

APOSTROPHES



These are the general rules for using apostrophes:

NEVER use for plurals.

There are three ~~cat's~~.

Use for contractions, when letters have been omitted (removed).

I've been thinking about cats.

The 'ha' is omitted from 'have'.

Use for possession, to show something belongs to nouns.

The cat's bed.

The bed belongs to the cat.



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More about possession:

Can you explain the difference between these sentences?

The cat's bed.
The cats' bed.



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If the noun is plural, the apostrophe goes after the s. This is because the plural of cat is cats, so it already has an s because of that.



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More about possession:

Which of these sentences is correct?

A. The Halloween decorations are decaying, especially the pumpkins teeth. Cedric carved all ten jack-o-lanterns, and he can't bear to throw them away.

B. The Halloween decorations are decaying, especially the pumpkins' teeth. Cedric carved all ten jack-o-lanterns, and he can't bear to throw them away.

C. The Halloween decorations are decaying, especially the pumpkin's teeth. Cedric carved all ten jack-o-lanterns, and he can't bear to throw them away.



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More about possession:

B. The Halloween decorations are decaying, especially the pumpkins' teeth. Cedric carved all ten jack-o-lanterns, and he can't bear to throw them away.

Sentence B is correct. The context of the sentence (all ten jack-o-lanterns) makes clear the fact that more than one pumpkin is rotting away.





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Which sentences are written correctly?

(There may be none, there may be three, so choose carefully.)

A: The dog's hair was pulled out by the cat.

B: The cat pulled all the dogs hair out.

C: The dogs' hair was pulled out by the cats.

Answer



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Which sentences are written correctly?

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A: The dog's hair was pulled out by the cat.

B: The cat pulled all the dogs hair out.

C: The dogs' hair was pulled out by the cats.

It could be A or C depending on if there is one or more dogs.

B is definitely wrong as there is no apostrophe indicating that the hair belongs to the dog or dogs.



APOSTROPHES

Which sentences are written correctly?

(There may be none, there may be three, so choose carefully.)

A: There were lots of toy's in the garden.

B: In the garden, there were toy's everywhere.

C: Toys here, toys there, the garden was a mess.

Answer

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Which sentences are written correctly?

(There may be none, there may be three, so choose carefully.)

A: There were lots of toy's in the garden.

B: In the garden, there were toy's everywhere.

C: Toys here, toys there, the garden was a mess.

Only C is correct. An apostrophe should not be used for a plural. This is a common mistake.



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Which sentences are written correctly?

(There may be none, there may be three, so choose carefully.)

A: The man's hat.

B: The ladies' books.

C: The women's shoes.

Answer



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Which sentences are written correctly?

(There may be none, there may be three, so choose carefully.)

A: The man's hat.

B: The ladies' books.

C: The women's shoes.

All of these are correct:

A: The hat of the man -- singular, so add 's

B: The books of the ladies -- plural ending in s, so add an apostrophe

C: The shoes of the women -- plural not ending in s, so add 's