

Possessives

Possession is most often shown by adding "-s" to the relevant noun. However, possessive pronouns (like *his*, *hers*, *its*, *ours*, *yours*, and *theirs*) do not require an additional apostrophe-"s".

Singular nouns

To indicate possession for singular nouns, add "-s".

The **child's** toys were scattered across the floor after his play date.

As I looked through the glass, I noticed that the **walrus's** eyes were fixed on me.

Plural nouns

To indicate possession for plural nouns that do not end with an "s", add "-s".

The **men's** clothes are reasonably priced at this store.

I must confess that I do not always understand **people's** choices.

To indicate possession for plural nouns that end with an "s", add an apostrophe only.

These young **girls'** outfits were almost identical.

My **students'** feedback really helped me improve my lectures.

Compound nouns

To indicate joint possession, add "-s" to the last noun of the list.

Are we going to **Jim and Pam's** cottage this summer? (They both own the cottage.)

Be careful: the **table and chair's** legs are fragile. (They are both fragile.)

To indicate individual possession, add "-s" to each noun of the list.

Brian's and **Wanda's** tools are broken. (They each have their own tools.)

The **dog's** and **cat's** toys were hidden underneath my pillow. (They each have their own toys.)

To know more, see *Checkmate*, *The Little, Brown Handbook*, the *Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers*, or similar writing guides.