

## Capitals

### Titles

Capitalize a person's title if it comes before the person's name. If the title is abbreviated, start it with a capital letter and put a period after it.

➔ **Dr. Judy Kelso**      **Ms. Finkle**      **Mayor Pitts**      **President Lincoln**

Capitalize a person's title if it's used instead of the person's name.

➔ Thank you, **Mayor Pitts**.      Thank you, **Mayor**.

Don't capitalize a person's title if it's used alone or if it comes after the person's name.

➔ The doctor is sick today.      This is Ralph Pitts, **mayor** of our town.



Cross out each incorrect lowercase letter in these sentences. Write the correct capital letter above it. The first one is done for you.

1. <sup>O</sup>/~~o~~fficer bronski gave a parking ticket to one of sister agnes's nuns in Big City.
2. The nun was helping homeless people when the officer gave her a ticket.
3. The mayor, willy b. elected, was upset when he heard about the ticket.
4. mayor elected thought helping homeless people was more important than disobeying parking rules.
5. He wanted to make it easy for the nuns to park wherever they needed to park.
6. The officer said, "even for someone who helps the homeless, I can't bend the rules."
7. So mayor willy b. elected issued special parking permits for sister agnes's nuns.
8. The nuns could only use these permits while they were helping homeless people.
9. officer bronski and other police officers didn't have to bend the rules.
10. The mayor will probably be re-elected next year.

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## Relatives

Capitalize words that name relatives whenever these words are in front of people's names or when they replace people's names.

- ➔ My Aunt Bea makes great grasshopper pie.  
Grasshopper pie is one of the best things my aunt makes.



Cross out each incorrect lowercase letter in these sentences. Write the correct letter above it.

Sally was spending the summer with her dad and aunt pam. Her aunt's house in the country was always fun to visit. Today was the day her dad had promised to take her fishing. Sally wasn't too keen on fishing, but she wanted to spend as much time as she could with her dad.

When her dad came downstairs, Sally was pleased that his tackle box was closed. At least the smelly, wriggly, slimy worms would be under cover. When they reached aunt pam's fishing hole, Sally was surprised that it was a pretty clearing along the bank of a stream. It would be a great place for a picnic, but a horrible place for hooking worms.

"It's time to bait the hooks," dad said. Sally forced herself to look interested as her dad opened the tackle box. Inside the box were pretty lures in all kinds of colors with beads and feathery things attached. Sally's father noticed her surprise and relief. Her dad explained, "No serious fisherman uses worms anymore." Fishing was going to be fun after all, as long as Sally didn't have to clean any fish!

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## Brand Names

Brand names are the titles of products or things you can buy, like Kleenex® or Nike®. Capitalize each important word in brand names, but not common nouns that follow brand names.

➔ Campbell's® tomato soup    Nike® running shoes    Diet Coke® soda



Cross out each incorrect letter in these sentences. Write the correct lowercase or capital letter above it.

Jim couldn't help it, he was a national-brand-name kind of guy. He used redken® on his hair, wore levi® jeans and ate mcdonalds® fast food. Jim would wear any brand of shoes, as long as it was endorsed by a national basketball association player. He was the same way about beverages. He would drink gatorade®, but he wouldn't drink the milk from the local dairy, martha's farm. If coca-cola® bottled martha's farm's dairy milk, that would be different. If martha's farm had cool T-shirts or a fancy madison avenue ad campaign to market it, Jim might consider drinking their milk. What really makes Jim's mom mad is that Jim's grandmother, martha, owns martha's farm.

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## Geographic Names

Capitalize the names of specific places or geographic features. Here is a list of major types of places to capitalize:

places or features	examples
continents, countries, states, provinces, counties, cities, towns, villages	Australia, Kentucky, Ontario, Evansville
oceans, lakes, rivers, ponds, swamps	Pacific, Lake Huron, Rio Grande, the Everglades
beaches, islands, peninsulas	Coney Island, Manhattan Beach
mountains, valleys, deserts, forests, canyons	Mount Sinai, Mojave Desert, Bryce Canyon
parks, dams, highways, streets, malls	Yosemite, Hoover Dam, Interstate 80, Elm Street
recognized parts of the world or a country	the South, the Northwest, the East Coast

Capitalize direction words like *east* or *south* when they refer to a section of the world or a country. Don't capitalize these words when they refer to directions.

➔ Many countries import silk from the East. We headed east for 15 miles.



Cross out each incorrect letter in these sentences. Write the correct lowercase or capital letter above it.

Last year, my family went on vacation out west. We saw the hoover dam, the grand canyon, the colorado river, and my sister's braces every time she smiled. Our first stop was mount rushmore in south dakota. It was kind of cool seeing the Presidents carved in stone. A bee stung my sister in custer state park. She screamed, and a herd of buffalo stampeded after her. Then we headed up into the rocky mountains. Pike's peak was so high, my sister got a nosebleed. In yellowstone national park, bears smashed my sister's camera. All in all, I'd say it was a great vacation!

