

WHY TO PUNCTUATE

- Punctuation marks are symbols that indicate the structure and organization of written language, as well as intonation and pauses to be observed when reading aloud.
- In written English, punctuation is vital to disambiguate the meaning of sentences.

**Correct punctuation can
save a person's life**

Let's eat grandpa.

Let's eat, grandpa.

THE POWER OF PUNCTUATION

An English professor asked the students to punctuate the following:

“A woman without her man is nothing”

All of the males in the class wrote

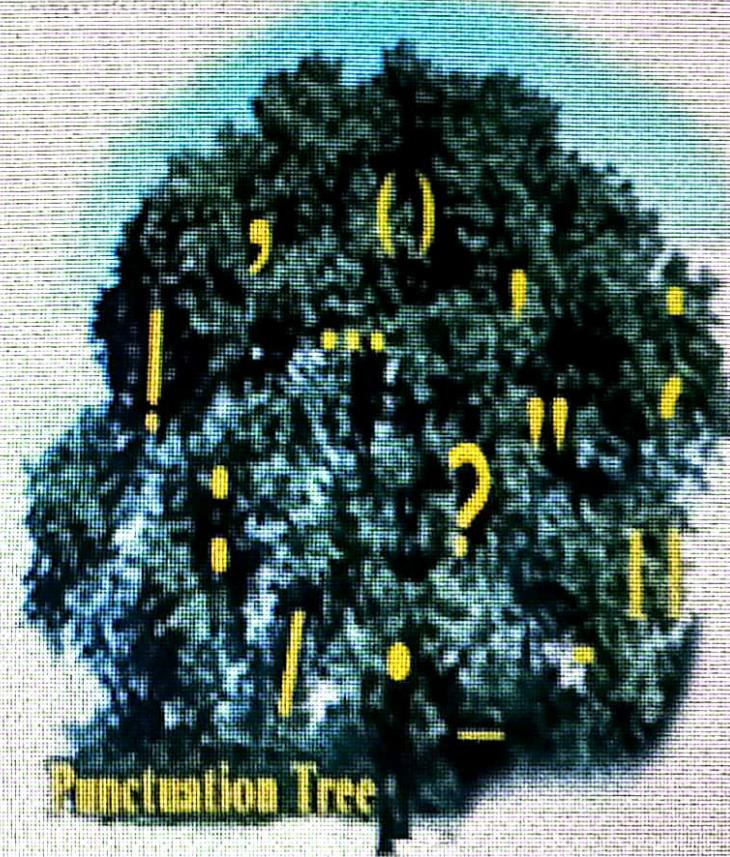
“A woman without her man. is nothing.”

All of the females in the class wrote

“A woman: without her, man is nothing.”

PUNCTUATION MARKS

- Full stop/period
- Ellipses marks
- Comma
- Colon
- Semi colon
- Question mark
- Exclamation mark
- Quotation marks
- Parentheses
- Apostrophe
- Hyphen and Dash



SPACING WITH PUNCTUATION



- **Rule 1.** With a computer, use only one space after commas, semicolons, colons, exclamation points, question marks, and quotation marks.

- **Rule 2.** Use no spaces on either side of a hyphen.

Example:

We borrowed twenty-two sheets of paper.



Full Stop

.

RULES

1. Use a full stop at the end of a complete sentence that is a statement.

- **Example:**

I know that you would never break my trust intentionally.

2. If the last word in the sentence ends in a full stop, do not use another full stop after it.

- **Examples:**

- I know that M.D. She is my sister-in-law.
- Please shop, cook, etc. I will do the

Ellipsis Marks

• • •

RULE

The three-dot method is used for ellipsis marks. Use no more than three marks whether the omission occurs in the middle of a sentence or between sentences.

- **Example:**
- **Original sentence:** The regulation states, “All agencies must document overtime or risk losing federal funds.”

Rewritten using ellipses: The regulation states, “All agencies must document overtime...”

Comma

,

RULES

1. To avoid confusion, use commas to separate words and word groups with a series of three or more.

○ **Example:**

○ My property is to be split among my husband, daughter, son, and nephew.

(Omitting the comma after son would indicate that the son and nephew would have to split one-third of the property.)

2. Use a comma to separate two adjectives when the word *and* can be inserted between them.

○ **Example:**

○ He is a strong, healthy man.

3. Use commas before or surrounding the name or title of a person directly addressed.

○ **Examples:**

○ Will you, Aisha, do that assignment for me?

○ Yes, Doctor, I will.



4. Use a comma to separate the day of the month from the year and after the year.

- **Example:**
- She talked to her husband on December 5, 2003, in Mill Valley, California.

