It's vs. Its

One of the most common errors found on new wiki articles is a misunderstanding of the usage of the word *it's*. This guide will help you avoid the error. This is taken into consideration when Staff are Reviewing Submissions.

The Basics

- **“It's”** is a contraction of “it is” or “it has.”
  - “**It's** illegal to smoke on planet Yamatai.”
  - “**It's** very strange.”
  - “**It's** a trap!”
- **“Its”** is the possessive.
  - “The ship fired **its** weapons”
  - “**Its** teeth are huge”
  - “...moving under **its** own power.”

The reasons some people make the “it's/its” error is because **'s** can be added to most objects to show possession (Example: “Hanako's uniform”); however, *its* is a pronoun so *its* has **no apostrophe**. Other possessive pronouns do not have an apostrophe either:

- Theirs
- Yours
- His
- Hers
- **Its**

How To Avoid The Error

The best way to avoid the error is to learn the rules above. If you're having trouble, try one of the following:

- Substitution Method
- Avoid “It's” Entirely

Substitution Method

The substitution method:

- **It's:** Try swapping “it's” for “it is” and see if your sentence still makes sense. If it does not, then you should use *its*.
- **Its:** Try swapping the gender-neutral “its” with “her” (Example: The ship fired her weapons). It

should still make sense grammatically.

Avoid "It's" Entirely

Avoid using “it's” in wiki articles. There are two good reasons for this:

1. Because “it's” is a contraction, it is informal and not suited to the somewhat encyclopedic tone of our wiki articles.
2. Because “it's” is a contraction, you can use “it is” in its place. If you always use “it is,” you can avoid the error entirely.

More Resources

Here are some useful links to off-site pages:

- It's vs Its @ e Learn English Language

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