

The Apostrophe

Use an apostrophe and *-s* for the possessive of a singular indefinite pronoun.

one's coat *but* his sleeping bag

Use an apostrophe and *-s* to form the possessive of a singular noun, even one that ends in *-s*.

The dress's fabric Charles Addams's cartoons the dog's collar

Use an apostrophe alone to form the possessive of a plural noun that ends in *-s*.

the girls' meeting the hats' sizes the bats' habits

Use an apostrophe and *-s* to form the possessive of a plural noun that does not end in *-s*.

the women's department the sheep's pasture the children's hour

Put only the last word of a compound noun in the possessive form.

her father-in-law's car the attorney general's office

If two or more persons possess something jointly, use the possessive form for the last person named. If two or more persons (or companies) possess an item individually, put each one's name in the possessive form.

Uncle Dan and Aunt Susan's house Procter and Gamble's soaps
Bach's and Handel's music Tom Cruise's and Julia Roberts's films

Use an apostrophe in place of letters omitted in contractions (words formed from two words that have been combined by omitting one or more letters).

I + am = I'm could + not = couldn't Linda + is = Linda's

Use an apostrophe in place of the omitted numerals of a particular year.

the Super Bowl of '94 the rebellion of '98 the winter of '77

Use an apostrophe and *-s* to form the plural of letters, numerals, symbols, and words used to represent themselves.

9's 7's @'s &'s
