The Use of Apostrophes

1. Use an apostrophe and –s to form the possessive of a noun, singular or plural, that does not end in –s.
   - Man’s coat
   - Women’s suits
   - Child’s toy

2. Use an apostrophe alone to form the possessive of a plural noun ending in –s.
   - Girls’ clothes
   - Dogs’ food
   - The Browns’ house

3. Use an apostrophe and –s (only when you would pronounce the –s) or the apostrophe alone to form the possessive of singular nouns ending in –s.
   - James’ hat or (if you would pronounce the –s) James’s hat

4. Use an apostrophe and –s to form the possessive of certain indefinite pronouns.
   - Everybody’s
   - One’s
   - Another’s

5. Use an apostrophe to indicate that letters or numbers have been omitted.
   - I can’t stop now.
   - Six o’clock
   - In the ‘80s.

6. Use an apostrophe to indicate the plural of letters, numbers, and words used as words.
   - Five 8’s
   - And’s
   - Dot your i’s.

7. Use an apostrophe with pronouns only when you are making a contraction.
   - Who’s the leader now? (a contraction of who is)
   - It’s a big problem (a contraction of it is).
   - I’d like to have a cup of coffee (a contraction of I would).
   - You’d better see the dentist (a contraction of you had).
   - He’d rather watch a movie than do his math homework (a contraction of would rather).
   - She’s been teaching English for ten years (a contraction of has been).

Reference: