

Rev Caption Style Guide v4.0.1

Welcome to the Caption Style Guide! This guide explains customer expectations for captioning quality and the *metrics system*, our way of ensuring freelancer quality.

We trust you to deliver high-quality work. Customers—teachers, business owners, students, and everything in between—rely on your accurate and timely captions as a crucial part of their daily work.

Updated May 20, 2019

*Important additions in v4.0.1 are labeled as **NEW**. Please review all pages to make sure you are using the most recent rules and best practices. Notable updates in this version:*

- Always re-caption pre-existing captions. ([Page 8](#))
- Lyrics must always be captioned if they are heard. ([Page 12](#))
- Exceptions for pre-existing on-screen text. ([Page 21](#))

Quality expectations fall into three categories: Accuracy, Formatting, and Alignment.

- **Accuracy** - Can you correctly hear and caption *what* words were said and *who* said them?
- **Formatting** - Can you correctly apply guidelines to caption groups?
- **Alignment** - Can you correctly sync the start of caption groups to when the sound or dialogue is heard?

Each category has **major errors*** and **minor errors** which are the most common reasons customers return files to be re-done.

Errors in your work may lead to lowered [metrics](#). Rev requires captioners to maintain certain metrics to remain active on Rev. Take special care in proofing your work before submission.

* The presence of major errors in a captions file can cause the file to be rejected by video platforms and cost customers large amounts of money.

A grade consists of scores on three categories: **Accuracy**, **Formatting**, and **Alignment**.

5 - Excellent	Near perfect – May contain a few errors that do not alter the meaning of the original video.
4 - Good	Customer ready – Noticeable number of minor errors that do not detract or alter the meaning of the video content.
3 - Fair	Not customer ready – One or more major errors present.
2 - Poor	Not customer ready – Caption reflects severe carelessness or lack of understanding of the style guide.
1 - Very Poor	Unusable – Caption is a poor representation of the video content or is incomplete.*

One or more major errors may result in a 1 - 4. One or more minor errors may result in a 2 - 5.

[Read this article](#) for more information about how metrics work and affect your account.

* If you submit incomplete work your pay for the job will be removed, the project graded 1's for accuracy, formatting, & alignment, and your account may be closed after Support review.

Captions - The audio content of a video in written form, appearing on screen for the viewer to read.

Dash - Rev's online tool you use to caption videos. Find the [Dash User Guide here](#).

Caption Groups - A unit of text that is shown on-screen, which may include dialogue or atmospherics. A caption group includes the timing of when to display its text during the video.

Caption Group Splitting - This refers to when you create a new caption group.

Caption Group Length - The number of characters, including spaces, in a caption group. Maximum is 60 characters, including spaces, per group.

Atmospherics - The non-dialogue sounds you hear during a video such as music or sound effects.

Homophones - Two words that sound alike but have different meanings and spellings. See [page 9](#).

Speaker Labels - The notation used to indicate the voice that is speaking.

Pre-Existing On-Screen Text - Text that has been added by the filmmakers in post-production that contains important information for the viewer.

Unclaim - If you do not wish to complete a caption project, or cannot for any reason, you can “return it” for others to work on. See [page 6](#) for rules of when to unclaim.

Deadlines - [Read this article](#) to understand project deadlines.

Browser Compatibility - Rev recommends that you use the most up-to-date version of Google Chrome when working with Dash.

	Major Errors	Minor Errors
Accuracy	<u>Precision</u>	<u>Punctuation</u>
	<u>Wrong Words</u> (Terminology/Homophones)	<u>Time / Numbers</u>
	<u>Spelling</u>	<u>Math / Graphing / Web</u>
	<u>Omission of Content</u>	<u>Acronyms / Symbols / Technical Terms</u>
	<u>Lyrics</u>	
Formatting	<u>Indicating Speaker Changes</u>	<u>Speaker Labeling</u>
	<u>Pre-Existing On-Screen Text (Up-Arrow Carets)</u>	<u>Using Atmospherics</u>
		<u>Caption Group Formatting / Caption Group Length</u>
		<u>Advanced Caption Formatting</u>
Alignment	<u>Syncing</u>	
Other	<u>Unworkable Projects</u>	
	<u>Project-Specific Instructions</u>	

Certain types of projects are considered “unworkable”. Unclaim projects if they meet the criteria below.

