Hyphen Trail

Spot number-and-unit compounds in action.

7.L.GC.1.51 "Mechanics: Use hyphens with appropriate affixes and compound words. (Continue)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

HYPHENATED

For the number-and-unit compounds on this page, use hyphens when the compound comes before a noun. This is a common pattern, not a rule for every compound word.

a six-foot fence

OPEN

For this pattern, write the words open when they come after a linking verb or tell how long, far, or much. Other compounds may follow dictionary or style rules.

The fence is six feet tall.

1 SORT

8 items

For each item, circle HYPHEN or OPEN, then in Part 2 choose two items and explain how the words' positions helped you decide.

1.	a three-mile hike	HYPHEN	OPEN
2.	an eight-hour shift	HYPHEN	OPEN
3.	The shift lasts eight hours.	HYPHEN	OPEN
4.	a twenty-minute video	HYPHEN	OPEN
5.	The video is twenty minutes long.	HYPHEN	OPEN
6.	The hike is three miles long.	HYPHEN	OPEN
7.	a five-pound bag	HYPHEN	OPEN
8.	a two-day trip	HYPHEN	OPEN

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new HYPHEN example and one new OPEN example using a number and a unit.

HYPHEN _____

OPEN _____

CHALLENGE

Write one sentence that uses a hyphenated number-and-unit compound before a noun and an open number-and-unit form after a linking verb.

ANSWER KEY

Hyphen Trail

GRADE 7 · 7.L.GC.1.51

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	a three-mile hike	**HYPHEN**	The number-and-unit compound comes before the noun hike, so it is hyphenated and mile is singular.
2	an eight-hour shift	**HYPHEN**	The compound comes before the noun shift, so it is hyphenated and hour is singular.
3	The shift lasts eight hours.	**OPEN**	The number and unit come after the verb lasts, so they stay open and hours is plural.
4	a twenty-minute video	**HYPHEN**	The compound comes before the noun video, so it is hyphenated and minute is singular.
5	The video is twenty minutes long.	**OPEN**	The number and unit come after the linking verb is, so they stay open and minutes is plural.
6	The hike is three miles long.	**OPEN**	The number and unit come after the linking verb is, so they stay open and miles is plural.
7	a five-pound bag	**HYPHEN**	The compound comes before the noun bag, so it is hyphenated and pound is singular.
8	a two-day trip	**HYPHEN**	The compound comes before the noun trip, so it is hyphenated and day is singular.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **HYPHEN**: a four-seat canoe
- **OPEN**: The canoe has four seats.

Challenge: Our class planned a two-day visit, but the visit was two days long.

Accept equivalent number-and-unit examples if the hyphenated compound comes before a noun and uses a singular unit. In open forms after verbs, the unit is usually plural when the number is greater than one.