

Category/specific term	Examples	Summary of rule
1. COMPOUNDS ACCORDING TO CATEGORY		
age terms	<i>a three-year-old</i> <i>a five-year-old child</i> <i>a fifty-five-year-old woman</i> <i>a group of eight- to ten-year-olds</i> <i>but</i> <i>seven years old</i> <i>eighteen years of age</i>	Hyphenated in both noun and adjective forms (except as in the last two examples); note the space after the first hyphen in the fourth example (see 7.84). The examples apply equally to ages expressed as numerals.
chemical terms	<i>sodium chloride</i> <i>sodium chloride solution</i>	Open in both noun and adjective forms.
colors	<i>emerald-green tie</i> <i>reddish-brown flagstone</i> <i>blue-green algae</i> <i>snow-white dress</i> <i>black-and-white print</i> <i>but</i> <i>his tie is emerald green</i> <i>the stone is reddish brown</i> <i>the water is blue green</i> <i>the clouds are snow white</i> <i>the truth isn't black and white</i>	Hyphenated before but not after a noun. This departure from Chicago's former usage serves both simplicity and logic.
compass points and directions	<i>northeast</i> <i>southwest</i> <i>east-northeast</i> <i>a north-south street</i> <i>the street runs north-south</i>	Closed in noun, adjective, and adverb forms unless three directions are combined, in which case a hyphen is used after the first. When <i>from . . . to</i> is implied, an en dash is used (see 6.78).
ethnic terms. See proper nouns and adjectives relating to geography or nationality in section 2.		
foreign phrases	<i>an a priori argument</i> <i>a Sturm und Drang drama</i> <i>in vitro fertilization</i> <i>a tête-à-tête approach</i>	Open unless hyphens appear in the original language.

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1. COMPOUNDS ACCORDING TO CATEGORY (continued)		
fractions, compounds formed with	<i>a half hour</i> <i>a half-hour session</i> <i>a quarter mile</i> <i>a quarter-mile run</i> <i>an eighth note</i>	Noun form open; adjective form hyphenated. See also numbers in this section and half in section 3.
fractions, simple	<i>one-half</i> <i>two-thirds</i> <i>three-quarters</i> <i>one twenty-fifth</i> <i>one and three-quarters</i> <i>a two-thirds majority</i> <i>three-quarters done</i> <i>a one twenty-fifth share</i>	Hyphenated in noun, adjective, and adverb forms, except when second element is already hyphenated. See also number + noun and 9.14.
number + abbreviation	<i>the 33 m distance</i> <i>a 2 kg weight</i> <i>a 3 ft. high wall</i>	Always open. See also number + noun .
number + noun	<i>a hundred-meter race</i> <i>a 250-page book</i> <i>a fifty-year project</i> <i>a three-inch-high statuette</i> <i>it's three inches high</i> <i>a one-and-a-half-inch hem</i> <i>one and a half inches</i> <i>a five-foot-ten quarterback</i> <i>five feet ten [inches tall]</i> <i>five- to ten-minute intervals</i>	Hyphenated before a noun, otherwise open. Note the space after the first number in the last example. See also number + abbreviation . See also 9.13.
number + percentage	<i>50 percent</i> <i>a 10 percent raise</i>	Both noun and adjective forms always open.
number, ordinal, + noun	<i>on the third floor</i> <i>third-floor apartment</i> <i>103rd-floor view</i> <i>fifth-place contestant</i> <i>twenty-first-row seats</i>	Adjective form hyphenated before a noun, otherwise open. See also century in section 3.
number, ordinal, + superlative	<i>a second-best decision</i> <i>third-largest town</i> <i>fourth-to-last contestant</i> <i>he arrived fourth to last</i>	Hyphenated before a noun, otherwise open.
numbers, spelled out	<i>twenty-eight</i> <i>three hundred</i> <i>nineteen forty-five</i> <i>five hundred fifty</i>	Twenty-one through ninety-nine hyphenated; others open. See also fractions, simple .
relationships. See foster, grand, in-law, and step in section 3.		

