

## APOSTROPHES

Following are some rules for using the apostrophe:

1. **Add ('s) to form possessive singular of nouns.**  
Ex. - Ed's wife, instructor's book, Charles's tapes, bus's tires
2. **Add only (') to form possessive singular of nouns that end with an s and have more than one syllable.**  
Ex. - business' forms, mattress' cover
3. **Add ('s) to form possessive singular of compound nouns and phrases.**  
Ex. - daughter-in-law's television, vice-president's office, FCCJ's president
4. **Add only (') to form possessive plural of nouns whose plural ends in an s.**  
Ex. - boys' gym, students' essays
5. **Add ('s) to form possessive plural of nouns whose plural form does not end in s.**  
Ex. - men's team, children's toys

**REMEMBER ALSO THAT APOSTROPHES ARE USED TO FORM CONTRACTIONS.**

(do not = don't, cannot = can't) **AND SOME PLURALS** (abc's, M.D.'s, a's).

**PRACTICE EXERCISE 1:** Correct any errors in the use of apostrophes.

Example: Did anyone in class find Claires purse?

Correction: Did anyone in class find Claire's purse?

1. Every January my hometown glitters when hundred's of folks from surrounding villages gather to celebrate the towns winter carnival.
2. Its exciting to listen to the peoples stories concerning each others participation throughout the years'.
3. It would be interesting to hear psychologists' opinions about the people who tell these stories.
4. A stranger to the carnival certainly wouldn't recognize the children's parents.
5. These parents' don't observe their ps and qs.
6. Men's teams are often pitted against boy's teams.
7. The men often lose to the boys', and when they do, the wives reactions are as ridiculous as their husbands.
8. You should have seen my father-in-laws' float which he created for last years' parade.
9. All the M.D.s at the towns' hospital rode on it.
10. Yes, each person's view of this carnival differs from his neighbors.

## QUOTATION MARKS

- I. **Quotation marks are used around the titles of articles from newspapers and magazines, chapters of a book, scenes from a plays, poems, short stories, and songs.**

**REMEMBER: Titles of long works (books, magazines, plays, movies, television shows, newspapers, operas) are underlined or italicized.**

**EXAMPLE:**

Did you know that Daven Kari wrote the article “A Cliche a Day Keeps the Gray Away” in Teaching English in the Two-Year College? Quotation marks are used around the article title, and an underline is used on the magazine title.

- II. **Quotation marks are also used to enclose the exact words of a speaker, a quoted remark of a person, or words on a sign.**

**EXAMPLE:**

1. Martha told me, “You are an exciting writer.”
2. “You are an exciting writer,” Martha told me.
3. “You are,” Martha told me, “an exciting writer.”

Please note special punctuation!!

- a. the comma BEFORE the quote in #1
- b. the capital letter at the beginning of the quote in #1
- c. the period BEFORE the quote mark in #1 and #3
- d. the commas and the quote marks in the split quotation in #3

**\*IMPORTANT**

**Periods, commas, question marks, and exclamation points go BEFORE the quote mark, but colons and semicolons are placed AFTER the quotation marks.**

## APOSTROPHES & QUOTATION MARKS

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**PRACTICE EXERCISE 2:** Capitalize and punctuate correctly.

EXAMPLE:           The sign actually said do not walk on the sidewalk.

CORRECTION:       The sign actually said, "Do not walk on the sidewalk."

1.   Patrick Henry said give me liberty or give me death.
2.   Well Henry sighed life has been good to me
3.   The report read the statistics have increased enormously
4.   Can you he asked participate in Sunday's program
5.   I love working as a student assistant Bob said because being in the lab gives me the opportunity to meet interesting people
6.   The opening line of the book The Road Less Traveled says life is difficult
7.   Writing the last essay was easy said James in fact, I'm positive I've earned an A
8.   Did you ever hear Sharon The Best Things in Life Are Free
9.   The line Memphis in the late forties and the early fifties was a seedbed of musical activity was written by Peter Guralnich
10.  The jurors declared he has been tried and found guilty; then they celebrated their decision.

## **PRACTICE EXERCISE 1 (Answers):**

1. hundreds ( no apostrophe, hundreds is simply a plural noun.)  
town's (singular possessive)
2. It's (contraction for it is)  
people's (plural possessive)  
others' (plural possessive)  
years (no apostrophe, years is simply a plural noun.)
3. psychologists' (plural possessive)  
stories (plural noun)
4. wouldn't (contraction for would not)  
children's (plural possessive)
5. parents (plural noun, not possessive)  
don't (contraction for do not)  
p's (plural) q's (plural)
6. Men's (plural possessive)  
boys' (plural possessive)
7. boys (plural noun)  
wives' (plural possessive)  
husbands' (plural possessive)
8. father-in-law's (singular possessive)  
year's (singular possessive)
9. M.D.'s (plural)  
town's (singular possessive)
10. person's (singular possessive)  
neighbors' (plural possessive) or neighbor's (singular possessive)

## **PRACTICE EXERCISE 2 (Answers):**

1. Patrick Henry said, "Give me liberty or give me death."
2. "Well," Henry sighed, "life has been good to me."
3. The report read, "The statistics have increased enormously."
4. "Can you," he asked, "participate in Sunday's program?"
5. "I love working as a student assistant," said Bob, "because being in the lab gives me the opportunity to meet interesting people."
6. The opening line of the book The Road Less Traveled says, "Life is difficult."

## **APOSTROPHES & QUOTATION MARKS**

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7. “Writing the last essay was easy,” said James “In fact, I’m positive I’ve earned an A.”
8. Did you ever hear Sharon sing “The Best Things in Life Are Free?”
9. The line, “Memphis in the late forties and the early fifties was a seedbed of musical activity,” was written by Peter Guralnich.
10. The jurors declared, “He has been tried and found guilty”; then they celebrated their decision.