NEW

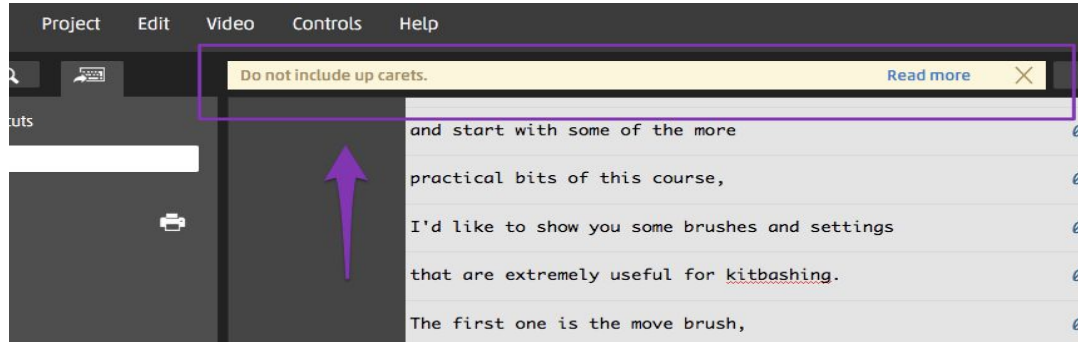
If you submit a project that has no meaningful English audio content captured, you will not be paid for the job and you may receive a grade of 1’s for accuracy, formatting, & alignment.

If		Then
There is <u>no</u> English audio content	And all audio content is foreign language	<u>Unclaim</u> the project as “Foreign language”.
	And there is video without sound	<u>Unclaim</u> the project as “Missing audio”.
	And the entire video consists of only sound effects or instrumental music	<u>Caption</u> the video using appropriate atmospherics.

The screenshot shows a dark-themed menu with the following options: Project, Edit, Video, Control, Submit, Recover, Upload Draft, Download Draft, Upload SRT, Style Guide, Project details, and Unclaim. The 'Unclaim' option is highlighted with an orange border. To the right, a 'Unclaim' dialog box is open, titled 'Unclaim' with a close button (X). The dialog asks 'Why do you want to unclaim the project?' and includes a note: 'Note: If you unclaim this job, you will not be able to re-claim it.' Below the note are five radio button options: Foreign language, Missing audio, Difficult audio quality, Incorrect length, and Personal reasons / Technical problems. At the bottom of the dialog are two buttons: 'cancel' (grey) and 'unclaim' (red).

* Note: Sporadic English does not indicate a project should be worked on. [More information](#)

Occasionally a project may have special instructions that deviate from our normal guidelines. These instructions will appear in a yellow box in Dash.



Only instructions in the yellow box are to be followed. Customers may include separate instructions that go against our Style Guide in the customer glossary or a provided script. Any requests in these resources that go against our style guidelines should be ignored.

This error will be graded based on the instructions in either accuracy or formatting.

NEVER copy and paste scripts you may find online without thoroughly reviewing. By submitting a project you are stating that you have watched and captioned the entire video accurately.

Always caption exactly what is said. Although spoken word is not always grammatically correct, your captions must preserve the integrity of the original speech. Do not write what you think the speaker meant to say.

1. Never omit words.

- NEW**
- a. **ALWAYS** caption what is heard, even if there are pre-existing captions or subtitles on the video.
 - b. **EXCEPTIONS:** see [page 11](#).

2. Never add content, paraphrase, or rearrange the order of speech.

- a. Never translate or caption a foreign language.

3. Never censor or edit expletives.

- a. If the word is censored with a sound, use (beep) in-line to indicate the noise.
- b. Never use asterisks or add extra spaces to indicate an expletive.
- c. If the expletive has been silenced or partially silenced, type nothing.

4. Never correct or edit a speaker's grammar.

- a. Never change spoken contractions (e.g. do not → don't OR don't → do not).
- b. Never change formal speech into an informal contractions (e.g. going to → gonna).

5. EXCEPTION: Correct egregious phonetic and pronunciation errors that inhibit readability or understanding.

- a. Example: if a speaker pronounces “refrigerator, washer and dryer” as “refrigurator, washar and dryear”, please use the correct spelling of the words based on your context of the audio.