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1. COMPOUNDS ACCORDING TO CATEGORY (continued)		
time	at <i>three thirty</i> the <i>three-thirty</i> train a <i>four o'clock</i> train the 5:00 p.m. news	Usually open; forms such as "three thirty," "four twenty," etc., are hyphenated before the noun.
2. COMPOUNDS ACCORDING TO PARTS OF SPEECH		
adjective + noun	<i>small-state</i> senators a <i>high-quality</i> alkylate a <i>middle-class</i> neighborhood the neighborhood is <i>middle class</i>	Hyphenated before but not after a noun.
adjective + participle	<i>tight-lipped</i> person <i>high-jumping</i> grasshoppers <i>open-ended</i> question the question was <i>open ended</i>	Hyphenated before but not after a noun.
adverb ending in <i>ly</i> + participle or adjective	a <i>highly paid</i> ragpicker a <i>fully open</i> society he was <i>mildly amusing</i>	Open whether before or after a noun.
adverb not ending in <i>ly</i> + participle or adjective	a <i>much-needed</i> addition it was <i>much needed</i> a very <i>well-read</i> child <i>little-understood</i> rules a <i>too-easy</i> answer the <i>best-known</i> author the <i>highest-ranking</i> officer the <i>worst-paid</i> job a <i>lesser-paid</i> colleague the <i>most efficient</i> method a <i>less prolific</i> artist a <i>more thorough</i> exam the <i>most skilled</i> workers (most in number) but the <i>most-skilled</i> workers (most in skill) a very <i>much needed</i> addition	Hyphenated before but not after a noun; compounds with <i>more</i> , <i>most</i> , <i>less</i> , <i>least</i> , and very usually open unless ambiguity threatens. When the adverb rather than the compound as a whole is modified by another adverb, the entire expression is open.
combining forms	<i>electrocardiogram</i> <i>socioeconomic</i> <i>politico-scientific</i> studies the <i>practico-inert</i>	Usually closed if permanent, hyphenated if temporary. See 7.78.
gerund + noun	<i>running shoes</i> <i>cooking class</i> <i>running-shoe</i> store	Noun form open; adjective form hyphenated. See also noun + gerund .
noun + adjective	<i>computer-literate</i> accountants <i>HIV-positive</i> men the stadium is <i>fan friendly</i> she is <i>HIV positive</i>	Hyphenated before a noun; usually open after a noun.

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2. COMPOUNDS ACCORDING TO PARTS OF SPEECH (continued)		
noun + gerund	<i>decision making</i> <i>a decision-making body</i> <i>mountain climbing</i> <i>time-clock-punching employees</i> <i>a Nobel Prize-winning chemist</i> (see 6.80) <i>bookkeeping</i> <i>caregiving</i> <i>copyediting</i>	Noun form usually open; adjective form hyphenated before a noun. Some permanent compounds closed (see 7.78).
noun + noun, single function (first noun modifies second noun)	<i>student nurse</i> <i>restaurant owner</i> <i>directory path</i> <i>tenure track</i> <i>tenure-track position</i> <i>home-rule governance</i> <i>shipbuilder</i> <i>gunrunner</i> <i>copyeditor</i>	Noun form open; adjective form hyphenated before a noun. Some permanent compounds closed (see 7.78).
noun + noun, two functions (both nouns equal)	<i>nurse-practitioner</i> <i>philosopher-king</i> <i>city-state</i> <i>city-state governance</i>	Both noun and adjective forms always hyphenated.
noun + numeral or enumerator	<i>type A</i> <i>a type A executive</i> <i>type 2 diabetes</i> <i>size 12 slacks</i> <i>a page 1 headline</i>	Both noun and adjective forms always open.
noun + participle	<i>a Wagner-burdened repertoire</i> <i>flower-filled garden</i> <i>a clothes-buying grandmother</i> <i>a day of clothes buying</i>	Hyphenated before a noun, otherwise open.
participle + noun	<i>chopped-liver pâté</i> <i>cutting-edge methods</i> <i>their approach was cutting edge</i>	Adjective form hyphenated before but not after a noun.
participle + up, out, and similar adverbs	<i>dressed-up children</i> <i>burned-out buildings</i> <i>ironed-on decal</i> <i>we were dressed up</i> <i>that decal is ironed on</i>	Adjective form hyphenated before but not after a noun. Verb form always open.
phrases, adjectival	<i>an over-the-counter drug</i> <i>a matter-of-fact reply</i> <i>an up-to-date solution</i> <i>sold over the counter</i> <i>her tone was matter of fact</i> <i>his equipment was up to date</i>	Hyphenated before a noun; usually open after a noun.

