

Introduction to Commas

Commas are used to indicate a separation of numbers, words, phrases, or clauses from other words or an independent clause thereby avoiding confusion.

- Commas are used to offset an introductory element from the rest of the sentence.
- Commas are used to separate two independent clauses separated by a coordinating conjunction.
- Commas are used to separate items in a series.
- Commas are used to separate non-essential elements (clauses and phrases) from the independent clause.
- Commas are used between compound adjectives.
- Commas are used to offset parenthetical and transitional expressions.
- Commas are used to offset contrasting elements, participles, interjections, direct addresses, and tag questions.
- Commas are used with dates, addresses, titles, and numbers. □ Commas are used in quotations.

Unnecessary comma usage can be distracting to your reader and can create confusion.

1. Do not use a single comma between the subject and verb.
2. Do not use a comma to offset a restrictive element.
3. Do not use a comma between two independent clauses that are not separated by a coordinating conjunction.
4. Do not use a comma to separate an independent clause and a dependent clause separated by a coordinating conjunction.
5. Do not use a comma before the first or the last item in a series.