Possessives and Contractions

Contractions
The apostrophe ‘ is used to replace a missing letter or letters

Example: The apostrophe ‘ replaces the o in “was not” to create the contraction “wasn’t.”

- Contractions should be avoided in formal writing for college courses!

Possessives
To figure out possessives, ask yourself, “Who owns what?”

Then ask, “Is the ‘who’ singular or plural?”

Examples: Sports car of my sister = My sister’s sports car
Sports car of my sisters = My sisters’ sports car
The cage of my hamster = My hamster’s cage
The cage of my hamsters = My hamsters’ cage

Possessive Pronouns
Never use an apostrophe with possessive pronouns!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mine</th>
<th>Ours</th>
<th>Whose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yours</td>
<td>Yours</td>
<td>Its</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His, Hers</td>
<td>Theirs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Possessive pronouns are used when the possessive word is separated from the name of the thing possessed.

Examples: This book is mine. The problem is his.
The magazine is hers. The video is theirs.

Be careful when you use the possessive words its, whose, your, and their. These words are used strictly to show possession.

Examples: The computer has lost its files. Whose condo is this?
The kids are brushing their teeth. I will help you find your keys.