Always use *context clues* to write down the correct word or phrase. If you are unsure of a word or phrase, complete thorough research or ask for a second opinion on the [forum](#).

Examples	
“aerospace” vs “arrow space” “Botox” vs “boat ox”	Always use context clues to write down the appropriate word. This is especially important for proper nouns or industry terminology.
“looked” vs “loved” “kissed” vs “killed”	Take your time while captioning—a changed word could result in a drastic change in the meaning of a sentence.
Homophones	"You're" is a contraction of "you are," while “your” is possessive. “You're working on your project.” More examples here .

NEW

1. Use U.S. spelling at all times, even if the speaker has a non-American accent or elongates words.
2. Research words, phrases, and proper nouns. [Click here for an article](#) on how to research effectively.
3. Research and use proper capitalization for terms (e.g. iPhone, UCLA, SaaS). If spelling is not easily findable, make your best guess using a common spelling of the word.

NEW

4. Use glossary terms when provided. If a customer has provided glossary terms, they will display in the left-hand menu of Dash.
5. Spell words consistently throughout the captions.
6. Look at text on-screen. If the words are spoken, caption the words using the same spelling as what you see on-screen.



customer glossary

glossary for Finance Corp.

InterActive Designs

Barclays

obdormition

sternutate



Tip: Use our built-in spell check by right clicking on underlined or highlighted words.

- I love to use Instangram!

My friends and I use it to share our photos.

Never leave words or phrases out of your captions, outside of the situations outlined below for increased viewer readability:

- Speech disfluencies*: omit unnecessary filler words, false starts, stutters, or repetitions.
- Quick interjections: omit active listening cues, e.g. “mm-hmm”, unless a direct response to a question.
- Correct *egregious* phonetic and pronunciation errors that *inhibit readability*. See [page 8](#).

When you cannot confidently hear or understand a word, use an atmospheric.

- If the video intentionally creates an inaudible situation, use an appropriate atmospheric such as ([murmurs](#)) or ([mumbles](#)) for a single speaker or ([background noise drowns out other sounds](#)). **NEVER** use “inaudible” or “indistinct” in captions.
 - [If I stub my toe, one more time, on this stupid \(mumbles\).](#)
 - [What a play by-- \(crowd cheering drowns out speaker\)](#)
- View this [Help Center article](#) on how to handle unclear audio for additional examples.

* For more information on speech disfluency, read http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speech_disfluency

NEW

Lyrics must always be captioned if they are heard.

EXCEPTIONS:

- a. Do not caption lyrics if prominent dialogue is occurring at the same time. **IF** there is a pause in dialogue where the lyrics are the only discernible sounds, caption the lyrics.

♪ Whenever you need me	00:00.00
♪ I'll be there	00:00.00
♪ Don't you know baby	00:00.00

How to caption lyrics:

- Add a musical eighth note “♪” at the start of every caption group containing the lyrics. You can add these notes in Dash by typing “##” followed by a space.
- Do not include a dash or speaker ID for lyrics.
- Capitalize the beginning of each caption group.
- Do not use ending punctuation such as . ! ? when typing lyrics, but do create a new caption group for each lyric phrase.
- When the lyrics pause or end, the next caption group with non-singing dialogue must follow normal conventions for a change of speaker. For example, if the person who was singing is now speaking, no dash is needed. However if the speaker is different from who was singing, add a dash and a space “- “ and possibly a speaker ID, if needed.

	Guidelines	Example
Punctuation	<p>The primary role of punctuation is to aid readability by marking the structure and intonation of the dialogue as spoken. As a captioner it is our responsibility to capture what is spoken for the viewer as closely as possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use . ! ? as you normally would as terminal punctuation. - Use your best judgment to split up run-on speech into shorter sentences for readability. - Use colons :, semicolons ;, and single quotation marks ‘ sparingly as they are often misused/overused. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I went to the park. - I love parks too, but that one’s too far away.
Commas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use to connect two independent clauses by a coordinating conjunction. - Use to connect dependent and independent clauses. - Use for interjections and direct addresses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Let’s eat, Grandma.
Ellipses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ellipses should be used sparingly and only at the end of a caption group if the speaker trails off their current thought AND pauses afterward for at least 1 second. - Never use ellipses at the beginning or in the middle of a caption group. Instead, you should hold off displaying the next caption group until the dialogue has resumed. - Capitalize the word after an ellipsis if it starts a new sentence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I’m not sure... - Before I couldn’t... <p>We always wanted to go there.</p>

