Chapter 3

Nouns
Noun Classes

Nouns name:

Persons  Places  Things
Qualities  Feelings  Concepts
Activities  Measures

• Nouns may be grouped into two classes:
  – Common Nouns
  – Proper Nouns
Noun Plurals—Regular

**Plural nouns**: name *two* or more things

**Regular nouns**: form the plural with the addition of *s* or *es*
## Noun Plurals—Regular

**Add *s***
- office -> offices
- manager -> managers

**Add *es* to nouns ending in *s, x, z, ch, or sh***
- bench -> benches
- loss -> losses
- fax -> faxes
- waltz -> waltzes

*Exception:* quiz, quizzes
Noun Plurals—Irregular

A few plural nouns change form:

- man → men
- foot → feet
- mouse → mice
- child → children
How would you make these nouns plural?

- business
- coin
- house
- quiz
- tax
- virus
- wish
- workman
- woman
- mouse

- businesses
- coins
- houses
- quizzes
- taxes
- viruses
- wishes
- workmen
- women
- mice*

* but computer mouse devices
Challenging Noun Plurals

Nouns Ending in \textit{y}

When a vowel comes before \textit{y}, (\textit{a, e, i, o, u}), just add an \textit{s}.

attorney · · · · · attorneys
holiday · · · · · holidays
turkey · · · · · turkeys
valley · · · · · valleys
Challenging Noun Plurals

Nouns Ending in y

When a *consonant* comes before the *y*, then change the *y* to *ies*.

- baby → babies
- company → companies
- luxury → luxuries
- secretary → secretaries
Challenging Noun Plurals

Nouns Ending in \textbf{f} or \textbf{fe}

No standard rule is followed. You just have to memorize them.

**Add \textit{s}**
- cliff \rightarrow cliffs
- safe \rightarrow safes
- staff \rightarrow staffs

**Add \textit{ves}**
- knife \rightarrow knives
- shelf \rightarrow shelves
- wife \rightarrow wives
Challenging Noun Plurals

Nouns Ending in  ʻo

When  ʻo is preceded by a vowel, add  ʻs only.

studio  •  •  • studios
curio  •  •  • curios
Challenging Noun Plurals

Nouns Ending in $o$

When $o$ is preceded by a *consonant*, no standard rule applies. Add *s* or *es*.

**Add s**
- auto • autos
- solo • solos

**Add es**
- potato • potatoes
- veto • vetoes

You just have to memorize these.
Challenging Noun Plurals

Nouns Ending in o

Musical terms ending in o are always made plural by adding s only.

alto • • • • altos
banjo • • • • banjos
piano • • • pianos
soprano • • soprano
Proper Nouns and Surnames

Most proper nouns are made plural by adding *s*. When *the* appears before a surname, the name is always plural.

- Avila  ->  the Avilas
- Kennedy  ->  the Kennedys
- Pagano  ->  the Paganos
- Guffey  ->  the Guffeys
- Miller  ->  the Millers
- Petty  ->  the Pettys
Proper Nouns and Surnames

Proper nouns ending in \(s, x, z, ch,\) or \(sh\) are made plural by adding \(es\).

- Williams → the Williamses
- Rex → the Rexes
- Gomez → the Gomezes
- Ferris → the Ferrises
- Bush → the Bushes
Challenging Noun Plurals

Compound Nouns (more than one word combined into one word)

Written as a single word: make the final element plural.

bookshelf • • • bookshelves
workman • • • workmen
More Compound Nouns

Hyphenated or written as separate words: make the principal word plural.

mother-in-law  mothers-in-law
runner-up  runners-up
editor in chief  editors in chief
Challenging Noun Plurals

Numerals, Alphabet Letters, Isolated Words, and Degrees

*Generally*, add *s* only. Many writers prefer to use ’*s* only for clarity.

- 2010s
- pros and cons
- MDs
- Bs and Cs
Challenging Noun Plurals

Numerals, Alphabet Letters, Isolated Words, and Degrees

Isolated lowercase (small) letters and the capital letters A, I, M, and U require ’s for clarity. Why these capitals?

Dot your i’s and cross your t’s. She received all A’s last semester.
Challenging Noun Plurals

Abbreviations

Usually add **s** to the singular form.