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2. COMPOUNDS ACCORDING TO PARTS OF SPEECH (continued)		
phrases, noun	<i>stick-in-the-mud</i> <i>jack-of-all-trades</i> <i>a flash in the pan</i>	Hyphenated or open as listed in Webster's. If not in the dictionary, open.
proper nouns and adjectives relating to geography or nationality	<i>African Americans</i> <i>African American president</i> <i>a Chinese American</i> <i>French Canadians</i> <i>South Asian Americans</i> <i>the Scotch Irish</i> <i>the North Central region</i> <i>Middle Eastern countries</i> <i>but</i> <i>Sino-Tibetan languages</i> <i>the Franco-Prussian War</i> <i>the US-Canada border</i> <i>Anglo-American cooperation</i> <i>Anglo-Americans</i>	Open in both noun and adjective forms, unless the first term is a prefix or unless <i>between</i> is implied. See also 8.38.
3. COMPOUNDS FORMED WITH SPECIFIC TERMS		
ache	<i>toothache</i> <i>stomachache</i>	Always closed.
all	<i>all out</i> <i>all along</i> <i>all over</i> <i>an all-out effort</i> <i>an all-American player</i> <i>the book is all-encompassing</i> <i>but</i> <i>we were all in [tired]</i>	Adverbial phrases open; adjectival phrases usually hyphenated both before and after a noun.
book	<i>reference book</i> <i>coupon book</i> <i>checkbook</i> <i>cookbook</i>	Closed or open as listed in Webster's. If not in the dictionary, open.
borne	<i>waterborne</i> <i>food-borne</i> <i>e-mail-borne</i> <i>mosquito-borne</i>	Closed if listed as such in Webster's. If not in Webster's, hyphenated; compounds retain the hyphen both before and after a noun.
century	<i>the twenty-first century</i> <i>fourteenth-century monastery</i> <i>twenty-first-century history</i> <i>a mid-eighteenth-century poet</i> <i>late nineteenth-century politicians</i> <i>her style was nineteenth century</i>	Noun forms always open; adjectival compounds hyphenated before but not after a noun. See also old (below), mid (in section 4), and 7.83.

Category/specific term	Examples	Summary of rule
3. COMPOUNDS FORMED WITH SPECIFIC TERMS (continued)		
cross	a cross section a cross-reference cross-referenced cross-grained cross-country crossbow crossover	Many compounds formed with <i>cross</i> are in <i>Webster's</i> (as those listed here). If not in <i>Webster's</i> , noun, adjective, adverb, and verb forms should be open.
e	e-mail e-book eBay	Hyphenated except with proper nouns. See also 8.163.
elect	president-elect vice president elect mayor-elect county assessor elect	Hyphenated unless the name of the office consists of an open compound.
ever	ever-ready help ever-recurring problem everlasting he was ever eager	Usually hyphenated before but not after a noun; some permanent compounds closed.
ex	ex-partner ex-marine ex-corporate executive	Hyphenated, but use en dash if <i>ex-</i> precedes an open compound.
foster	foster mother foster parents a foster-family background	Noun forms open; adjective forms hyphenated.
free	toll-free number accident-free driver the number is toll-free the driver is accident-free	Compounds formed with <i>free</i> as second element are hyphenated both before and after a noun.
full	full-length mirror the mirror is full length three bags full a suitcase full	Hyphenated before a noun, otherwise open. Use <i>ful</i> only in such permanent compounds as <i>cupful</i> , <i>handful</i> .
general	attorney general postmaster general lieutenants general	Always open; in plural forms, <i>general</i> remains singular.
grand, great-grand	grandfather granddaughter great-grandmother great-great-grandson	<i>Grand</i> compounds closed; <i>great</i> compounds hyphenated.

