APOSTROPHES AND CONTRACTIONS

APOSTROPHE

1. Use an apostrophe to indicate a noun is possessive. Possessive nouns indicate ownership.

   If the noun does not end in -s, add –’s.
   Example: That is Tony’s car.

   If the noun is singular and ends in -s, add –’s.
   Example: We are going to Jess’s house.

   If the noun is plural and ends in -s, add only an apostrophe.
   Example: The tutors’ books were missing.

Apostrophes are NOT used to indicate something belonging to “it”.
Example: The car lost its headlight. This is correct. While, The car lost it’s headlight, is incorrect.

2. Use an apostrophe to mark omissions in contractions and numbers.
   Examples: Fran can’t go to the movie. In this case, can’t stands for cannot.
   The summer of ’03 was a very hot one.

CONTRACTIONS

Two words condensed into one are called a contraction.
   Example: Is not → isn’t
   You have → you’ve

The letter or letters that are left out are replaced with an apostrophe. For example, if the two words “do not” are condensed into one, an apostrophe is put where the “o” is left out.
   Example: Do not → don’t

Note* how the apostrophe goes in the exact place where the letter or letters are left out in these contractions:
   Examples: I am → I’m
               I shall, I will → I’ll
               You are → you’re
               You will → you’ll
               He is, he has → he’s
               We are → we’re
               We will, we shall → we’ll
               They have → they’ve
               Cannot → can’t
               Does not → doesn’t
               Let us → let’s
               Where is → where’s

*One contraction does not follow this rule:

   Will not → won’t

In all other contractions that you’re likely to use, the apostrophe goes exactly where the letter or letters are left out. Note especially it’s, they’re, who’s and you’re. Use them when you mean two words.