From: Patrick Andries
Date: 2002 Oct 23 5:34pm
Subject: Dashes

For French :

i) em dash (—) « tiret sur cadratin, tiret long, tiret cadratiné, moins (jargon), etc. »
Usage : change of speaker in dialogue, used as parentheses, indicates a pause in the text, replaces the entry word in dictionary, plays the role of "ditto" in tables, used as separator in enumerations, used as bullets, also used to specify the absence of cents Fr. 13,—.
Spacing : surrounding by spaces, break or no-break according to context (within running text or not), the width of the spaces ("thin" 1/8th of an em or "word" 1/4th, both sizes are the modern widths) varies according to context and authors.

ii) en dash (–) « tiret sur demi-cadratin, tiret court »
Usage : rare between numbers except amongst those copying the Chicago Manual of Style..., seems to be replacing the em dash in Newspapers when used a parenthesis in running text, but not in quality book. Some codes say one should use en dashes ("modern look") or em dashes ("classical look") but one should not use both in the same text.
Spacing : as em dash.

iii) hyphen (‐) « trait d'union, division »
Usage : « trait d'union » to join words : « franc-parler », « point-virgule », « amour-propre », etc. « Division » used for word division across lines : « trans-action », « atmo-sphère », or to separate syllabes (« li-si-bi-li-té »).
Spacing : no spaces surround the hyphen except when the en dash could be used to join hyphenated words ("Trois-Rivières - Le Gardeur" or "Trois-Rivières–Le Gardeur") Three ou four times smaller than the « tiret cadratin ».

iv) 2-em dash (——) Not used as far as I know (Méron http://listetypo.free.fr/meron/new/Guilles.pdf seems to think this English habit makes for a lot of dashes...).

v) 3-em dash (———) Not used as far as I know.

Date: 2002-10-24 17:43:58 -0700

Slight correction (sorry for the typos in my previous message).

----- Message d'origine -----

> iv) 2-em dash (——) or 3-em dash (———) « tiret sur deux cadratins », «
tiret sur trois cadratin »
> Not used as far as I know (Méron
> http://listetypo.free.fr/meron/new/Guilles.pdf seems to think this English
> habit makes for a lot of dashes...).

This was apparently used in bibliographies more than sixty years ago, but
has since gone out of fashion. My informer tells me that this was an
academic habit, probably of English origin.
A single character of several ems length for this typographer.

P. Andries