

Appendix 5

Short forms (I'm / you've / didn't etc.)

5.1 In spoken English we usually say **I'm / you've / didn't** etc. (*short forms* or *contractions*) rather than **I am / you have / did not** etc. We also use these short forms in informal writing (for example, a letter or message to a friend).

When we write short forms, we use an *apostrophe* (') for the missing letter(s):

I'm = I am you've = you have didn't = did not

5.2 List of short forms:

'm = am	I'm						
's = is or has		he's	she's	it's			
're = are					you're	we're	they're
've = have	I've				you've	we've	they've
'll = will	I'll	he'll	she'll		you'll	we'll	they'll
'd = would or had	I'd	he'd	she'd		you'd	we'd	they'd

's can be **is** or **has**:

- ☐ She's ill. (= She **is** ill.)
- ☐ She's gone away. (= She **has** gone)

but **let's** = let **us**:

- ☐ Let's go now. (= Let **us** go)

'd can be **would** or **had**:

- ☐ I'd see a doctor if I were you. (= I **would** see)
- ☐ I'd never seen her before. (= I **had** never seen)

We use some of these short forms (especially 's) after question words (**who/what** etc.) and after **that/there/here**:

- who's what's where's how's that's there's here's who'll there'll who'd
- ☐ **Who's** that woman over there? (= who **is**)
- ☐ **What's** happened? (= what **has**)
- ☐ Do you think **there'll** be many people at the party? (= there **will**)

We also use short forms (especially 's) after a noun:

- ☐ **Katherine's** going out tonight. (= Katherine **is**)
- ☐ **My best friend's** just got married. (= My best friend **has**)

You cannot use 'm / 's / 're / 've / 'll / 'd at the end of a sentence (because the verb is stressed in this position):

- ☐ 'Are you tired?' 'Yes, I **am**.' (*not* Yes, I'm.)
- ☐ Do you know where she **is**? (*not* Do you know where she's?)

5.3 Negative short forms

isn't (= is not)	don't (= do not)	haven't (= have not)
aren't (= are not)	doesn't (= does not)	hasn't (= has not)
wasn't (= was not)	didn't (= did not)	hadn't (= had not)
weren't (= were not)		
can't (= cannot)	couldn't (= could not)	mustn't (= must not)
won't (= will not)	wouldn't (= would not)	needn't (= need not)
shan't (= shall not)	shouldn't (= should not)	daren't (= dare not)

Negative short forms for **is** and **are** can be:

he **isn't** / she **isn't** / it **isn't** or he's **not** / she's **not** / it's **not**
 you **aren't** / we **aren't** / they **aren't** or you're **not** / we're **not** / they're **not**