Nouns: possessive ‘s’

Meaning

The possessive ‘s’ shows that a noun owns or possesses another noun. In other words, we use the possessive ‘s’ to say something belongs to a person, group of people, place, or thing. For example,

*This is Jamal**’s** pen. (person)*

*These are the children**’s** books. (group of people)*

*I met the school**’s** principal. (place)*

*These are the bicycle**’s** tires. (thing)*

Use

The use of the possessive ‘s’ can be either an apostrophe and an s (‘s) or an apostrophe after the s (‘) for a noun that already end in an s.

Form

Type of noun	Form of possessive ‘s’	Examples
singular nouns	**‘s**	*This is Tom**’s** house.* *Where is Hamdan**’s** car?*
irregular plural nouns that do not end in ‘s’	**‘s**	*Where are the children**’s** toys?* *We sell both men**’s** and women**’s** shoes.*
singular nouns that end in ‘s’	**’** or **‘s**	*This is James**’** computer.* *This is James**’s** computer.*
plural nouns that end in ‘s’	**’**	We cleaned the horses**’** stables. This is the wolves**’** enclosure.

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Functions

Function	Examples
showing ownership	*This is Amira**’s** laptop.* *Ahmed**’s*** glasses are on the table.
saying where someone works, studies, or spends time	*Where is Sarah**’s** office?* *John**’s** school is in Abu Dhabi.*
showing the relationship between people	*These are Aisha**’s** students.* *I spoke to Mark**’s** teacher.*
expressing intangible things	*Steven**’s** patience is decreasing.* *The coffee increased Mariam**’s** energy.*

Things to consider:

- We can use more than one possessive ‘s’ in a sentence. For example,

  *I went to my friend**’s** mother**’s** restaurant.*

- When showing belonging to more than one noun, we only add the possessive ‘s’ to the last noun. For example,

  *This is Mohamad, Peter, and Salim**’s** homework.*