

# Apostrophes

By: Paul Koziol

And Bobby Reamer

# Definition

The apostrophe has three uses:

1. to form possessives of nouns
2. to show the omission of letters (i.e.,  
contractions)
3. to indicate certain plurals

# Examples

add “s” to the plural forms that do not end in -s:

- the children's game
- the geese's honking

# Rules for ownership

Depends on:

How many – The dogs collar was broken (1 dog)

The dogs's collars were broken (+2 dogs)

Chris's dog      Agnes's house (“s” ending)

The Klos's cars were dirty (“s” ending plural)

Exceptions: Biblical names – Jesus'

Greek myths – Hercules', Zeus'

# Contractions

- Apostrophes can be used to show omission of words.
  - Examples:
    - it's = it is
  - they're = they are
    - who's = who is

# Incorrect vs correct

Incorrect: The lawyer's could generally be found after hours at the Hanover Street Bar and Grill.

Incorrect: The lawyers' could generally be found after hours at the Hanover Street Bar and Grill.

Correct: The lawyers could generally be found after hours at the Hanover Street Bar and Grill.

**\*\*There is no possession so no need for an apostrophe.\*\***

# Don't use apostrophes for possessive pronouns or for noun plurals

Apostrophes should not be used with possessive pronouns because possessive pronouns already show possession — they don't need an apostrophe. His, her, its, my, yours, ours are all possessive pronouns. Here are some examples:

- wrong: his' book
- correct: his book
- wrong: The group made it's decision.
- correct: The group made its decision.

# quiz

1. what does an apostrophe looks like?
2. That \_\_\_\_\_ leaves are starting to fall.  
A: tree's      B: trees'
3. The lead \_\_\_\_\_ voice is beautiful.  
A: singer's      B: singers'
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ desks were really messy.  
A: student's      B: students'
5. That \_\_\_\_\_ bark is worse than his bite  
A: dog's      B: dogs'

# answers

1. '
2. A
3. A
4. B
5. A