

Apostrophes

Apostrophes can be used in two ways, to show possession or to make a contraction.

Basic Possession

1. Bob's shop
2. Rose's address
3. Cleo's dogs

Plural Words ending in "s"

For plural words ending in "s" such as officers to show possession simply add an apostrophe after the "s"

1. Rock fans' t-shirts (multiple rock fans)
2. The bakers' convention (multiple bakers)
3. The students' injuries (multiple students)

Singular words ending in "s"

If a singular word ends in "s" the rule is if the double "s" sound sounds ok, then apostrophe "s" would be appropriate. If it sounds like a snake at the end of your word, the apostrophe goes after the "s"

Say these out loud

1. The Bakers' house is on Elm Street. (the double "s" sounds snaky)
2. Ross's new car is sweet. (the double "s" sounds ok)
3. My parents' teachings got me through high school (double "s" sounds snaky)
4. Gus's room has a weird smell (double "s" sounds ok)

Contractions

A contraction is used when two words are shortened and turned into one. The apostrophe is used to indicate the splice of the two words.

1. Can't = can not
2. Could've = could have
3. It's = it is

When not to use an Apostrophe

1. Do not use an apostrophe to make a word plural. Instead add "s" or "es" ex: pencils & dishes
2. Do not add apostrophes to verbs this mistake is commonly made with "sees" or "says"
3. Do not add an apostrophe to possessive pronouns such as his, hers, yours, ours, theirs, and its because these words' function is to indicate possession.

It's and its

It's and its are commonly confused. Because the apostrophe is used to show possession it's is often thought to show possession. However, "its" is already a possessive pronoun; therefore, it does *not* need an apostrophe. "It's" is actually a contraction; therefore, it does *need* an apostrophe to show the omission of certain letters.