

Possessive Phrase – المضاف ، المضاف إليه

A possessive phrase is formed by combining two nouns or by attaching a pronoun to a noun. The two parts of a possessive phrase must be consecutive, with no other words intervening between them. Examples:

Punishment of fire	عذاب النار		Messenger of Allah	رسولُ الله
Day of Friday	يومُ الجمعةِ		Zaid's book	كتابُ زيدٍ
Word of a messenger	قولُ رسولٍ		Our Book	كتابُنا
Weight of a particle	مِثقالُ ذرَّةٍ		Father of Qasim	أبو القاسمِ
Member of my house	أهلُ بيتي		Member of the house	أهلُ البيتِ

The possessive phrase has the following characteristics:

- The first noun is called مضاف.
- It will be Indefinite.
- It never ends with a تنوين.
- It can have any of the three cases. Few examples are:
قال رسولُ الله ، وقنا عذابُ النار ، من عذابِ النار
- The second noun is called مضاف إليه.
- It is usually definite but it can be indefinite as well.
- Its case is always مجرور.

مضاف إليه can also be a مضاف for the following word and this can be continued indefinitely.
e.g. مفتاحُ بابِ بيتِ الله => بابُ بيتِ الله => بيتُ الله

The adjective describing the مضاف or مضاف إليه will follow the possessive phrase and the case/gender agreement usually makes it clear whether it describes the مضاف or مضاف إليه.
Examples are:

The small key of the car	مفتاحُ السيَّارةِ الصَّغيرِ
The key of the small car	مفتاحُ السيَّارةِ الصَّغيرةِ
Key of a small car	مفتاحُ سيَّارةِ صَغيرةِ
Toy of the beautiful child	لعبَةُ الطِّفلِ الجميلِ
Beautiful toy of the child	لعبَةُ الطِّفلِ الجميلةِ

Toy of a beautiful child	لعبةُ طفلٍ جميلٍ
Shirt of the black boy	قميصُ الولدِ الاسودِ
Black shirt of the boy	قميصُ الولدِ الاسودُ
Shirt of a black boy	قميصُ ولدٍ أسودٍ

If the إعراب is not written or the case and gender of the مضاف and مضاف إليه is the same, ambiguity can arise. However, context should help identify whether the adjective is describing the مضاف or مضاف إليه. e.g. منْ كتاب الرجل العظيم