

# ~~APOSTROPHE'S~~ APOSTROPHES

## 1. *Use an apostrophe to make contractions; the apostrophe takes the place of missing letters:*

You can't go in while the interview is taking place.  
He'll be right back.  
I would've submitted an entry if I'd had time.

**Keeping in mind that the apostrophe means missing letters, you can remember that "it's" means "it is," but "its" is the possessive (belonging to "it").**

## 2. *Use an apostrophe to show possession, that one person or thing owns something or has a particular quality:*

Denise's senior thesis topic is one that no one else is writing about.  
Michael's curiosity gets him into trouble sometimes.

**If a person's name ends in "s," pronunciation can guide you somewhat:**

Chris's dog chewed up Lois's socks but left alone her copy of Sophocles' plays.

**To make a plural word that ends in "s" possessive, simply add an apostrophe:**

The students' projects were nowhere near being done.  
The Simpsons' next-door neighbor is Ned Flanders.

**Remember that some plural words don't end in "s"; in those cases, add an apostrophe and "s" to make a possessive:**

The children's coats were on the floor.

**When a word that already ends in "s" is both plural and possessive, add an "es" to make the word plural and an apostrophe to make the word possessive:**

The school buses' schedules were on a delay because of the snow.  
The Flanderses' next-door neighbor is Homer Simpson.

**\*\* Note:** Though "Flanderses" is technically correct for the plural of "Flanders," it may be less awkward to say "The Flanders family"

## 3. *Rarely use an apostrophe to make plurals, except in cases such as letters or numbers:*

I got straight 4.0's last semester.  
How many Q's are there in a Scrabble game?

**However, this rule is flexible:** How many Qs are there in a Scrabble game?

**Most conventions omit the apostrophe when speaking of plural years, such as a decade:**

The 1980s were a terrible decade for fashion but the '90s were better.

