



Apostrophe Rules – Do's and Don'ts

What does an apostrophe do?

- a. creates possessive nouns
- b. shows some letters are missing
- c. makes a plural form for small case letters

1. Creates Possessive Nouns

Single: Add 's to single form of words.

This is Miss **Kim's** pen. This pen is Miss **Kim's**.

Plural: Add an apostrophe after the S (but don't add another s).

These are the two **boys'** hats. I visited the **girls'** middle school class.

Names: Add 's to the last name if there have two names.

This is Rob and **Sherry's** dog.

2. Shows some letters are missing.

Contractions: This **isn't** my pen. We **weren't** at school today.

3. With small case letters and some numbers, use an apostrophe to make a plural form.

Plural: I have a list of **do's** and don'ts.

I have a full house: three **7's** and two **5's**.

But, don't add an apostrophe to capital letters to make a plural.

Right: My daughter got three **As** on her report card.

Wrong: My daughter got three **A's** on her report card.

4. Don't use apostrophes with numbers that suggest a time period.

Right: I was born in the **1960s**.

Wrong: I was born in the **1960's**.

5. Don't use apostrophes with possessive pronouns.

Right: This is **hers**.

Wrong: This is **hers'**.



Do these sentences need to be corrected? Find and correct the apostrophe errors.

1. The six chickens eggs fell on the floor.

2. Didnt you say youd wash the dishes?

3. The schools secretaries went on a picnic.

4. The three school's secretaries went on strike.

5. After a good days work I like to relax and watch a movie.

6. Theyre on the road and should be in Seoul by 3pm.

7. Were lost. Maybe we should turn right here.

8. The boxes contents are broken. Do you know what happened?

9. The shoes are his', not mine.

10. I passed. I got all A's on my final exams.

11. Mens pants are for sale on the third floor.

12. Jacks writing is hard to read. His 4s look like 9s.



Answers

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11. Men's pants are for sale on the third floor.
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