

SERIES: Use a comma after each word (except the last) in a list of three or more words or phrases.

- 1 2 3
- Reading, writing, and literature classes at SWIC are great fun.
- 1 2 3
- We studied hard, aced the test, and celebrated until dawn.
- 1 2 3
- I went to Florida, Cancun, and Hawaii for some R & R after taking ENG 101.

COMPOUND SENTENCE: Use a comma before coordinating conjunctions (REMEMBER FANBOYS: **for**, **and**, **nor**, **but**, **or**, **yet**, **so**) when they connect two complete sentences.

- The weather outside is frightful. The fire is so delightful.
- The weather outside is frightful, **but** the fire is so delightful.
- My kids went sledding in their bikinis. They froze.
- My kids went sledding in their bikinis, **so** they froze.
- I put more wood on the fire. They thawed out nicely.
- I put more wood on the fire, **and** they thawed out nicely.

INTRODUCTORY ELEMENT: Use a comma to separate an introductory word, phrase, or clause from the main sentence.

- (dependent clause) (main sentence)
- If you are what you eat, then I must be a gallon of ice cream.
- (prepositional phrase) (main sentence)
- In a state of emergency, I will eat frozen yogurt or sorbet.

(word) (main sentence)

- Unfortunately, *die* is part of the word diet.

DATES AND PLACES: Use commas to set off years when part of a date and states when used with a city.

- We moved to Belleville, Illinois, on July 4, 2004, after we entered the witness protection program.

But, there is no comma needed if the city, state, month, or year stand alone.

- We moved to Illinois in 2004 after we entered the witness protection program.

APPOSITIVES: Use commas to set off a noun when it is identifying or explaining a previous noun, when the **second noun** is not necessary to the meaning of the sentence.

- Mr. Rogers, **my math teacher**, offers extra credit throughout the semester.
- Oprah Winfrey, **a talk show host**, does a lot of giveaways.

If a second noun is needed to make the first noun clearer, then a comma is not needed.

- The math teacher Mr. Rogers offers extra credit throughout the semester.
 - The talk show host Oprah Winfrey does a lot of giveaways.
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CONJUNCTIVE ADVERBS (CA): a conjunction that signals relationships between parts of a sentence

Also	Furthermore	Likewise	Next
Then	Anyway	However	Meanwhile
Now	Therefore	Besides	Incidentally
Moreover	Otherwise	Thus	Certainly
Indeed	Namely	Similarly	Undoubtedly
Finally	Instead	Nevertheless	Still

Semicolon: Use a semicolon before a conjunctive adverb (CA) when a CA connects two sentences.

Sentence; CA sentence.

- Fred promised to make up the work; however, we doubted his sincerity.

or

Sentence; CA, sentence.

- Fred promised to make up the work; however, we doubted his sincerity.

Comma: A comma is *sometimes* used before and/or after a conjunctive adverb (CA) when there is only one complete sentence.

However, we doubted his sincerity.

We, however, doubted his sincerity.

We doubted his sincerity, however.

Thus we are still mad at him.

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS (SC): a conjunction that introduces a subordinate clause.

As though	Than	When	Because	If
Although	That	Where	Once	As if
Even though	So that	Whether	Since	Before
Unless	In order that	While	After	Until

Comma: Use a comma *after* a subordinating conjunction (SC) which starts a sentence.

SC clause, sentence.

- **Because** Fred didn't do his paper, our group got a bad grade.

SC clause, sentence.

- **Even though** we are friends, I am mad at Fred.

No Comma: A comma is unnecessary when a SC connects two sentences (or actually connects a dependent clause to an independent clause).

Sentence SC sentence.

- The instructor told us to do extra work **if** we wanted to pass.

Sentence SC sentence.

- We went to Six Flags **while** Fred stayed home to study.

HINT: SC dependent, independent.

Independent SC dependent.

PREPOSITIONS (prep): show relationships, often with respect to time or location.

HINT: Remember *time*, **location**, and opposites.

About	Among	Beneath	<i>During</i>	Into
Onto	Toward	Above	Under	Around
Beside	Except	Like	Out	Across
As	Between	Far from	Near	Over
<i>Until</i>	According to	At	Beyond	For
Next to	Past	Up	<i>After</i>	<i>Before</i>
By	From	Of	Regarding	Upon
Against	Behind	Down	In/inside	off
Since	With	Along	Below	Due to
In front of	On	Through	without	

COMMA: Use a comma *after* a prepositional phrase which starts a sentence.

Prep phrase, _____ **sentence.**

- **During** the day, we felt guilty about going to Six Flags without Fred.

Prep phrase, _____ **sentence.**

- **Far from** the excitement of the park, Fred was confined to his room.

NO COMMA: A comma is unnecessary when a prepositional phrase is in the middle or end of a sentence.

- We figured it would take Fred **about** three weeks to finish his work.
- We were having fun **without** him.

HINT: Comma use is the same as with SC.