



English Teachers' Pet Peeves

No-no #4: Confusing *you're*
and *your*

Magic Apostrophe Rule to the rescue!

& Except when it is used with a person's name or a noun, an apostrophe almost always stands for a letter left out. If nothing is left out, you don't want an apostrophe.



Let's break it down!

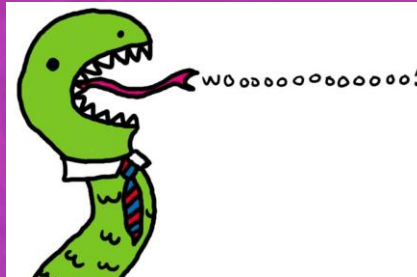
&The word *you're* is not a person's name or a noun. Therefore, the apostrophe must stand for something left out.

&It does, by golly! The word *you're* is a contraction for *you are*. The apostrophe stands for the missing *a* in *are*. Therefore, the only time you should use *you're* is when you can substitute the words *you are* for the word *you're*.

Some super awesome examples:

Which do you think is correct?

& Be sure to bring ***your/you're*** coat with you.



& If ***your/you're*** going to ask a guy to the dance, at least pick a nice one.

How'd you do?

& Be sure to bring **your** coat with you.

(Be sure to bring **you are** coat with you? No, that doesn't make sense. You definitely don't want **you're**. Use **your** instead.)

& If **you're** going to ask a guy to the dance, at least pick a nice one.

(If **you are** going to ask a guy to the dance, at least pick a nice one. Yes, that sounds right. Use **you're**.)



Now, practice. (Because I say so!)

&The members of the Melting Lemons sauntered on stage. “**You’re/Your** going to love our first song,” said the lead singer, Clovis. “It’s not **you’re/your** average heavy metal tune, man. It’s way deeper than anything ever before created. **You’re/your** just going to be blown away by it’s brilliance.”

He paused. “This tune has a lot of meaning for me, and for the members of the band because it’s about a subject very dear to our hearts: toenail clippers. **You’re/your** so lucky to be here and share in the very first performance of this piece. I know **you’re/your** going to enjoy **you’re/your** listening experience.”

The answers! Drum roll, please!

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