

ASTELL WYDN

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The genitive construction

In English we say, for example, *the tail of the dog*. Cornish does not have a construction like that. In Cornish the preposition **a** 'of' cannot be used to mean possession.

In English we can also say *the dog's tail* – that is, *the dog + tail*, using the old genitive ending 's for the dog. In this construction *the* in front of *tail* disappears. Cornish tackles possession in the same way.

However, in Cornish we put *the dog* after *tail* because (just like an adjective) *the dog* describes what kind of *tail* it is – one belonging to the dog. And in Cornish there is no special genitive ending.

The result is **lost an ky**.

Exercise One

See if you can put these phrases into Cornish. The first one has been done for you.

the girl's book

lyver an vowes

the man's house

the boy's spade

the woman's cushion

the school's cat

the farmer's field

the bird's nest

the dog's bone

the goose's feather

Mathew's pizza

Davyth's football

Exercise Two

Now see if you can put these phrases into Cornish. Remember there is no Cornish word for 'of' meaning possession. Just use the same construction as before. The first one has been done for you.

the rock of the cliff

carrek an âls

the bread of the baker

the door of the bedroom

the stocking of the woman

the leg of the frog

the pen of the friend

the beautiful window of the church

the scarlet bikini of Crysten

the blueberry muffin of Tôny

the cranberry juice of Peternel

Saying 'have' meaning possession in Cornish

'Have' meaning possession is expressed in Cornish by the verb 'to be' with preposition **dhe**. So 'the dog has a tail' is **yma lost dhe'n ky**.

Instead of **dhe** you can use **gans**, but the sense is then 'have something with you'. For example, **yma gans Peternel box ly** means 'Petronella has a lunch box [with her]'.
her]']

Exercise Three

How would you say the following in Cornish?

Crysten has a black wetsuit.

The sitting-room has three windows.

The house has four bedrooms.

The village has a shop.

Jowan has a tablet computer with him.

Jana has a laptop with her.

The farm has two large fields for the farmer's horses.

Peternel has a fine horse.

I have a big file with me.

We have a geography class at nine thirty.

Numerals 11 to 20

These are **udnek, dêwdhek, tredhek, peswardhek, pymthek, whêtek, seytek, êtek, nawnjek, ugans**.

Exercise Four

Practise numerals by counting down from twenty to zero.