

## PUNCTUATION RULES

Punctuation Marks		Description	Examples
<b><i>Apostrophe</i></b>	'	Use it to show possession, to take the place of missing letters in contractions and to form the plurals of letters and numerals.	Sam's best fried never got straight A's, but Sam didn't care.
<b><i>Colon</i></b>	:	Use it after the greeting in a business letter; to introduce a list; between numbers in time; and to introduce an important quotation in a report, essay, or news story.	Dear Sir: Here are the rules: no gum, no baseball caps, no talking. The police office stated: "We found the suspect's fingerprints at the scene of the crime."
<b><i>Commas</i></b>	,	Used for many things. Look at the following rules, then look at their coordinating examples on the next column.  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To separate three or more items in a series.</li> <li>2. To separate adjectives that modify the same noun.</li> <li>3. Between a city and a state.</li> <li>4. Between the day and year in a date.</li> <li>5. After the greeting and closing of a friendly letter.</li> <li>6. Before a conjunction that joins the independent clauses in a compound sentence.</li> <li>7. After the dependent clause at the beginning of a complex sentence.</li> <li>8. After introductory words or mild interjections at the beginning of a sentence.</li> <li>9. To set off the name of the person you're speaking to.</li> <li>10. To set off an appositive (a noun or phrase that renames or further identifies the noun it follows).</li> <li>11. With words that interrupt a sentence's basic idea.</li> <li>12. In front of a short, direct quotation in the middle of a sentence.</li> <li>13. At the end of a direct quotation that is a statement when it comes at the beginning of a sentence.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Marge loves spinach, Brussels sprouts, and asparagus.</li> <li>2. The loud, beeping buzzer woke me up.</li> <li>3. Miami, FL</li> <li>4. May 27, 2004</li> <li>5. Dear _____ Susie, Yours truly,</li> <li>6. I tried to call you on Saturday afternoon, but your line was busy.</li> <li>7. When it began to rain, I knew our picnic would be cancelled.</li> <li>8. Yes, you can borrow my new CD. Oh, I didn't know that the test was today.</li> <li>9. Jennie, can you have dinner at my house tonight?</li> <li>10. Mrs. Tyra, my math teacher, won the teaching award.</li> <li>11. Dad, of course, had to brag about our soccer team to everyone. Eddie, therefore, will have to leave the game early.</li> <li>12. Callie asked, "Is that your uncle sitting over here?"</li> <li>13. "Mrs. Howard is giving a luncheon today," explained Mom.</li> </ol>
<b><i>Dash</i></b>	--	<p>Use it to separate and stress elements in a sentence.</p> <p>Use after an interrupted or unfinished statement of thought or to introduce a list of items.</p> <p>Use after an introductory list.</p> <p>Also, use before and after comments inserted into a sentence to give information or add emphasis.</p>	<p>The cafeteria -- and no other room - may be used for school lunches.</p> <p>You'll need three things -- a pencil, an eraser, and a ruler.</p> <p>Toys, hairbrushes, chewing gum -- these items must be left at home.</p>

<b><i>Ellipsis</i></b>	<b>...</b>	Three dots in a row. It is used to replace words that have been left out. Use an ellipsis to indicate that something has been left out of the middle of a sentence. If something is left out at the end of a sentence, use a period and then an ellipsis.	Mary, Mary...how does your garden grow?  Four score and seven years ago our forefathers brought forth this nation...
<b><i>Exclamation Point</i></b>	<b>!</b>	Use it after strong interjections, exclamatory sentences, and strong imperative sentences.	Sarah! Get off that desk immediately!
<b><i>Hyphen</i></b>	<b>-</b>	Use it to break a word between syllables at the end of a line, in two-part numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine, in spelled-out fractions, and in some compound nouns and adjectives.	Four-fifths of the twenty-two drive-in movies in town have closed.
<b><i>Parentheses</i></b>	<b>( )</b>	Use it to give the reader added information. Also use before and after an abbreviation or an acronym of a company or organization once its full name has been written.	Read the first story (pages 4-7) tonight.  A representative from American Airlines (AA) will visit our class.
<b><i>Period</i></b>	<b>.</b>	Use it at the end of a declarative sentences, at the end of an imperative sentence that doesn't require an exclamation point, and after most initials and abbreviations. Also use as a decimal point.	Dr. A. C. Ross will visit the clinic today.
<b><i>Quotation Marks</i></b>	<b>" "</b>	Use it before and after a direct quotation or to set off words or phrases used in a special way. Also use before and after the names of book chapters, essays, short stories, songs, poems, and magazine, and newspaper articles.	Sue said, "Pass the paper, please."  Cory hummed, "Row, row, row, your boat" as he washed the car.
<b><i>Semicolons</i></b>	<b>;</b>	The following is a list of rules for using semicolons. Please look at their corresponding examples on the next column.  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use it to join independent clauses in a compound sentence without a comma and a conjunction.</li> <li>2. Before some conjunctions that join two simple sentences into one compound sentence. Use a comma after the conjunction.</li> <li>3. To separate a series of items when one or more of the items include commas.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One cousin is driving here from Colorado; another will take a plan from Maine.</li> <li>2. He cooked a huge dinner; therefore, he invited the neighbors over.</li> <li>3. The art supplies we need for class are paintbrushes; red, yellow, and blue paint; a sketch pad; a charcoal pencil; a calligraphy pen; and an art smock.</li> </ol>
<b><i>Question Marks</i></b>	<b>?</b>	Use it at the end of interrogative sentences, after a direct question, at the end of an incomplete question, and when a statement is intended as a question.	What is your name?  Really? When? No kidding?  Your name is Wendy?