



vs



online

apostrophes
(mostly)

for description

replaces the 'i' from 'is'

for possession

signifies ownership
by the subject



take clowns

Simon's a clown

I am skilled in pie-throwing and pratfalls.

Simon's clown

I own the rights to Krusty.

Simons' clowns

My family, known collectively as the Simons, own Krusty, Coco et al.

The latter is unlikely to be what you wish to communicate. It is therefore rarely the right apostrophe position.



adjectives

When describing with an adjective, there is no need for an article (ie, an 'a' or 'the'). Without it, the role of the apostrophe is less clear.

Simon's orange

My personal citrus.

Simon's orange

My poor choice of self-tan.

Grammar can't help without context.

It's one of its exceptions.

Which leads us to the next...



'it's' = 'it is'

And that is all it's means.
Ever.

If you want to say something is owned by 'it', no apostrophe is required.

It's orange

Tells you the colour of the fruit.

Its orange

Tells you the ownership of the fruit.

Why doesn't this follow the rules?

Well, it does.

We are just looking at the wrong rules.



possessive pronouns

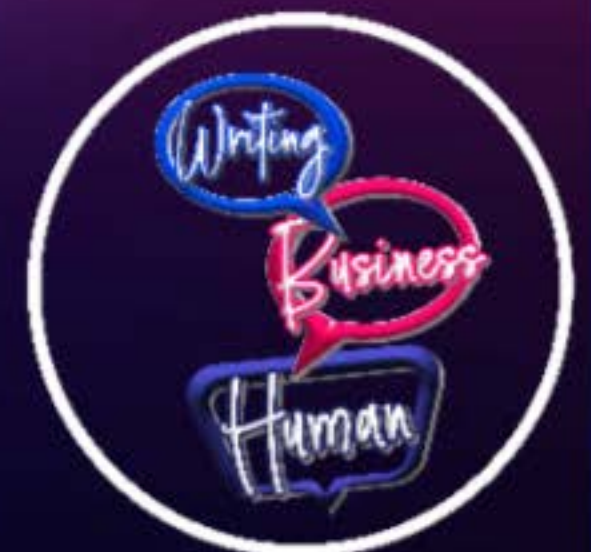
Forget apostrophes.
Look at pronouns.

Pronouns become new
words for their possessive
form.

In this context, 'its' is
merely the reformed 'it'.
The s at the end causes
the confusion.

It is, frustratingly, coincidental.

SUBJECT	POSSESSIVE
I	My
She	Her
He	His
We	Our
They	Their
You	Your
It	Its



This doesn't solve all problems
of the awkward apostrophe.

What about one's and one's?
And possession for plurals?

We may look at these another time.
For now, remember its it's.

If another extra word causes you
pain, get in touch.



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