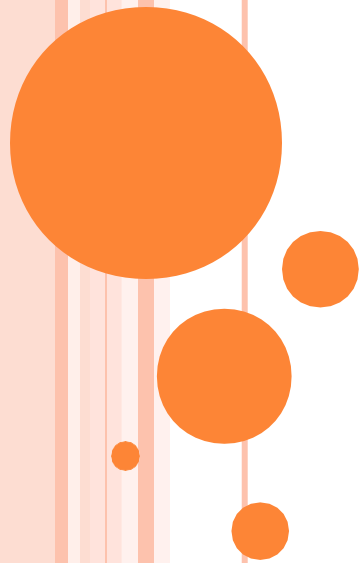


PUNCTUATION

English Language



WHY TO PUNCTUATE

- ' Punctuation marks are symbols that indicate the structure and organization of written language, as well as intonation n and pauses to be observed when reading aloud.
- ' In written English, punctuation is vital to disambiguate the meaning of sentences.



**Correct punctuation can
save a person's life**

Let's eat grandpa.

Let's eat, grandpa.

THE POWER OF PUNCTUATION

An English professor asked the students to punctuate the following:

“A woman without her man is nothing”

All of the males in the class wrote

“A woman without her man, is nothing.”

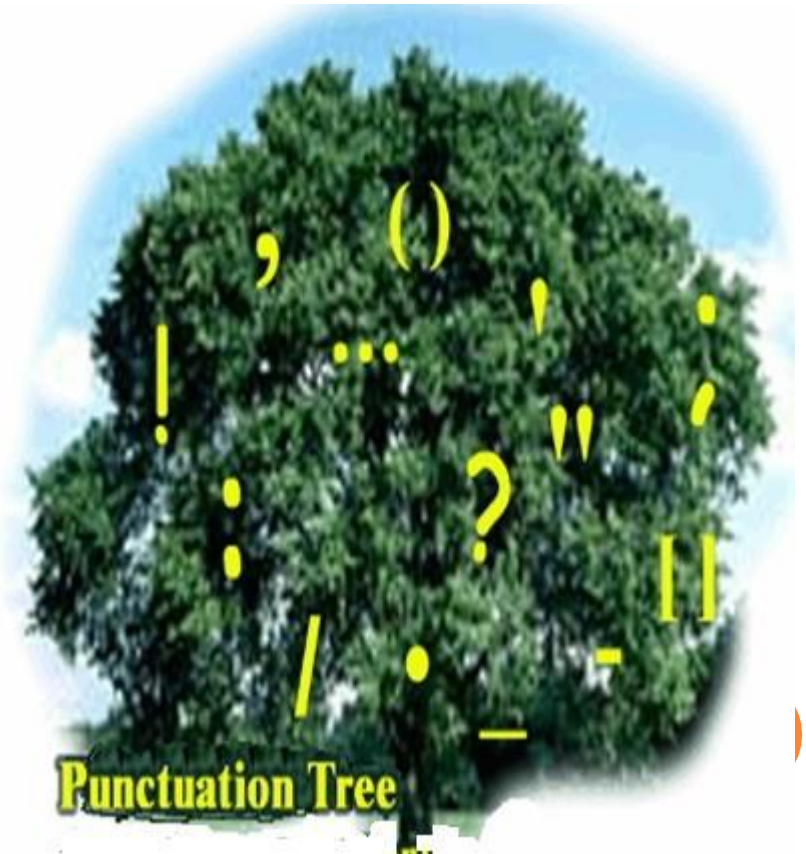
All of the females in the class wrote

“A woman: without her, man is nothing.”



PUNCTUATION MARKS

- ' Full stop/period
- ' Ellipses marks
- ' Comma
- ' Colon
- ' Semi colon
- ' Question mark
- ' Exclamation mark
- ' Quotation marks
- ' Parentheses
- ' Apostrophe
- ' Hyphen and Dash



PUNCTUATION

’ **Rule 1.** With a computer, use only one space after commas, semicolons, colons, exclamation points, question marks, and quotation marks.