(continued on next page)

	Guidelines	Example
Hyphens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You should hyphenate two or more words that precede and modify a noun as a unit, especially if the words include a past participle, a present participle, a single letter, or a number. - If a speaker is abruptly interrupted by another speaker or sound effect, use a double-hyphen. NEVER use a single hyphen to indicate interruptions or trailing off. - If a speaker spells out a word, use the format “W-O-R-D”. 	<p>accident-prone custom-built one-by-one</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The symphony should really get its-- - I don't C-A-R-E about the symphony.
Parentheses	<p>Parentheses are only used to indicate atmospherics and cannot be used otherwise. Never create your own notations such as (silence) or (crosstalk).</p>	
Quotation Marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use when a quote is directly stated or implied. Examples - Do not edit or paraphrase the quote, even if it is quoted incorrectly (e.g. a famous quote or religious passage). <p>NEW Do not use single quotation marks ‘ ’ for direct quotations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use double quotes for titles of films, books, songs, or speeches. - Format quotes by including “ at the beginning of every caption group that is still in the same quote. Only put a closing ” at the very end of the full quote. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She told me, "It's ridiculous. <p>"Maybe I can go ask for 12 planes,</p> <p>"and they'll make the drawings in the sky."</p>

NEW * We are unable to cover and address all common conventions regarding punctuation and grammar. We expect you to have some prior knowledge of, or be able to research, proper American English grammar and punctuation.

	Guidelines	Example
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If an exact time is mentioned, write it as “9:30 a.m.” - If spoken, always use lowercase a.m. (ante meridiem) and p.m. (post meridiem). - If the speaker says “o’clock”, caption as spoken: “nine o’clock.” - If the speaker doesn’t mention an exact time, follow the number conventions below: “I’ll see you tonight at nine.” - Write out phrases as spoken. Do not convert into a numerical time (e.g. do not convert “half past one” into 1:30 p.m.) 	<p>Should I come at 9:05 or 9:10 p.m.?</p> <p>He’ll stop by at half past one instead of noon.</p>
Numbers	<p>Write out the number for single-digit numbers zero through nine (e.g. “eight”). Use numerals for all other numbers.</p> <p>Some exceptions apply with common conventions for numbers with the goal of readability. Below is an <u>incomplete</u> list of examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Days/Time: A.D. 1066, the 1980s, the ‘90s, February 1st - Percentages: 4%, 15.93% - Decimals/Fractions: 1.5, 1/4 - Proper nouns: Article III of the Constitution, Genesis 1:1, Fifty Shades of Grey - Money: 10 cents, \$84, \$1 billion, \$10,567.45 - Measurement: eight inches, 10 feet by four feet, 223 pounds 	<p>He turns 25 today, where’d the last five years go?</p>

	Guidelines	Example
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow basic number rules; use numerals for fractions. - Follow the conventions for ordinal place. For example: “Zeroth”, “first in line”, “10th place”, “21st century”, “100th time”. - For anything that’s not a number / digit or percentage, write out the full word instead of the symbol. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [Teacher] 2,000 plus three equals 2,003. - [Teacher] 1/2 of this and 10 3/4 of that. - X squared times 0.32%. - Five x times negative three x equals negative 15x squared.
Graphing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write it out as the speaker says it, following basic number conventions such that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (-10,3) becomes “negative 10 comma three” or “negative 10 three” depending on their word choice. - Quadrants are labeled with Roman numerals, such as “quadrant IV” - Axes and coordinate references are hyphenated as follows: x-coordinate, y-axis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Looking at the x-axis, we multiply the constant by three and get the coordinates of 24 comma 15.
Web	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Caption website addresses as “http://www.google.com” instead of “h-t-t-p, w-w-w dot google dot com” - Social media handles, such as for Twitter and Instagram, can be captioned as “@mytwitterhandle” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visit http://www.seetheanswer.com to leave feedback.

