

# Punctuation – Dashes

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# Punctuation – The Dash

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Dashes can be used in place of brackets.

Dashes can be used in place of commas.

Dashes can be used in place of colons.

The use of dashes is generally considered to be informal.

UK and US English have different spacing rules.

# Dashes – Examples #1

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Dashes can be used in place of brackets.

- Our new neighbour (Fred Brown) is a policeman.
- Our new neighbour - Fred Brown - is a policeman.
  
- You probably think she's friendly (she's not).
- You probably think she's friendly - she's not.

# Dashes – Examples #2

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Dashes can be used in place of commas.

- My cousin, who lives in Manchester, is pregnant again.
- My cousin - who lives in Manchester - is pregnant again.
  
- Suzi's mother, who is a critic of the school board, spoke up.
- Suzi's mother - who is a critic of the school board - spoke up.

# Dashes – Examples #3

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Dashes can be used in place of colons.

- A BLT sandwich only has 3 ingredients: bacon, lettuce and tomato.
- A BLT sandwich only has 3 ingredients - bacon, lettuce and tomato.
  
- Only two things are certain in life: death and taxes.
- Only two things are certain in life - death and taxes.

# Dashes – Examples #4

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UK and US English have different spacing rules.

UK writers put a space around the dash.

US writers don't put spaces around the dash.

- UK: That's what I said to him – don't waste your money on that junk.
- US: That's what I said to him—don't waste your money on that junk.