

The two patterns at a glance

Turkish joins two nouns in three different ways. One question tells you which one you need, every time.

ONE QUESTION DECIDES EVERYTHING

Which one, specifically?	→	definite compound, both words marked
What kind of thing?	→	indefinite compound, only the second word marked
What is it made of, what sex, what is it like?	→	no marking at all

01 THE THREE STRUCTURES

STRUCTURE	FORMULA	EXAMPLE	READING
Definite compound	X-(n)In Y-(s)I	ev in kapı s1	the door of the house
Indefinite compound	X Y-(s)I	ev kapı s1	a house door
No marking	X Y	tahta kapı	a wooden door

02 THE TEST THAT ALWAYS WORKS

Say the English sentence **the X is Y**. If it makes sense, nothing is marked.

the watch is gold → altın saat ♦ the doctor is a woman → kadın doktor

If it is nonsense, you have a compound. The stop *is* a bus? No. otobüs durağı 1 is a stop *for* buses.

03 NO MARKING AT ALL

altın saat, taş duvar MATERIAL	kız kardeş, kadın doktor SEX	altı komşu, ön koltuk POSITION
baş aşçı, ana cadde RANK	bir bardak su MEASURE	melek çocuk, pamuk şeker COMPARISON

04 THE SIGNATURE CONTRAST

TURKISH	ENGLISH	WHICH QUESTION IT ANSWERS
kadın doktor	a doctor who is a woman	what the doctor is, nothing is marked
kadın doktor u	a doctor for women	what kind of doctor, second word marked
kadın in doktor u	that woman's doctor	whose doctor, both words marked

WORTH PINNING DOWN NOW

Indefinite describes the *first* noun, not the whole phrase. **İstanbul Boğazı** 1 is one specific strait, yet it takes the indefinite pattern, because **İstanbul** is naming a category and not claiming ownership.

05 WHAT EACH PATTERN IS USED FOR

DEFINITE COMPOUND · BOTH MARKED

Murat'ın araba sı	belongings
Kemal'in komşu su	people around a person
masa nın ayağ ı	part of a whole
ay ın son u	dates and time
kutu nun iç i	position and place
laf ın geli ş i	fixed expressions
hayat ımın adam ı	terms of endearment
bu kimin çanta sı ?	asking whose

INDEFINITE COMPOUND · SECOND MARKED

cep telefon u	everyday terms
elektrik süpürge si	technical terms
Hilton Otel i	name plus category
Lincoln kitab ı	a book about X
Türk mutfağ ı	nationality and origin
İstanbul Boğaz ı	geographical names
Pazar gün ü	days, months, years
Bu ne kitab ı ?	asking what kind

06 CHAINS

okul müdür**ü** nün araba**sı**

araba**sı** the car ♦ müdür**ünün** araba**sı** the principal's car ♦ okul müdür**ünün** araba**sı** the school principal's car

Read a chain from the right and peel one layer at a time. After a vowel the genitive is **-nın / -nin / -nun / -nün**, and that **n** belongs to the ending itself.

07 LABEL CHAINS

NO GENITIVE ANYWHERE

Some chains are a stack of labels. Every link names a category, so nothing takes the genitive.

İstanbul Havaliman**ı** İç Hatlar Terminal**i** ♦ Türk Hava Yollar**ı** ♦ Millî Eğitim Bakanlığ**ı**

08 TWO MISTAKES TO WATCH

WRONG	RIGHT	WHAT HAPPENED
Murat'ın araba	Murat'ın arabası	Opened and never closed. The most common error of all.
babasının aşkısı	babasının aşkı	Closed twice. Remove the last ending and look underneath.

09 WHICH QUESTION YOU ACTUALLY SAY OUT LOUD

WHOSE · DEFINITE

Bu kimin çanta**sı**?
Bu, Murat'ın çanta**sı**.

Bu çanta kimin?
Bu çanta Murat'ın.

Both are correct and equally common.

WHAT KIND · INDEFINITE

Bu ne kitab**ı**?
Tarih kitab**ı**.

Bu ne çay**ı**?
Elma çay**ı**.

Ask with **ne** and the answer comes back indefinite.

Want the other two sheets?

Sheet 2 is every ending with its vowel. Sheet 3 is the word lists worth learning by heart. Both come with the course, plus 273 worked examples and 251 exercises that mark themselves.

Get the course →

turkishclicks.com/noun-chains