

Apostrophe -The Contraction
uh PAHS tro fee

Make sure you can pronounce it.

An apostrophe almost always comes near the end of a word. It looks like a comma, but instead of being put at the bottom of a word it is put at the top.

There are two users for the apostrophe: contraction and possession.

Contraction

Contraction is the opposite of expansion: Contraction is making something smaller. When you let the air out of a balloon, it contracts. When you blow the balloon up it expands.

Two words can be contracted into one word by an apostrophe. The contraction has fewer letters than the original two words, and the apostrophe goes where the missing letters were.

<u>Expanded Form</u>	<u>Contraction</u>
have not	haven't
can not	can't
I am	I'm
she is	she's
he would	he'd
let us	let's

A contraction always sounds different from the expanded form. The contraction takes less time to pronounce, and there are not so many separate sounds in it. Be sure you know how these contractions are supposed to sound. First say the expanded form aloud, and then the contraction:

<u>Expanded Form</u>	<u>Contraction</u>
I am	I'm
it is	It's
you are	you're
they are	they're
there are	there're
would not	wouldn't
could not	couldn't
are not	aren't
do not	don't
he will	he'll
it will	it'll
who is	who's
she would	she'd
I would	I'd
they would	they'd

Under “Expanded Form” write the two-word version of each contraction. Put a box around the letter or letters that the apostrophe replaces. The first one is an example.

<u>Contraction</u>	<u>Expanded Form</u>
haven't	<i>have not</i>
we've	
you're	
there's	
it'll	
shouldn't	
they're	
I'm	
can't	
they're	
I've	
she's	
you'd	
let's	
that's	

One of the two words making a contraction is always a verb. If a verb has more than one word, the first word if the verb is the one that can be contracted.

One kind of contraction is a verb plus the word *not*. Here is a partial list of verbs plus *not*. Write the correct contraction for each.

<u>Expanded form</u>	<u>Contraction</u>
has not	
have not	
had not	
is not	
are not	
can not	

could not	
would not	
should not	

Will not has an unusual contraction: *won't*

Sometimes in a sentence you will find a verb that can be contracted either with the word before it or with the word after it. The word before it is the subject and *not* is the word after it. For example: *he is not* could be contracted to either *he's not* or *he isn't*. Under the columns contraction 1 and contraction 2, write the two ways each of the following phrases could be contracted.

<u>Expanded Form</u>	<u>Contraction 1</u>	<u>Contraction 2</u>
he is not	<i>he's not</i>	<i>he isn't</i>
she is not		
we are not		
they are not		
we have not		
I have not		
you have not		
he has not		
I will not		
you will not		
you would not		
they would not		
we would not		

In each of the following sentences there is a possible contraction. Re write the entire sentence with the contraction. For example: Ford is upset. Ford's upset.

1. We are all softies. _____
2. Music is her love. _____
3. The teamsters are not happy. _____
4. He will complain. _____
5. It is an off year for movies. _____
6. Cubans were not involved. _____
7. The engines would not start. _____

8. Let us unite. _____
9. The police chief was not cleared. _____
10. They will land tonight. _____
11. The robber left no clues. _____
12. The school did not pass the inspection. _____
13. The republicans feared they would loose the election. _____
14. Hemilnes will not change this year. _____
15. Let us consider sex education. _____
16. The Yankees will not admit defeat. _____

In this passage there are some contraction errors. Apostrophes are used in words that could not be expanded into two words. Find these errors and correct them.

To name a child is fairly easy. All someone need's to do is think of a name that he likes. But who's to say that the child wi'll like the name that's been given to him? In many case's children grow up disliking their name. After they reach a certain age, they feel that they can't continue to live with the name that is their's, and so they change it to one that they like. I myself don't like my name, but I wouldn't change it.

Contractions are normally used when people speak or write causally. However, in formal speech and in formal writing-the kind of writing you will usually do in college- contractions should be avoided. Expanded (two-word) forms should be used instead.

The following passage is from a forma; essay written by a student. Find the contractions and change them to expanded forms.

In the fairy tale *Beauty and the Beast* , a beautiful maiden becomes the guest of a frightful monster. The Beast turns out to be kind and intelligent even though he is ugly. The beauty eventually learns to love him. In our society, the problems of acceptance experienced by the Beast occur with people who're physically disabled or handicapped. The only difference is that society often doesn't accept the "Beast " for what he is capable of doing.

The physically disabled person is thought of as a frightful and pitiable thing. Society doesn't understand that he or she may be as intelligent as the Beauty of society, and he or she may have a lot to offer.

Let's take for example a blind person. Blind people don't have the same capacities as those who can see. They're pitied but not easily accepted. When you have pity on somebody, you aren't being just to him. But often they have skills because they are blind. They may hear better or smell better than most people.

I have seen blind people who could do things I could never do. I've seen them able to paint, and wonder how they can so it. In high school I had an art teacher who only had one eye, and very poor vision in that eye. What the man could see and paint, I could never achieve with both of my eyes. He saw beauty in everything. Maybe because he had only one eye he learned to appreciate everything more.

POSSESSION

To possess something normally means to own it. In grammar, however, possession means something less specific. The words printed in heavy type all indicate grammatical “possession”:

- the **pig's** death
- Maria's** brothers
- the **baby's** pictures
- the old **man's** motorcycle
- the **money's** source

Think about those examples and the idea of possession.

The old man's motorcycle: Does the old man own or possess this motorcycle? Yes, he does.

The baby's pictures: Does the baby own or possess its pictures? Probably not. “We saw the baby's pictures in the newspaper” means we saw the pictures *of* the baby, not the pictures *owned* by the baby.

Maria's brothers: Does Maria own or possess her brothers? No.

The pig's death: Does the pig possess its death? No.

The money's source: Lets say your rich uncle is the source of the money. Does the money possess the source? No, in fact the source(uncle) possesses the money.

So “possession” is not a very accurate word for this grammatical form. But it is the word commonly used, and therefore you should know what it means.

Whenever you have this kind of apostrophe, *S* you could write the same idea in a slightly longer form using the word “of” : *the pig's death* could be written *the death of the pig*. In the space below, write the “of” form of the other examples.

<u>Possessive</u>	<u>Expanded form</u>
the pig's death	<i>the death of the pig</i>
the old man's motorcycle	
Maria's brothers	
the money's source	
the baby's pictures	

Here are some more possessives. Write the expanded form using the word “of” :

<u>Possessive</u>	<u>Expanded form</u>
the book's thesis	
Schuberts's Symphony	

Beethoven's Symphony Number 5	
the camera's lens	
man's great burden	
my grandmother's house	
the newspaper's editor	
the editor's desk	
the editorial desk's style	
Macy's summer sale	
Chris Evert's serve	
the journey's end	
Roberts's friend	