	Guidelines	Example
Acronyms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- For acronyms like FOIL (First, Outer, Inner, Last, used for binomial multiplication), be sure to keep it capitalized for all uses.- If a speaker spells out a word, use the format “W-O-R-D”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Now you try FOILing this next problem- Be sure to go to bed early the night before your SATs.- Do you spell cat, K-A-T?
Non-Letter Symbols	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- We cannot use symbols or special characters such as é, £, €, or ². Only use what is available on a standard American keyboard.- Non-letter symbols, such as pi, should have spaces in between them and both the preceding and next variable or term.- Try to be as clear and consistent as possible using spaces as needed to avoid confusion, such as pi being mistaken for p times i.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Two times pi times r is the formula for what?
Technical Terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- For technical terms, optimize for readability. Always caption how it is displayed on-screen.<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Keyboard commands caption as “press Shift + Command + X” not “press shift command X”.- Software commands should be “console.log” not “console dot log”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Use the following keys to complete this function: Shift + Command + X, Control + Up Arrow.

Use a dash (-) and a space every time a **new speaker** starts speaking or a **speaker changes**.

1. If the speaker **can** be visually identified speaking:
 - Use a dash and a space:
 - Do you think Joan will be surprised?
 - I bet she will be.
 - (doorbell rings)
 - Don't you remember last time, she jumped two feet.
2. If the speaker **cannot** be visually identified speaking:
 - Identify the speaker with a dash (-) and a space plus the speaker ID.
 - Details on how to identify a speaker are on the [next slide](#).
 - [Joey] Have you heard the news?
 - [Blonde Girl] Look, it's on TV.
3. If there are **multiple speakers** talking at the same time, you can:
 - Use [Advanced Caption Formatting](#) if the crosstalk captions cannot be on-screen long enough to be read clearly.
 - Use group identifiers:
 - [Congregation] Amen!
 - [Crowd]

Note:

- Never use numbers such as Narrator 2 in a speaker ID.
- Never use race or other discriminatory identifiers. Instead, use a descriptor (occupation, clothing, height, etc.)
- It's ok to reuse the same speaker ID for multiple speakers as long as those speakers are never on-screen at the same time.

If		Then	Example
The speaker can be visually identified as the one speaking...	For the entire dialogue	Use a dash and a space at the beginning of a speaker's monologue. Do not include a dash after the atmospheric, since the speaker is not changing.	- I don't want anything, I'm not hungry. - Well, I am starving. (bell rings) I think I'll get a hamburger.
	They are seen on-screen at any point during their monologue and they are not interrupted, even if they start or end off-screen		
	They are interrupted by an atmospheric		
The speaker cannot be visually identified as the one speaking and...	The viewer knows the speaker's name	Use a dash and a space plus their <i>first name</i> or their known character name. Use that same label for the specific speaker throughout.	- [Mark] - [Gibbs]
	The character changes names (secret identities, superheroes, etc.)	Use dash and a space plus the name as it is known to the audience at the time.	- [Bruce] Let me think about this. - [Hulk] Likes to smash.
	The speaker's name is unknown	Use a dash and a space plus a visible description.	- [Blonde Woman] - [Ghostly Voice] - [Narrator] - [Interviewer] - [Tall Person] - [Guest] - [Man] or - [Woman] <i>can be used if they are the only man/woman present</i>
	The speaker is expressing unspoken thoughts	Use a dash and a space plus a label.	- [Mark Voiceover]
	The file is an audio file only	Use a dash and a space. Never use a speaker label. More information .	- I am not sure what to say. - How about you love me too?
	Multiple people are speaking in unison	Use a dash and a space plus a description.	- [Congregation] - [Students] - [Crowd]

Speaker Labeling Tips & Tricks




- When doing a movie, first check for credits at the end of the video.
 - If they exist, they will tell you the proper spelling of character names.
 - They may suggest helpful descriptors for characters that are unnamed.
 - - [Policeman] or - [Screaming Girl]
 - You can also check [IMDB.com](https://www.imdb.com), Google, or LinkedIn for names, spellings, and pictures of characters.
 - Review this [Help Center Article](#) for additional speaker label examples.

Never cover important pre-existing on-screen text in the lower 1/3 of the screen with captions. You can avoid it by using a ^ at the beginning of any caption group that appears in the same lower 1/3 **at the same time** as the pre-existing text, even if it is only a split second. This will move the caption to the top of the screen.

