

1 Here's the Idea

► **Personal pronouns that show ownership or relationships are in the possessive case.**

Possessive pronouns can be used in two ways:

1. The possessive pronouns *mine*, *ours*, *yours*, *his*, *hers*, *its*, and *theirs* can be used in place of a noun. The pronoun can function as a subject or an object.

I need to see a map of the whole region.

Can I see yours? Mine is missing.

DIRECT OBJECT

SUBJECT

2. The possessive pronouns *my*, *our*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, and *their* can be used to modify a noun or a gerund. The pronoun precedes the noun or gerund it modifies.

Our searching the area led to their recovery.

GERUND

NOUN

Remember that a gerund acts as a noun. That's why the possessive pronoun can modify it.

Do use a possessive pronoun with a gerund.

No one objected to his climbing the mountain alone.

POSSESSIVE

GERUND

Do not use a possessive pronoun with a participle.

We saw him climbing the mountain alone.

OBJECTIVE

PARTICIPLE

Don't confuse the possessive pronouns *their*, *its*, and *your* with the contractions *they're* ("they are"), *it's* ("it is"), and *you're* ("you are"). Use context to figure out the correct word.