Category/specific term	Examples	Summary of rule
3. COMPOUNDS FORMED WITH SPECIFIC TERMS (continued)		
half	half-asleep half-finished a half sister a half hour a half-hour session halfway halfhearted	Adjective forms hyphenated before and after the noun; noun forms open. Some permanent compounds closed, whether nouns, adjectives, or adverbs. Check Webster's. See also fractions in section 1.
house	schoolhouse courthouse safe house rest house	Closed or open as listed in Webster's. If not in the dictionary, open.
in-law	sister-in-law parents-in-law	All compounds hyphenated; only the first element takes a plural form.
like	catlike childlike Christlike bell-like a penitentiary-like institution	Closed if listed as such in Webster's. If not in Webster's, hyphenated; compounds retain the hyphen both before and after a noun.
mid. See section 4.		
near	in the near term a near accident a near-term proposal a near-dead language	Noun forms open; adjective forms hyphenated.
odd	a hundred-odd manuscripts 350-odd books	Always hyphenated.
old	a three-year-old a 105-year-old woman a decade-old union a centuries-old debate a child who is three years old the debate is centuries old	Noun forms hyphenated. Adjective forms hyphenated before a noun, open after. See also age terms in section 1.
on	online onstage ongoing on-screen on-site	Sometimes closed, sometimes hyphenated. Check Webster's and hyphenate if term is not listed. See also 7.79.
percent	5 percent a 10 percent increase	Both noun and adjective forms always open.

Category/specific term	Examples	Summary of rule
3. COMPOUNDS FORMED WITH SPECIFIC TERMS (continued)		
pseudo. See section 4.		
quasi	a <i>quasi corporation</i> a <i>quasi-public corporation</i> <i>quasi-judicial</i> <i>quasiperiodic</i> <i>quasicrystal</i>	Noun form usually open; adjective form usually hyphenated. A handful of permanent compounds are listed in <i>Webster's</i> .
self	<i>self-restraint</i> <i>self-realization</i> <i>self-sustaining</i> <i>self-conscious</i> the behavior is <i>self-destructive</i> <i>selfless</i> <i>unselfconscious</i>	Both noun and adjective forms hyphenated, except where <i>self</i> is followed by a suffix or preceded by <i>un</i> . Note that <i>unselfconscious</i> , Chicago's preference, is contrary to <i>Webster's</i> .
step	<i>stepbrother</i> <i>stepparent</i> <i>step-granddaughter</i> <i>step-great-granddaughter</i>	Always closed except with <i>grand</i> and <i>great</i> .
style	<i>dined family-style</i> <i>1920s-style dancing</i> <i>danced 1920s-style</i> <i>Chicago-style hyphenation</i> according to <i>Chicago style</i> <i>headline-style capitalization</i> use <i>headline style</i>	Adjective and adverb forms hyphenated; noun form usually open.
vice	<i>vice-consul</i> <i>vice-chancellor</i> <i>vice president</i> <i>vice presidential duties</i> <i>vice admiral</i> <i>viceroxy</i>	Sometimes hyphenated, sometimes open, occasionally closed. Check <i>Webster's</i> and hyphenate if term is not listed.
web	a <i>website</i> a <i>web page</i> <i>web-related matters</i>	Noun form open or closed, as shown; if term is not in any dictionary, opt for open. Adjective form hyphenated. See also 7.76.
wide	<i>worldwide</i> <i>citywide</i> <i>Chicago-wide</i> the canvass was <i>university-wide</i>	Closed if listed as such in <i>Webster's</i> . If not in <i>Webster's</i> , hyphenated; compounds retain the hyphen both before and after a noun.

