

# Тридцать седьмой урок Lesson Thirty-seven

**Диалог:** "What kind of computer do you have?"  
**Грамматика:** The Genitive of personal and interrogative pronouns  
 Expressing possession in Russian with y + GEN  
 - Have in Russian  
 - The 'existence' word есть 'there is/are'  
 - Possession in the Past Tense  
 The Genitive of Negation

## Диалог

Какой у тебя компьютер?

What kind of computer do you have?

	1	Ира в панике	Ira is in a panic
<b>Слава:</b>	2	Что с тобой? Что случилось?	What's wrong with you? What happened?
<b>Ира:</b>	3 4	Я как раз заканчивала огромное сочинение, а мой компьютер сломался.	I was just finishing a huge paper and my computer broke.
<b>Слава:</b>	5	Какой кошмар. Чем я могу тебе помочь?	What a nightmare. How can I help you?
<b>Ира:</b>	6	Какой у тебя компьютер, PC или Макинтош?	What kind of computer do you have, PC or Mac?
<b>Слава:</b>	7 8 9	К сожалению у меня нет компьютера. У меня был ноутбук, но я его продал. У моего соседа есть компьютер. По-моему, у него PC.	Unfortunately I don't have a computer. I had a laptop (notebook), but I sold it. My roommate has a computer. I think he has a PC.
<b>Ира:</b>	10	А какой у него принтер?	What kind of printer does he have?
<b>Слава:</b>	11 12	У него нет принтера. То-есть, у него есть принтер, но он не работает.	He doesn't have a printer. I mean, he does have a printer, but it doesn't work.
<b>Ира:</b>	13	Какой кошмар!	What a nightmare!

## Словарь

1	паника	panic
3	как раз	just; precisely (at this/that moment)
3	заканчивай+	finish – repeated action
3	сочинение	composition; paper
4	компьютер (Note the Ъ!)	computer
4	сломай+...ся	break (down) – this Verb is intransitive
6	у тебя (Genitive pronoun) +NOM	you have (lit.: 'by you') (See below for explanation of have)
6	PC (писи)	(they use the Latin letters for this)
7	у меня (Genitive pronoun) нет +GEN	I don't have...
8	ноутбук	notebook computer; laptop
8	продал от продал Fem продала Plural продали от продали	sell (Present Tense is irregular – just use the Past and Infinitive for now)
9	у него (Genitive pronoun) есть +NOM	he has ... (Есть emphasizes the existence of the Noun in the Nominative)
10	принтер	printer
11	то-есть	I mean, ...; that is (to say) ...

### 37.A Genitive Pronouns

Genitive personal pronouns are identical to those in the Accusative, so you have nothing new to learn. (Sorry to disappoint you.) Some of the interrogative pronouns have the **-ого/-его** ending which is characteristic of the Genitive Case. It is very important to remember that, just as with the Accusative, the 3<sup>rd</sup> person personal pronouns (but *not* the possessives) begin with **н-** when preceded by a Preposition.

### Genitive Case: Pronouns

NOMINATIVE		GENITIVE	
я	<i>I</i>	меня́	<i>me</i>
ты	<i>you</i>	тебя́	<i>you</i>
он; онó	<i>he; it</i>	(н)его́	<i>him; it</i>
она́	<i>she</i>	(н)её	<i>her</i>
мы	<i>we</i>	нас	<i>us</i>
вы	<i>you (Formal; pl)</i>	вас	<i>you; y'all</i>
они́	<i>they</i>	(н)их	<i>them</i>
кто	<i>who</i>	кого́	<i>who(m)</i>
никто́	<i>no one</i>	никого́	<i>no one</i>
что	<i>what</i>	чего́	<i>what</i>
ничего́	<i>nothing</i>	ничего́	<i>nothing</i>



Put the pronouns into the correct form:

Model: Это подаро́к для (я)                      Это подаро́к для меня́

- |       |       |         |                    |
|-------|-------|---------|--------------------|
| 1. ты | 2. он | 3. она́ | 4. мы              |
| 5. вы | 6. я  | 7. они́ | 8. кто? (in front) |

## 37.Б Expressing Possession in Russian: У + Genitive

Какой у тебя компьютер? (6); У меня был ноутбук (7)

