

Apostrophe Usage

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***Apostrophe Myths***

1. When referring to a decade, there must be an apostrophe before the *s*.
   * **False!** The only time that an apostrophe is used when referring to a time period is when there is an omission of numbers.
     1. Pink Floyd was a very popular band in the **‘70s**.

○ Christopher Columbus sailed to North America in the **1400s**.

1. When using the word *its* there must be an apostrophe in between the *t* and *s*.
   * **Not always true!** The only time that an apostrophe is used in *its* is when you are using the contraction form of “it is.”

○ **It’s** really cold outside this winter.

* + 1. The dog chased **its** tail over and over again.

***Apostrophe Rules:***

1. Use an apostrophe to mark the possessive forms of nouns and some pronouns.
   * Singular nouns use an *‘s* at the end of the word to show possession.

○ Last night I saw **Marvel’s** production, *Ragnarok*, at the theaters.

* + Plural nouns use an *s’* at the end of the word to show possession.

○ The **dogs’** water bowls were empty by the time I got back from work.

* + Some nouns that change form when plural (women, mice, geese, etc.) use an *‘s* at the end of the word to show possession.

○ The **women’s** department at the store was completely wrecked after Black Friday.

2. If a word has more than one sibilant, the *s* or *z* sound, in the last syllable, you must use an *‘* after the *s*.

* + **Jesus’** baseball bat was lost in the storm.

1. Add an *‘s* to form the plural of a number, letter, or an abbreviation
   * Sally got **A’s and B’s** on her report card.

1. Add an *‘s* to form the possessive of an indefinite pronoun.
   * **Everyone’s** grades will be posted this afternoon.

1. Use an apostrophe on the last noun to show joint possession.
   * **Sheila and Mark’s** class got canceled for two days.

1. Use an apostrophe to show individual possession as well, but this time after both nouns.
   * **Becky’s and Jennifer’s** cars were stuck in traffic for two hours.

1. Make the last noun possessive with an apostrophe if it is a compound noun.
   * The **dental assistant’s** main job was to prepare the hygienist for his work.

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