MBA • • • MBAs
no. • • • nos.
wk. • • • wks.
yr. • • • yrs.
Try Your Skill

LEVEL 1

How would you make these nouns plural?

attorney general • attorneys general
copy • copies
CPA • CPAs
editor in chief • editors in chief
knife • knives
p and q • p’s and q’s
Sunday • Sundays
1990 • 1990s
Showing Possession

Apostrophes are used to show the following:

- **Ownership**: Kim’s book
- **Origin**: Dr. Moss’s prescription
- **Authorship**: Hemingway’s works
- **Measurement**: ten years’ experience
Showing Possession

How do we know where to place apostrophes?
Following Three Steps in Placing Apostrophes


   Have you seen Kim’s book?

   The children’s area is out back.

   The waitress’s schedule was adjusted.

2. Brad has ten years’ experience.
Following Three Steps in Placing Apostrophes

2. Reverse the nouns. Use the second noun to begin a prepositional phrase.

- book of Kim
- area of the children
- schedule of the waitress
- experience of ten years
Following Three Steps in Placing Apostrophes

3 Examine the ownership word. Does it end in \textit{s}? Is it singular or plural?

Kim (singular and does \textit{not} end in \textit{s})
children (plural and does \textit{not} end in \textit{s})
waitress (singular and \textit{does} end in \textit{s})
years (plural and \textit{does} end in \textit{s})
Following Three Steps in Placing Apostrophes

3 If the ownership word does NOT end in **s**, add an apostrophe and **s**, whether the noun is singular or plural.

- Kim’s book
- children’s area
Following Three Steps in Placing Apostrophes

3 If the ownership word is *singular* and DOES end in *s*, add an apostrophe and *s*.

waitress’s schedule
Following Three Steps in Placing Apostrophes

3 If the ownership word is plural and DOES end in s, add an apostrophe only.

ten years’ experience
Try Your Skill

1. That company(s) workers rely heavily on e-mail.

Try Your Skill

a. See the two nouns together?
b. Reverse the nouns.
c. Examine the ownership word.
   i. Singular or plural?
   ii. End in s?
   iii. Do you add an apostrophe s or just an apostrophe?
2. All administrator(s) salaries will be reduced.

administrators’
Try Your Skill

3. That attorney(s) prices are too high.

a. See the two nouns together?

b. Reverse the nouns.

c. Examine the ownership word.
   i. Singular or plural?
   ii. End in s?
   iii. Do you add an apostrophe s or just an apostrophe?
Try Your Skill

a. See the two nouns together?
b. Reverse the nouns.
c. Examine the ownership word.
   i. Singular or plural?
   ii. End in s?
   iii. Do you add an apostrophe s or just an apostrophe?

4. Employees(s) benefits will change next year.

Employees’
Descriptive Versus Possessive Nouns

When nouns describe or identify only, apostrophes are not used.

Sales Division (not Sales’ Division)

Human Resources Department (not Human Resources’ Department)

Safety Department (not Safety’s Department)
Names of Organizations

Organizations with possessives in their names may or may not use apostrophes. Follow the style they use.

- Domino’s Pizza
- Starbucks
- McDonald’s
- Mrs. Fields
- Noah’s Bagels
- Chevys Fresh Mex
Names of People

Make people’s names possessive by following the same rules for making other nouns possessive.

• Singular names: add apostrophe and s
• Plural names: add apostrophe only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Singular Possessive</th>
<th>Plural Possessive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Robertson</td>
<td>Lisa Robertson’s car</td>
<td>the Robertsons’ home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Adams</td>
<td>John Adams’s camera</td>
<td>the Adamses’ business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jose Lopez</td>
<td>Jose Lopez’s job</td>
<td>the Lopezes’ children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny Nash</td>
<td>Jenny Nash’s résumé</td>
<td>the Nashes’ vacation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abbreviations

Make abbreviations possessive by following the same guidelines as for other nouns.

Levi Strauss & Co.’s jeans

CPAs’ convention
Awkward Possessives

Reword awkward expressions by using prepositional phrases. How could the following be improved? (Hint: Start with the ending noun.)

- the chief of police’s pension
- my friend’s father’s business
- Mr. Saltzman, my attorney’s advice
Try Your Skill

1. documents of the attorney general

2. friends of the Lopezes

Change the following prepositional phrases into apostrophe constructions.

