**FIND error-prone locations**

LOOK for a punctuation mark [it’s] or where it might go [as in its].

**FIX** by picking one of only two choices

**✓ AN APOSTROPHE** or **✓ NOT**

### #1B. It’s or Its?

**A** If it is fits

- or if it has fits, use the contraction it’s.

___ a contraction.

[It is a contraction.]

It’s a contraction.

___ been nice.

[It has been nice.]

It’s been nice.

I am, I’m. We are, we’re. She is, she’s. He is, he’s.

Pull out a letter(s) and put in an apostrophe.

A smart cat knows it’s master.

**B** If his or her fits

- and if the gender of the base-word is neutral or unknown, use the possessive its.

The city got its grant. Her cat ate its food. Her leg, his leg, ___ leg

- His, her, and its all have no apostrophe.

_____ This ball is _____.

Mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, yours, and theirs all have no apostrophe.

A smart dog knows its master.

### #2B. Plurals

**Y** 1 For plurals, add an s. The Smiths (an ID sign)

2 But if the word ends with an s, add es. The Joneses

EXCEPT child, children; sheep, sheep.

**N** 1 WRONG

Never use an apostrophe to make a word plural.

The Smith’s

The Smith’s book

(An internal apostrophe for a plural is WRONG.)

### EXCEPTION: For the plural of a single letter, use an apostrophe just to avoid confusion: A’s, not As. ABCs (no confusion).
#3B. Possessive Singular

**General**
- ☀ To make a singular word possessive, add an apostrophe and an *s.*
  - a princess's gown
  - a princess’s slipper
  - Bass's guide
  - Moses’s law

**Journalism**
- a prince’s suit

But, if singular, use just an apostrophe

1. if a word ends with an *s* and the next word starts with an *s.*
   - a princess’ slipper

2. if a proper name ends with an *s.*
   - Bass’ guide

3. if a name’s end-sound is “zes.”
   - Moses’ law

**Prediction:** One day, everyone will use apostrophe-*s* all of the time for the possessive singular.

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CORPORATE NAMES. Macy’s, Walgreens (company decisions)

ONE THING. Joe and Mary's kitchen (one kitchen)
TWO THINGS. Joe's job  Mary's job  Joe's and Mary's jobs

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#4B. Possessive Plural

**A** To make a plural ending in an *s* into a possessive, add an apostrophe.

- the princesses' home
- the Smiths' home
- the kids zoo

**B** For plural “possession,” use the plural word as an adjective.

- The Princesses Plot
- The Veterans Center
- The witches brew

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Want more help? Check online grammar exercises at examples.newsplace.org