

Chapter 24

Other Marks of Punctuation

Hyphens, Dashes, Parentheses

HYPHENS

As you know, some compound words are hyphenated (*attorney-general*); some are written as one word (*carport*); some are written as two or more words (*real estate*). As our language grows, new compound words enter the vocabulary, bringing writers the problem of choosing the correct form.

Whenever you need to know whether a word is hyphenated, consult your dictionary. In addition, learn to use the hyphen in the following situations.

24a. Use a hyphen to divide a word at the end of a line.

If you will look at the right margins of pages in this book, you will see that hyphens are often used to divide words at the ends of lines. *A word must always be divided between syllables.*

INCORRECT She spoke, but it was obvious that she didn't recognize me.

CORRECT She spoke, but it was obvious that she didn't recognize me.

If you need to divide a word and are not sure about its syllables, look it up in your dictionary. Keep in mind these rules for syllable division:

1. Since words are divisible between syllables only, do not divide one-syllable words.

INCORRECT Do you know how much that big kettle weighs?

CORRECT Do you know how much that big kettle weighs?

CORRECT Do you know how much that big kettle weighs?

2. You should try to avoid dividing capitalized words.

INCORRECT Jane's aunt works at the Smithsonian Institution.

CORRECT Jane's aunt works at the Smithsonian Institution.

3. If a word is already hyphenated, divide it *only* at a hyphen.

INCORRECT Tonight I am going to meet my new mother-in-law.

CORRECT Tonight I am going to meet my new mother-in-law.

4. Do not divide a word so that one letter stands alone.

INCORRECT The utility company built a dam to generate electricity.

CORRECT The utility company built a dam to generate electricity.

EXERCISE 1. Suppose that you are considering dividing the following words at the ends of lines. If necessary, check your dictionary for the proper syllabication. Then copy each word and use a hyphen to indicate where you would make the division. If a word should *not* be divided, write “carry forward” after the corresponding number on your paper.

EXAMPLES 1. monument
 1. *monu-ment* (or *mon-ument*)
 2. month
 2. *carry forward*

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 1. swimming | 8. Indo-Chinese | 15. hyphen |
| 2. method | 9. unhappy | 16. strength |
| 3. panorama | 10. whose | 17. cameo |
| 4. special | 11. questionnaire | 18. traction |
| 5. impartial | 12. spectacular | 19. galaxy |
| 6. inside | 13. Vera | 20. oboe |
| 7. French | 14. cross-reference | |

24b. Use a hyphen with compound numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine and with fractions used as adjectives.

EXAMPLES thirty-five students
 a two-thirds majority [but *two thirds* of the votes]

24c. Use a hyphen with the prefixes *ex-*, *self-*, *all-*, and with the suffix *-elect*, and with all prefixes before a proper noun or proper adjective.

EXAMPLES ex-champion mid-September
 self-confident trans-Pacific

all—star

anti—Communist

President—elect

pre—Revolutionary

EXERCISE 2. In the following sentences, ten hyphens are needed. List the words that should be hyphenated, correctly punctuated, on your paper.

1. The exstudents hoped that the proposal would pass by a two thirds majority.
2. About three fourths of the club members are under twenty one years of age.
3. The expresident told us about events that took place during the preRenaissance era.
4. An all American quarterback last year, Mac boasts of being a self made star.
5. December and January have thirty one days; but February has only twenty eight, except during leap year, when it has twenty nine.

DASHES

As you have learned, many words and phrases are used *parenthetically*, that is, they break into the main thought. They are explanations, qualifications, or just “side remarks.” They do not affect the grammatical construction of the sentences in which they occur.

Most parenthetical elements are set off by commas or parentheses. Sometimes, however, words or phrases or clauses used parenthetically may demand a stronger separation. In such instances, you use a dash.

24d. Use a dash to indicate an abrupt break in thought

EXAMPLES

Stephens—Ms. Stephens, I mean—was waiting for me in her office.

Julia Stowe—her nickname is “Peanuts” —has moved into my neighborhood.

