

DASHES AND HYPHENS

GUIDELINES FOR DASHES AND HYPHENS

1. **A dash is used with a long explanation that interrupts the sentence.**

EX:

I spoke to Katy--I really can't believe she did what she did--about reviewing her finances.

2. **Use a dash following a series that introduces a complete sentence.**

EX:

Hot dogs, potato chips, soda pop--all she lives on is junk food.

3. **Use dashes to set off a nonessential appositive or a parenthetical element that is internally punctuated.**

EX:

Her three sons--Tom, Dick, and Harry-- have promised to support her.

4. **Use the hyphen in compound numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine.**

5. **When fractions are adjectives, they are hyphenated.**

EX:

His speech was one-third fact and two-thirds fabrication.

But Three fourths of the people have arrived.

6. **Use the hyphen in most compound words that contain prepositions.**

brother-in-law

commander-in-chief

stick-in-the-mud

7. **Use a hyphen in compound adjectives that come before a noun. When they are used in the predicate position, they are not hyphenated.**

She is a part-time employee. *But* She works part time.

EXERCISE

Use hyphens or dashes as necessary.

1. Some of the so called art in that exhibition could have been done by a four year old child.
2. Mary, John, and Ruth I was surprised to find that they were all available.
3. I really thought you would try please don't interrupt me to find the results of the decision.
4. I grew up on hand me down clothes.
5. He has just been named editor in chief of Life magazine.
6. No matter when you visit England summer, fall, winter, or spring you will find the weather rather cool.
7. When Sarah turned twenty three, she already had three children.
8. Genes, hormones, diet these factors all play a part in our health.
9. Wayne's three officemates Rogers, Wilson, and Probst are all very competent.