

## Possessive 's and s'

We can show possession by using 's and s'	
Use	Example
We use 's with singular nouns, including names, and with irregular plurals which do not end in -s.	<i>That's the manager's car, over there.</i> <i>We are still waiting for Sarah's decision about who to take on.</i> <i>I think that women's rights should be protected by law.</i>
We just add an apostrophe to regular plural nouns ending in -s.	<i>The workers' pay was increased by ten percent.</i>
We use 's or s' in some time expressions.	<i>After an hour's wait, I finally got to see the manager.</i> <i>I'll be at the factory in about ten minutes' time.</i>
We usually use 's or s' with people (or groups composed of people) and animals. For other things, we normally use of the/my/etc.	<i>Is this John's briefcase?</i> <i>We held a meeting to discuss the company's finances.</i> <i>The vet had a close look at the cat's paw.</i> <i>The technician had a close look at the back of my computer.</i> (not ...at my computer's back)

### Watch out!

- With singular names ending in -s, some people use 's and some people just add an apostrophe. They are both correct, although using 's is more common.
  - ✓ *The report is on Charles's computer in the office.*
  - ✓ *The report is on Charles' computer in the office.*
- With plural names ending in -s, we just add an apostrophe, as with other plurals.
  - ✓ *The Smiths' business eventually closed down.*
- With phrases, the possessive 's and s' must go at the end of the whole phrase.
  - ✓ *Tom, Dick and Harry's office is around here somewhere.*
  - ✗ ~~*Tom's, Dick's and Harry's office is around here somewhere.*~~
  - ✓ *The President of France's visit to England will be good for business.*
  - ✗ ~~*The President's of France visit to England will be good for business.*~~

## Possessive determiners and pronouns

Structure	Example
Possessive determiners ( <i>my, your, his, her, its, our, their</i> ) come before a noun and show possession	<i>I'm really excited about my new job.</i> <i>Are you looking forward to meeting your new boss?</i>
Possessive pronouns ( <i>mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs</i> ) are used instead of a noun	<i>My new job is great. How about yours? (= ...your job)</i> <i>Our business is doing quite well, but I hear Simon and Julie are having problems with theirs. (= ...their business)</i>
Possessive pronouns can also be used after <i>of</i> to show possession	<i>She's a colleague of mine. (= ...one of my colleagues)</i> <i>Are they customers of yours?</i>

### Watch out!

- A common mistake to be avoided is using a possessive pronoun instead of a possessive determiner or using a determiner instead of a pronoun.
  - ✓ *I don't really get on so well with my boss.*
  - ✗ ~~*I don't really get on so well with mine boss.*~~
  - ✓ *I know your job is dangerous, but did Frank and Jenny tell you about theirs?*
  - ✗ ~~*I know your job is dangerous, but did Frank and Jenny tell you about their?*~~
- Remember that there are no apostrophes in possessive pronouns.
  - ✗ ~~*I know your job is dangerous, but did Frank and Jenny tell you about their's?*~~
- Don't get confused between *its* (possessive determiner, without an apostrophe) and *it's* (contraction for *it is* or *it has*, with an apostrophe).
  - ✓ *Our company is hoping to increase its share of the market.*
  - ✗ ~~*Our company is hoping to increase it's share of the market.*~~