

Possessive Adjectives & Possessive Pronouns

When discussing possessives, it's important to distinguish between an adjective and pronoun. An adjective merely describes a noun. A pronoun, on the other hand takes its place. For example:

My book is large. (adjective, describes book)
Yours is small. (pronoun, takes the place of noun)

Your car is green. (adjective, describes car)
Mine is red. (pronoun, takes the place of noun)

As the sentences above demonstrate, a possessive adjective describes a noun in that it indicates who owns or possesses it. The words "yours" and "mine" in the sentences above, on the other hand, take the place of "book" and "car", respectively.

A convenient way to memorize the possessives for quick use is to place them on a T-chart where they match up with the people particular items belong to.

Possessive Adjectives		Possessive Pronouns	
mi (s)	nuestro/a (s)	mío/a (s)	nuestro/a (s)
tu (s)	vuestro/a (s)	tuyo/a (s)	vuestro/a (s)
su (s)	su (s)	suyo/a (s)	suyo/a (s)

Notice that, as the charts above indicate, possessives must reflect the number (singularity or plurality) of the things they describe or replace. Since nuestro and vuestro end with an "o", they can be changes to reflect the gender of the things they describe or replace, too. For example:

Mi libro es grande.	My book is big.	El libro grande es mío.	The big book is mine.
Mis plumas son rojas.	My pens are red.	Las plumas rojas son mías.	The red pens are mine.

Possessive pronouns are often used with definite articles. For example:

Es el mío.	It's mine (referring to a masculine and singular object, like book/libro).
Son las mías	They're mine (referring to a feminine and plural object, like pens/plumas).
Mi libro es grande; el tuyo es pequeño.	My book is big; yours is little.
Tu coche es verde y el mío es rojo.	Your car is green and mine is red.

QUIZ

Translate the following sentences.

- Where is her book? _____
- Hers is in the backpack. _____
- How old is your sister? _____
- Mine is five years old. _____
- Where are your papers? _____
- Ours are in the folder. _____
- When is y'all's party? _____
- Theirs is on Saturday. _____
- Why are my parents here? _____
- Yours aren't here! _____