

Library-Iowa Department for the Blind
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Weekly Dose
REVIEW OF CONTRACTION USAGE
Lower Signs

Lower sign rule: Any number of lower groupsigns and lower punctuation may follow one another without a space, provided that one of them is in contact with a character containing dot 1 or dot 4.

- When a series of lower signs is not in contact with a dot 1 or 4, the last possible contraction is spelled out.

LOWER WORDSIGNS

be, his, was, were:

- Cannot be part of a longer word
- Cannot be used in contact with lower punctuation

in, enough:

- Cannot be part of a longer word (except that **enough** can be used in the word **enough's**)
- Can be used in contact with lower punctuation if the sequence contains upper dots.
- The wordsign for **in** can be used next to a slash

LOWER GROUPSIGNS

be, con dis:

- Are only used when they constitute the first syllable of a word.
- Are used following the hyphen in a hyphenated compound word.
- Are not used next to a slash.
- **con** and **dis** cannot be used as whole words.
- can be used in abbreviations if they do not constitute the entire abbreviation.

bb, cc, ff, gg, ea:

- Are used only in the middle of words.
- Strong groupsigns have preference over them.
- Are never used when in contact with punctuation.
- **ea** is not used when its letters overlap a prefix and the remainder of the word.

en, in:

- Can be used wherever the letters occur.
- Strong groupsigns have preference over them; however, **ing** cannot be used at the beginning of a word.
- Must follow the lower sign rule.