

Punctuation: The Comma ,

Punctuation provides direction to the reader. Proper punctuation permits the writer to place emphasis on certain points and control the meaning of what is said. When punctuation is not used properly, the flow of ideas is interrupted and the reader may become confused.

1. Use a comma to separate two main ideas connected with a coordinate conjunction (i.e. and, or, but).
Example: Mary hated spaghetti, but she ate some anyway.
2. When a sentence begins with a dependent clause, place a comma at the end of the dependent clause.
Example: Although Adam had never played baseball before, he joined the team.
3. Use a comma to set off interrupting words.
Example: Phyllis, undoubtedly, is a good student.
4. Use a comma to set off names in direct address.
*Example: "John, open the window."
"Could you, Jack and Jill, please clean the board?"*
5. Use commas to punctuate dates and addresses.
*Examples: On Friday, October 19, 1929, the great crash occurred.
Victoria, British Columbia*
6. Use a comma to set off direct quotations but not in indirect quotations.
*Examples: The owner shouted, "Get out!" (direct quotation)
The owner told them to leave immediately. (indirect quotation)*
7. Use commas to separate items in a series.
Example: Last week I did the laundry, washed the windows, cooked dinner, and attended a party.
8. Use a comma to separate non-essential information from the rest of the sentence.
Example: My uncle, seventy years old next week, will be organizing his own birthday party.
9. Use a comma to prevent confusion.
*Example: At eleven thirty students appeared at the door. (confusing)
At eleven, thirty students appeared at the door.*

Insert COMMAS wherever necessary.

1. This city is lovely friendly and fascinating.
2. Suzanne my sister-in-law loves cats.
3. When the tenants arrived at the building the door was locked.
4. While I was bathing the dog jumped into the tub.
5. “Complete your form Tom before handing it in.”
6. “Everyone is going to work over-time tonight” stated the boss.
7. I was born on Wednesday October 13 1961.
8. The teacher told us not to be late.
9. He suffered but survived.
10. We brought wine cigars and clothes from Argentina.
11. Andrea the girl who works at the bank often drops by to say hello.
12. “By the way do you remember Sue’s address?”
13. Her son was born on February 20 1972.
14. Point Faith Beach located along highway 7 is full of tourists in July.
15. Although I hadn’t been to that zoo before I wanted my friends to see the baby elephants.
16. You can by the way get to the airport by taking the 204 bus.
17. Bill Lee’s neighbour has an old cottage in Cape Breton Nova Scotia.
18. My uncle’s favourite pastimes are skiing biking and cooking.