

Hyphens, Dashes, and Ellipses

Retaching

Name _____ Date _____

Here are ways to use hyphens (-), dashes (—), and ellipses (...).

Hyphens Use a hyphen to connect words, word elements, or the parts of a compound word, as follows:

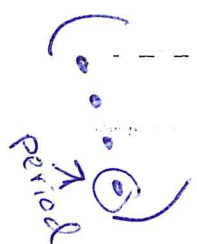
- in compound numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine, and in fractions such as two-thirds
- in certain compound nouns, such as mother-in-law, great-grandson
- in compound adjectives used before (but not after) the noun it modifies, such as best-known candidate
- in words with the prefixes ex-, self-, quasi-, and all-, and with the suffix -elect
- to avoid confusion or to avoid repeating a vowel or consonant, for example, pre-election, cell-like
- when part of a word must be carried over from one line to the next (Words should be divided only between syllables. Keep at least two letters of the hyphenated word together on a line. Divide an already-hyphenated word at the hyphen, and never divide a one-syllable word.)

Dashes Use dashes for the following reasons:

- to signal an abrupt change or an idea that breaks into the thought of a sentence
- Specials—at least according to regular patrons—are excellent.
- to set off explanatory, supplementary, or parenthetical material in sentences. The salads available—house, Caesar, and Cobb—are all delicious.

Ellipses Remember the following guidelines for using ellipses (also called ellipsis points).

- Use three ellipsis points to show that one or more words have been omitted within a quoted sentence.
- "The critics are raving about . . . this film."
- Use a period and three ellipsis points to show that quoted material, such as the following, has been omitted: the last part of a sentence, the first part of the following sentence, an entire sentence or more, or an entire paragraph or more.
 - In fiction or informal writing, three ellipsis points may also be used to indicate that an idea or a character's voice trails off.



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More Practice

A. Using the Hyphen

In these sentences, underline each word that requires a hyphen, and write the corrected word on the line at the right.

1. Raspberry fudge was voted the mostliked ice cream flavor of the month. _____
2. In the election for class treasurer, I received thirtyfour more votes than my opponent. _____
3. The selfproclaimed automotive genius ran out of gas on the way to school this morning. _____
4. Joshua's sisterinlaw gave him a Labrador retriever for his birthday. _____
5. Governorelect Williams enjoyed attending county fairs around the state. _____

B. Using Dashes in Sentences

Rewrite each sentence inserting dashes where they are needed.

1. Talking animals, evil witches, elves, and fairies all these characters are commonplace in fairy tales. _____
2. It was all my fault no, I take that back the fault was partially yours. _____
3. All of your nervous habits tapping your fingers, cracking your knuckles, and scratching your head are getting out of hand. _____
4. This painting if I must say so myself is my best work to date. _____

C. Using Ellipses

Read the following passage. Then choose the passage below in which ellipses points have been used correctly to quote the passage. Circle the letter before the correct passage.

The Ship Island region was as woodsy and tenantless as ever. The island has ceased to be an island; has joined itself compactly to the main shore, and wagons travel, now, where the steamboats used to navigate.

Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*

1. The Ship Island region was as woodsy. . . . as ever. The island. . . . has joined itself compactly to the main shore, and wagons travel, now . . .
2. The Ship Island. . . . has ceased to be an island . . . and wagons travel, now, where the steamboats used to navigate.

THE HYPHEN

25t. Use a hyphen to divide a word at the end of a line.

For rules on dividing words at the end of a line, see "Manuscript Form," pages 486-87.

25u. Use a hyphen with compound numbers from *twenty-one* to *ninety-nine* and with fractions used as adjectives.

EXAMPLES five hundred and forty-one
three-quarter-length stockings
a two-thirds majority [two-thirds is used as an adjective modifying *majority*]
two thirds of the voters [*thirds* is a noun modified by *two*]

25v. Use a hyphen with the prefixes *ex-*, *self-*, *all-*, with the suffix *-elect*, and with all prefixes before a proper noun or proper adjective.

