

## PERSONAL PRONOUNS, POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS, & APOSTROPHES

While nouns and indefinite pronouns use apostrophes to become possessive (*Ben's coffee*, *someone's keys*), personal pronouns (*me*, *you*, *he*, *she*...) actually change into other words—possessive pronouns—in order to become possessive!

And these possessive pronouns don't take apostrophes.

For example, *we* is a personal pronoun. Notice that we never say *we's* to show possession of the personal pronoun *we*. We change the word completely to the possessive pronoun *our* or *ours*.

Personal Pronouns	Possessive Pronouns	Possessive Pronouns
<i>We own a cat.</i>	<i>This is we's cat.</i> → No	<i>The cat is we's.</i> → No
<i>We own a cat.</i>	<i>This is our cat.</i> → Yes	<i>The cat is ours.</i> → Yes

It's easy to see that we don't add apostrophes to certain personal pronouns like *we*, but things can get tricky when the possessive version of the pronoun ends in *-s* as it does in the words *hers*, *theirs*, and *its*.

We see the *s* in a possessive word, and we feel like it needs an apostrophe.

Personal Pronouns	Possessive Pronouns	Possessive Pronouns
<i>I found Mary's cat. I will call her.</i>	<i>This is her's cat.</i> → No	<i>The cat is her's.</i> → No
<i>I found Mary's cat. I will call her.</i>	<i>This is her cat.</i> → Yes	<i>The cat is hers.</i> → Yes

However, possessive pronouns already show possession, so adding an apostrophe would be unnecessary (and wrong). It would be sort of like buying and installing a webcam for your computer that already has a built-in camera.

**Never add apostrophes to possessive pronouns.  
These words already show possession, so they don't need  
apostrophes.**

The following chart shows you the possessive versions of the personal pronouns. Note that they do not contain apostrophes.

<b>Personal Pronouns</b>	<b>Possessive Pronouns</b> These words modify nouns, so you might also hear them called possessive adjectives.	<b>Absolute Possessive Pronouns</b> These words stand alone as pronouns.
<b>I/me</b>	<b>my</b> <i>This is my cat.</i>	<b>mine</b> <i>This cat is mine.</i>
<b>you</b>	<b>your</b> <i>This is your cat.</i>	<b>yours</b> <i>This cat is yours.</i>
<b>he/him</b>	<b>his</b> <i>This is his cat.</i>	<b>his</b> <i>This cat is his.</i>
<b>she/her</b>	<b>her</b> <i>This is her cat.</i>	<b>Hers</b> <i>This cat is hers.</i>
<b>it</b>	<b>its</b> <i>The dog wagged its tail.</i>	<b>its</b> It's possible but rare to have <i>its</i> acting as an absolute possessive pronoun.
<b>we/us</b>	<b>our</b> <i>This is our cat.</i>	<b>ours</b> <i>This cat is ours.</i>
<b>they/them</b>	<b>their</b> <i>This is their cat.</i>	<b>theirs</b> <i>This cat is theirs.</i>
<b>who*</b>	<b>whose</b> <i>This is whose cat?</i>	<b>whose</b> <i>This cat is whose?</i>

\* *Who* isn't a personal pronoun. It is an interrogative pronoun and a relative pronoun, but I included it in this chart since many people are confused about the possessive word *whose*.