

When to Use Contractions

Answer Key

1. Don't/Do not use the toaster near water.
Do not. These instructions require a formal writing voice.
2. Hey, Benny, I will/I'll let you know tomorrow when I can drop off the new laptop.
I'll. The sentence calls for a friendly tone, so the contraction is appropriate.
3. Mr. Chen should not have/shouldn't've criticized Maggie in front of everyone.
should not have. Never use a contraction that requires two apostrophes.
4. Do not/don't tamper with the blood specimens before they are picked up.
Do not. The seriousness of the content demands a formal voice.
5. The volunteers said they'd/they would hand out water bottles before the movie began.
they'd. The content indicates an informal event and, therefore, more informal language is suitable.
6. You are/you're invited to join us at Manfield Park for a laid-back barbeque on Labor Day.
You're. The wording in the invitation strongly suggests that the message is meant to be informal.
7. Effective communication would have/would've led to enhanced productivity, heightened customer satisfaction, and significant cost savings.
Would have. The language in the sentence is clearly formal.
8. Although I'm/I am hesitant to be leaving Next.com., working at such an innovative start-up has been a memorable experience.
I am. The content tells us the sentence is part of a resignation letter, which demands a formal tone.
9. After the interview, I am/ I'm even more excited to become a part of FarmToTable.com.
I'm. The author would want his or her voice to show sincere excitement.
10. Passengers shouldn't/should not open the door until the vehicle comes to a complete stop.
should not. Instructions require formality.