

Apostrophes

Possessive Nouns

The possessive case of a noun is the form of the noun that shows ownership. This form is made by adding an apostrophe and often an *s* to the noun. Be careful where you place apostrophes, or you may confuse your reader.

15n. To form the possessive case of a singular noun, add an apostrophe and an *s*.

EXAMPLES The **tiger's** teeth are very sharp. [The teeth belong to one tiger. The apostrophe comes after the singular noun *tiger* and before the *s*. The *s* in this example shows possession and does not make the noun *tiger* plural.]
The **man's** shoes were bright green. [The shoes belong to one man. The apostrophe comes between *man* and the *s* that shows possession.]

15o. To form the possessive case of a plural noun that does not end in *s*, add an apostrophe and an *s*.

EXAMPLE The **men's** shoes were wet and muddy. [The shoes belong to more than one man. The plural noun *men* does not end in *s*, so the apostrophe comes before the *s*.]

15p. To form the possessive case of a plural noun ending in *s*, add only the apostrophe.

EXAMPLE The **tigers'** teeth are very sharp. [The teeth belong to more than one tiger. The noun *tigers* is the plural form of *tiger*, so the apostrophe follows the *s*.]

EXERCISE A Write the possessive form of each of the following words on the line provided.

Example 1. mice mice's [The word *mice* is plural and does not end in *s*. The possessive form is made by adding an apostrophe and an *s*.]

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|---|-------------------|
| 1. pictures _____ [Is the word <i>pictures</i> plural? Does it end in <i>s</i> ?] | 6. girls _____ |
| 2. clown _____ [Is the word <i>clown</i> plural?] | 7. truck _____ |
| 3. store _____ | 8. umbrella _____ |
| 4. children _____ | 9. people _____ |
| 5. dogs _____ | 10. sisters _____ |

Possessive Pronouns

15q. Do not use an apostrophe with possessive personal pronouns.

EXAMPLE Is this jacket **yours** or **hers**?

for **CHAPTER 15: PUNCTUATION** pages 330–34 *continued***15r.** To form the possessive case of some indefinite pronouns, add an apostrophe and an s.**EXAMPLE** Is this movie **everyone's** favorite movie? [The possessive form of *everyone* is formed by adding an s and an apostrophe.]**EXERCISE B** Write the possessive form of each of the following words. Write your answer on the line provided.**Example 1.** her her [Her is already possessive. It is not a word that forms its possessive by adding an apostrophe and an s.]11. either _____ [Is *either* a word that forms its possessive by adding an apostrophe and an s?]

12. you _____

13. everybody _____

14. someone _____

15. him _____

Contractions**15s.** Use an apostrophe to show where letters, words, or numerals have been omitted (left out) in a contraction.

A contraction is a shorter form of a word, a number, or a group of words. The apostrophe in a contraction shows where letters or numbers have been left out.

EXAMPLES is + not = isn't	will + not = won't
of + the + clock = o'clock	they + are = they're
that + is = that's	1988 – 1900 = '88

NOTE Do not confuse contractions and possessive pronouns. Possessive personal pronouns do not have apostrophes.**EXAMPLES** It's too expensive. [*It's* is a contraction for *It is*.]**EXERCISE C** Put apostrophes where they are needed in the following sentences.**Example 1.** Don't you want to go to the movies? [*Don't* comes from *Do not*, so the apostrophe goes where the o has been left out of *not*.]16. She hasnt forgotten my birthday. [Which letter has been left out of the words *has not*?]

17. Whats the name of his brother?

18. Youre in my math class this year.

19. Do you know whos making the posters for the play?

20. The banner in the gym congratulated the graduating class of 02.