



HYPHEN

RULES





Rules For Specific Cases

- Compound Modifier - when connecting words to function like one word (adjective)
- Example: The business suit made me look like a well-dressed professional.
- It makes it clear to readers that these two words are one unit of meaning
- Adjective definition - word or phrase modifying a noun





Rules For Specific Cases

- In numbers 21-99 when the numbers are spelled out. Example: Twenty-five
- High and low: High-flying, high-quality, low-frequency
- Prefixes like self, all, ex. Examples: Self-driving cars, all-consuming, ex-employee
- With fractions like quarter-pound, half-way, tenth-of-a-meter
- Compound adjective with numbers like 20th-century history, 5-minute break, 10-year





Additional Rules

- Long-term and short-term
- It is a long-term program vs. this program runs over a long term
- In “over a long term” the word long is about the word term so it’s two words
- In a “long-term program,” the word long-term refers to the word program
- Similarly hyphenate part-time and full-time





More Complex Situations

- Home made, homemade, or home-made?
- Noun with past participle
- This means noun and a past-tense verb
- World-traveled, Boston-based, protein-powered
- Two words: Homemade or home-made are OK



When Not To Use A Hyphen

- When the first word ends in “ly”
- Newly created, quickly written

