

Beginner Apostrophe



The **apostrophe** has only a handful of uses, but these uses are very important. A misplaced apostrophe can be annoying — not to mention lonely.

The apostrophe is used:

1. to create possessives
2. to show contractions
3. to create some plural forms

The apostrophe is used to create possessive forms for singular and plural nouns, especially nouns referring to people.

Example: *the mayor's car* *my father's garden*
 Esaki's sister *Tago Kikunae's habits*

When a noun already ends in “s,” you can decide whether or not to use another “s” after the apostrophe.

Example: *Yokito's car* *Mikimoto's office*

With multisyllabic words, don't add another “s” after the apostrophe.

Example: *Dumas' second novel* *Jesus' birth,*
 Socrates' ideas *Illinois' legislature*

To form the possessive of an inanimate object, we're usually better off using an “of phrase,” but the apostrophe possessive is not impossible, especially with expressions of time and in personifications.

Example: *a year's salary* *my heart's desire*
 your dollar's worth *the paper's conclusion*

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To form the possessive of a plural noun, we pluralize first and then add the apostrophe. Notice that with an irregular plural, the apostrophe will come before the “s.”

Example: *The Mikio' s house*
The children's playhouse
The travelers' expectations

A contraction allows us to blend sounds by omitting letters from a verb construction. The apostrophe shows where something is left out.

Example: *I am a student here = I'm a student here*
I have been working on the railroad. = I've been working on the railroad.
They could have been great. = They could've been great.
Let us go. = Let's go.
Who is there? = Who's there?
It is Sato. = It's Sato

REMINDER:

It's is a contraction for “it is”; the possessive of it = its (no apostrophe).

The apostrophe is also used to form the plural of digits and letters and to indicate omission of a number in a date

Example: *The word Mississippi has four s's.*
She got three A's and two B's last semester.
She dotted all her i's very carefully.
summer of '99; class of '38

The apostrophe doesn't mind being used, but it wants to be used wisely. Use it well and it will be there whenever you need it!