“Then what—what shall I say?” Sara faltered.

“I hope—” Audrey began and then stopped.

EXERCISE 3. Copy the following sentences (adapted from the work of professional writers who used the dash correctly and effectively) and insert dashes where they are appropriate.

1. “It it’s not right,” she stammered.
2. Suddenly and don’t ask me how it happened the conviction came to me

that she was right.

3. My sister's engagement this is supposed to be a secret will be announced Sunday.
4. The climate there winters sometimes last for eight months will be quite a change from Florida.
5. The valedictorian that is, the student having the highest average will receive a special award.

PARENTHESES

Parentheses are used to set off parenthetical elements that serve as explanations or qualifications. Since parentheses are *enclosing* marks, they are used in pairs.

24e. Use parentheses to enclose matter which is added to a sentence but is not considered of major importance.

EXAMPLES Next Monday night (of course, I'll see you before then) we will meet at the stadium.

During the Middle Ages (from about A.D. 500 to A.D. 1500) Muslims and Vikings invaded Europe.

Mrs. Clement Nelson (formerly Miss Valerie Kirk) was the guest of honor.

North Carolina's Senator Jordan (Democrat) led the debate on the proposal. There are several poems by Sara Teasdale (1884-1933) in this book.

As you see from the examples above, the material enclosed in parentheses may range from a single word or number to a short sentence. In the first example, the sentence in parentheses is part of the main sentence. Sometimes an entire sentence, standing alone, can be placed in parentheses.

EXAMPLE Correct the spelling errors in these sentences. (Do not write in your book.)

Notice that the period for the enclosed sentence is placed inside the parentheses. Punctuation marks are used within parentheses when they belong with the parenthetical matter, as above. Do not, however, place a punctuation mark within parentheses if it belongs to the sentence as a whole.

EXAMPLE She plans to rehearse at least twenty hours (probably longer);

moreover, she must know her part before the first rehearsal.

In general, follow these two rules when you are considering using parentheses:

1. Always be sure that any material enclosed in parentheses may be omitted without changing the basic meaning and construction of the sentence.
2. Commas, dashes, and parentheses are frequently interchangeable, especially for setting off incidental words or phrases. Commas are more common than dashes; dashes are more common than parentheses.

EXERCISE 4. Decide where parentheses may be used in the following sentences (adapted from the works of professional writers who used parentheses). Copy the sentences, adding the parentheses and punctuating the parenthetical elements correctly.

EXAMPLE 1. These three powers formed the Triple Entente which means “triple understanding.”

1. These three powers formed the Triple Entente (which means “triple understanding”)

1. Bake the meat in an oven set at 450° F 232° C for about forty minutes.
2. For shallow containers, buy Oasis a spongelike, moisture-retaining block from a florist.
3. Around her neck she wore a shabby furpiece whether mink, muskrat, or alley cat I could not determine.
4. Having learned something do not eat old turtles I was now determined to explore the whole subject.
5. Beginning with her book of poems *A Street in Bronzeville* and including her marvelous *Annie Allen* which was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1950 the work of Gwendolyn Brooks has received well-deserved praise from critics.
6. She frets about the heavy expenses of being on the tour \$15,000 a year.
7. A sperm whale the kind Moby Dick was grows to eighty feet.
8. The architect later he designed the Woolworth Tower in New York became dissatisfied and threatened to sue.
9. I am only against the fake or in a kinder term the exaggerated advertising

claim.

10. The game State vs. Eastern was nothing but an endless series of fumbles at midfield.

REVIEW EXERCISE A. Copy the following sentences, and punctuate them by using hyphens, dashes, or parentheses. (Do not add commas in this exercise.) When you have a choice between dashes and parentheses, be prepared to give a reason for your choice.

EXAMPLE

1. In my history book there are several maps see page 716, for example that clearly show the proximity of Cuba to the United States.

