Notes on Hyphens

I. Using a hyphen to divide a word into syllables:

A. Don’t divide the word at the end of the line unless it is absolutely necessary.

B. If you do need to divide the word, follow these rules:

1. Word MUST be more than one syllable long.

2. Divide the word between double consonants.  
   (mat-ter, rud-der, pat-tern, and so on)

3. Divide a compound word between the two words.  
   (bed-room, tooth-paste)

4. Use a dictionary as a final authority to look up how to divide the word.

II. Use a hyphen between two words which are being used together as a unit to describe another word coming after them.

(A time-consuming job, a money-saving offer, an off-color joke, a real-life situation)

III. Certain terms or phrases are automatically hyphenated even when they stand by themselves.

A. All words beginning with self and followed by a complete, valid word  
   (self-conscious, self-aware, self-esteem, self-confidence)

B. Many words having non- or re- in front of them as prefixes  
   (non-toxic, non-prescriptive, re-hash, re-group)