

Possession

Possessive adjectives are words which associate a specific object or person with ownership. They generally precede the object or person in a pattern similar to English, as summarized by the following box:

my	mi, mis
your	tu, tus
his/her	su, sus
our	nuestro, nuestra, nuestros or nuestras
their	su, sus

As these words are adjectives, they must agree in number (and gender in the case of “nuestro”) with the object or person that they modify. Notice that the same word, “su”, is used for él/ella/ellos/ellas/etc. The difference between “su” and “sus” depends on whether the object in question is singular or plural.

My dog = mi perro

His brother = su hermano

Their book = su libro

Our car = nuestro coche

My dogs = mis perros

His brothers = sus hermanos

Their books = sus libros

Our house = nuestra casa

Her sisters = sus hermanas

Our cars = nuestros coches

Remember that when expressing ownership in Spanish, the [’s], as in “John’s book” is never used. Instead, use the word “de” [of] as in “the book of John” (el libro de Juan). This is especially important when clarifying “su” or other possessive pronouns. Note the following examples:

La mamá de Pepé (Pepe’s mom)

El lápiz del profesor (the teacher’s pencil)

Su casa. La casa de ellos (Their house)

Sus opiniones. Las opiniones de ellos (Their opinions)

Possessive pronouns:

There is also a set of pronouns which can be used for possession. As these are pronouns, they are used alone, and not next to the object itself:

In the case of these pronouns, they are often used to respond to a question or where the information is already known. As with the possessive adjectives, they must match in number and gender.

mine	mío, mía, míos, mías
yours	tuyo, tuya, tuyos, tuyas
his / hers	suyo, suya, suyos, suyas
ours	nuestro, nuestra, nuestros, nuestras
theirs	suyo, suya, suyos, suyas

¿De quién es el coche?

Es mío (It’s mine).

¿Es éste mi lápiz?

No, no es mío, es tuyo. (No it’s not mine, it’s yours).

¿Él es su hijo?

Sí, él es nuestro. (Yes he’s ours).

¿Son ellas las hermanas de Pedro?

Sí, son suyas. (Yes, they are his [sisters]).

For more practice on this topic, please visit:

<http://www.studyspanish.com/lessons/possadj.htm>

<http://www.studyspanish.com/lessons/posspro.htm>