

AMA Manual of Style

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To Show Possession

Cheryl Iverson

Print Publication Year: 2007 Published Online: 2009
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Use the apostrophe to show the possessive case of proper nouns in accordance with the following examples (see also , Eponyms, Nonpossessive Form): Jones' bones (1 person named Jones) the Joneses' bones (2 or more people named Jones) If a singular or plural word does not end in s, add 's to form the possessive. If a proper noun or name ends in a silent s, z, or x, form the possessive by adding 's. Theroux's The Mosquito Coast |

Possessive Pronouns

Cheryl Iverson

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Do not use 's with possessive pronouns: his, hers, ours, its, yours, theirs, whose. The idea was hers. Give the book its due. Note: Do not confuse the contraction of it is (it's) with the possessive its, eg, "It's an excellent resource. I have not seen its equal." |

Possessive of Compound Terms

Cheryl Iverson

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Use 's after only the last word of a compound term. |

Joint Possession

Cheryl Iverson

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When joint possession is being shown with nouns, or with an organization's or business firm's name, use the possessive form only in the last word of the noun or name. Food and Drug Administration's policy Farrar, Straus & Giroux's books Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Task Force Hammond and Horn's study When possession is individual, each noun takes the possessive form. We matched the infant's and mother's records. Note: When one of the nouns takes a possessive pronoun, the other nouns take the possessive as well. I presented the intern's and my workups. |

Using Apostrophes to Form Plurals

Cheryl Iverson

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Do not use an apostrophe to indicate the plural of a name. Do not use an apostrophe in the name of an organization in which the qualifying term is used as an adjective or an attributive rather than a possessive. Of course, always follow the official name. Use 's to indicate the plural of letters, signs, or symbols spoken as such, or words referred to as words when s alone would be confusing. Note the italics with inflectional ending in roman type for words, letters, and numbers but not for symbols and signs. He uses too many and's. The manuscript editor

Units of Time and Money as Possessive Adjectives

Cheryl Iverson

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With units of time (minute, hour, day, month, year, etc) used as possessive adjectives, an 's is added. The same holds true for monetary terms: |

Prime

Cheryl Iverson

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Item type: section

Do not use an apostrophe where a prime sign is intended. Do not use a prime sign as a symbol of measurement. (See also , Nomenclature, Drugs, Chemical Names.) The methyl group was in the 5# position. |