What is a possessive Noun?

**Possessive nouns** are nouns that show ownership or possession. Normally these words would be a singular or plural noun, but in the possessive form they are used as adjectives to modify another noun or pronoun.
Singular Possessive Nouns

- To make a singular noun possessive – add an apostrophe (') and an “s”.
- **Examples:**
  - The manager's office is at the end of the hall.
  - The team's uniforms are green.
Singular Possessive Nouns that end in “s”

- To make a singular noun that ends in “s” possessive—add an **apostrophe (‘) and “s”**.

  **Examples:**
  - The sales report is on Charles’s desk.
  - The bus’s seats are brown.

  **Note:** It is also acceptable to add only an apostrophe after the “s”, for example, Charles’ desk.

  The two methods are debated. A widely used technique is to write the word as you would speak it. If the word ends in an “s” or “z” sound, it sounds better to leave off the extra “s” after the apostrophe.

  **Example:** Oh, for goodness’ sake.
Plural Possessive Nouns

- To make a plural noun that ends in “s” possessive – add an apostrophe (‘) after the “s”.

- **Examples:**
  - The owner will sign the employees’ paychecks on Friday.
  - All of the computers’ keyboards are new.
Plural Possessive Nouns that do not end in “s”

- To make a plural noun that does not end in “s” possessive – add an apostrophe (‘) and an “s”.

**Examples:**
- The Portland women's soccer team is the Thorns.
- The children’s ball was left outside.
Compound Possessive Nouns

- To make a compound noun possessive – add an apostrophe (‘) and an “s” to the end of compound words.
  - **Example:** My brother-in-law’s house is a log cabin.

- If two or more owners share ownership, add an apostrophe (‘) and “s” to the last noun.
  - **Example:** Aasha and Tim’s business is very successful.

- When two or more owners have separate ownership, add an apostrophe (‘) and “s” to each noun.
  - **Example:** Beth’s and Phan’s businesses are very successful.
Plural vs. Possessive nouns

- **Plural nouns** are words used to show that there is more than one person, animal, place, thing, or idea.
- Nouns are usually made plural by adding an *s*, *es*, or *ies* to the end.
- If there is more than one of something, it is plural.
Plural vs. Possessive nouns

- Using a possessive noun in place of a plural noun is a common mistake.
- Incorrect: He sing’s in the choir
- Correct: He sings in the choir

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Possessive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cat</td>
<td>Cats</td>
<td>Cat’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Baby’s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>Buses</td>
<td>Bus’s</td>
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</tbody>
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Practice

- Go to spot.pcc.edu/~jstrong
- Open the handout “Possessive Nouns.docx”
Class Activity

- Write five sentences that use possessive nouns. Please use one of each of the following:
  - Singular possessive noun
  - Singular possessive noun that ends in “s”
  - Plural possessive noun
  - Plural possessive noun that does not end in “s”
  - Compound possessive noun

- Give your sentences to a partner to proofread. If there are corrections made, review the rules from the handout together and discuss the correction with your partner until you come to an agreement about the correct possessive form.