1. *In my history book there are several maps (see page 716, for example) that clearly show the proximity of Cuba to the United States.*

1. During the next ten years 1970-1980 my aunt worked for Throckmorton Brothers, Inc.
2. Senator Varner Republican, New York voted against the proposal; nevertheless, it passed by the required two thirds majority.
3. In April of 1980 the President's policy a boycott of the Summer Olympics was supported by the U.S. Olympic Committee.
4. The ex president of the club he always seemed too self confident and all knowing was fond of quoting Shakespeare in any situation.
5. These symptoms dizziness, headaches, fever often indicate the beginning of an infectious disease.
6. One of my New Year's resolutions to do my homework on time has been difficult to keep.
7. Twenty seven members of the Glee Club lucky people! have been invited to sing at the Governor's Ball.
8. Althea either Althea or her twin Lucille will doubtless make the All State team this year.
9. I am definitely going to the beach probably in mid July and I can hardly wait!
10. In "The Secret Sharer," Joseph Conrad 1857-1924 links Leggatt to Cain with the phrase "a fugitive and a vagabond." See Genesis 4: 14.

REVIEW EXERCISE B. This exercise covers capitalization and all marks of punctuation (Chapters 19-24).

Copy and correctly punctuate the following sentences, using capitals where necessary. You may divide sentences if you wish.

1. Early suffragists women like Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony campaigned to get the vote for women.
2. Rod Evans sailing over the last hurdle easily won the race. Roger Evans, his brother, came in a slow second.
3. Hurrah! Shouted Sylvia, I knew you'd make it, Rod. When are you heading for the Olympics? Your mother said last night my son Rod is going to be all American this year.
4. Rosemary is knitting her first sweater, a pink soft wool one with no sleeves whatever, according to directions in the May 81 issue of Seventeen magazine.
5. Well, he does, I believe, still live at 268 Fairway Lane, Des Moines, Iowa 50318.
6. Father's Day comes on the third Sunday in June; Mother's Day comes on the second Sunday in May.
7. Elena dreams of working at the Brookhaven National Laboratory at Upton, New York.
8. I've carefully studied Chapter 20, end marks and commas in our textbook on English grammar and composition, as well as the other chapters on punctuation. Therefore, I use commas for appositives and for series; quotation marks to enclose titles of chapters; and semicolons to separate independent clauses not joined by and, but, or, nor, for, or yet.
9. Jimson weed was named after Jamestown, Virginia, and wisteria was named after Caspar Wistar, 1696-1752, an anatomist.
10. A devilfish doesn't have a forked tail and a sand dollar won't buy an ice-cream cone or a ticket to the play, Annie, but an electric eel can shock you.

REVIEW EXERCISE C. This exercise covers capitalization and all marks of punctuation (Chapters 19-24). Copy and correctly punctuate the following sentences, using capitals where necessary.

1. Get your big feet out of the aisle. John Linda muttered, stumbling over them on her way to the chalkboard.
2. What a great story! exclaimed Jose, who I remembered usually finishes his reading assignments very quickly.
3. Mr. Sanchez, a kindly, generous man in our neighborhood, distributes gum, fruit, and small toys to the children in Brooks Hospital.
4. When she comes home from work, my mother always asks me where is your sister?
5. In an editorial entitled "Which Way is Up?" the editor of our school paper, the Cumberland News, wrote: "As our school's athletic record improves, school

spirit declines

6. This salad requires the following lettuce tomato cucumber and onion in addition of course there is the dressing an important part of any salad.
7. I agreed with Mrs Guth my guidance counselor that I had better apply early for summer jobs for there are only a limited number of positions available.
8. E M Treanor jr was taken by ambulance to dade county emergency center where he was treated by dr henry and dr su
9. Samuel Clemens 1835-1910 who used the pen name Mark Twain wrote the novel the adventures of tom sawyer and patterned one of its characters becky thatcher after laura hawkins a neighbor who lived across the street from clemens in hannibal missouri
10. As an international language english has some drawbacks for example it has many words with more than one meaning and the spelling of many of its words is confusing