

Using the Apostrophe: Writing Possessive Nouns

Use an apostrophe (') when writing possessive nouns. A **possessive noun** shows ownership or possession of the noun that follows it. Usually, only people or animals can possess.

Rita's house

Bill's laugh

To make the possessive form of a noun, follow these rules.

- If the noun is singular, add an apostrophe and the letter *s*. Follow this rule even when the singular noun ends in *s*.

Jackie's Deli

Charles's car

- If the noun is plural and ends in *s*, just add an apostrophe to the end of the word.

the witches' brooms

the workers' cubicles

- If the noun is plural but does not end in *s*, add an apostrophe and an *s*.

men's shoes

children's books



Circle the possessive noun in each sentence. On the line, write *S* for singular or *P* for plural.

- _____ Melinda's fish tank needs cleaning.
- _____ Often, ballet dancers' feet become bruised and painful.
- _____ I could barely hear that actor's lines.
- _____ For my parents' anniversary party, we have rented a tent.
- _____ Roy Jones's dog won first prize at the dog show.
- _____ The announcer called out one doctor's name after the other.
- _____ The pianists' fingers flew through the duet.
- _____ Please show me your line of women's bikes.
- _____ The secretary brought the letter to Ms. Lopez's attention.
- _____ The reports must be on the boss's desk tomorrow morning.

B**Practice**

For each item, write a phrase that has the same meaning as the given phrase but uses a possessive noun.

Example: the blankets that belong to the babies
 the babies' blankets

1. the helmets that belong to the divers _____
2. the cup that belongs to Tony _____
3. the home that belongs to the Sadlers _____
4. the handshake that Gloria has _____
5. the ears of the elephant _____
6. the laughter of the children _____
7. the backpacks that belong to the hikers _____
8. the tips that belong to the waitress _____

Circle the possessive noun in each sentence. If it is not written properly, rewrite it correctly on the line. If it is written properly, write *Correct*.

9. Put the guests coats where they can find them easily.

10. I knocked on the directors' door, and he invited me into his office.

11. No two writers' penmanship is exactly the same.

12. It has always been Bess' dream to own her own home.

13. Two contestants in the mens' pole vault event were tied.

14. The dentist's office was open, but he was out to lunch.

C Apply

In each sentence, find a phrase that can be changed to include a possessive noun. Then rewrite the sentence using that possessive noun.

1. The tools that belong to the gardener are stored in the shed.

2. The giggle of my daughter always makes me laugh.

3. Dave wrote the name of his brother on the emergency form.

4. The announcement could hardly be heard over the noise of the fans.

5. Sarah adjusted the brakes on the bike that belongs to her sister.

6. An aide picked up the suitcase that belongs to the governor.

7. This exam will test the basic skills of the students.

8. The speeches of the two candidates were similar.

9. The score that belongs to Marcus was the highest in the class.

10. Work was done on the locker room that belongs to the women.

D Check Up

Read each group of sentences. Choose the sentence in which the possessive noun is written correctly.

- A The farmers's hopes faded as the drought continued.

B Her children were testing the young mother's patience.

C We found an excellent picture book in the childrens' section.

D The car was packed with the twin's' belongings.
- F The bellboy took the travelers' suitcases up to their rooms.

G Robertos' brother got a job in the factory.

H The prisoner's families came to see them during visiting hours.

J Cats curiosity sometimes gets them into trouble.
- A Artis' workshop is filled with expensive tools.

B The celebrity refused to answer the journalists questions.

C The singer's throat was sore, so he went to the doctor.

D The peoples' cheers made the hero feel welcome.
- F Malik's' shopping cart had one wheel that wouldn't turn.

G It's my hope to make my childrens dreams come true.

H Tina couldn't take her eyes off the actress' sequined dress.

J The chef's special included tacos and burritos.

Read each sentence and look at its underlined word. Choose the answer that is written correctly for each underlined word.

- The winning jockeys outfit was splashed with mud.

A jockey's

B jockeys'

C jockey's'

D Correct as it is
- It is the voter's right to expect honesty from their elected officials.

A voter's'

B voters'

C voters

D Correct as it is
- Those artists' use of color is what sets them apart.

F artists

G artist's

H artistss'

J Correct as it is
- Megs' hobbies include tennis and needlepoint.

F Meg's'

G Meg's

H Megs

J Correct as it is