

Possessive Apostrophes

show that something **belongs to** someone or **is for** someone

**A Look at these examples.
Discuss why each apostrophe is used.**

Notes

Ladies' Room

The lady's coat fell on the floor.

Patrick's speech went really well.

Parents' Evening

The dog's lead was too long.

Dogs' leads sold here.

The children's party starts at 6pm.

Men's Toilets

Tips

Decide if there is one 'owner' or more than one 'owner'.

1. If there is **one owner** the apostrophe goes before the s.
 - The man's coat got soaking wet in the rain.
 - Patrick's alarm clock did not go off so he was late for work.
 - The dog's lead snapped and he ran away.
 - The book's cover was damaged so it was on sale at a reduced price.
 - Today's weather will be warm and sunny.

2. If there is **more than one owner** the apostrophe goes after the s
(unless the plural noun does not end in an s – see rule 3 below)
 - The girls' coats got soaked when they got caught in the storm.
 - In the final competition, all the dancers' routines were fantastic.
 - Battersea Dogs' Home was established in 1860.
 - Ten years' hard work was at stake.

3. If the owner has an **irregular plural** that **does not end in s** the apostrophe goes after the complete plural noun but before the s.
 - The women's cloakroom is down the corridor on the right.
 - He really deserved to win the People's Choice Award.
 - The sheep's coats were heavy and matted by springtime.

B Missing apostrophes! **Rewrite each sentence using the correct punctuation.**

Example: My daughters coat was ruined when she fell in a puddle.

My daughter's coat was ruined when she fell in a puddle.

1. The babys name was very unusual.
2. The childrens competition was won by a five year old boy from Oxford.
3. The babies cries could not be ignored.
4. The employees Christmas party was a great success.
5. Last months profits were disappointing.
6. Martins homework was excellent.
7. The books pages were dog-eared because she had read it six times.
8. Her sisters new car was very expensive.
9. The cashiers till would not open and she had to call a supervisor.
10. The postmens mailbags were extremely heavy just before Christmas.
11. Two weeks holiday was over in a flash.
12. The students attitude to their work was simply not good enough.
13. The womans son was ill so she could not go to college.
14. Do you know where Mikes car keys are?

C Use possessive apostrophes to shorten these sentences.

Example: The eyes of the tiger glowed in the dark.

The tiger's eyes glowed in the dark.

1. The profits of last week were not too good.
2. The hat that belonged to my daughter was pink and fluffy.
3. The party for the salesmen was cancelled.
4. The bookshop for children closes at 5.00pm.
5. The biscuits for dogs were on special offer in the pet shop.
6. The special offer for this month is 'three bottles of wine for the price of two'.
7. The rainfall for September was lower than expected.
8. Hats for women are in our other store across the road.
9. The two tractors, both belonging to the farmer, were destroyed in the fire.
10. The news on Tuesday was rather depressing.
11. The mothers of the babies were upset when the 'Bonnie Baby' competition was cancelled.
12. The capital city of England is London.
13. The new car, belonging to Helen, had to go back to the factory.
14. The boat owned by the millionaire had gold plated taps.

ANSWERS

B Missing apostrophes! Rewrite each sentence using the correct punctuation.

1. The baby's name was very unusual.
2. The children's competition was won by a five year old boy from Oxford.
3. The babies' cries could not be ignored.
4. The employees' Christmas party was a great success.
5. Last month's profits were disappointing.
6. Martin's homework was excellent.
7. The book's pages were dog-eared because she had read it six times.
8. Her sister's new car was very expensive.
9. The cashier's till would not open and she had to call a supervisor.
10. The postmen's mailbags were extremely heavy just before Christmas.
11. Two weeks' holiday was over in a flash.
12. The students' attitude to their work was simply not good enough.
13. The woman's son was ill so she could not go to college.
14. Do you know where Mike's car keys are?

C Use possessive apostrophes to shorten these sentences.

1. Last week's profits were not too good.
2. My daughter's hat was pink and fluffy.
3. The salesman's party was cancelled.
4. The children's bookshop closes at 5.00pm.
5. The dogs' biscuits were on special offer in the pet shop.
6. This month's special offer is 'three bottles of wine for the price of two'.
7. September's rainfall was lower than expected.
8. Women's hats are in our other store across the road.
9. The farmer's two tractors were destroyed in the fire.
10. Tuesday's news was rather depressing.
11. The babies' mothers were upset when the 'Bonnie Baby' competition was cancelled.
12. England's capital city is London.
13. Helen's new car had to go back to the factory.
14. The millionaire's boat had gold plated taps.