

Introduction to Using Commas

Name: _____

A comma (,) tells the reader to pause for just a moment, but is not a complete stop. There are many different situations for which a comma is needed. Let's look at the rules for using commas:

When to Use Commas:

1. Use a comma to separate a list of three or more items in a series. *He likes to run, jump, and play.*
2. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction to connect two independent clauses. *She was hungry, yet nothing sounded good to eat.*
3. Use a comma to separate a dependent clause from an independent clause at the beginning of a sentence. *Due to unexpected rain, they were not able to play baseball.*
4. Use a comma to separate additional information that could be removed from a sentence without changing its meaning. *Joseph, the boy in the red shirt, was working on his homework.*
5. Use a comma to separate adjectives next to each other if they would otherwise need an "and" or a "but" between them. *He was a tall, dark, and handsome man.*
6. Use a comma to separate a direct quote from information that introduces or explains the quote. *The teacher said, "Please don't forget to put your names on your papers."*
7. Use a comma to separate contrasting phrases in a sentence. *He was interested in her money, not her good looks.*
8. Use a comma to show a pause if the sentence would be confusing without one. *Inside, the boxes were stacked all around.*
9. Use a comma to separate the day of the month from the year when writing a date. *May 25, 1945.*
10. Use a comma to separate the name of a city and its state or country. *Albany, New York*
11. Use a comma to show place value periods when writing numbers. *1,238,900*
12. Use a comma to separate a name and a suffix (like Jr., or PhD). *Edward Ronald Scott, Jr.*

Use the rules above to add commas to the sentences below.

Rule 1: The frustrating boy hit kicked and teased the little girls on the playground.

Rule 2: We can vacation on the beach or we can go to the mountains.

Rule 3: While the music played the students danced together.

Rule 4: Mrs. Johnson the new teacher used to work in New York.

Rule 5: He was a bright curious and friendly boy.

Rule 6: "I would like to go to the movies " replied Andrew.

Rule 7: The kitten was cute but its fur made her sneeze.

Rule 8: The furniture next to the porch looked old.

Rule 9: The store opened on August 20 2010.

Rule 10: Our family lives in Atlanta Georgia.

Rule 11: The current population of the city is 1 843 723.

Rule 12: The guest speaker at the conference was Sylvia Pritchard PhD.