### 37.Б.1 Have in Russian

One verb that Russian does not have is *have*.<sup>1</sup> Instead, to express *somebody has something*, the following construction is used:

**у + “Possessor” in GENITIVE + form of *be* (or *есть*) + “Noun possessed” in NOMINATIVE**

Literally this constructions means: *By POSSESSOR (there) is/exists NOUN POSSESSED*. (More on *есть* and “existence” below.) Some examples:



Listen and repeat all examples on this page

У + POSSESSOR		+	BE	+	NOUN POSSESSED	
(GEN)			(ЕСТЬ)		(НОМ)	
У	моего брата		есть		компьютер.	= My brother has a computer.
<i>By</i>	<i>my brother</i>		<i>(there) is</i>		<i>a computer.</i>	
У	Веры				большая спальня.	= Vera has a large bedroom.
<i>By</i>	<i>Vera</i>		<i>is</i>		<i>a large bedroom.</i>	
У	Ивана				дорогие часы.	= Ivan has an expensive watch.
<i>By</i>	<i>Ivan</i>		<i>is</i>		<i>an expensive watch.</i>	
У	её матери				огромные банки икры.	= Her mother has huge jars of caviar.
<i>By</i>	<i>her mother</i>		<i>are</i>		<i>huge jars of caviar.</i>	

Variation on a theme: You can ask someone what kind of *Noun* they have by using **какой**, which agrees in gender and number with the Nominative Noun (the thing possessed):

КАКОЙ + У + POSSESSOR		+	BE	+	NOUN POSSESSED	
(GEN)					(НОМ)	
Masculine						
Какой	у	её отца			принтер?	= What (kind of) printer does her father have?
<i>What kind</i>	<i>by</i>	<i>her father</i>	<i>is</i>		<i>printer?</i>	
Neuter						
Какое	у	Лёвы			пиво?	= What (kind of) beer does Lyova have?
<i>What kind</i>	<i>by</i>	<i>Lyova</i>	<i>is</i>		<i>beer?</i>	
Feminine						
Какая	у	его сестры			машинка?	= What (kind of) car does his sister have?
<i>What kind</i>	<i>by</i>	<i>his sister</i>	<i>is</i>		<i>car?</i>	
Plural						
Какие	у	их профессора			книжки?	= What (kind of) books does their professor have?
<i>What kind</i>	<i>by</i>	<i>their professor</i>	<i>are</i>		<i>books?</i>	

<sup>1</sup> Actually Russian does have a verb **имей**+ *have*, but it's used only with certain abstract nouns. We'll be seeing it later on.

Note that, just like the Accusative personal pronouns, Genitive 3<sup>rd</sup> person personal pronouns are identical in form to 3<sup>rd</sup> person possessives (See 28.B). Remember that the extra **н-** is added when **его, её, их** are used as personal pronouns following a Preposition, but **not** when they are used as possessives:

3 <sup>RD</sup> PERSON GENITIVE PRONOUN (with н- after preposition)	3 <sup>RD</sup> PERSON POSSESSIVE (no н- after preposition)
У <b>него́</b> жёлтое полотенце. <i>He has a yellow towel.</i>	У [ <b>его́</b> брата] жёлтое полотенце. [ <i>His brother</i> ] has a yellow towel.
Какие у <b>неё́</b> брюки? <i>What kind of pants does she have?</i>	Какие у [ <b>её́</b> сестры] брюки? [ <i>her sister</i> ] have?
У <b>них</b> красивый дом. <i>They have a beautiful house.</i>	У [ <b>их</b> родителей*] красивый дом. [ <i>Their parents</i> ] have a beautiful house.

\*This is the Genitive plural, which we have not seen yet. We just wanted to include an example with **них / их**.

### 37.Б.2 The “Existence” Word: Есть ‘there is/are’; ‘I do’

When you want to establish that fact that a thing exists (in a particular person’s possession), use **есть**. This is especially common in questions and replies. **Есть** receives the stress in the sentence. The affirmative answer to such questions is very often simply: **Да, есть**. (We’ll explore negative answers below.)

У тебя́ **есть** компьютер? Да, **есть**.

*Do you have a computer? Yes, I do.*

У него́ **есть** телевизор? Да, **есть**.

