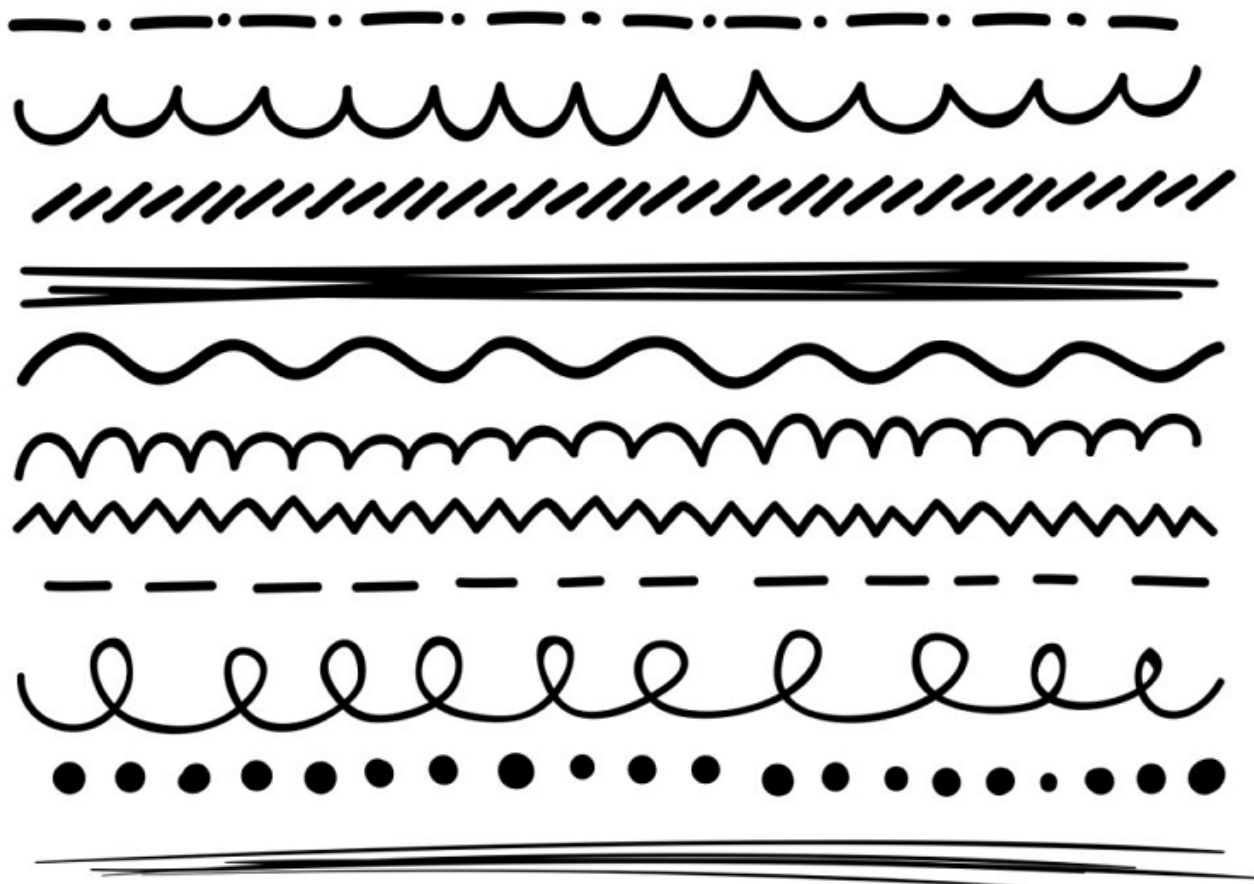


Here's How to Use Dashes Properly in Your Writing, According to AP Style



And the difference between em and en dashes.

Allison Carter, Ragan Communications

For a couple of straight lines, hyphens, em dashes and en dashes can be surprisingly tricky to use. But they're a critical tool for any writer, especially if you're hoping to add drama or connect thoughts together.

Let's dive into how AP style says to use each of these

punctuation marks properly to punch up your writing.

En dash: –

We're starting with the easiest one. The en dash is slightly longer than a hyphen but smaller than the em dash. In other words, it's the width of the letter "N."

That's really the most interesting thing about en dashes. AP style doesn't use them, though some other styles may in limited capacities, such as between a range of years. In general, don't worry about them.

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Em dash: —

An em dash is longer than the en. If you guessed that it's as wide as the letter "M," you get a gold star. In AP style, the dash should be set off with spaces on both sides.

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