

Date _____

Name _____

HYPHEN HOUND'S HYPHEN GUIDE

Hyphens are used to connect whole words, words and prefixes, and parts of words, either temporarily or permanently.

The rules for hyphenation can be extremely complicated and complex, but this brief guide should give you a head start.

Hyphens are often used to avoid ambiguity in sentences.

Otherwise, how would we know the difference between 'a man-eating shark' (yikes!) and 'a man eating shark' (mmm, that looks tasty).

Uses of Hyphens

Creating a compound adjective before a noun:

- The tired-looking teacher slumped at her desk.
- She has greeny-grey eyes.
- The twins are from a single-parent family. [but NOT, despite what you may see in even the best newspapers, "Mrs Jones is a mother-of-one."]



Joining two nouns of equal importance, either to create an adjective or a new noun:

- Our pupil-teacher relationships develop throughout the year.
- Laurence Olivier was known as an actor-director.

Avoiding awkward letter and sound combinations:

- Foundation subjects have been de-emphasised.
- The doctor prescribed anti-inflammatories for my ankle.



Hyphenate when the alternative would have a totally different meaning:

- The ink ran on my contract, so I re-signed it in blood.
- Mr Dracula, my boss, was so demanding that I resigned.
- The Head Teacher retreated to her office after a particularly demanding day.
- The weedkiller hadn't worked, so I re-treated the grass a week later.

Date _____

Name _____

TO HYPHENATE, OR NOT TO HYPHENATE?

The prefix 're' often means 'do again'. However, sometimes the same word with a hyphen after 're' gives a totally different meaning, like this:

- The old wooden chest was really battered, so we **restored** it.
- The caretaker brought the games out of their usual cupboard, then she **re-stored** them after the fair was over.

For each pair of sentences on the next page, choose the best pair of 're' words from the table below to fill the gaps.

Use your dictionary to help you decide which sentence needs the hyphenated word.

refine / re-fine

recover / re-cover

remove / re-move

reflex / re-flex

recount / re-count

research / re-search

return / re-turn

recycle / re-cycle

remark / re-mark

1) Marek has done lots of _____ on our new topic about 'Space'.
The police are going to _____ the area in the hopes of finding some clues.

2) The test scores seemed very low, so the teacher decided to _____ them.

It is extremely rude to make personal _____ about other people.

3) The basketball hoops have gone from the playground; they were _____ by the builders.

Olly was just learning the rules of chess, so Sam said he could _____ the Knight because he'd made a mistake.

4) This new jumper doesn't suit me, so I'm going to _____ it to the shop.
Can you please turn the plant pots round in the morning, then _____ them every afternoon?

5) If you _____ your use of hyphens, your writing will be more exact.
Dad got a parking ticket last week, and he was _____ in the same place today!

6) When you write about what happened, this is called a _____.
The election for School Councillors was so close, the teacher had to _____ all the votes.

7) Our class won a prize for _____ more used batteries than all the others.

Today, we are _____ the road we covered on our bikes yesterday.

8) "As Kate straightens and _____ her arm, you can see the muscle relax and contract."

Samir is the best goalkeeper because he has really quick _____.