*Does he have a TV? Yes, he does.*



Ask whether the person has the thing

Example: Борис / компьютер  
он / собака

⇒ У Бори́са *есть* компью́тер?  
⇒ У него́ *есть* соба́ка?

- |                    |                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Вэ́ра / маши́на | 2. она́ / кот                   |
| 3. ты / прин́тер   | 4. Бори́с / брат                |
| 5. вы / ключ       | 6. твой профе́ссор / компью́тер |
| 7. они́ / слова́рь | 8. его́ сестра́ / друг          |
| 9. он / часы́      | 10. э́та же́нщина / муж         |

A tiny glitch: not all *have*-constructions can have **есть**. This is because not all *have*-constructions focus on the *existence* of the thing itself. Instead the focus can be on either: 1) *who* has the thing or; 2) *what kind* of thing the person has. In both cases, it is clear that the thing exists and is already in someone’s possession.

- Focus on *who has the thing* (which is known to exist):

У кого́ ключ? У тебя́ или у него́?      *Who has the key? You or him (he)?*

- Focus on *what kind of thing* (which is known to exist) the person has:

As a general rule, don't use **есть** if you have **како́й** or when you are including an Adjective to specify what kind of thing you have (i.e., it is already known that you have the item):

У меня́ <u>хоро́ший</u> компью́тер.	<i>I have a <u>good</u> computer.</i>	<i>It is known the speaker already has a computer; s/he is simply stating that it's a good one.</i>
У неё <u>мои́</u> ключи́?	<i>Does she have <u>my</u> keys?</i>	<i>It is known that she has someone's keys; the speaker is simply asking whether she has his/her keys</i>
<u>Кака́я</u> у тебя́ соба́ка?	<i><u>What kind of</u> dog do you have?</i>	<i>It is known that the person has a dog; the speaker is simply asking what kind of dog the person has.</i>



\*\*\*Do not use **есть** when you want to say you have a *question*. Just say: **У меня́ вопро́с**\*\*\*  
(Even though there is no Adjective in this statement.)

To be honest, all the rules for when to include or omit **есть** can be quite tricky. (A senior thesis is just waiting to be written about this.) For the time being, try to absorb as best as you can the guidelines we've outlined above, and when in doubt, just rely on your best instinct.



Say that the person has the thing. Don't use **есть** in these sentences.

Example:      Бори́с / но́вый компью́тер      ⇨      У Бори́са но́вый компью́тер.  
                 он / краси́вая соба́ка      ⇨      У него́ краси́вая соба́ка.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Де́нис / хоро́ший прин́тер          | 2. Ве́ра / краси́вые де́ти                        |
| 3. я / но́вая маши́на                  | 4. они́ / огро́мное коли́чество дома́шней рабо́ты |
| 5. его́ сестра́ / после́днее пече́нье  | 6. Зи́на / большо́й стол                          |
| 7. они́ / бе́лая маши́на               | 8. ты / ма́ленькие у́ши                           |
| 9. он / ста́рый но́утбук               | 10. её брат / ру́сская подру́га                   |
| 11. их профе́ссор / интере́сные кни́ги | 12. мы / че́рная ко́шка                           |
| 13. вы / о́чень краси́вый дом          | 14. кто / ру́чка?                                 |

## 37.Б.3 Possession in the Past Tense

Note that the models for the *have*-constructions in 37.Б.1 were all in the Present Tense, in which case the verb *be* =  $\emptyset$  or was **есть**. In the Past (and Future – we will discuss later on), the *Verb must agree with the Nominative Noun possessed*.

**Past Tense:**  
**Agreement is determined by the gender and number of the Nominative noun**

У + POSSESSOR + БЫЛ/А/О/И + NOUN POSSESSED		(GEN)	(NOM)	
У	меня		был	плохой телевизор.
By	me		was	a bad TV.
			↓ Masculine	
			↓ Feminine	
У	Максима		была	новая ручка.
By	Maksim		was	a new pen.
			↓ Neuter	
У	моего брата		было	интересное письмо.
By	my brother		was	an interesting letter.
			↓ Plural	
Какие	у	его сына	были	диски?
What kind	by	his son	were	CDs?
				= I had/used to have a bad TV.
				= Maksim had a new pen.
				= My brother had an interesting letter.
				= What (kind of) CDs did his son have?