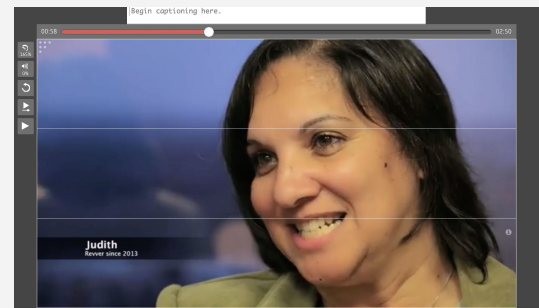
Examples of pre-existing on-screen text that you must use a ^ for:

- Interview name plates and descriptions.
- Social media links that appear briefly, intended to be seen.
- Storytelling information intentionally placed by the filmmaker to be seen.

Exceptions:

- NEW** ● A logo, graphic, image, or watermark. [Examples](#)
- Hashtag or text that persists for the **entirety** of the video.
- TV/movie rating/CC information such as:   
- Text on the environment in a video. (A gas station sign, a number on a race car)
- A running timecode throughout the video.
- Full-screen / PowerPoint slides, graphics, whiteboards, charts.
- NEW** ● A software interface such as a video game or videoconferencing recordings.
- IF there is on-screen text in both the bottom 1/3 and the top 1/3 of the screen at the same time, do NOT include the up-arrow caret since important text will be covered in either location. More information [here](#).

Dash has a visual indicator to show the top and lower thirds of the video.



To flip a caption group while typing, use ^
To flip the caption group while [syncing](#), use \

Include atmospherics in the following situations **when they are also integral to the context of the story**:

1. A sound effect:
 - If a character reacts to a sound, e.g., (gun bangs), (plane engine roars), or (car honking).
 - If a sound is the main focus point, e.g., a group of children playing, (children laughing).
 - Include sounds made by the speaker, e.g., (laughs loudly).
 - If a sound is made by a logo or when the scene changes, e.g. (air whooshing).
 - If in doubt, include the atmospheric.
2. [Background music](#) setting a specific mood:
 - Only include a background music atmospheric if there's a significant gap (at least 2 seconds). E.g., (dramatic orchestral music).
 - Introductory music is a common use case. E.g., (gently chiming bells).
 - Sometimes music is used to signal a change in the scene. If this occurs, include an atmospheric at the start of the music and then when the tempo or style of the music changes dramatically, add a new atmospheric describing the change.
 - Recognizable songs without audible lyrics. E.g., ("The Star-Spangled Banner").
3. A speaker speaks in a foreign language.
 - Follow the speaker labeling conventions and describe with the atmospheric (in foreign language). E.g., - What was that? (yells in foreign language)



Tip: See [common mistakes and foreign language tips](#) for atmospherics.

Atmospheric Formatting

- Always use parentheses and lowercase unless a proper noun is used. E.g., (Mark laughs), (child laughs).
 - Parentheses can **only** be used for atmospherics, **never dialogue or other notations**.
 - Atmospheric-only caption groups can never have a dash or speaker label.
- Atmospherics must always be present tense, E.g., (coughs loudly).
- Always describe with an action verb. E.g., (frogs croaking).
- Never use onomatopoeia of a sound, such as “ribbit, ribbit”.

Atmospheric Positioning

1. If the atmospheric lasts for at least 2 seconds OR has some silence before and after the atmospheric, put the atmospheric in its own caption group.

(bar patrons talking loudly)

02:27.84

2. If the sound is made by the speaker, put the atmospheric in-line with the dialogue at the same point you hear it occur.

I (laughs) couldn't believe it!

01:38.00

3. If an important atmospheric overlaps with dialogue OR is less than 2 seconds long, use [Advanced Caption Formatting](#) to put it on its own line within the same caption group.

(child wailing)
If the rules had been enforced

02:33.86

Caption groups should be created in such a way as to not create awkward sentence structure or inhibit readability.

