

Apostrophes

Purpose of the apostrophe: to show possession or ownership.

Apostrophes are also used in contractions (he is → he's, we are → we're), but these are not used in academic writing (unless you are transcribing someone's spoken words).

RULES FOR PLACING APOSTROPHES TO SHOW POSSESSION

1. Singular nouns add 's

- ☒ The patient's attitude was positive. 🙋
- ☒ They followed the doctor's advice. 🙋
- ❖ If a name already ends in *s*, add just the apostrophe (')
- ☒ We documented Mr. Jones' experience.

Mini quiz 1:

Put the apostrophe in the correct place.

1. We did not want to give away the participants information. (one participant)
2. He was told to follow his physical therapists advice (a physical therapist)
3. The childs progress was impressive.
4. Dr Vivien Thomas research was groundbreaking.
5. The patients voice improved after the first collagen injection. (one patient)

*Note **Apostrophes are typically used when referring to *people* rather than *objects*.**

- ☒ The girl's parents gave written consent.
- ☒ The expiration date of the blood was unknown.
- ☒ The blood's expiration date was unknown.

2. Regular plural nouns just add '

- ☒ The patients' records were found in the database. (many patients)
- ☒ The families' visiting hours were limited the first week of the clinical trial.
(many families)

Mini Quiz 2:

Put the apostrophe in the correct place.

1. The three doctors approaches aligned.
2. Most of the participants reasons for joining the focus group had to do with sharing their experiences.

3. The twin boys blood type was AB. (both twin boys)
4. One nurse answered that the surgeons hours were too long. (more than one surgeon)

3. Irregular plural nouns add 's

e.g. man-men, child-children, woman-women, people (already plural)

→ **men's, women's, children's**

- ☒ The children's ward served as a model for other hospitals.
- ☒ She argued that the men's uniforms were outdated.

Mini Quiz 3:

Put the apostrophe in the correct place.

1. The mens and womens exercise programmes were the same.
2. Childrens dosages of Benadryl are based on weight rather than age.
3. The infants feeding times varied. (more than one infant)

Note:

Do not use an apostrophe for dates:

In the ~~1980's~~ → in the 1980s

or to make an acronym plural:

Both ~~MRI's~~ showed identical results. → Both MRIs showed identical results.

Answers to quizzes:

Mini quiz 1:

1. We did not want to give away the participant's information. (one participant)
2. He was told to follow his physical therapist's advice (a physical therapist)
3. The child's progress was impressive.
4. Dr Vivien Thomas' research was groundbreaking.
5. The patient's voice improved after the first collagen injection. (one patient)

Mini Quiz 2:

1. The three doctors' approaches aligned.
2. Most of the participants' reasons for joining the focus group had to do with sharing their experiences.
3. The twin boys' blood type was AB. (both twin boys)
4. One nurse answered that the surgeons' hours were too long. (more than one surgeon)

Mini Quiz 3:

1. The men's and women's exercise programmes were the same.
2. Children's dosages of Benadryl are based on weight rather than age.
3. The infants' feeding times varied. (more than one infant)