

The Serbian Locative Case: Endings and Usage

The locative endings for the three possible classes of nouns are given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The locative case of Serbian nouns

	Class I (masculine: ending in a consonant in nominative) 'window'	Class I (neuter: ending in -o or -e in nominative) 'village'	Class II (feminine: ending in -a in nominative) 'woman'	Class III (feminine: ending in a consonant in nominative) 'love'
SINGULAR				
Locative	prozor- u Jovanu (to John)	sel- u	žen- i	ljubav- i
PLURAL	'windows'	'villages'	'women'	'loves'
Locative	prozor- ima	sel- ima	žen- ama	ljubav- ima

As you can see, in both singular and plural, the locative case endings are the same as the [dative case endings](#). So, by memorizing the endings for one case you'll automatically know the ending for another case. Two for the price of one!

When to use the locative case in sentences?

As the name implies, the basic meaning of the **locative case is to show the location or position** of an object represented by a noun. Unlike all other cases, the locative case can only appear after prepositions and not as the direct or indirect object of verbs.

The locative case is used as an object of the following prepositions: (For a more comprehensive list of prepositions, see the file [Serbian prepositions and their cases](#).)

- Prepositions: **u** 'in' and **na** 'on/at', **po** 'by, through, on' indicating the position or location of the object (examples 1-3).
Try not to mix the locative case with the accusative case when using prepositions **u**, **na** and **po**. Remember that the [accusative case](#) is also used with these prepositions, but only if it shows the **destination or goal of the movement or action expressed by a verb, not the actual location or position**.
- Preposition: **o** 'about, around', with verbs of 'talking' (examples 5-6), and to designate a location (7).
- Preposition: **prema** 'toward', **pri** 'at, over, by', indicating the place or location of the object or the time of the action or state. Remember that the [dative case](#) also occurs with the preposition **prema** 'toward', but indicates **direction or course of movement or action**, not the actual location. But since these two cases have the same endings, you don't need to worry about which is which.

Table 2: Some examples of locative nouns as objects of prepositions

	Serbian	English
1.	On je bio u Beogradu .	He was <u>in</u> Belgrade.
2.	Spavala je u Milanovoj sobi .	She slept <u>in</u> Milan's room.
3.	Marija je na poslu .	Maria is <u>at</u> work.
4.	Knjige su na stolu .	The books are <u>on</u> the table.
5.	Marija je pričala o knjigama .	Marija talked <u>about</u> the books.
6.	Oni su govorili o ratu .	They spoke <u>about</u> the war.
7.	Lanac joj visi o vratu .	Her chain is hanging <u>around</u> her neck.
8.	Majmuni skaču po drvetu .	Monkeys are jumping <u>on</u> the tree.
9.	Ona je okrenuta prema suncu .	She is turned <u>toward</u> the sun.
10.	On je došao u Ameriku pri kraju rata .	He arrived in America <u>by</u> the end of war.

To ask questions about the locative case, you usually use **gde** 'where', or **interrogative pronouns in dative case**: **O kome** 'about whom' **O čemu** 'about what'

Table 3: Some examples of questions that ask about the locative object

Serbian	English
Question: Gde si bila? Answer: Bila sam u Beogradu .	Where were you? I was in Belgrade
Question: O čemu pričaš? Answer: Pričam o ovoj knjizi .	What are you talking about? I'm talking about this book.
Question: O kome pričaš? Answer: Pričam o Mariji .	About whom are you talking? I'm talking about Maria.

And now some exercises! If you get stuck or are not sure you got it right, please [email](#) me for help.

Exercise 1 – Fill out the locative case forms in sentences below

Using the nouns below (given in nominative, or dictionary form), please insert the appropriate locative forms in the following sentences. For convenience, I have indicated which noun goes with which sentence.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. pod 'floor' | 4. stanica 'station' | 7. fakultet 'college' |
| 2. bioskop 'movie theater' | 5. dvorište 'courtyard' | 8. Amerika 'America' |
| 3. rame 'shoulder' (neuter) | 6. dan 'day' | 9. ptica 'bird' |

1. Knjiga je na _____	The book is on the <u>floor</u>
2. Milan je u _____	Milan is in a <u>movie theater</u>
3. On je okačio torbu o _____	He hung the chain around his <u>shoulder</u>
4. Voz je u _____	The train is in the <u>station</u>
5. Deca se igraju po _____	The children are playing at the <u>playground</u>
6. Deca su umorana pri kraju _____	The children get tired by the end of <u>day</u>
7. Jovan je proveo ceo dan na _____	Jovan spent the entire day at his <u>college</u>
9. Marija je pričala o _____	Maria talked about <u>birds</u>

Exercise 2 – Translate the following sentences

For this exercise you need to know both the [present tense](#) and [past tense](#). **The boldface nouns require the locative case.** If you don't have a bi-directional Serbian-English-Serbian dictionary, you may go to the website: <http://www.krstarica.com/dictionary/> to get the words you need for this exercise. Note that for nouns, a dictionary will only give you the nominative case forms.

1.	Today, I'm talking about Spring .
2.	Yesterday, I was talking about Texas .
3.	I was in Belgrade .
4.	My window is turned toward the East .
5.	Squirrels are jumping on the roof .
6.	She sat in my room .
7.	Predrag is at the train station .
8.	They were talking about Marija .