

Name: _____ Date: _____

Do You Need That Apostrophe?

You have a word that ends with *s*. Should there be an apostrophe before that *s*? Here's what you need to know:

A **DO NOT use apostrophes to form plurals.**

1. The plural form of a noun indicates more than one person, place, or thing. Plural nouns usually end in *s*. For example: *shoes, apples, faces*. So . . .

NO: Place your ~~shoe's~~ in the closet.
YES: Place your shoes in the closet.

2. There are also some irregular plural nouns, like *men, women, feet, and mice*. They have no *s*, they need no *s*! So . . .

NO: The ~~women's~~ are upstairs.
YES: The women are upstairs.

3. To form the plural of a singular noun that ends in a consonant followed by *y*, remove the final *y* and replace it with *ies*. For example: *party* becomes *parties*, *body* becomes *bodies*, and *baby* becomes *babies*. So . . .

NO: There are two ~~baby's~~ in the stroller.
YES: There are two babies in the stroller.

B **DO NOT use apostrophes to form possessive pronouns.**

A possessive pronoun is a word that shows ownership, like *hers, ours, whose, and its*. So . . .

NO: The bike is ~~her's~~.
YES: The bike is hers.

NO: ~~It's~~ tires were flat.
YES: Its tires were flat.

C **DO use apostrophes to form possessives.**

Possessives show ownership.

1. To make a singular noun (like *artist*) possessive, add 's to the end. So . . .

YES: That is the artist's first painting.
Add 's even if the noun ends with *s*. So . . .

YES: Where is Chris's trophy?

2. To make a compound noun (a noun formed by two or more words) possessive, add 's to the end of the last word. So . . .

YES: I like my sister-in-law's new car.
YES: The washing machine's door is open.

3. If two or more people or things possess or share the same item, add 's to the last person or thing only. So . . .

YES: Jason and Emily's vacation sounded nice.

4. To make a plural noun (like *dogs*) possessive, add an apostrophe after the *s* that is already at the end of the word. If the plural noun is irregular and doesn't end in *s*, add an apostrophe and an *s*. So . . .

YES: The dogs' toy needs to be washed.
This refers to one toy shared by two or more dogs.

YES: The women's jackets are on the coat rack.

An activity on apostrophes begins on the next page.

Directions: Fill in the circle next to the correct answer to each question.

1. Choose the sentence that is punctuated correctly.

- Ⓐ Claire's toe's are cold.
- Ⓑ Claires' toes are cold.
- Ⓒ Claires toes are cold.
- Ⓓ Claire's toes are cold.

2. Which of the following correctly indicates that the tent belongs to more than one boy?

- Ⓐ Where is the boys' tent?
- Ⓑ Where is the boy's tent?
- Ⓒ Where is the boys tent?
- Ⓓ Where is the boys's tent?

3. Which of the following correctly indicates that Kim and Jessica live in the same house?

- Ⓐ Kim's and Jessica's house is cold.
- Ⓑ Kim's and Jessica house is cold.
- Ⓒ Kim and Jessica's house is cold.
- Ⓓ Kim's and Jessica's houses are cold.

4. Who or what owns the fur in the following sentence? *Owen's hamsters' fur is soft.*

- Ⓐ one hamster
- Ⓑ more than one hamster
- Ⓒ Owen
- Ⓓ It is impossible to tell.

5. One movie star has three dogs. All of them barked. Which sentence indicates this?

- Ⓐ The movie's star's dogs barked.
- Ⓑ The movie star's dogs barked.
- Ⓒ The movie star's dog's barked.
- Ⓓ The movie stars' dogs barked.

6. Which of the following correctly indicates that the friends of one girl are laughing?

- Ⓐ The girls' friends are laughing.
- Ⓑ The girl's friend's are laughing.
- Ⓒ The girl's friends are laughing.
- Ⓓ The girls' friends' are laughing.

Directions: The following letter contains 12 apostrophe errors. Find them, then fix them!



Dear Pete and Pat,

I hope you are having fun at your grandma's and grandpa's house. Marcus, Martin, May, and I are spending the holiday's at home, finishing Moms huge list of chore's. She told us to clean our rooms, so May tidied my side of our room and I cleaned her's. I must say, it is nice to have everything so neat and organized. Even the cat's seem to enjoy it. They have been hanging out in our room ever since we cleaned it.

Marcus' and Martin's room is still a complete mess—though they have found some interesting stuff in there. Martin found Marcuses project from last years Invention Convention. Marcus discovered Martins' leftover's from the pizza party we had three months ago. The boys' also finally found those DVDs you lent them. I am sad to say that most of them are scratched or broken.

That is all my news for now. Call us when you get home!

Love, Mercy