







The Finnish Case System

Cases are applied to nominals -- nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and numerals -- according to the nominal's function in the sentence. They are signaled by endings added to the inflectional stem of the nominal, and most correspond roughly to the prepositions found English and other Indo-European languages.

The examples given in this table are of nouns and pronouns in the singular. Cases in Finnish also apply to adjectives and numerals. According to the rule of **congruence of attributes**, pronouns or adjectives which modify nouns must agree with the noun in both case and number.

	Case	Suffix	English preposition	Principle function(s)	Answers the questions	Example	Meaning		
	Nominative	--	--	basic form as found in dictionary	<i>kuka?</i> <i>mikä?</i>	who? what?	<i>auto</i> <i>hän</i> <i>talo</i> <i>olut</i> <i>valo</i> <i>nainen</i> <i>pöytä</i> <i>isä</i> <i>yliopisto</i> <i>sinä</i> <i>kirjailija</i> <i>raha</i> <i>ystävä</i> <i>jalka</i> <i>meri</i>	car him/her house beer light woman table father university you (singular) writer money friend foot sea	
	Genitive	-n (-den, -tten)	of	possession	<i>kenen?</i> <i>minkä?</i>	whose? of what?	<i>hänen</i> <i>auto n</i>	hers, his of (the) car; (the) car's	
	Accusative	--, -n, -t	--	object ending	<i>kenet?</i> <i>minkä?</i>	whom? what?	<i>häne t</i> <i>(Minä) ostan talo n.</i>	her, him I will buy the house.	
	Partitive	-(t)a, -(t)ä	--	indefinite quantity	<i>ketä?</i> <i>mitä?</i>	who? what?	<i>olut ta</i> <i>valo a</i>	(some) beer (some) light	
Local (locative)	Inner	 <i>Inessive</i>	-ssa, -ssä	in	inside	<i>kenessä?</i> <i>missä?</i>	in whom? where?	<i>naise ssa</i> <i>talo ssa</i>	in the woman in (the) house
		 <i>Elative</i>	-sta, -stä	(out) from	out of	<i>kenestä?</i> <i>mistä?</i>	about whom? from where?	<i>naise sta</i> <i>talo sta</i>	out of (the) woman out of (the) house
		 <i>Illative</i>	-(h)Vn -seen, -siin	into	into	<i>keneen?</i> <i>mihin? minne?</i>	(in)to whom? where to?	<i>naise en</i> <i>talo on</i>	into (the) woman into (the) house
	Outer	 <i>Adessive</i>	-lla, -llä	at, on	on; instrument	<i>kenellä (on)?</i> <i>millä?</i> <i>missä?</i>	who has? on/with what? where?	<i>isä llä (on)</i> <i>pöydä llä</i> <i>yliopisto lla</i>	(the) father (has) on (the) table at (the) university
		 <i>Ablative</i>	-lta, -ltä	(off) from	off	<i>keneltä?</i> <i>miltä?</i> <i>mistä?</i>	from whom? from which? from where?	<i>isä ltä</i> <i>pöydä ltä</i> <i>yliopisto lta</i>	from (the) father off (the) table from (the) university
		 <i>Allative</i>	-lle	onto	onto	<i>kenelle?</i> <i>mille?</i> <i>mihin? minne?</i>	to whom? to what? where to?	<i>isä lle</i> <i>pöydä lle</i> <i>yliopisto lle</i>	to (the) father onto (the) table to (the) university
Rare	Role cases	<i>Essive</i>	-na, -nä	as	state	<i>kenenä?</i> <i>minä?</i>	to be whom? to be what?	<i>sinu na</i> <i>kirjailija na</i>	as you as a writer
		<i>Translative</i>	-ksi	to (role of)	change of state	<i>keneksi?</i> <i>miksi?</i>	to become whom? to become what?	<i>sinu ksi</i> <i>kirjailija ksi</i>	(become) you (become) a writer
	<i>Abessive</i>	-tta, -ttä	without	without			<i>raha tta</i>	without money	
	<i>Comitative</i>	-ine-	(together) with	accompanying			<i>ystäv ine ni</i>	with my friend(s)	
	<i>Instructive</i>	-n	with (the aid of)	(idiomatic)			<i>jala n</i>	on foot	

Theoretical cases

There are a number of additional cases proposed by various theorists. For example, one proposed case is *prolative*, with the suffix *-tse*, meaning "by means of" or "via," as in *meri|tse*, "by sea" or *tietokonei|tse*, "by means of a computer." However, as Jukka Korpela has pointed out, neither prolative nor any other of these proposed cases pass the test of congruency in case between a noun and adjectives which modify it. For more info, see [Korpela's web page on Finnish cases](http://www.henkimaa.net/finindex/suomea/index.html).

This table may be freely distributed and copied so long as it remains unmodified, with copyright notice and contact information left intact. To suggest corrections, please write mel@henkimaa.nu.

<http://www.henkimaa.nu/finindex/suomea/index.html>