

The correct usage of hyphens

Created: Friday, 08 April 2016 10:30 | Published: Sunday, 24 April 2016 13:11 | Written by [namita](#) | [Print](#)

According to the oxford dictionary, hyphens (-) are used to link words and parts of words to avoid confusion. They are also called as 'look-it-up' punctuation mark. Its main purpose is to link words together, for instance, long-term, up-to-date, etc. Most people get confused between the usage of hyphens and dashes. Dashes are longer and have spaces around them, which is not the case with hyphens.



Rules to use hyphens

Hyphen are used between two or more words when they appear before a noun to modify the meaning and give it a single idea. Compound adjectives consist of noun + adjective. Let us look at some examples:

His office is an example of state-of-the-art design
He has chosen to stay in an off-campus apartment
This area is accident-prone
He likes his coffee sugar-free
She is always camera-ready

Compound adjectives also carry a noun + a participle or an adjective + a participle, respectively. Let us look at some examples:

This is a user-generated interface
This place is custom-built for premium consumers
He is a good-looking model
He is bad-tempered in office

Hyphen is also used when writing original or unusual compound nouns. For example: I am a no-meater as I have taken an oath.

Hyphen is not used with the adverb 'very' and adverbs ending with ly. For example:
It is incorrect usage when we say:

She is wearing a very-elegant dress; or
She is wearing a finely-tuned watch.

Hyphens are usually used to indicate ages of people and things.
For example: His boy is two-year-old.

Hyphens are also used along with numbers. When making an estimate of time, distance or to specify quantities, we make use of hyphens.

For example: 4-5 pm, 400-450 people.

Hyphen is used along with spelled-out fractions. But if you are adding the article – a or an – hyphen is not used. For example:

More than one-third audience agreed with the change.

More than a third of audience agreed with the change.

Conclusion

English grammar is a vast topic and to understand its rule, you can join an [online English learning](#) course. Hopefully, this article will help you with the correct usage of hyphen. There are many more rules related to the usage of hyphens and it is impossible to teach you all at once. Join our spoken English class to improve your grammar and spoken English fluency.

About Eagetutor:

eAgeTutor.com is the premier online tutoring provider. eAge's world-class faculty and ace communication experts from around the globe help you to improve English in an all-round manner. Assignments and tasks based on a well-researched content developed by subject matter and industry experts can certainly fetch the most desired results for improving [spoken English](#) skills. Overcoming limitations is just a click of mouse away in this age of effective and advance communication technology. For further information on online English speaking course or to experience the wonders of virtual classroom fix a demonstration session with our tutor. Please visit www.eagetutor.com.

- By Shailja Varma

Related topics:

1. [How to Learn English by Speaking at Home?](#)
2. [The lazy man's guide to learning English](#)
3. [When to use also and too](#)
4. [What are adverbs of frequency?](#)
5. [Present continuous/present perfect - Can you identify the difference?](#)

Category:[Spoken English](#) / [English Grammar](#)

[Joomla SEF URLs by Artio](#)