



# WRITING CENTRE

Use the **apostrophe** to show possession. To show possession with a singular noun, add an apostrophe plus the letter s.

*Jane's car*  
*The dog's bone*  
*The Earth's gravity*

**Regular nouns** are nouns that form their plurals by adding either the letter s or -es. To show plural possession, simply put an apostrophe after the s.

*The cats' milk.*  
*The boys' uniforms.*  
*The workers' rights.*

English also has many **irregular nouns**. These nouns become plural by changing their spelling. To show possession with an irregular noun, add an apostrophe or an apostrophe + s.

*The teeth's roots*  
*The women's money*  
*The people's choice*

Use an apostrophe with **contractions**. A contraction is word produced by running two or more words together and leaving out some of the letters or sounds. The apostrophe is placed where a letter or letters have been removed.

EXAMPLES:

<i>does not</i>	becomes	<b><i>doesn't</i></b>
<i>would not</i>	becomes	<b><i>wouldn't</i></b>
<i>he is</i>	becomes	<b><i>he's</i></b>
<i>can not</i>	becomes	<b><i>can't</i></b>
<i>you have</i>	becomes	<b><i>you've</i></b>

Unless you are quoting somebody, don't use contractions in an essay. Take the time to write out the two separate words.

**Take care when using the phrase *it's*. *It's* means *it is*. You do not use an apostrophe when making *it* possessive.**

*It's* time to wake up!

(*It is* time to wake up!)

The jury has reached its decision.

(The jury has reached the jury's decision.)