’ **Rule 2.** Use no spaces on either side of a hyphen.

Example:

We borrowed twenty-two sheets of paper.



Full Stop

•



RULES

1. Use a full stop at the end of a complete sentence that is a statement.

′ **Example:**

I know that you would never break my trust intentionally.

2. If the last word in the sentence ends in a full stop, do not use another full stop after it.

′ **Examples:**

′ I know that M.D. She is my sister-in-law.

′ Please shop, cook, etc. I will do the



Ellipsis Marks

...



RULE

The three-dot method is used for ellipsis marks. Use no more than three marks whether the omission occurs in the middle of a sentence or between sentences.

Example:

Original sentence: The regulation states, “All agencies must document overtime or risk losing federal funds.”

Rewritten using ellipses: The regulation states, “All agencies must document overtime. . .”

Comma

,



RULES

1. To avoid confusion, use commas to separate words and word groups with a series of three or more.

Example:

My property is to be split among my husband, daughter, son, and nephew.

(Omitting the comma after son would indicate that the son and nephew would have to split one-third of the property.)

2. Use a comma to separate two adjectives when the word *and* can be inserted between them.

Example:

He is a strong, healthy man.

3. Use commas before or surrounding the name or title of a person directly addressed.

Examples:

Will you, Aisha, do that assignment for me?

Yes, Doctor, I will.



4. Use a comma to separate the day of the month from the year and after the year.

- ' **Example:**

- ' She talked to her husband on December 5, 2003, in Mill Valley, California.

(If any part of the date is omitted, leave out the comma)

They talked in December 2003, in Mill Valley.

5. Use commas to set off expressions that interrupt the flow of the sentence.

- ' **Example:**

- ' I am, as you have probably noticed, very nervous about this.

6. If something or someone is sufficiently identified, the description following it is considered nonessential and should be surrounded by commas.

- ' **Example:**

- ' Freddy, who has a limp, was the only person available with required qualification .



7. When starting a sentence with a weak clause, use a comma after it.

Conversely, do not use a comma when the sentence starts with a strong clause followed by a weak clause.

Example:

If you are not sure about this, let me know now.

Let me know now if you are not sure about this.

8. Use a comma to separate two strong clauses joined by a conjunction—*and*, *or*, *but*, *for*, *nor*. You can omit the comma if the clauses are both short.

Examples:

I have painted the entire house, but he is still working on sanding the doors.

I paint and he writes.

9. Use the comma to separate two sentences if it helps to avoid confusion.

Example:

I chose the colors red and green, and blue was his first choice.



10. Use commas to introduce direct quotations shorter than three lines.

‘ **Example:**

‘ He actually said, “I do not care.”

11. Use a comma to separate a statement from a question.

‘ **Example:**

‘ I can go, can’t I?

12. Use a comma to separate contrasting parts of a sentence.

‘ **Example:**

‘ That is my money, not yours



13. Use a comma when beginning sentences with introductory words such as *well, now, or yes*.

' **Examples:**

' Yes, I do need that report.

Well, I never thought I'd live to see the day.

14. Use commas surrounding words such as *therefore and however* when they are used as interrupters.

' **Examples:**

' I would, therefore, like a response.

' I would be happy, however, to volunteer for the Red Cross.



Colon

:



RULES

1. Use the colon to introduce a list of items when introductory words such as *namely, for example, or that is* do not appear.

Examples:

I want the items namely, butter, sugar, and flour.

I want the following items: butter, sugar, and flour.

2. A colon should not precede a list unless it follows a complete sentence.

Examples:

I want an assistant who can (1) input data, (2) write reports, and (3) complete tax forms.

I want an assistant who can do the following:

(a) input data,

(b) write reports, and

(c) complete tax forms.



3. Use a colon when the second clause explains the first clause and no conjunction is being used to connect the clauses. If only one sentence follows the colon, do not capitalize the first word of the new sentence. If two or more sentences follow the colon, capitalize the first word of each sentence.

- ' **Examples:**

- ' I enjoy reading: novels by Kurt are my favorite.