Foreign Nouns

Nouns derived from foreign languages may retain a foreign plural form, or they may have an Americanized form. You just have to memorize them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>alumna</td>
<td>alumnae (feminine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alumnus</td>
<td>alumni (masculine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analysis</td>
<td>analyses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

– continued
## Foreign Nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>basis</td>
<td>bases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>criterion</td>
<td>criteria or criterions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>datum</td>
<td>data*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>formula</td>
<td>formulae or formulas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>millennium</td>
<td>millennia or millenniums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stimulus</td>
<td>stimuli</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The word *data* may be considered a collective noun; thus it may be either singular or plural.
Some special nouns are *only* singular or *only* plural in meaning. Other special nouns may be considered *either* singular or *or* plural in meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usually Singular</th>
<th>Usually Plural</th>
<th>May Be Either Singular or Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>billiards</td>
<td>clothes</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>economics</td>
<td>goods</td>
<td>corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genetics</td>
<td></td>
<td>deer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

– continued
## Special Nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usually Singular</th>
<th>Usually Plural</th>
<th>May Be Either Singular or Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kudos</td>
<td></td>
<td>fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mathematics</td>
<td>statistics</td>
<td>politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>measles</td>
<td></td>
<td>series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mumps</td>
<td>thanks</td>
<td>sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>news</td>
<td></td>
<td>species</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How would you make these nouns plural?

- bacterium
- crisis
- headquarters
- hypothesis
- memorandum
- moose

- bacteria
- crises
- headquarters
- hypotheses
- memoranda/memorandums
- moose
Possession With Time and Money

Remember that time and money can show possession.

- one year’s earnings (earnings of one year)
- three years’ experience (experience of three years)
- one dollar’s worth (worth of one dollar)
- ten dollars’ worth (worth of ten dollars)
Incomplete Possessives

- When the second noun is unstated but is understood, the possessive is incomplete.

- Use an apostrophe to show possession even though the second noun is only implied.

The party is at Francisco’s. (What is implied?)

Darren’s exam is earlier than Julie’s.
Separate or Combined Ownership

• When two nouns express *separate* ownership, make both nouns possessive.

• When two nouns express *combined* ownership, make only the second noun possessive.

**Separate Ownership**

• Both the men’s and women’s locker rooms are clean.
• Scott’s and Lydia’s cars are for sale.
Combined Ownership

• Dawn and Cheryl’s condominium is located near the campus.
• The husband and wife’s inheritance was substantial.

What clues have you learned to determine whether ownership is shared?
Separate or Combined Ownership: Clues

Look at the object owned (condominium, inheritance).

If that object is singular, ownership is usually combined.
Generic academic degrees are written with possessive apostrophes, even if the word *degree* is implied.

- Kristen earned her associate’s degree at DVC.
- UCLA offers many bachelor’s degrees.
- A master’s in accounting is required for this job.
- Kent earned his doctoral degree. (no apostrophe)
Try Your Skill

1. Identify any noun possession errors in the following sentence.

   In three day’s time, we will board a plane for Hawaii.

   In three days’ time, we will board a plane for Hawaii.
Identify any noun possession errors in the following sentence.

2. One months rent is all you need to secure this apartment.

One *month’s* rent is all you need to secure this apartment.
3. Identify any noun possession errors in the following sentence.

Sandy purchased five hour’s worth of wireless access at the airport.

Sandy purchased five hours’ worth of wireless access at the airport.
4. Identify any noun possession errors in the following sentence.

We always get our moneys worth at this restaurant.

We always get our money’s worth at this restaurant.
Try Your Skill

5. Identify any noun possession errors in the following sentence.

Our book club will meet at Michelle's in June.

Our book club will meet at **Michelle’s** in June.
6. Identify any noun possession errors in the following sentence.

   Mitch’s proposal was more persuasive than Kendra’s.

   Mitch’s proposal was more persuasive than Kendra’s.

Try Your Skill

7. Michael and Sam’s cars were both broken into last night.

Michael’s and Sam’s cars were both broken into last night.

(Separate ownership)
Identify any noun possession errors in the following sentence.

8. Amy’s and Aaron’s daughter is in middle school.

Amy and Aaron’s daughter is in middle school. (Combined ownership)
Identify any noun possession errors in the following sentence.

9. James earned his master's degree in business administration.

James earned his master’s degree in business administration.
Identify any noun possession errors in the following sentence.

10. You need a bachelor’s to qualify for this position.

You need a bachelor’s to qualify for this position.
Can an apostrophe make a difference?

• The butler stood by the door and called the guests names as they arrived.

OR

• The butler stood by the door and called the guests’ names as they arrived.