

Signpost Punctuation

Pesky Punctuation 2

Pesky Punctuation 2:

- Apostrophe
- Semicolon
- Colon
- Dash/Hyphen
- Phrasal Adjective
- Quotation Marks



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The apostrophe

- The apostrophe is used in the following 3 ways ...



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The apostrophe

- 1 The apostrophe is used in place of omitted letters in a contraction.

- ➔ **It's** not too late to protest the name change. [it is = it's]
- ➔ **Who's** responsible for reining in the new guy? [who is = who's]

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The apostrophe

- 2 The apostrophe shows that a noun is possessive.

- ➔ The project's new name ...
- ➔ All our supervisors' schedules ...
- ➔ My supervisor's duties ...

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The apostrophe

- When a possessive noun ends in **-s**, the **-s** after the apostrophe may be omitted
- But it is **always** correct to keep the **-s** after the apostrophe.
- Be consistent.

- ➔ All our supervisors' schedules ...
- ➔ All our supervisors's schedules ...

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The apostrophe

- Possessive pronouns **do not** take an apostrophe – they have no need to show possession because they are already possessive.
 - ➔ **Its** new name is "Operation FastBuild"!
 - ➔ **Whose** idea was it to ask the new supervisor, anyway?

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The apostrophe

- 3 The apostrophe is used to show that a letter or number is plural. (This is the only time an apostrophe is used to show a word is plural!)
 - ➔ The new secretary has now told everyone this morning that his son made all **A's** last semester.
 - ➔ How many **O's** are there in the CEO's new salary?

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The semicolon

- The semicolon is used in only two ways ...



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The semicolon

- 1 The semicolon acts as a "soft" period; it separates two main clauses **not** joined by a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *but*, etc.).
 - ➔ Observant managers notice problems (often before the employees do); good managers react immediately to rectify problems.

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The semicolon

- 2 The semicolon separates items in a series when at least one item contains a comma.
 - ➔ Please send copies of the attached memo to our offices in Birmingham, Alabama; Penobscot, Maine; and Springfield, Tennessee.

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The serial semicolon?

- **Always** include the semicolon before the word *and* at the end of a series.
 - If the series requires a semicolon, the sentence is already difficult to read.



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The colon

- The colon has a single use ...



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The colon

- The colon introduces a statement or a series in a sentence.
 - ➔ The new policy includes the following provision: Employees must not take personal time without consulting their supervisor at least 48 hours in advance.

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The colon

- The statement that follows the colon may be initial capped but need not be.
 - ➔ The new policy includes the following provision: Employees must not take personal time without consulting their supervisor at least 48 hours in advance.
 - ➔ The new policy includes the following provision: employees must not take personal time without consulting their supervisor at least 48 hours in advance.

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The colon

- The language preceding the colon should foreshadow what follows it.
 - ➔ The new policy includes the following provision: employees must not take personal time without consulting their supervisor at least 48 hours in advance.

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The colon

- In paragraph-style text, a colon never directly follows a verb.
 - ➔ NOT:
The new policy includes: employees must not take personal time without consulting their supervisor at least 48 hours in advance.

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The colon

- A colon may follow a verb that ends the line just before a bulleted list.
 - ➔ The new cafeteria menu includes:
 - tofu stir fry
 - chicken pot pie
 - shrimp fajitas

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The dash

- The dash is punctuation.
- There are three styles of dashes:
 - the broken dash (left over from typewriter days) → --
 - the em dash (1/m) → —
 - the en dash (1/n) → –
- Use one style of dash consistently throughout the document.

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The dash

- You may space before and after the dash or not.
 - The new version – 4.1 – is flawed.
 - The new version–4.1–is flawed.
- Just be consistent throughout the document.

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The hyphen

- The hyphen is a **spelling** tool.
 - president-elect
 - low-cost health insurance
 - mother-in-law
 - ex-husband
 - self-interest
 - two-year-old child
 - ninety-three

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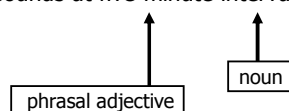
The hyphen

- Traditionally, the hyphen is also used to show ranges of numbers.
 - The cost should be \$25-\$40.
 - But this trend is changing, and you will often see the en dash used to show ranges.
 - The cost should be \$25–\$40.
 - Either is correct, as long as you use the same style consistently throughout your document.

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Phrasal adjectives

- A phrasal adjective is a group of words that act as a single word to modify the noun that **follows** them.
- Hyphens connect the modifying words.
 - The bell sounds at five-minute intervals.



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Phrasal adjectives

- The purpose of a phrasal adjective is to guide the reader smoothly through the sentence.




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Phrasal adjectives

- If the modifying words follow the noun, no hyphens are used.
 - The bell sounds at five-minute intervals.
 - The bell sounds at intervals of five minutes.
- If one of the words is an adverb ending in -ly, the hyphen is omitted.
 - The rapidly degenerating meeting was soon ended.
 - Her rapid-fire responses thrilled us.

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Phrasal adjectives

- Sometimes the distinction is a fine one: 
 - Please provide a two-day notice before painting the conference room.
 - "A two-day notice" uses a phrasal adjective.
 - Please provide two days' notice before painting.
 - "Two days' notice" is the possessive form of the phrase "a notice of two days."

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The quotation mark

- In American English, periods and commas **always** go inside the quotation mark.
 - ➔ Our new supervisor suggests we rename the project "Operation FastBuild."
 - ➔ If we call it "FastBuild," we may not live up to the name!

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The quotation mark

- In American English, colons and semicolons always go outside the quotation mark.
 - ➔ The team is uncertain of the purpose behind the name "FastBuild"; is it an incentive to push production?
 - ➔ This is what I think of "FastBuild": it will not cause us to produce any faster.

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The quotation mark

- In American English, question marks and exclamation points may go inside or outside the quotation mark depending on the part of the sentence to which they logically attach.
 - ➔ Shall we agree to call the project "FastBuild"?
 - ➔ The new supervisor asked Jon, "Do you like our new project name?"

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The quotation mark

- In American English, quoted language within quoted language uses single quotation marks.
 - ➔ I heard the new supervisor ask Rita, "Don't you think 'FastBuild' should be our new project name?"

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