### Possessive Nouns

Most of the time, we use -' or -'s to show **who** owns something. Other times, we can use the same apostrophe rules to show **what** owns or has something.

- ➔ the worth of a dollar      a dollar's worth
- a delay of a month      a month's delay



Rewrite each phrase to make it show possession. The first one is done for you.

1. the breath of a pig      a pig's breath
2. the pits of cherries      \_\_\_\_\_
3. the warts of Jason      \_\_\_\_\_
4. the quiet of a morning      \_\_\_\_\_
5. a delay of a month      \_\_\_\_\_
6. the strength of dental floss      \_\_\_\_\_
7. the time of a year      \_\_\_\_\_

### Joint or Individual Ownership

When two or more nouns own the same thing, use -'s only after the last owner.

- ➔ Spot and Fido's doghouse      *Spot and Fido share the same doghouse.*

When two or more nouns each own their own things, use -'s after each owner.

- ➔ Spot's and Fido's collars      *Each dog has his own collar.*



This story is about the locker Mark and Sam share at school. Rewrite each sentence. Add the correct punctuation to show who owns each underlined noun.

1. Mark and Sam locker at school is the messiest.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Mark and Sam jackets barely fit inside.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The principal and vice-principal inspection of the lockers was today.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Maria and Angela assignments were neatly stored in their locker.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Maurice and Emil backpacks fit easily in their locker.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Mark and Sam door flew open when the principal lifted the latch.  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Apostrophes

## Contractions

A contraction is a way to shorten two words into one word. An apostrophe marks the place where a letter or letters are missing from the contraction. Some contractions are made from a **pronoun + a verb**.

➔ she is → she's      they are → they're



Write the correct contraction for the words below each blank.



1. \_\_\_\_\_ going to talk to Bill all night.  
I am
2. \_\_\_\_\_ the coolest guy in our class.  
He is
3. \_\_\_\_\_ the only one he ever calls.  
I am
4. Dad says \_\_\_\_\_ only let me talk two minutes.  
he will
5. Dad just doesn't realize \_\_\_\_\_ so important.  
it is
6. I mean, Bill says \_\_\_\_\_ never call anyone else.  
he will
7. Why can't Dad see how \_\_\_\_\_ improve my popularity?  
it will
8. \_\_\_\_\_ just not fair.  
It is
9. \_\_\_\_\_ never talked on the phone for more than ten minutes.  
I have
10. Maybe \_\_\_\_\_ why Bill only calls me.  
that is

# Apostrophes

## Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns are words like *my*, *your*, and *our*. These words already show who owns something, so you don't need to add -'s to make them show ownership.

➔ This is Dan's book. It is **his** book.



Proofread this story. Correct any errors in punctuation that show ownership.

We colonists came from a dying planet. Our's lush forests had long since been harvested for lumber. Oxygen, therefore, was a scarce resource. On our's home planet, huge utilities claimed a monopoly on all oxygen generation. They charged us outrageous' fees for the right to breathe their's oxygen.

We crossed galaxies and solar systems to find our's new home. At last we landed our ship on the planet Vern. A dwarf sun's rays were casting their's warmth over the land. As space colonists, we believed our's right to control things extended beyond Vern's land. We wanted to guarantee all peoples right to breathe air without paying for it. Since there were so few people on Vern, their's need for breathable air was far less than their's supply. We planned to take their extra air for our's own use. The natives didn't seem to understand that we wanted to buy their's air. They didn't even know that anyone could own air.

# Apostrophes

## Tricky Pronouns

Lots of people confuse *it's* with *its* and *who's* with *whose*. What's the deal here? Once you understand exactly what these words mean, it's simple!

➔ **its and whose** These possessive pronouns already tell you who or what owns something, so you don't need an apostrophe to show possession.

**Whose** pet is the silliest? My cat chases **its** shadow.

**it's and who's** These contractions for *it is* and *who is* don't tell anything about possession. They tell who or what **is** or **is doing** something.

**It's** easy to see **who's** being silly now.



Write the correct possessive pronoun or contraction in each blank.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ doing what to whom?  
Whose      Who's
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ the question Ms. Martin always asks the class.  
Its          It's
- 3. The question takes on a life of \_\_\_\_\_ own.  
  its              it's
- 4. We are never sure \_\_\_\_\_ answer will satisfy her.  
  whose          who's
- 5. When we get it right, \_\_\_\_\_ easy to tell.  
  its              it's
- 6. She gives us a look like \_\_\_\_\_ all over.  
  its              it's
- 7. She won't ask again, but we don't know \_\_\_\_\_ name she wrote down.  
  whose          who's
- 8. That's why we don't know \_\_\_\_\_ answer worked.  
  whose          who's
- 9. We all know \_\_\_\_\_ to blame:  
  whose          who's
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_ just that we don't know if she knows.  
Its              It's