

A Quick Primer on Grammar and Style

Just in case you have difficulty with the proper use and formation of possessive and plural nouns, here is a quick primer on the proper way to write these nouns in English. Read this over and if you have any questions, see me in my office hours or after class. Do not make these sorts of errors on any work you turn in this semester (including the blog). Errors such as these detract from the work and from your grade. And, now that you know how to form these nouns correctly, errors such as these will cost you more on your grade on future assignments.

Plural nouns

Plural nouns are formed by adding either 's' or 'es' to the word:

train → trains

bus → buses

Plural nouns are never formed by using an apostrophe like this:

train → train's or trains'

Possessive nouns

Possessive nouns are formed using an apostrophe and the letter 's'.

women → women's

If the possessive noun you are forming is a one-syllable name ending in 's', it is formed like this:

Singular → Mills

Possessive → Mills'

But, if it is a two-syllable name ending in 's', it is formed like this:

Singular → Lois

Plural → Lois's

It can be trickier if you are making a plural noun possessive. Here's how it works:

Singular → Roman

Singular possessive → Roman's

Plural → Romans

Plural possessive → Romans'

A final note: 'women' is the plural form of the noun 'woman.' Thus, it is always incorrect to write 'A women who?'

And if you really strive to write it right, I suggest reviewing: [The Elements of Style](#) by William Strunk, Jr.