

One of the **top ten** errors you must not make

Apostrophe S

Get it right!



To start with...

Look at the word you think might need an apostrophe+s and follow the three rules...

FIRST RULE

DOES THE WORD OWN ANYTHING?

- The S and apostrophe are to do with one thing owning another
- Words do NOT need an apostrophe if they do not own anything.
- Simple **plurals** do not need apostrophes.



She went out with her friends

The friends do not own anything in the sentence

So NO APOSTROPHE

More examples

I do not like Mondays

Carrots are my favourite vegetable

Those five dogs are driving me mad

The toilets were overflowing so the students had to use buckets

Your toothbrushes should be renewed regularly

I do not understand when apostrophes should be used

**DO NOT USE AN
APOSTROPHE S ON A
WORD WHICH DOES NOT
OWN ANYTHING**

This is very, very important and the
most common mistake



SECOND RULE

IF IT'S YES TO OWNERSHIP AND THE
WORD DOES NOT ALREADY END IN S

's

**Use to show ownership when
the word does not end in S**



I like the girl's shoes

The girl owns the shoes

There is one girl – does not end in s

Examples

- I do not like Monday's lessons.
- That dog's barking was driving me nuts.
- The school's toilets were overflowing.
- Mr Taylor's lesson on apostrophes was very exciting.
- Autumn had arrived and the oak tree's leaves were falling.

's or s?

Martin(1) records were too loud.

Sunday(2) are my favourite day(3).

The children(4) entertainer turned up late.

All the student(5) in my class love sprout(6).

Have you seen the Year 9 exam result(7)?

Have you seen Year 9(8) exam result(9)?

I like Bob(10) new car.

My neighbour(11) dog is driving me mad.

That dog(12) constant barking kept me awake all night.

The student(13) loved Mr Taylor(14) apostrophe

lesson(15).

FINAL RULE

DOES THE WORD ALREADY END IN S?

s'

**Use to show ownership when the word
already ends in s**

This means most (but not all) plurals



She liked her three friends' shoes

Her friends own the shoes

There is more than one friend so the
word already ends in s – so s'

Examples

- The dogs' owner should keep them quiet.
- Oh, no! Now the ladies' toilets have flooded!
- I liked the students' work in that class.
- All the trees' leaves had fallen in the forest.
- Three cars' windcreens had been broken.

The mental process

DOES THE WORD OWN ANYTHING?

No = do not
use an
apostrophe

If yes...

IF IT'S YES TO OWNERSHIP AND THE
WORD DOES NOT ALREADY END IN S

's

DOES THE WORD ALREADY END IN S?

s'

Sneaky names ending in s

A name ending in s follows the rule for without an s:

- Mrs Jones's classroom
- Charles Dickens's novels
- Mr Burgess's lessons