“Its” vs. “It’s”
Contributors: UWC Staff

The difference between “its” and “it’s” can be confusing because they are said exactly the same way. However, in writing, it is important to make the distinction.

**Using “its”**
We use “its” when the word “it” is functioning as a pronoun and you want to show possession.

> The kitchen in the house is its only good quality.

> The book has its good and badly written parts.

This can be counterintuitive because, normally, the apostrophe is used to show possession. However, in the case of “its,” no apostrophe actually shows possession.

**Using “it’s”**

We use “it’s” when contracting the phrase “it is.”

> It’s a shame that I switched majors.

> I feel like it’s a bad thing to go shopping at the last minute.

A good way to know whether you should use “its” or “it’s” is do this: take out the “its” or “it’s” and replace it with “it is.” If the sentence still is grammatically correct then you can use “it’s.” If not, then “its” is probably appropriate.