- ' Garlic is used in Italian cooking: It greatly enhances the flavor of pasta dishes: It also enhances the flavor of eggplant.



4. Use the colon to introduce a direct quotation that is more than three lines in length. In this situation, leave a blank line above and below the quoted material. Single space the long quotation. Indent one-half inch on both the left & right margins. Quotation marks are not used.

Example:

The author wrote in the first chapter:

Georgia went back to her room and stared at the intricate patterns of burned moth wings in the clear glass of the overhead light. She felt herself as pitiable as the burnt moth. She could not manage the stress and anxiety she was experiencing this moment. The world was seeming odd to her.



Semicolon

;



RULES

1. Use a semicolon in place of a full stop to separate two sentences. where the conjunction has been left out.

' **Examples:**

' Call me tomorrow; I will give you my answer then.

' I have paid my dues; therefore, I expect all the privileges listed in the contract.

2. Use the semicolon to separate units of a series when one or more of the units contain commas.

' **Example:**

' This conference has people who have come from Lahore, Pakistan; Bombay, India; and Jadah, Saudi Arabia.



3. Use the semicolon between two sentences that are joined by a conjunction but already have one or more commas within the first sentence.

' **Examples:**

' When I finish here, I will be glad to help you; and that is a promise I will keep.

' If she can, she will attempt that feat; and if her husband is able, he will be there to see her.



Question Mark

?



RULES

1. Use a question mark only after a direct question.

‘ **Example:**

‘ Will you go with me?

I asked if he would go with me.

2. Use a question mark when a sentence is half statement and half question.

‘ **Example:**

‘ You do care, don’t you?



Exclamation Mark



RULE

1. Use exclamation points to show emphasis or surprise. Do not use the exclamation point in formal business letters.

' **Example:**

' I'm truly shocked by your behavior!



Quotation Marks

“ ”



RULES

1. Full stops and commas always go inside quotation marks.

' **Example:**

' She said, "you need to hurry up."

2. The placement of question marks with quotes follows logic. If a question is in quotation marks, the question mark should be placed inside the quotation marks.

' **Examples:**

' She asked, "Will you still be my friend?"

' Do you agree with the saying, "All's fair in love and war"?

(Only one ending punctuation mark is used with quotation marks. Also, the stronger punctuation mark wins. Therefore, no full stop after war is used.)



3. When you have a question outside quoted material AND inside quoted material, use only one question mark and place it inside the quotation mark.

' **Example:**

' Did she say, "May I go?"

4. Use single quotation marks for quotes within quotes.

' **Example:**

' He said, "Danial said, 'Do not treat me that way.'"

5. Use quotation marks to set off a direct quotation only.

' **Example:**

' "When will you be here?", he asked.

He asked when you will be there.

6. Do not use quotation marks with quoted material that is more than three lines in length.



Parentheses

()



RULES

1. Use parentheses to enclose words or figures that clarify or are used as an aside.

Example:

I expect five hundred dollars (\$500).

He finally answered (after taking five minutes to think) that he did not get the question.

(Commas could have been used in the above example. Parentheses show less emphasis or importance.)

2. Use full parentheses to enclose numbers or letters used for listed items.

Example:

We need an emergency physician who can (1) think quickly, (2) treat patients respectfully, and (3) handle complaints from the public.



3. Full stop go inside parentheses only if an entire sentence is inside the parentheses.

' **Example:**

' Please read the analysis. (I have enclosed it as Attachment A.)

Please read the analysis (Attachment A).



Apostrophe'



RULES

1. Use the apostrophe with contractions. The apostrophe is always placed at the spot where one or more letters have been removed.

• **Examples:**

• don't, isn't

You're right.

She's a great teacher.

2. Use the apostrophe to show possession. Place the apostrophe before the *s to show singular possession.*

• **Examples:**

• one boy's hat

• one child's hat

(Names ending in s or an s sound are also required to have the second s added .)

• Mr. Jones's golf clubs

• Mrs. Lees's books (name is Lees)



3. Use the apostrophe where the noun that should follow is implied.

' **Example:**

' This was his father's, not his, jacket.

