Apostrophes & Possessives

1. Apostrophes are used to indicate the possessive form of a noun. One trick to determining whether you want a possessive is to change the phrase to “…of the…”
   ex. the man’s wallet → the wallet of the man
   ex. our teacher’s favorite student → the favorite student of the teacher.

   a. Add ’s to the singular form of a word (even if it ends in –s):
      the subject’s response
      Carlos’s left arm
   b. Add ‘s to plural forms of words that do not end in –s:
      the children’s test scores [not “the childrens’ test scores”]
      the People’s Choice Awards [not “the Peoples’ Choice Awards”]
   c. Add ‘ to the end of plural nouns that end in –s:
      the participants’ responses
      my parents’ marital bliss
   d. To show joint possession, follow rules a-c for only the LAST person in a group:
      Marko and Melanie’s best routine [not “Marko’s and Melanie’s best routine”]
      Dr. Clark and Dr. Andres’ therapy session [not “Dr. Clark’s and Dr. Andres’ session.”]

2. Apostrophes can also be used to indicate missing letters in a contraction.
   ex. Cameron could not stand to see Lily cry. → Cameron couldn’t stand to see Lily cry.
   ex. They are rarely late. → They’re rarely late.

   a. It’s = It is.    Its = belonging to it
      You should take an umbrella because it’s raining.
      The dog wagged its tail because it was happy to see its master.
   b. Let’s = Let us.     Lets = Allows.
      Let’s use correct grammar—it’s fashionable and fun!
      Sometime Monica lets Chandler eat in bed.
   c. You’re = You are.    Your = belonging to you
      You’re going to have great grammar if you study this worksheet.
      Your writing skills will be better if you follow the rules above.