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Commas and Quotation Marks: Inside or Outside?

Commas always go inside quotation marks in the United States when the comma follows the text in quotation marks.

Example: “We can ask my mother,” said Elizabeth, “she’ll understand.”

Note the comma after Elizabeth. It is outside the quotation mark because it does not follow any quoted text.

Rewrite each sentence below, adding commas in the correct places.

1. “You are looking in the wrong direction” said the detective. //
2. His favorite old televisions shows are “I Love Lucy”, “Batman” and “Bonanza.”
3. “If you want to go outside” said Mrs. Clark “you must wear your raincoats.”
4. “Yes, it’s an important clue” replied Vance “but more important is the time of the call.”
5. “Rarely” the doctor observed “has anyone survived such a fall.”
6. At camp we sang “Daisy, Daisy” “Oh! Susannah” and “Skip to My Lou.”

Commas and Quotation Marks

DIRECTIONS: Read each sentence. Add commas where necessary.

1. "Wait" Janice said, "I think I have an idea."
2. "Margaret" Jim said, "I think we need to talk."
3. When we were within earshot I called out "Kimberly! You forgot your backpack!"
4. "I love fall" Mrs. Winter proclaimed. "It is my favorite season."
5. "Without any evidence" the detective added, "there can be no conviction."
6. "Excuse me" the man asked. "Is anyone sitting here?"
7. "Let me know when you are ready to order" said the boy behind the counter.
8. "If you like these bracelets" Carrie said, "you should see my matching earrings."
9. "If Jill borrows your bike" Harry told me, "then you can borrow mine."
10. The policeman called out, "Use the crosswalk!"
11. "Fortunately we weren't late" my mother commented.



Using Commas

Read each sentence below. If the commas are used correctly, write the letter of the usage rule(s) on the line. Some sentences have more than one correct answer. If they are used incorrectly, write an X on the line.

Use a comma:

- A. To separate items in a list
- B. To separate two independent clauses connected by *and, but, or, nor or for.*
- C. To set off an introductory word, or series of prepositional phrases
- D. To set off the name of a person to whom you are speaking.
- E. With direct quotes



1. "James, I would like for you to mow the lawn", Mom said.

2. We ate popcorn, candy and peanuts at the movies.

3. "At the turn of the century, I lived in Paris."

4. "I won't stand for it," Jill declared.

5. There were ribbons, on the package.

6. In the summer, in the winter, in the spring, we are together.

7. I wanted to go, but my mother wouldn't let me.

8. At the party he refused, to dance, even though I asked him.

9. It was a big room, filled with floating balloons.

10. "Kevin, can you please help me?"

11. "I thought I would never see you again," George cried.

12. Make sure you pack shoes, shorts, sweats and a jacket.

13. I wasn't sure about it, but then they told me I got the job.

14. The first group to have a picture taken, was the bridal party.

15. "I baked the cake," Ann said, "and I ate it too."

16. She neither wants to stay, nor is she required to.

17. The music included rock, country, and hip hop selections.

18. She moved onto the dance floor, arms in the air, singing.

Commas and Coordinating Conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions join two independent clauses to make a compound sentence. The coordinating conjunctions are *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so* (FANBOYS). A comma is used to combine the two independent clauses together.

EXAMPLE: Independent clause, and independent clause.

DIRECTIONS: Read each sentence. Add commas where necessary.
Underline the independent clauses in each sentence.

1. It was a beautiful day so Derek decided to ride his bicycle.
2. We wanted to have pizza for dinner but we couldn't afford to buy one.
3. My mother wants to stay home with me but she has to go to work.
4. I did everything I could yet I still couldn't find my dog.
5. I will either play football or I will play soccer.
6. Marcie plays the piano and she also plays the flute.
7. We were going to go to the water park but it rained.
8. You may sit on the sofa or you may stand.
9. Do you prefer a puppy or would you rather have a kitten?
10. Mike found a lost parakeet and he took the parakeet to the humane society.
11. Roger would have come to the party but he was sick.
12. Pam is buying a dress for Patrick asked her to the dance.
13. That frog is going to hop away or he is going to sit still.

To help you remember the coordinating conjunctions, think of the words "FAN BOYS".



Using Commas With Coordinating Conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions join two independent clauses to make a compound sentence. Use a comma between the first independent clause and the coordinating conjunction. **Example:** *My brother likes the mountains, but I like the beach.*

To help you remember the coordinating conjunctions, think of the words "FAN BOYS".



For And Nor But Or Yet So



Combine the sentences using a comma and a coordinating conjunction.

1. I don't want to argue with you! I don't want to give in. //

2. She had a lot of friends, She was a friendly girl. !

3. I had a cute puppy! I lost him. . .

4. He studied for the test. | He got a good grade. //

5. Jim can boil eggs, Sally can make toast. |

6. We can go to Disneyland, We can go to Sea World. |

7. Dan moved to Michigan, He moved home again. |

8. They didn't want to be late. | They hurried. |

9. Jill runs a mile every day, She swims on Fridays. |

10. You can choose vanilla ice cream. | You can choose chocolate. |