

43. Possessive pronouns

1 Definition

Possessive pronouns are pronouns which are used to indicate possession:

On a tous les deux une voiture de sport: **la mienne** est italienne tandis que **la sienne** est allemande

We both have sports cars: mine is Italian whilst his / hers is German

2 Use

2.1 As with possessive adjectives, possessive pronouns must agree in gender and in number with the noun to which they refer. Note that they are always used with the definite article *le, la* or *les* and that there is no hyphen.

	Singular		Plural	
	<i>masc</i>	<i>fem</i>	<i>masc</i>	<i>fem</i>
<i>mine</i>	le mien	la mienne	les miens	les miennes
<i>yours</i>	le tien	la tienne	les tiens	les tiennes
<i>his / hers</i>	le sien	la sienne	les siens	les siennes
<i>ours</i>	le nôtre	la nôtre	les nôtres	
<i>yours</i>	le vôtre	la vôtre	les vôtres	
<i>theirs</i>	le leur	la leur	les leurs	

Je peux emprunter ton sèche-cheveux? **Le mien** est cassé.

*Could I borrow your hairdrier? **Mine** is broken.*

Ta voiture est plus économique que **la sienne**

Your car is cheaper to run than his / hers

C'est son problème, non **le nôtre**

*It's his / her problem, not **ours***

Note also that *le nôtre* and *le vôtre* have a circumflex accent, unlike the possessive adjectives *notre* and *votre*. This creates a difference in pronunciation, changing the vowel sound from one similar to that in the English word *got* to that in *goat*.

2.2 The impersonal pronoun *on* and other impersonal expressions take the possessive pronoun *le sien*:

La literie n'est pas fournie, on doit / il faut apporter **la sienne**

*Bedding is not provided, you must bring **your own***

3 Other ways of expressing possession

3.1 *Être à* + someone:

C'est à qui ce manteau? - C'est à **Marie**

Whose is this coat? - It's Marie's

3.2 Demonstrative pronoun + *de* + noun:

C'est à qui ce manteau? - C'est **celui de Marie**

Whose is this coat? - It's Marie's

3.3 Appartenir à:

Ce livre **appartient** à Richard
This book belongs to Richard