

Nominative or genitive?

The biggest clue should be the context!

Nominative = subject (the main word at the start of the phrase)

Genitive = attribute (always follows after another word)

Examples:

- *Venae thoracicae* = thoracic veins (nominative plural, SUBJECT)
 - *Ruptura venae thoracicae* = rupture of the thoracic vein (genitive singular, ATTRIBUTE)

- *Digiti medii* = middle fingers (nominative plural, SUBJECT)
 - *Amputatio digiti medii* = amputation of the middle finger (genitive singular, ATTRIBUTE)

- *Processus spinosus* = spinous process(es) (nominative singular/plural, SUBJECT)
 - *Fractura processus spinosi* = fracture of the spinous process (genitive singular, ATTRIBUTE)

NOTE: You cannot ever analyze the adjective on its own, because it is in the same case and number as its noun. You can always think about nouns + adjectives as being one unit. Once you identify the noun as a genitive, the adjective is genitive as well etc.

Not all nominative plurals and genitive singulars look the same. The clue might be in the endings. It is like solving a puzzle.

First you need to determine the declension of all words. Then look at all the possible interpretations of the case endings. Compare them and you should get only one possible answer.

II + III decl.	Digiti anulares.	Amputatio digiti anularis.	Digitus anularis.
possibilities	-i nom. pl. / gen. sg.	-i nom. pl. / gen. sg.	-us nom. sg.
possibilities	-es nom. pl.	-is nom. sg. / gen. sg.	-is nom. sg. / gen. sg.
final decision	NOM. PL.	GEN. SG.	NOM. SG.
translation	ring fingers	amputation of the ring finger	ring finger

Sometimes you will still get more options than one. At that point context is key. See above about subject and attribute.

IV + I decl.	Manus sinistra.	Therapia manus sinistrae.	Manus sinistrae.
possibilities	- us nom. sg. / nom. pl. / gen. sg. / acc. pl.	- us nom. sg. / nom. pl. / gen. sg. / acc. pl.	- us nom. sg. / nom. pl. / gen. sg. / acc. pl.
possibilities	-a nom. sg. / abl. sg.	-ae gen. sg. / nom. pl.	-ae gen. sg. / nom. pl.
final decision	NOM. SG.	GEN. SG. (context!)	NOM. PL. (context!)
		context: manus comes after therapia, so it must be a non-agreed attribute (non-agreed attribute = NOT nominative)	context: manus is the start of the phrase, so it must be subject (subject = nominative)
translation	Left hand.	Treatment of left hand.	Left hands. (unlikely)

V + III decl.	facies articularis	facies articulares	ad facies articulares
possibilities	-es nom. sg. / nom. pl. / acc. pl.	-es nom. sg. / nom. pl. / acc. pl.	-es nom. sg. / nom. pl. / acc. pl.
possibilities	-is nom. sg. / gen. sg.	-es nom. pl. / acc. pl.	-es nom. pl. / acc. pl.
final decision	NOM. SG.	NOM. PL. (context!)	ACCUSATIVE PL. (context!)
		context: accusative would need to come after a preposition (no preposition = NO accusative)	context: there is a preposition (preposition = accusative/ablative)
translation	Articular surface.	Articular surfaces.	Towards articular surfaces.

II + II + III decl.	Musculi intertransversarii mediales.	Ruptura musculi intertransversarii medialis.	Musculus intertransversarius medialis.
possibilities	-i gen. sg. / nom. pl.	-i gen. sg. / nom. pl.	-us nom. sg.
possibilities	-i gen. sg. / nom. pl.	-i gen. sg. / nom. pl.	-us nom. sg.
possibilities	-es nom. pl. / acc. pl.	-is nom. sg. / gen. sg.	-is nom. sg. / gen. sg.
final decision	NOM. PL.	GEN. SG.	NOM. SG.
translation	Medial	Rupture of the medial	Medial

	intertransversal muscles.		intertransversal muscle.		intertransversal muscle.
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Now try to do a couple yourself.

	Meatus acusticus.		Stenosis meatus acustici.		Meatus acustici.
possibilities					
possibilities					
final decision					
translation					

	Ductus nasolacrimales.		Ductus nasolacrimalis.		Apertura ductus nasolacrimalis.
possibilities					
possibilities					
final decision					
translation					

	Arteriae segmentales superiores.		Thrombosis arteriae segmentalis superioris.		Arteria segmentalis superior.
possibilities					
possibilities					
final decision					
translation					

	Sectio fetus mortui.		Fetus mortuus.		Fetus mortui.
possibilities					
possibilities					
final decision					
translation					

