

Possessive Nouns

Where do I put the apostrophe?

1. When the possessive noun is singular (one person or thing), put the apostrophe *before* the -s.

The cat's collar jingles as she walks.

2. When the possessive noun is plural (more than one person or thing), put the apostrophe *after* the -s.

The students' desks are very organized.

3. When there is a joint possessive (both nouns own the same thing), put the apostrophe *before* the -s on the second possessive noun.

Mark and Jennifer's science report won the blue ribbon in the science fair competition.

4. When you want to show that two or more nouns both own something, you need to add 's after each noun.

Ankita's and Serena's jackets are both blue.

5. When a plural noun does not end in an s, add 's.

Example: mice's hole,
children's toys, women's dresses

6. If a singular *common* noun ends in s, add 's—**unless** the next word begins with s. If the next word begins with s, add an apostrophe only. (This includes words with s and sh sounds.)

The boss's temper was legendary among his employees.

The boss' sister was even meaner.

7. If a singular *proper* noun ends in s, always add an apostrophe after the s.

* Douglass' painting is beautiful!

