

Apostrophes 2

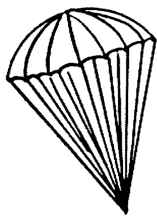
Apostrophes of possession

The possessive apostrophe shows who or what has or does something, or how long something takes.

- You use 's after a singular noun, as in *the dog's tail*, *Friday's newspaper*, *a full day's work*, and *the bus's wheels*.
- You also use 's after a plural noun that does not end in s, as in *children's books*, *people's favourites* and *women's rights*.
- If something belongs to someone, the apostrophe comes after the owner's name, as in *Jack's bike*, *Lisa's book*, and *Rover's lead*.
- You use an apostrophe alone after plural nouns ending in s, as in *the dogs' leads*, *my parents' fault*, *a boys' school*, and *in two hours' time*.
- You also sometimes use an apostrophe alone after names or other words ending in s, as in *Archimedes' principle*, *for goodness' sake*, and *Mrs Jones' cakes*. Using the apostrophe alone in this way is becoming more common as it is easier to say, although in the past you would always have added 's (*Charles Dickens's novels*).

PARACHUTES

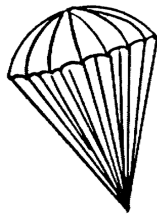
These words each need a possessive apostrophe. Mark the place in each where the apostrophe should 'land' to make them correct. The first one has been done for you.



a cat's tail



Claire's hat



many girls' toys



a princess's tiara



children's books

APOSTROPHE MACHINE

Each phrase is going through the apostrophe machine to shorten part of it using a possessive apostrophe. Fill in the blanks to show what will emerge on the other side. The first one has been done for you.

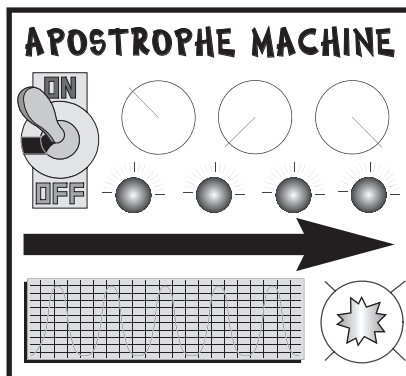
The book of the author was very popular.

The lock of the box was rusty.

The spy of King James was secretive.

The debates of the politicians were long.

The Emperor was the choice of the people.



author's book

Remember that words like *hers*, *ours*, *yours* and *theirs* do not have apostrophes, even though they show possession.

It's and its

Many people have trouble deciding when to use **it's** and when to use **its**. Remember:

It's: it is or it has **Its:** belonging to it

Remember that it is only if you could substitute **it is** or **it has** in the sentence that you should use an apostrophe. Fill in the gaps in the following passage with the correct form, **its** or **it's**:

I have a sick parrot. _____ been off _____ food for days, and now _____ started pulling out _____ feathers with _____ beak. I bought some new toys for _____ cage, but _____ no better. I guess _____ time to call the vet!

Can you make up any sentences which use both **it's** and **its**?

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

In the following passage there are some apostrophes which show omission and some that show possession. Read the passage and circle the words that have apostrophes. Then split them into two lists depending whether they are apostrophes which show omission or possession.

Our house is full of pets. We've got so many animals. The rabbits' hutches are in the garden, but the gerbil's cage is in the kitchen, and James's guinea pig lives in his room. Actually he's got three guinea pigs, but Mum doesn't know that! Our cat's favourite place is my room, where the parrot's cage is too. I'm trying to teach the parrot to speak, but it's very stubborn. And my Dad's got a tank of tropical fish. All in all, it's a real zoo!