4. WORDS FORMED WITH PREFIXES

Compounds formed with prefixes are normally closed, whether they are nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs. A hyphen should appear, however, (1) before a capitalized word or a numeral, such a *sub-Saharan*, *pre-1950*; (2) before a compound term, such as *non-self-sustaining*, *pre-Vietnam War* (before an open compound, an en dash is used; see 6.80); (3) to separate two *i*'s, two *a*'s, and other combinations of letters or syllables that might cause misreading, such as *anti-intellectual*, *extra-alkaline*, *pro-life*; (4) to separate the repeated terms in a double prefix, such as *sub-subentry*; (5) when a prefix or combining form stands alone, such as *over-* and *underused*, *macro-* and *microeconomics*. The spellings shown below conform largely to *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. Compounds formed with combining forms not listed here, such as *auto*, *tri*, and *para*, follow the same pattern.

ante	antebellum, antenatal, antediluvian
anti	antihypertensive, antihero, <i>but</i> anti-inflammatory, anti-Hitlerian
bi	binomial, bivalent, bisexual
bio	bioecology, biophysical, biosociology
co	coequal, coauthor, coeditor, coordinate, cooperation, coworker, <i>but</i> co-op, co-opt
counter	counterclockwise, counterrevolution
cyber	cyberspace, cyberstore
extra	extramural, extrafine, <i>but</i> extra-administrative
fold	fourfold, hundredfold, <i>but</i> twenty-five-fold, 150-fold
hyper	hypertension, hyperactive, hypertext
infra	infrasonic, infrastructure
inter	interorganizational, interfaith
intra	intrazonal, intramural, <i>but</i> intra-arterial
macro	macroeconomics, macromolecular
mega	megavitamin, megamall, <i>but</i> mega-annoyance
meta	metalanguage, metaethical, <i>but</i> meta-analysis (not the same as <i>metanalysis</i>)
micro	microeconomics, micromethodical
mid	midthirties, a midcareer event, midcentury, <i>but</i> mid-July, the mid-1990s, the mid-twentieth century, mid-twentieth-century history
mini	minivan, minimarket
multi	multiauthor, multiconductor, <i>but</i> multi-institutional
neo	neonate, neoorthodox, Neoplatonism, neo-Nazi (<i>neo</i> lowercase or capital and hyphenated as in dictionary; lowercase and hyphenate if not in dictionary)
non	nonviolent, nonevent, nonnegotiable, <i>but</i> non-beer-drinking
over	overmagnified, overshoes, overconscientious
post	postdoctoral, postmodernism, posttraumatic, <i>but</i> post-Vietnam, post-World War II (see 6.80)
pre	premodern, preregistration, prewar, preempt, <i>but</i> pre-Columbian, Pre-Raphaelite (<i>pre</i> lowercase or capital as in dictionary; lowercase if term is not in dictionary)
pro	proindustrial, promarket, <i>but</i> pro-life, pro-Canadian

4. WORDS FORMED WITH PREFIXES (continued)

proto	protolanguage, protogalaxy, protomartyr
pseudo	pseudotechnocrat, pseudomodern, <i>but</i> pseudo-Tudor
re	reedit, reunify, reposition, <i>but</i> re-cover, re-creation (as distinct from <i>recover</i> , <i>recreation</i>)
semi	semiopaque, semiconductor, <i>but</i> semi-invalid
sub	subbasement, subzero, subcutaneous
super	superannuated, supervirtuoso, superpowerful
supra	supranational, suprarenal, supraorbital, <i>but</i> supra-American
trans	transsocietal, transmembrane, transcontinental, transatlantic, <i>but</i> trans-American
ultra	ultrasophisticated, ultraorganized, ultraevangelical
un	unfunded, unneutered, <i>but</i> un-English, un-unionized
under	underemployed, underrate, undercount