

Apostrophes

You will be marked down for incorrect use of an apostrophe when you take your English GCSE exam. There are two main uses and both are easy, once you understand them. You DON'T need an apostrophe to show that there is more than one of something, so writing **I bought some apple's** would be wrong.

Rule 1: ownership

An apostrophe should always be used to show ownership. A simple example of this would be **John's coat**. However, it could also be something less obvious, like **John's attitude** (the attitude still belongs to John).

An apostrophe is also used to show that something belongs to a group of people. To do this, you can just put the apostrophe **after** the 's'. An example of this is **The students' books**.

Just to make things difficult, there are groups where the apostrophe still goes before the 's'. These are **men, women, people, children** and **everybody**. This is because the 's' is only added for ownership; the word already tells you that there is more than one. An example of this is **The women's toilet**.

When a name ends in 's', the apostrophe can either be added at the end of the word, or an extra 's' can be inserted. An example of this is **James' book** and **James's book**.

Rule 2: omission

Omission is just a formal word for leaving something out. When two words become one, part of the second word is left out and an apostrophe is put at the end of the first word (except in the case 'will not'), so **could have** becomes **could've**. See if you can make each of the expressions below into a word with an apostrophe. Write your example next to the one that has been given:

Should have:

Should not:

Might have:

Would have:

Have not:

Do not:

Could not:

Can not:

Will not:

Would not: