

The Apostrophe

The apostrophe has three uses: 1) to form possessives of nouns, 2) to show the omission of letter, and 3) to indicate plurals of letters, numbers, and symbols. Do not use apostrophes for possessive pronouns or for noun plurals.

1. To show possession:

To see if you have a possessive, turn the phrase around and make it an “of the...” phrase:
the boy’s hat = the hat of the boy

To place the apostrophe correctly to show possession:

Add ‘s to the singular form of the word (even if it ends in –s):

The owner’s car

Add ‘s to the plural forms that do not end in –s:

The children’s game

Add ‘ to the end of plural nouns that end in –s:

Three friends’ letters

Add ‘s to the end of compound words:

My brother-in-law’s money

2. To show omission of letters

Who’s = who is

He’ll = he will

3. To form plurals of letter, numbers, and symbols:

There are three 5’s on my license plate.

I got two A’s on my report card.

NOTE: Don’t use apostrophes for possessive pronouns or for noun plurals.

Wrong: his’ book

Correct: his book

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