

APOSTROPHES

1. To form a simple plural, add s with no apostrophe.

boy - boys baby - babies

There are some irregular plurals: child/children, man/men.

2. Always use an apostrophe to show possession (except for some pronouns, in 3 below):

boys (singular) boy's

boys (plural) boys'

man (singular) man's

men (plural) men's

ox (singular) ox's

oxen (plural) oxen's

baby (singular) baby's

babies (plural) babies'

James (singular) James'

Notice : if a noun does not end in "-s," add an apostrophe and an "s."

If a noun ends in "-s," just add an apostrophe.

3. Possessive pronouns like ours, yours, his, her, its, and theirs do not have an apostrophe.

4. But some pronouns--impersonal ones--take an apostrophe, such as other's, another's, somebody's, and everybody's.

5. Use an apostrophe to show letters left out when you shorten or contract a word:

I have = I've

I will = I'll

cannot = can't

I will not = won't

It is = It's

6. Add an apostrophe for plurals of letters, numbers, and symbols:

A's, B's, C's 8's, 1900's #'s, ¶'s

7. Do not use an apostrophe for "of" possession:

The father of the bride = the Bride's father

APOSTROPHES EXERCISE #1

(Practice in recognizing where possessive apostrophes must be written)

If you spoke these sentences, they would sound correct and clear. As they are written here, however, they are incorrect because no possessive apostrophes have been provided. Can you recognize where the possessive apostrophes need to be added?

1. When a mother and father respect each others opinions, children learn to live together harmoniously.
2. Since the chairmans resignation, the members have been speculating about the committees leadership responsibilities.
3. Mrs. Beattys husband still sends her flowers on Valentines Day.
4. We were all overjoyed when my sisters baby took her first faltering steps.
5. It is the parents responsibility to provide for the children religious training.
6. We will borrow somones car and go for an hours drive.
7. Charles father mumbled audibly that the guests had consumed at least ten dollars worth of potato chips.
8. Bill and Janes children never did get along together.
9. Bills and Janes children never did get along together.
10. Mother and Dads house is small but perfect for their needs.
11. Phyllis and Gertrudes partnership has thrived.
12. The bosses secretary husbands are invited to the office party.
13. Charles Dickens novels are regaining popularity.

Find the apostrophe error in each of the following sentences and write the correct form of the word in the space at the right.

1. The teacher told us that we shouldn't use too many and's and but's in today's essay.

2. One of the President's advisers was Father's college roommate, a member of the class of '36.

3. Since his parents divorce, Arthur's work hasn't been adequate.

4. By the dawn's early light, we saw three soldiers and their rifles lying in No Man's Land.

5. Whose 66 Ford is parked outside Grady's Cafe?

6. How many B's are there in the professor's wife's first name?

7. Donna's mother wont be able to attend her daughter's birthday party.

8. Does'nt Ed's father claim that women's liberation is threatening American families?

9. I missed today's assignment in Miss Riley's physics class and can't do my assignment.

10. It's true that Keat's poetry isnt as romantic as Shelley's.

11. Harry is someone's friend, but I'm sure he's not Claudias.

12. Yesterdays paper announced the prices of Ben's used cars and the prices of the new models now available.

13. Four imported bicycles were stolen; thats the reason for Chief Davis' anger.

14. Its commendable that Tom's brother won't turn states's evidence.

15. Bobs problem is that he speaks with too many er's and ah's.

16. Aren't the childrens' toys and games blocking Ben's drive way?

17. My music professor cant stand the songs and dances of the '30's.

18. Lets watch the men's and women's tennis matches.

19. Marys nobody's baby but Bill's and mine.

20. We're going to the boat races at Hood's Pond.

Apostrophe Exercises

1. The students grades in their classes were As Bs and Cs.
2. Somebodys books cant be found in the library.
3. Wheres the cover for its box?
4. That is anothers problem, not yours.
5. Dont ask me where Charles cars are parked.
6. Tom Jones familys strong feelings about the issues were made clear to the mambers of the committee.
7. The teachers use 8s and 9s to score childrens quizzes, rather than As and Bs.
8. He tore the letters envelope as he put it in the mailboxs slot.
9. The sirens sounds were daming to the listeners ears in the audience.
10. The banks profits are less than profits last year.

APOSTROPHE EXAM

Add an apostrophe whenever necessary.

1. The Waitresses Guild decided to hold its convention in Chicagos new center: unfortunately, the centers president doesnt like women.
2. Historys lessons are always useful although theyre frequently alarming and most nations politicians repeatedly ignore them.
3. The calculator sputtered and wrongly registered eight 7s across the screen; these were immediatly followed by a series of Es.
4. The outcome of the Operas regional auditions is anybody's guess, but Ill bet John wont win.
5. Someones tax loophole may be someones elses legitimate deduction; hence, the committees report wont be simple once again.
6. The groom followed his father-in-laws advice and hid the car before the wedding days festivities; however, the cars color was simply too striking.
7. Most of the attorneys day - from eight oclock - is spent in the judges chambers.
8. "Youd better hide it," she said , "because if youre around, theyll search you and throw the book at you.
9. Although he isnt here now, hes usually hanging out at Joes garage where he listens to his friends stories.
10. Its time to give the cat its milk; if it doesnt want it , however, Ill give it to Charles dog if youll let me.
11. All of the senates meetings will be held at Jake and Charlottes house.
12. Well leave for New York before Charles wife arrives.

