

### Possessive Apostrophes

A possessive apostrophe shows that a noun has ownership (or possession) of a person, object, idea, or quality.

If the word is a(n):	Add:	Example:
Singular noun	's	California's, John's, baby's
Singular noun ending in -s	's or '	Zeus's, Gus's, boss's or Carlos', Arkansas'
Plural noun ending in -s	'	mothers', babies', bosses'
Plural noun not ending in -s	's	children's, mice's, geese's
Indefinite pronoun	's	somebody's, nobody's, everyone's

#### Rules to Remember:

- *It's* is a contraction meaning "it is". **It's** too bad that she got sick during her vacation. *Its* is possessive. *The cat played with its* toy.
- Inanimate objects cannot be possessive.  
*The computer's* screen becomes *The computer* screen  
*The house's* color becomes *The house* color or *The color of the house*
- Add -'s to the last name in the case of joint possession.  
*Peter and Jamie's* dog got out of the yard.
- Add -'s to each name if there is no joint possession.  
*Eric's and Kevin's* grades are high this semester.
- Add -'s to the end of a compound word.  
*My sister-in-law's* car broke down.

#### Exercise: Correct the statements below by adding apostrophes.

1. **Sarahs** new car is a hybrid.
2. Pete has two dogs. The **dogs** toys are in the backyard.
3. The **ducks** flying pattern was beautiful.
4. **Nate and Jackies** wedding is on Saturday.
5. The **childrens** books are in the classroom.
6. That **babies** name is Claire.
7. My **sisters-in-law** house is right on the beach.
8. The wolf snarled and showed **its** teeth.
9. **Janes and Peters** lunches were delicious.

Key: 1) **Sarah's** 2) **dogs'** 3) **duck's** 4) **Nate and Jackie's** 5) **children's** 6) **baby's** 7) **sister-in-law's** 8) **its**  
 9) **Jane's and Peter's**

Works Consulted:

Brizee, Allen. "The Apostrophe." *The OWL at Purdue*. 20 May 2009.  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/621/01/>.