

# How to Succeed Without Really Trying: Knowing the Difference Between Its and It's



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I've always advised my children that if they can use *its* and *it's* appropriately, if they can balance their checkbooks and can fry an egg, then they can be wildly successful in the world. In other words, if they paid attention briefly in English, Math and Home Economics, success is within reach.

Now most people balance their checkbooks online and there are hundreds of websites to guide you in the cooking of a fried egg, but it is still clear to me that many people don't know the difference between its and it's.

Here's how I remember which one to use, because it doesn't come naturally to me either.

*If you can substitute the words "it is" in the sentence, use the apostrophe. For example: "It's my blog" can also be expressed as "It is my blog."*

*If the words "it is" make no sense whatsoever as a substitution, do not use the apostrophe. For example: "The kitten licked its paw," cannot be expressed as "The kitten licked it is paw."*

*In this instance, you have my permission to forget the rule that "'s" means "belongs to."*

Okay, I feel much better having gotten this off my chest.

Oh, and p.s. I also taught my kids to look people in the eye when they give them a firm handshake. Maybe I should have taught them the fist bump instead – it's (it is) more sanitary.