

# Apostrophes

When and when not to use them.

Apostrophes can be used to show  
missing letters.

I can not come to the party.

I can't come to the party.

*Can not* becomes ***can't***.

The apostrophe shows that there are letters  
missing.

# More examples of apostrophes for contraction.

Jack would not play with his baby brother.

Jack *wouldn't* play with his baby brother.

Emma did not want to eat the unhealthy chocolate cake.

Emma *didn't* want to eat the unhealthy chocolate cake.

# What do these words become when you shorten them?

have not

haven't

they will

they'll

shall not

shan't

I have

I've

you are

you're



# Make sure the apostrophe is in the correct place.

Check these for accuracy;

did'nt

didn't

we'll

we'll (correct)

should'nt

shouldn't

# Its and it's

So many people get this wrong!!!

The apostrophe is only used to show 'it is'.

*It's* sunny today.

*It's* very kind of you to give me your last sweet.

“*It's* full of wonderful things,” exclaimed Howard Carter after discovering Tutankhamun's tomb.

# Apostrophes for possession.

Apostrophes are also used to show possession.

***Mrs Clarke's computer*** – the computer belongs to Mrs Clarke and there is only one Mrs Clarke, so the apostrophe goes before the 's'

# More possessive apostrophes;

Oliver's book bag – the book bag belongs to Oliver.

Bob's football boots – the boots belong to Bob.

Julie's toy dalek – the dalek belongs to Julie.



When things belong to more than  
one person;

When more than one person is involved, the  
apostrophe comes after the 's'.

The boys' cloakroom – more than one boy.

The players' changing room – more than one player.

The teachers' staffroom – more than one teacher.

# Where should the apostrophe go?

Janes shoes

Jane's shoes

Nicks new car

Nick's new car

The cats whiskers (one cat)

The cat's whiskers

The horses stables (6  
horses)

The horses' stables

The raiders boat (lots of  
raiders)

The raiders' boat

# Some common errors involving apostrophes;

I see these sort of errors all the time. Can you spot them?

Fish and chip's

Fish and chips

The car's were on the road.

The cars were on the road.

Half price clothe's

Half price clothes

I saw a dog with it's bone.

I saw a dog with its bone.

Lucys book's were on the table.

Lucy's books were on the table.