

APOSTROPHES AND POSSESSIVE FORMS

APOSTROPHES - SINGULAR POSSESSION

Apostrophes (') are punctuation marks which are used to make nouns show possession (that idea that you own something, have something, or that something belongs to you). In most cases, you simply add an apostrophe and the letter S to a word to make it possessive.

EX:

Harold's gift

Stacy's mom

Everybody's plan

The Johnson's house

Sister-in-law's car

Dwight's girlfriend's cat

Harold's cat's toy

However, in the case of words already ending in S, you can either simply put an apostrophe or you can add an apostrophe and the letter S to a word to make it possessive.

EX:

James' toe [OR James's toe]

Even with collective nouns, you simply add an apostrophe and the letter S to show possession.

The family's house....

APOSTROPHES - PLURAL POSSESSION

When you have a plural word, the rules for the singular possession generally apply.

EX:

The attorneys' meeting...
(Means multiple attorneys having a meeting)

The families' rental
(Means the rental belonging to multiple families)

APOSTROPHES - MULTIPLES (INDIVIDUAL AND JOINT)

There are some instances where you have to show joint ownership. In this case, you would simply put the apostrophe and the letter S on the last name of the series

EX:

John and Tina's Boat (Joint Possession)

Kenneth, Brad, and Jerry's toys (Joint Possession).

Roger and Mary's dogs (Joint Possession).

When showing individual possession for multiple people, add the apostrophe and the letter S to each individual.

EX:

Jennifer's and Rosie's dresses were beautiful (Individual Possession).

Kevin's and Brad's guitars were louder than Ben's guitar (Individual Possession).

POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

Some pronouns may help to show possession.

EX:

His

Her

Theirs

Yours

Ours

Its

Mine

Typically, pronouns which show possession act alone. They do not accompany a noun.

EX:

The house belonged to him.

The car belonged to her.

This computer is mine.

Notice how IT'S refers to IT IS. The word ITS shows possessive.

POSSESSIVE DETERMINERS

Determiners may show possession. Possessive determiners include: His, her, their, etc. Typically, determiners showing possession accompany a noun. In fact, determiners often appear before the noun.

EX:

His dog is sick.

Her cat is sick too.

Their pets may be rabid.

Our pets are not rabid.

Its food is not the cause of the disease.

