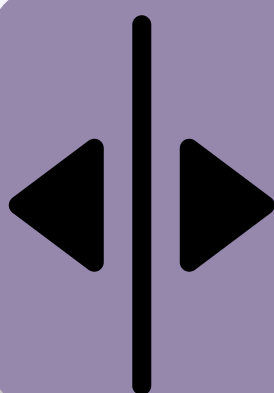# How to Use Commas

Separate Independent Clauses

When a coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) joins two complete sentences, use a comma.

Example: He walked down the street, and he went to the store.

Introduction Clauses/Phrases

Use a comma after an introductory clause or phrase.

Example: Before Evelyn started the movie, she created a bowl of popcorn.

Items in a Series or List

Use a comma to separate each item in a series or list.

Example: Rebecca's favorite superheroes are Black Panther, Captain America, Shang-Chi, and the Hulk.

Nonessential Phrases

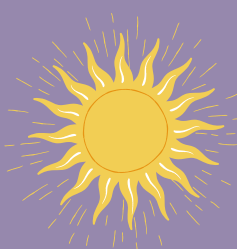Use a comma to enclose parts of a sentence that will not change the sentence if they were to be removed.

Example: Steve, who hates mornings, woke up for work at 8 AM.

Appositives

Show a noun or a noun phrase that renames the noun right beside it (an appositive) with a comma.

Example: My best friend, Jennifer, just graduated!

Direct Address

Use a comma to indicate when the speaker in your sentence is addressing another person.

Example: "Sam, did you go to Florida?"

Direct Quotation

When using quotation marks, indicate your speaker with a comma.

Example: "I love the fireworks," said Adrian.

How to Use Commas

Dates

When writing a date within a sentence, include a comma after the day and year.

Example: On May 12, 2022, I will be turning 19.

Addresses

Use a comma to separate an address or place, but do not use a comma before a zip code.

Example: The house's address is 111 South Pickle Street, Angola, Indiana 46703.

Geographical Names

Use commas between the city and state as well as between a state and a country.

Example: My uncle lived in Junction City, Kansas once, but he now lives in London, England.

Titles

If you are writing a sentence about a person with an official title following their name, use a comma before their title.

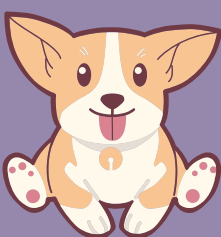**Example:** Sydney Carter, M.D., just transferred to the new hospital.

Numbers

Use commas if your number is more than four digits long.

Example: My grandmother won $10,000.

Coordinate Adjectives

Place a comma between coordinate adjectives.

Example: Sally is a hyperactive, friendly dog.

Dependent and Independent Clauses

If a dependent clause comes before an independent clause, then use a comma.

Example: If you're going to eat pancakes, I think you should come to brunch.