́ц — отца́  
 пале́ц — пальца́  
 порше́нь — поршня  
 ребёно́к — ребёнка́  
 сон — сна  
 уго́л — угла  
 уго́ль — угля

wind — of a wind  
 tar — of tar  
 day — of a day  
 castle — of a castle  
 lock — of a lock  
 stone — of a stone  
 claw — of a claw  
 piece — of a piece  
 forehead — of a forehead  
 fine fellow — of a fine fellow  
 finger nail — of a finger nail  
 fire — of a fire  
 donkey — of a donkey  
 father — of a father  
 finger — of a finger  
 piston — of a piston  
 child — of a child  
 dream — of a dream  
 corner — of a corner  
 coal — of coal

### 1.1.1.3. Irregular genitive case

боец — бойца  
 заём — займа  
 комсомолец — комсомольца  
  
 китаец — китайца  
 лев — льва  
 лёд — льда  
 ручей — ручья  
 удалец — удальца

fighter — of a fighter  
 loan — of a loan  
 Komsomol member —  
 of a Komsomol member  
 Chinaman — of a Chinaman  
 lion — of a lion  
 ice — of ice  
 stream — of a stream  
 dare-devil — of a dare-devil

### 1.1.2. The **-и/-ы** ending

Masculine gender nouns with the feminine gender endings **-а** or **-я** follow the rule for feminine gender nouns with the **-а** and **-я** endings being replaced by **-и** and **-ы** endings respectively.

|                   |                                |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ваня — Вани       | Vanya — of Vanya               |
| дедушка — дедушки | grandfather — of a grandfather |
| дядя — дяди       | uncle — of an uncle            |
| Лёва — Лёвы       | Leva — of Leva                 |
| Слава — Славы     | Slava — of Slava               |
| юноша — юноши     | young man — of a young man     |
| судья — судьи     | judge — of a judge             |

### 1.1.3. The **-у/-ю** ending

In addition to taking the inflection **-а**, some **zero-ending** masculine gender nouns can, depending on their usage, take the ending **-у** in the genitive singular. Similarly most nouns with stem ending in **-й** or in **-ь** may take the ending **-ю** in the genitive case.

|                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| миндаль — миндалю | almond — of almond |
| жир — жиру        | fat — of fat       |
| чай — чаю         | tea — of tea       |

The following form of masculine nouns in the genitive, which is mostly found in colloquial Russian, occurs when the nouns which denote substance, material or any kind of matter are used in the genitive to impart the meaning of quantification, i. e. to refer to a part or some quantity of that substance, (**partitive genitive**) masculine gender nouns take endings **-у/-ю**.

Нужно купить сахару, гороху, чаю, рису, луку. One needs to buy some: sugar, peas, tea, rice, onions.

По рецепту нужно добавить луку, рису, сыру, чесноку. According to the recipe we need to add some: onions, rice, cheese, garlic.

Добавь кипятку. Add some boiling water.

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**NB:** the nouns **хлеб** — bread and **овёс** — oats are exceptions, they never take the ending **-у** in the genitive singular, always the ending **-а**, **хлеб** — **хлеба** and **овёс** — **овса**.

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