There are 2 main rules to follow:

- 1) A caption group can **never** exceed 60 characters in length ([see page 26](#))
- 2) A caption should begin and end with natural breaks in the conversation and/or sentence structure.
 - a) Indicators of when to create a new caption group:
 - i) **Pauses in speech**
 - ii) Punctuation or ends of sentences
 - (1) Exception: If two short sentences are said by a speaker in under one second you can put them in the same caption group. For example: - Like, I know. You don't.
 - iii) Pronouns, adverbs, and prepositional phrases such as: that, who, in order to, not only, as we, in which, where, with, what, how, for, through, until, to, as, of, yet, so, by
 - iv) Conjunctions such as: and, nor, but, or, because
 - v) **Changes in Speaker**
 - (1) If there is crosstalk or an atmospheric and a speaker, use [Advanced Caption Formatting](#).



If a speaker is talking very slowly and a sentence takes longer than five seconds to say...

Separate the sentence into more than one caption group.

Example: what it means for us
to be a high performance team.

Speaker pauses for three seconds.



This is an example of *incorrect* caption group formatting. These splits make for awkward reading:

hit the earth. Or this kind of
meteorite, this is the current theory that the meteorite
hit the earth, and mass extinction occurred. So we think
that happened 65.5 million years ago.



This example *reads much better* because it follows the rhythm of speech, splitting at slight pauses:

hit the earth.
Or this kind of meteorite,
this is the current theory that the meteorite hit the earth,
and mass extinction occurred.
So we think that happened 65.5 million years ago.

Caption groups **must always contain less than 60 characters**. You will not be able to submit your project if a caption group has over 60 characters, including spaces.

The typing area turns yellow when you are nearing the character limit. **It's perfectly acceptable to submit captions with a yellow character length.**

If I type a caption group that exceeds 50 characters	00:00.00
the caption box turns yellow.	00:00.00

The typing box turns **red** when you are over the character limit. Remove some text from that caption group until the red color disappears.

If you type a caption group that exceeds 60 characters, the caption box turns red to let you know to break the caption group.	00:00.00
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Tip: When you have continuous speech, aim for caption groups that show up as green or yellow in the typing window. Avoid many short caption groups in a row, as this inhibits readability. [Examples](#)

When **multiple speakers talk** simultaneously, or key atmospherics occur very close together, **AND** all content is vital to the story being told, use Advanced Caption Formatting by pressing **Shift+Enter** to include a second line within the caption group.

Captioning crosstalk (2 characters talking over one another):

- Include both speakers' spoken words within the same caption group.
- Indicate the secondary speaker with a dash and a space.

Main speaker is speaking →

Second speaker talks at the same time →

Next speaker follows normal ID guidelines →

- Sir, our scouts have returned and report 01:50.38

that the orc army is nearby. 01:50.38

- I hear something. 01:50.38

- [Head Scout] We're awaiting your orders. 01:50.38

Captioning simultaneous atmospherics:

- Each atmospheric must be on its own line.

(spooky haunting music) 00:00.00

(door slams)

Additional Key Information:

- This is only allowed for TWO speakers. NEVER use Shift+Enter to break up dialogue by one speaker.
- Two lines is the maximum per caption group.
- **NEVER** use a speaker label when using advanced caption breaking. Include a dash on the second line to signify the change of speaker.
- Each individual line cannot exceed 30 characters. The typing area will turn red if a line exceeds 30 characters.
- Follow speaker conventions for the next caption group. E.g., if the second speaker is still speaking in the next caption group you do not re-indicate the speaker.

Sync each caption group so it appears on-screen when the audio **begins**. The **start time** needs to align with the beginning of the sound. This applies to both atmospherics and speech.

- Aim for precision, but it's ok for the start time to be up to a ½ second early or late from the true beginning of the sound.
- Dash automatically calculates the end time for a caption group. **You are only responsible for syncing the start time of a caption group.**

When to Edit Captions in Order to Adjust Caption Timing

1. If a speaker is talking very slowly or has a long, dramatic pause in the middle of a sentence, you can split up caption groups so that they do not end too **EARLY**.
2. If multiple speakers are talking very quickly, you can combine captions using [advanced caption formatting](#) so that the caption does not end too **LATE**.
3. **NEVER** add extra spaces to a caption group **OR** double up the captions in an attempt to adjust the amount of time the caption group is on-screen. This causes errors in the file format for customers.



For more details on how to sync captions, see the [Dash User Guide](#).