

Name: _____ Date: _____

Do You Need That Apostrophe?

You have a word that ends with *s*. Should there be an apostrophe before that *s*? Here's what you need to know:

A **DO NOT use apostrophes to form plurals.**

- The plural form of a noun indicates more than one person, place, or thing. Plural nouns usually end in *s*. For example: *shoes*, *apples*, *faces*. So . . .
NO: Place your shoe's in the closet.
YES: Place your shoes in the closet.
- There are also some irregular plural nouns, like *men*, *women*, *feet*, and *mice*. They have no *s*, they need no *s*! So . . .
NO: The women's are upstairs.
YES: The women are upstairs.
- To form the plural of a singular noun that ends in a consonant followed by *y*, remove the final *y* and replace it with *ies*. For example: *party* becomes *parties*, *body* becomes *bodies*, and *baby* becomes *babies*. So . . .
NO: There are two baby's in the stroller.
YES: There are two babies in the stroller.

B **DO NOT use apostrophes to form possessive pronouns.**

A possessive pronoun is a word that shows ownership, like *hers*, *ours*, *whose*, and *its*. So . . .

NO: The bike is her's.
YES: The bike is hers.

NO: It's tires were flat.
YES: Its tires were flat.

C **DO use apostrophes to form possessives.**

Possessives show ownership.

- To make a singular noun (like *artist*) possessive, add 's to the end. So . . .
YES: That is the artist's first painting.
 Add 's even if the noun ends with *s*. So . . .
YES: Where is Chris's trophy?
- To make a compound noun (a noun formed by two or more words) possessive, add 's to the end of the last word. So . . .
YES: I like my sister-in-law's new car.
YES: The washing machine's door is open.
- If two or more people or things possess or share the same item, add 's to the last person or thing only. So . . .
YES: Jason and Emily's vacation sounded nice.
- To make a plural noun (like *dogs*) possessive, add an apostrophe after the *s* that is already at the end of the word. If the plural noun is irregular and doesn't end in *s*, add an apostrophe and an *s*. So . . .
YES: The dogs' toy needs to be washed.
This refers to one toy shared by two or more dogs.
YES: The women's jackets are on the coat rack.

An activity on apostrophes begins on the next page.