



PUNCTUATIONS

STW UNIT 02

WHY DO WE NEED PUNCTUATIONS?

- The purpose of punctuation is to divide sentences and sentence segments to make the meaning clear and unambiguous.
- In scientific and technical writing, the most commonly used punctuations are
 - **The Comma**
 - **The Semicolon**
 - **The Colon**
 - **The Full Stop or the Period**
 - **The Dash**
 - **Parentheses**
 - **Square Brackets**

THE COMMA

- Use a comma after an introductory clause, to separate the clause from the main body of the sentence.
- **Although she spent many hours writing her lab report, she earned a low grade because she forgot to answer two of the total number of questions.**
- Use a comma between items in a series, including the last two.
- **The boundary layer thickness is affected by the air velocity, the fluid viscosity, the distance from the leading edge, the pressure gradient, the surface roughness, and the freestream turbulence level.**

THE COMMA

- Use a comma after conjunctive adverbs such as however, therefore, moreover, consequently, instead, nevertheless, similarly, subsequently, accordingly, finally etc.
- **Instructors expect students to hand in their work on time; however, illness and personal emergencies are acceptable excuses.**
- Use a comma after transitional expressions such as for example, as a result, in conclusion, on the contrary, on the other hand etc.
- **She participates in many extracurricular activities. As a result, she rarely gets enough sleep.**

THE COMMA

- Use a comma with ‘which’, but not with ‘that’.
- **The student damaged the milling machine, which resulted in us replacing the machine.**
- **The student damaged the milling machine so badly *that* it had to be replaced.**
- Use a comma to insert a pause and avoid confusion.
- Incorrect: While the sample was heating the students set up a spreadsheet for their data. (Sounds like the students were being heated up.)
- Correct: **While the sample was heating, the students set up a spreadsheet for their data.** (Insert comma after ‘heating’.)

THE COMMA

- Use a comma before and after parenthetical expressions that provide additional information.
- **Fluency in a foreign language, as we all know, requires years of instruction and practice.**
- Use a comma to connect two independent clauses that are joined by and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet etc.
- **Feel free to call me at home, but do not call after 8 p. m.**

THE SEMICOLON

- Use a semicolon to insert a pause between two independent but closely-related clauses not joined by a coordinating conjunction.
- **Outstanding athletes use their time wisely; this trait makes them highly sought-after by many employers.**
- Use a semicolon to separate items in a series already separated by commas.
- **Participating in sports has many advantages. First, you are doing something good for your health; second, you enjoy the camaraderie of people having a common interest; third, you learn discipline, which helps you make effective use of your time.**

THE COLON

- Use a colon to draw the attention of the reader to the words that follow, such as a list.
- **The college has the following accredited programmes: aeronautical engineering, biomedical engineering, chemical engineering, environmental engineering, mechanical engineering, and zymological engineering.**
- Do not use a colon after the words are, consists of, such as, including, for example.
- *Doctors encourage us to eat plenty of vegetables such as spinach, lettuce, carrot, onions, and broccoli.*

THE FULL STOP or THE PERIOD

- Use the period to end all sentences except questions and exclamations.
- Use the period for certain abbreviations such as e. g., Dr., Ms., B.Tech etc.

THE DASH

- Use a dash before and after parenthetical material; however, a dash is rarely used in scientific and technical writing because it interrupts the flow of the sentence.
- **The instruments she plays – oboe, guitar, and piano – are not traditionally used in the marching band.**

PARENTHESES

- Use parentheses to enclose supplemental material. However, it interrupts the flow.
- **Human error (failure to read scales correctly; arithmetic errors; failure to correct for latitude, elevation, and temperature; and failure to zero the barometer) was the main reason for the unexpected results.**
- Use parentheses to enclose references for citation.
- **Atmospheric carbon dioxide increased at Mauna Loa from 2007 to 2012 (Figure 6.7).**
- **Friction coefficients in laminar flows are unaffected by surface roughness (Schlichting, 2004).**

SQUARE BRACKETS

- Use square brackets to add or correct a direct quote.
- **The project manager of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory commented, "Preparations for launching Curiosity [a robotic rover carrying scientific equipment to Mars] are on track."**
- Use square brackets to add a parenthetical comment inside a higher level parenthetical comment.
- **Most engineering faculty members belong to an engineering professional society (American Society of Mechanical Engineers [ASME], American Institute of Chemical Engineers [AIChE], American Society of Civil Engineers [ASCE], among others).**



THANK YOU!