

It's its!

BY JESSI JONES ON FEBRUARY 6, 2011 · 3 COMMENTS

Apostrophes, for some unknown reason, tend to befuddle the masses. Particularly the words *its* and *it's*. For some reason the apostrophe has decided to migrate between the 't' and the 's' permanently for a large part of the population. Seems to make sense, right? We were all taught in grade school that apostrophe + s = possessive. Right? Right? Wrong.

Silly you, haven't you realized by now that English is the language of exceptions? While apostrophe + s *usually* indicates possession this rule undergoes a bit of a change when dealing with pronouns. After all, we don't say "hi's" or "her's" or "mine's" (this is my absolute least favorite grammatical error), do we? No. Why not? Because the English language says so! More specifically, because possessive pronouns are already, well, possessive. They don't require the extra apostrophe and, under normal circumstances, it seems downright foolish to put one there. However, the word *its* poses a bit of a problem thanks to the contraction *it's*. So here's your simple *its* vs. *it's* guide to success:

it's: *use only when you can replace the word with either "it is" or "it has".*

its: *use the rest of the time.*

See how simple it is? I bet you feel silly now, huh? Never fear, luckily it's a common mistake with an easy fix!

What are your grammatical pet peeves?