\*\*\* IMPORTANT: **Есть** can NEVER be used in the Past or Future. ‘Existence’ and all that jazz must simply be understood by the context.\*\*\*



In English the verb *have* agrees with the possessor, which is the *Subject* of the sentence: *I have, she has*, etc. Not surprisingly it is easy to fall into the trap of making the verb and even **какой** agree with the possessor in Russian as well. BE CAREFUL NOT TO DO THIS.

In this Lesson we see the first of several constructions in Russian where the Subject is a *thing* (with which the verb agrees) and not a *person*. You need to get used to “thinking backwards”.

The moral of the story: Make sure that the verb agrees with what’s called the “grammatical Subject”, i.e., whatever is in the *Nominative* Case.



Put the sentences into the Past:

1. У меня хорошая машина.
2. У Коли новый ноутбук.
3. У них хорошие дети.
4. У Веры новое пальто.
5. У неё большая лошадь.
6. У него мой карандаш.
7. У нас хорошая белая собака.
8. У кого мой ключи?

## 37.B The Genitive of Negation

У меня нет компьютера (7)

When you want to say that you *don't* have something, the Noun (that you don't have) goes into the Genitive and the word **нет** is inserted. Such sentences do not have any Noun in the Nominative (because the person who lacks the thing is in the Genitive following the Preposition *y*). For now stick to the Present Tense.

Y + POSSESSOR + HET +		NOUN LACKING		(NOTHING IN NOMINATIVE!)
(GEN)		(GEN)		
У	меня	нет	фотоаппарата.	= <i>I don't have a camera.</i>
By	<i>me</i>	<i>is not</i>	<i>camera.</i>	
У	Сáши	нет	машины.	= <i>Sasha doesn't have a car.</i>
By	<i>Sasha</i>	<i>is not</i>	<i>car.</i>	
У	нашей дóчери	нет	печенья	= <i>Our daughter doesn't have a cookie.</i>
By	<i>our daughter</i>	<i>is not</i>	<i>cookie.</i>	
У	них	нет	кроватьи.	= <i>They don't have a bed.</i>
By	<i>them</i>	<i>is not</i>	<i>bedt.</i>	

The “mirror image” below is a neat mnemonic for the Genitive of Negation:

# GEN|NEG

Over the course of the year we will see several other instances – besides possession – in which a negated Noun appears in the Genitive.



Negate the following sentences. (Yes, all these sentences have **есть**, even though some contain an adjective. This won't affect your answer. As we said, it's complicated.):

- У меня есть карандаш.
- У него есть ручка.
- У вас есть полотенце?
- У тебя есть японский *Japanese* ноутбук.
- У Áнны Пáвловны есть дочь.
- У них есть французское вино.
- У зто́го профессора есть чёрный галстук.
- У твоёй сестры́ есть коричневый шарф.

**Exercise 1**

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate form of the pronoun. Try not to look back in the lesson. **TRANSLATE INTO ENGLISH.**

1. У \_\_\_\_\_ (она) старший брат.
2. Какой у \_\_\_\_\_ (ты) компьютер?
3. У \_\_\_\_\_ (кто) мои ключи?
4. У \_\_\_\_\_ (мы) нет собаки.
5. У \_\_\_\_\_ (я) была итальянская машина.
6. Какое у \_\_\_\_\_ (они) вино?
7. У \_\_\_\_\_ (он) дорогие часы.

**Exercise 2**

Put the following sentences into the past

1. У Вэры дорогой компьютер. \_\_\_\_\_
2. У моего брата большая спальня. \_\_\_\_\_
3. У Лизы вкусное пиво. \_\_\_\_\_
4. У меня плохой профессор. \_\_\_\_\_
5. У кого большая банка икры? \_\_\_\_\_
6. У Виктора кусок колбасы. \_\_\_\_\_
7. У Оли красивые полотенца. \_\_\_\_\_



## Lesson 37 – Homework



### Exercise 3 Negate the following sentences

1. У меня есть хороший профессор. \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. У Бориса есть бутылка водки. \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. У него есть принтер. \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. У Кíры есть печенье. \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. У Олéга есть большáя кровáть. \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. У него есть нóвый словáрь. \_\_\_\_\_