



Commas

Commas are used for many different purposes including: to separate items in a list; to separate extra information in a sentence; between clauses; to show direct speech after a clause and after fronted adverbials.

Commas tell the reader to make a brief pause, not as long as the pause for a full stop.

They are a little bit more complicated than other punctuation marks because they have lots of uses.



Starter

Can you make this sentence mean different things using commas?

The antiques shop sells silver, paper, lanterns, drawers and vases.

See next page...

Starter

Can you make this sentence mean different things using commas?

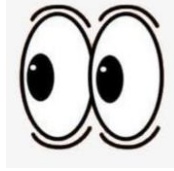
The antiques shop sells silver, paper, lanterns, drawers and vases.



The antiques shop sells silver, paper lanterns, drawers and vases.

The antiques shop sells silver paper, lanterns, drawers and vases.

Placing commas in sentences in the wrong place can change how they are read or what they mean. That's why we need to learn how to use them properly!



Look at these funny mistakes...

“Goats cheese salad ingredients: lettuce, tomato, goats, cheese”

This example is a hilarious comma mistake from a genuine restaurant menu! The accidental inclusion of an extra comma has suddenly made the menu a lot less vegetarian-friendly!

“Slow children crossing”

This brilliant funny grammar mistake comes from a real road sign, which instead of warning motorists to kill their speed because of children crossing the road, instead warns of unusually snail-paced children in the area!

Day 1 – Commas in Lists

First, let's crack how to **use commas in lists** (I'm sure you're all fairly confident in this but let's recap and make sure). Use a **comma between each item in a list, except for the last item** where you use 'and'.



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Introduction

Commas are used to separate items in lists, but 'and' is used instead of a comma for the last item.

In my fruit bowl, I have bananas, satsumas and kiwis.

Can you punctuate this list with commas?

My three favourite foods are fish pie stir fry and
pizza.

[Click here for a short activity to demonstrate!](#)

Day 1 – Commas in lists

Complete these tasks to fill in or correct lists sentences so that they have commas in the correct places.

Using Commas to Separate Items in Lists

Can you re-write these sentences using commas and 'and'?

1. On Safari we saw lions and tigers and giraffes and a snake.

2. I made the card using brown paper and glue and glitter.

3. My favourite sports are tennis and golf but my sister likes basketball and cricket and tennis.



Now, write a list of five things you would need to camp out for the night. Write your list as a sentence.



Day 2 - Commas to Separate Clauses

Commas can also be used like brackets to separate extra information from the main sentence. These are sometimes called **embedded clauses**. An **embedded clause** is a **clause used in the middle of another clause**.

In other words, an **embedded clause** is a clause (a group of words that includes a subject and a verb) that is within a main clause, marked by commas.

Information related to the sentence topic is put into the middle of the sentence to give the reader more information and enhance the sentence.



The boy, who was only eight, won the award for best actor.

Notice the sentence still makes sense if you don't include the clause in the commas...

The boy won the award for best actor.

Can you add commas to separate the extra information in this sentence?

The sandwich which was the only one left was delicious.

Day 2 - Commas to Separate Clauses

Add commas around the extra information (embedded clause) in these sentences:

Josh who was feeling tired walked home slowly.

The house which was rumoured to be haunted was still for sale.

In two years when I'm eleven I'll be going to secondary school.

My granny who loves gardening has an allotment.

Add your own extra information (embedded clause) to these sentences:

The astronaut looked fondly at planet Earth from the space station.

The tower stood looming over the town.

In a little while I'll have lunch.

The witch is very frightening.

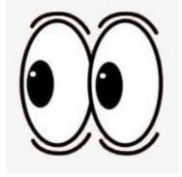
My coat has a hole in the pocket.



Day 3 - Commas After Fronted Adverbials

Fronted adverbials is something we have covered many times at school so you should have a good understanding of this.

An **adverbial** is a **word or phrase that has been used like an adverb** to add detail or further information to a verb. An easy way to remember what an adverb is: it **adds** to the **verb**. '**Fronted**' adverbials are '**fronted**' because they have been **moved to the front of the sentence**, before the verb. A comma is normally used after an adverbial.



Before the sun came up, he ate his breakfast.

All night long, she danced.

As fast as he could, the rabbit hopped.

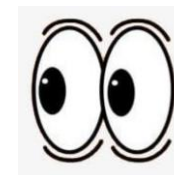
Under the clock, he stood and waited.

By the train station, we met.

Can you think of a different fronted adverbial to begin these sentences?

The fronted adverbials in these sentences are in blue.

Day 3 - Commas After Fronted Adverbials



Add a comma after the fronted adverbial in these sentences...

Dramatically the door slammed shut!

After searching for what seemed like hours the explorer finally discovered the cave.

Down in the dungeon an ear-splitting screech could be heard.

Using these images as inspiration, write sentences that begin with fronted adverbials and make sure the comma is in the correct place!



Day 3 - Commas

Can you remember some of the different ways commas are used?

Have you remembered to add a comma after your fronted adverbials?



Do you know how to use commas in a list?

Self Assessment:

How confident do you feel about commas?

Not confident

1

2

Okay

3

4

Really confident

5