



Palm Beach Atlantic University
Center for Writing Excellence

**WORDS THAT SOUND
THE SAME BUT ARE NOT**

ITS vs. IT'S:

- *ITS* is the possessive form of the third person singular *it*. This possessive pronoun shows ownership of an object.

Sammy helped recover the *dog's* ball.

Sammy helped recover *its* ball.

- *IT'S* is the abbreviation for *it is*.

It is very cloudy outside!

It's very clouded outside!

WHO'S vs. WHOSE:

- *WHO'S* is an abbreviation for *who is*.

Who is knocking at the door?

Who's knocking at our door?

- *WHOSE* is the possessive form of the word *who*. Possessive pronouns indicate possession of an object.

Whose is the purple book on the table?

The purple book on the table is *Becky's*.

YOU'RE vs. YOUR:

- *YOU'RE* is an abbreviation for *you are*.

I must admit that *you are* an awesome basketball player, Mr. James.

I must admit that *you're* an awesome basketball player, LeBron.

- *YOUR* is the possessive version of the second person plural and the second person singular *you*. Remember: possessive pronouns indicate ownership of an object.

Your cat has been meowing all day! Go take care of it!

THEY vs. THEY'RE, THEIR, THEIRS, and THERE (as well as THERE'S):

- *THEY* is the third person plural pronoun.

Here are Katy and John. *They* are my grandparents.

- *THEY'RE* is the abbreviation for *they are*.

Here are Katy and John. *They're* my grandparents.

- *THEIR* and *THEIRS* are possessive forms of *they*.

Their grandsons are *theirs*, so do not bother them with your advice.

- *THERE* means “in or at that place.”

The jacket you were looking for is *there*, under the bed.

- *THERE'S* is an abbreviation for *there is*.

I feel like *there's* something moving in the other room because I hear noises.