EXAMPLES ex-champion mid-September
self-confidence trans-Canadian
mayor-elect pre-Renaissance

25w. Hyphenate a compound adjective when it precedes the word it modifies.

EXAMPLES the well-known actor *but* The actor was well known.
the soft-spoken woman *but* The woman was soft spoken.

> **NOTE** Do not use a hyphen if one of the modifiers is an adverb ending in *-ly*.

EXAMPLE a heavily loaded truck

25x. Use a hyphen to prevent confusion or awkwardness.

EXAMPLES semi-invalid [prevents awkwardness of *semiinvalid*]
re-cover a floor [prevents confusion with *recover*]
re-form a line [prevents confusion with *reform*]
re-mark the term papers [prevents confusion with *remark*]

THE DASH

25g. Use the dash to indicate an abrupt break in thought.

EXAMPLES The way the argument started was stupid—but why bring it up again?—the problem has been settled.
A majority of the graduating class—fifty-five percent, in fact—is going on to college.

25h. Use a dash to set off parenthetical material.

EXAMPLE According to the Constitution, only one person—and that is the President—can appoint justices to the Supreme Court.

25i. Use a dash to mean *namely*, *in other words*, *that is*, and similar expressions that precede explanations.

EXAMPLE Her decision not to resign was based on one thought—she enjoys teaching science to teen-agers.

The dash and colon are often interchangeable in this use. A dash may be considered a little more emphatic than a colon. If the dash is overused, it loses its emphasis.

Using the Hyphen and Dash

DIRECTIONS: Place a hyphen or a dash (two hyphens) where one is needed in the sentences below.

EXAMPLE: We made a U-turn when we realized we had forgotten something[^] my brother Zach.

1. The Humphrey Hawkins bill passed last week.
2. I couldn't believe it, could you that her daughter speaks three languages at age five?
3. Three fourths of the student body doesn't know the school song and doesn't care!
4. The Bobcats lost the game 24 18.
5. He just played a B flat on the violin.
6. The gas tank is two thirds empty.
7. Sonia, did you hear that the principal just Oh, I see that you already know.
8. Rick's blue Nova skidded into the ditch at the top of the S curve.
9. He lived through the crash barely, but he'll never forget it.
10. He's paralyzed from the shoulders down; he'll never regain more than one fifth of his motor skills.
11. That means, for the rest of his life, someone else will have to fasten the buttons on his shirt sleeves, tie his shoes, and cut his fingernails all the little things we take for granted.
12. He will never again enjoy the luxury of being an average, run of the mill person.
13. I sometimes wonder why it's so difficult to appreciate really appreciate being able to walk and talk and see and hear.
14. So many of our efforts amount to no more than half hearted attempts to go through the motions of living.
15. Sloppy living really is what's the word pathetic?
16. People are still experiencing the effects of the first H bomb.
17. My brother in law loves to sail.
18. One third of the freshman class reads below the sixth grade level.
19. Sandy spent those years (1975 1977) studying in Germany.
20. I'll never forget when Andria couldn't remember that Oh, John, what was that silly thing which Andria couldn't remember?
21. The little girl had X rays taken of her ankle.
22. The little boy's two for a dime approach sold three gallons of lemonade.

Name

Date

Hour

errors

insert or delete

Hyphens, Dashes, and Ellipses

Identify and correct all errors in the use of hyphens, dashes, and ellipses. If a sentence contains no errors, write Correct.

Reporter's Notes: Con Artist Nabbed

(1) With moves worthy of an all star football player, Detective Sonia Lopez tackled Willie Smith as he attempted to escape a well engineered sting operation. (2) Smith is wanted in four states Ohio, Kentucky, Florida, and Texas for bilking patriotic but gullible citizens of their savings. (3) One victim said, "I felt so stupid . . . I should have known the Washington Monument wasn't for sale." (4) Undercover officer Laura Hernández, forty two, posed as a wealthy widow looking for a nest egg. (5) Ex-uding selfconfidence, Smith had presented quasiauthentic shares in the Washington Monument.

→ this word means "overflowing with" or "bubbling over"

