

3/1/26

# Contraction Action

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Estimated play time: Approximately 15 minutes  
Number of players: Unlimited  
Supplies needed: Scoring board/pad; noisemakers

## Overview:

In English, apostrophes are used for possessive words and for contractions. It's the contractions we are focusing on in this game. We have identified 92 English contractions, most of which are very commonly used, especially in speech. We all know the contraction *it's*, which means *it is*. Another way to say *it is*, though a bit old-fashioned, is *'tis*, which is also a contraction. There are also contractions such as *o'clock*, meaning *of the clock*, which can be considered both a contraction and a possessive word.

How many of our identified contractions can you come up with? To help, we've provided a list that indicates the first letter of each word, and also how many words start with that letter.

## Instructions:

1. This game can be played by individuals or in groups.
2. We recommend that you write a beginning letter on a large pad of paper or a white board for all to see. For example, you should write down the letter "I" and put the number 8 to the right of the "I." That way, your players know that they should try to come up with 8 contractions that begin with the letter "I." As we noted before, a very common one is *It's*.
3. We don't recommend scoring this game; just have players shout out as many answers as they can that start with the given letter. When you're done with the first letter, move on to the second starting letter hint.

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*Note: Other, more obscure correct answers are possible; and some answers are archaic or colloquial.*

<u>Starts with</u>	<u>Number of Words</u>
<b>A</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>H</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>I</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>J</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>L</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>M</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>O</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>S</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>W</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Y</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>' (apostrophe)</b>	<b>5</b>

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|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Aren't: are not         | 32. Mustn't: must not        | 62. What'll: what will/shall |
| 2. Can't: can not          | 33. Ne'er-do-well            | 63. What're: what are        |
| 3. Cat-o'-nine-tails       | 34. Needn't: need not        | 64. What's: what is/has      |
| 4. Could've: could have    | 35. O': of                   | 65. What've: what have       |
| 5. Couldn't: could not     | 36. O'clock: of the clock    | 66. When'd: when did         |
| 6. Didn't: did not         | 37. Shan't: shall not        | 67. When'll: when will       |
| 7. Doesn't: does not       | 38. She'd: she had/would     | 68. When's: when is          |
| 8. Don't: do not           | 39. She'll: she will/shall   | 69. Where'd: where did       |
| 9. Hadn't: had not         | 40. She's: she is/has        | 70. Where'll: where will     |
| 10. Hasn't: has not        | 41. Should've: should have   | 71. Where's: where is/has    |
| 11. Haven't: have not      | 42. Shouldn't: should not    | 72. Who'd: who had/would     |
| 12. He'd: he had/would     | 43. Tam o' Shanter           | 73. Who'll: who will/shall   |
| 13. He'll: he will/shall   | 44. That'd: that had/would   | 74. Who're: who are          |
| 14. He's: he is/has        | 45. That'll: that will/shall | 75. Who's: who is/has        |
| 15. How'd: how had/would   | 46. That's: that is/has      | 76. Who've: who have         |
| 16. How'll: how will/shall | 47. There'd: there had/would | 77. Why'd: why did/would     |
| 17. How's: how is          | 48. There'll: there will     | 78. Why'll: why will/shall   |
| 18. I'd: I had/would       | 49. There's: there is/has    | 79. Why's: why is            |
| 19. I'll: I will/shall     | 50. They'd: they had / would | 80. Will-o'-the-wisp         |
| 20. I'm: I am              | 51. They'll: they will       | 81. Won't: will not          |
| 21. I've: I have           | 52. They're: they are        | 82. Would've: would have     |
| 22. Isn't: is not          | 53. They've: they have       | 83. Wouldn't: would not      |
| 23. It'd: it would/had     | 54. This'll: this will       | 84. You'd: you had / would   |
| 24. It'll: it will/shall   | 55. Wasn't: was not          | 85. You'll: you will         |
| 25. It's: it is/has        | 56. We'd: we had/would       | 86. You're: you are          |
| 26. Jack-o'-lantern        | 57. We'll: we will           | 87. You've: you have         |
| 27. Let's: let us          | 58. We're: we are            | 88. 'Em: them                |
| 28. Ma'am: madam           | 59. We've: we have           | 89. 'Tis: it is              |
| 29. Might've: might have   | 60. Weren't: were not        | 90. 'Tisn't: it is not       |
| 30. Mightn't: might not    | 61. What'd: what had/did     | 91. 'Twas: it was            |
| 31. Must've: must have     |                              | 92. 'Twasn't                 |