

## Transcript

### Write it right

#### Narrator:

Whenever you're writing something, such as an Open University assignment, it's easy to make mistakes. This video looks at seven common writing mistakes, which can lose you marks when you're being assessed. First up your versus you're. This mark here is called an apostrophe and it's worth working out when to use it.

Your and you're sound the same. But your without an apostrophe means 'something belonging to you' - your dinner.

And in the case of you're, the apostrophe is used to show some letters are missing. You're means the same as you are. So if a dog is enjoying its dinner you'd say: 'You're a happy dog, enjoying your dinner'. Understanding the apostrophe also helps with another mistake. Number 2. The difference between its and it's.

The apostrophe in it's shows that two words it and is have been smushed together. It is becomes it's. If not short for it is, then there's no apostrophe and it's just its. So, if you want to write 'It's great my cat has its milk', think if you mean it is great, in which case there's an apostrophe, otherwise there isn't.

And it's similar with the words they're, there and their. If they're is a shortened version of they are, you use an apostrophe. They are becomes they're. If their means 'something that belongs to them' then it's their with an 'i'. And if there refers to a place or position, then it's there – with two 'e's.

So, if you're looking for two dogs each with a bowl, you'd say: 'They're over there with their dinner'.

Next up is should have and NOT should of. Should've is a quick way of saying should have. Should have becomes should've. The letters 'h' and 'a' are missing so you can see there there's an apostrophe. But if you're writing an assignment, it's usually best to write words out in full. So, if you're writing should've, you probably should have written the words out in full... And not should of which, although it sounds similar, is never right.

There are times when an apostrophe isn't taking the place of missing letters. Let's look at an example of this: Dog's and Dogs'. Dog's here, with the apostrophe before the letter 's' means 'belonging to one dog'. So, when it comes to feeding your pet, this is 'the dog's dinner' with an 'apostrophe s'.

When the dinner belongs to more than one dog, the correct thing to do is to put the apostrophe after the letter 's'. 'The dogs' dinner' is a dinner belonging to more than one dog!

Another common muddle is between effect and affect. They sound similar but they are not the same.

An effect is a thing or a noun; something you can make. To affect something is to do or change something (a verb). So, if someone is doing some exercise, you could say: 'The effect of the exercise affects their mood'.

Finally let's look at the difference between fewer and less. They sound like they mean the same thing, but fewer is for things that can be counted, like bottles, while less is for something that can't be counted, like milk.

So, when it comes to a lack of milk for example, you would have less milk and fewer bottles of milk.

It's very easy to get these things wrong. The key is to learn to spot your mistakes and correct them before your marks are affected. This can also help with your written communication in other areas of life and give you confidence that you are expressing yourself in the best way you can.