

AVOIDING CONTRACTIONS

While contractions are perfectly acceptable in informal writing, some narratives, and even creative writing, Contractions are usually considered informal constructions in formal forms writing (e.g., academic exposition, academic argumentation, scientific, technical, and legal writing). As a consequence, their use is limited in college composition.

The trend in professional, technical, and most collegiate writing continues to be: Avoid Contractions.

Particular contractions can cause confusion. Since the aim of college writing is usually one of establishing clarity, coherence, and consistency, then avoiding contractions becomes a good practice.

EX:

IT'S may mean two different things:

It is (as in: It's raining)

It has (as in: It's been a while since we've talked....)

Since you want to be clear about which verb you are using in formal writing, then avoiding such contractions is good.

Moreover, particular contractions are more closely related to regionalisms, illiteracies, or slang.

EX:

Ain't (which often stands for isn't or aren't)

Such contractions may not help us to distinguish between singular entities or plural entities; in a sense, this limits clarity.

Therefore, try to avoid contractions in formal writing. Contractions are neither formal nor specific.

Moreover, remember that speaking and writing are two different language acts (and both have their own levels of formality and informality).

With speaking, once something is said, such speech cannot be revised.

Writing, on the other hand, allows a person to fix errors and make language much more effective and efficient.