4. To show plural possession, make the noun plural first. Then immediately use the apostrophe.

' **Examples:**

- two boys' hats two women's hats
- two actresses' hats two children's hats

5. With a singular compound noun, show possession with 's *at the* end of the word

' **Example:**

' my mother-in-law's hat



6. If the compound noun is plural, form the plural first and then use the apostrophe.

• **Example:**

• my two brothers-in-law's hats

7. Use the apostrophe and *s* after the second name only if two people possess the same item.

Examples:

Sara's and Amna's job contracts will be renewed next year.

(Indicates separate ownership.)

• Sara and Amna's job contracts will be renewed next year.

(Indicates joint ownership of more than one contract.)

8. Never use an apostrophe with possessive pronouns: *his, hers, its, theirs, ours, yours, whose*. They already show possession so they do not require an apostrophe.

• **Example:**

Correct: This book is hers, not yours.

Incorrect: Sincerely your's.



Hyphen

—



RULES

1. To check whether a compound noun is two words, one word, or hyphenated, you may need to look it up in the dictionary. If you can't find the word in the dictionary, treat the noun as separate words.

- **Examples:**

eyewitness

eye shadow

eye-opener

2. Hyphenate all compound numbers from *twenty-one* to *ninety-nine*.

- **Examples:**

- The teacher had thirty-two children in her classroom.

- Only twenty-one of the children were bilingual.



3. Hyphenate all spelled-out fractions.

- ' **Example:**
- ' You need one-third of a cup of sugar for that recipe.

4. When adverbs other than *-ly adverbs are used as compound words* in front of a noun, hyphenate. When the combination of words is used after the noun, do not hyphenate.

- ' **Examples:**
- ' The well-known actress accepted her award.
The actress who accepted her award was well known.
- ' He got a much-needed haircut yesterday.
His haircut was much needed.



5. Generally, hyphenate between two or more adjectives when they come before a noun and act as a single idea.

' **Example:**

' friendly-looking man

(compound adjective in front of a noun)



Hyphen with Prefixs

—



RULES

1. The current trend is to do away with unnecessary hyphens. Therefore, most prefixes and suffixes are used without a hyphen.

- ' **Examples:**
- ' noncompliance
- ' Semiconscious

2. Hyphenate prefixes when they come before proper nouns.

- ' **Example:**
- ' un-American



3. When a prefix ends in one vowel and a root word begins with a different vowel, generally attach them without a hyphen.

• **Examples:**

• antiaircraft

• proactive

4. Hyphenate prefixes ending in an *a or i* only when the root word begins with the same letter.

• **Examples:**

• ultra-ambitious

• semi-invalid

5. Prefixes and root words that result in *double e's and double o's* are usually combined to form one word.

• **Examples:**

• preemployment

• coordinate

• **Exceptions:**

• de-emphasize

• co-owner



6. Hyphenate all words beginning with *self* except for *selfish* and *selfless*.

- ' **Examples:**
- ' self-assured
- ' self-respect
- ' self-addressed

7. Use a hyphen with the prefix *ex*.

- ' **Example:**
- ' His ex-wife sued for nonsupport

8. Use the hyphen with the prefix *re* *only when the re means again AND omitting the hyphen would cause confusion with another word.*

- ' **Examples:**
- ' Will she recover from her illness?

Re does not mean again.

- ' I have re-covered the sofa twice.

Re does mean again AND omitting the hyphen would have caused confusion with another word.



Dashes

—



EN DASH

1. An en dash, named for the width of a typesetter's *n* key, is a little longer than a hyphen. It is used for span of time when you might otherwise use *to*.

- ' **Examples:**
- ' The years 2001–2003
- ' January–June



EM DASH

An em dash is longer than an en dash (named for the width of a typesetter's *m key*). *Don't use it just* because you are uncertain about correct punctuation. In informal writing, em dashes may replace commas, semicolons, colons, and parentheses to indicate added emphasis, an interruption, or an abrupt change of thought.

- ' Examples:
- ' You are the friend—the only friend—who offered to help me.
- ' Never have I met such a nice person—before you.



You're done!

