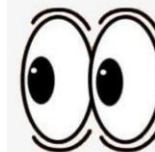


Parentheses – Brackets, Dashes & Commas

Parenthesis is a word, phrase, or clause inserted into a sentence to add extra information. **When a parenthesis is removed, the sentence still makes sense on its own.**

Brackets () are also known as parentheses (parenthesEs) and usually used to show parenthesis (parenthesIs). Commas and dashes can also be used to show parenthesis.



Explanation and examples:

Before anything else, please watch this clip...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AseBaZWID7w>

The most common way to show parenthesis is to use brackets within a sentence to add information for detail or clarification. What is key to remember is that the sentence to which the parenthesis is being added should make grammatical sense whether the information in the brackets is there or not.

George Washington (the first American President) was born in 1732.

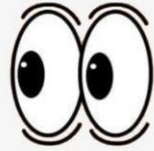
I went to the cinema to meet James (my eldest brother).

I love strawberries (and raspberries) but I'm not keen on blackberries.

For example, 'George Washington was born in 1732' makes sense on its own, therefore the brackets have been used correctly. The additional, or bracketed, information 'the first American President' adds extra detail to the main sentence.

Continued...

Parentheses – Brackets, Dashes & Commas Day 1



Dashes and commas can also be used in place of brackets to indicate parenthesis;

I miss seeing Amelia (my best friend from primary school) every day.

I miss seeing Amelia, my best friend from primary school, every day.

I miss seeing Amelia – my best friend from primary school – every day.

Q1. Read the sentence below and answer the questions. Write the sentence out and have a go at changing some of the information to create your own sentence, e.g. We agreed to see the new Star Wars film (my favourite films ever) on my birthday.

We agreed to meet on my birthday (2nd January) outside the cinema.

1) What is the main information in this sentence?



2) What is the additional information?



Answer!

Main
Information

Makes sense when the extra information
is removed.

We agreed to meet on my birthday
outside the cinema.



Q2. Read the
sentence and
answer the
question.
Dashes draw
more attention
to the extra
information.
The writer
wants us to
notice this.

Tom glared at Patrick - Patrick owed him £500 - and
shook his fist at him.

What is the additional information in this sentence?

A) Tom is clearly angry.

B) Tom doesn't smile much.

C) Patrick owed Tom money.

The sentence makes sense without the additional information.

The extra information is quite useful though and this time the writer *wants* to draw our attention to it.

The extra information is inserted between dashes.

When we wish to provide additional information and emphasize it, we use **a pair of dashes**.

Tom glared at Patrick - Patrick owed him £500 - and shook his fist at him.

What is the additional information in this sentence?

A) Tom is clearly angry.

B) Tom doesn't smile much.

C) Patrick owed Tom money.



Answer!



Identify the additional information in these sentences...



- A) Mexico, assumed by many to be a South American country, is in North America.
- B) St Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, was a Roman slave.
- C) The Moon, although it floats in space as the Earth does, is not a planet.
- D) Bulls, despite the fact that they will attack a red cloak, are colour-blind.

Did you spot it?

Sometimes we wish to add additional information just to make what we are writing a little clearer.

If we do not wish to draw too much attention to the extra information, we can use **a pair of commas**.



A) Mexico, assumed by many to be a South American country, is in North America.

B) St Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, was a Roman slave.

C) The Moon, although it floats in space as the Earth does, is not a planet.

D) Bulls, despite the fact that they will attack a red cloak, are colour-blind.

Day 2 - Parentheses – Brackets, Dashes & Commas

For each of these sentences, you need to choose a suitable parenthesis from the box and work out where it should go. Remember to mark the start and end of your parenthesis with brackets, commas or dashes. Vary your punctuation; don't just use one!

**e.g. The main door of the office is in the basement.
The front door (with the square 'enter' button to press) is in the basement.**

which was full of pot holes	the kind with touch screens	my sister's friend
with the square 'enter' button to press	he's called Marvin	381m high



1. My favourite teddy has only one ear.

2. The Empire State building is in New York.

3. Most smart phones can be used to play games.

4. The cycle track went right through the woods.

5. You'll never guess what I heard Sadie say to Katie!

Day 2 - Parentheses – Brackets, Dashes & Commas

Task 1

For each of these sentences, add an extra information clause (parenthesis) in the spaces. Remember to mark the start and end of your parenthesis with **brackets**, **commas** or **dashes**. Vary your punctuation; don't use just one!

e.g. My brother never brushes his hair!

My brother, who thinks he's really cool, never brushes his hair! OR

My brother - Jason - never brushes his hair OR

My brother (the scruffiest boy in history) never brushes his hair!

1. I watched a horror film _____
and it really scared me!
2. Dinosaurs _____
were a type of reptile.
3. We're not allowed peanut butter _____
in school because there's a girl who's allergic to nuts.
4. The bats _____
sleep in our attic during the day.
5. I lost my phone _____
when we went on the Thunder Roller ride.



Ask someone to read
your sentences and tell
you which bit is the
main information.

Were they correct?

Day 3 - Parentheses – Brackets, Dashes & Commas

Task 1

For each of these sentences, add an extra information clause (parenthesis) in the spaces.
Remember to mark the start and end of your parenthesis with **brackets**, **commas** or **dashes**.
Vary your punctuation; don't use just one!

e.g. My brother never brushes his hair!

My brother, who thinks he's really cool, never brushes his hair! OR

My brother - Jason - never brushes his hair OR

My brother (the scruffiest boy in history) never brushes his hair!

6. We made popcorn _____
for my birthday party.
7. Simone _____
doesn't speak much English yet.
8. We were helping the caretaker _____
to carry all the chairs into the hall.
9. There aren't many apples left _____
because we used them to make a pie.
10. 'Blue Peter' _____
has been on TV since the 1960s.



Ask someone to read
your sentences and tell
you which bit is the
main information.

Were they correct?

Day 3 - Parentheses – Brackets, Dashes & Commas

Challenge

Now write three sentences of your own. Each one should be a complex sentence and include a parenthetical piece of information. Remember to use brackets, dashes or commas.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



The real challenge would be to use parentheses in your writing tasks. Can you add additional information using brackets, dashes and commas?

Self Assessment:

How confident do you feel about parentheses?

Not confident

1

2

Okay

3

4

Really confident

5