(If any part of the date is omitted, leave out the comma)

They talked in December 2003, in Mill Valley.

5. Use commas to set off expressions that interrupt the flow of the sentence.

- **Example:**
- I am, as you have probably noticed, very nervous about this.

6. If something or someone is sufficiently identified, the description following it is considered nonessential and should be surrounded by commas.

- **Example:**
- Freddy, who has a limp, was the only person available with required qualification .



7. When starting a sentence with a weak clause, use a comma after it. Conversely, do not use a comma when the sentence starts with a strong clause followed by a weak clause.

○ **Example:**

○ If you are not sure about this, let me know now.

Let me know now if you are not sure about this.

8. Use a comma to separate two strong clauses joined by a conjunction—*and, or, but, for, nor*. You can omit the comma if the clauses are both short.

○ **Examples:**

○ I have painted the entire house, but he is still working on sanding the doors.

○ I paint and he writes.

9. Use the comma to separate two sentences if it helps to avoid confusion.

○ **Example:**

○ I chose the colors red and green, and blue was his first choice.



10. Use commas to introduce direct quotations shorter than three lines.

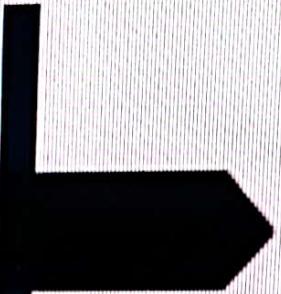
- **Example:**
- He actually said, "I do not care."

11. Use a comma to separate a statement from a question.

- **Example:**
- I can go, can't I?

12. Use a comma to separate contrasting parts of a sentence.

- **Example:**
- That is my money, not yours



Question Mark (?)

Why do we use a question mark?

To end a sentence when it asks a question

Examples:

Why is it so cold?

Where is your warm coat?

Exclamation Mark(!)

Why do we use an exclamation mark?

This mark shows strength of emotion. It is often used in direct speech and informal notes, messages and letters. It is less common in formal writing.

Examples:

Hi! Sorry I haven't written for so long!!!

Great work! Congratulations!

"Leave me alone!" she screamed

Colon (:)

The colon can be used to:

Introduce a list of things

example: Yesterday I had an enormous meal:
onion soup, a dozen oysters, a pile of potatoes
and apple pie and ice cream.

Introduce something which is written in quotation
marks example: Remember the old proverb:
"More haste, less speed."



The colon can also be used to:

Make two statements in the same sentence say something of equal value (one may be an explanation of the other).

example: Mary is a regular world traveler: every year she visits many countries.

Semi-Colon (;

Why do we use a semi-colon?

A semi-colon can be used instead of a full stop when the two parts of the sentence are too closely related in meaning to be put into separate sentences.

Examples: We did not go into the theatre before our friends arrived; instead, we waited outside.

I don't know who my grandfather was; I am more concerned to find out who his grandson will be.

Why do we use a semi-colon?

Semi-colons can also be used between items on a list, when the items consist of a number of words, or when the use of commas alone would be confusing.

Example: The committee consisted of Carol Jones, the staff representative; Bill Johnson, the boss; Terry Smith, the local doctor; Murray Todd, the fisherman; and Mary Renshaw, the cook.

Apostrophe ("")

The apostrophe can be used to:

Show that letters have been left out. These are called contractions.

example: can't for cannot, didn't for did not, it's for it is or it has

Dash (--)

Used to strongly emphasize a point or set off an explanatory comment. Don't overuse it.

To some of you, my proposals may seem radical
-- even revolutionary.

Hyphen (-)

Use a hyphen to join two or more words serving as a single adjective before a noun:

Example: a one-way street
chocolate-covered peanuts

Use a hyphen with numbers. Example: forty-six,
sixty-three, a fifteen-year-old boy

Use a hyphen with certain prefixes. Example: ex-husband, self-assured, mid-September, all-inclusive.

Quotation

To enclose direct quotations and dialogue.

Example: "You must arrive on time," the professor said.

To denote titles and nicknames.

Example: Her favourite book is "Brick Lane".

Note: Punctuation goes inside the quotation marks if it is part of the quote.

Example: "Give me my dignity!" the prisoner pleaded.

But: Have you seen "Pulp Fiction"?



Capital Letters

Capital letters are used:

At the start of a new sentence. Example: The cat sat on the mat. His owner sat nearby.

For the letter "i" when you are referring to yourself. Example: He can run faster than I can.

For people's names. Examples: Jim Smith, Bill Jones



capital letters are also used:

For titles. Examples: Dr Jones, Mr Brown

For book/film/company titles (main words only).

Examples: The Catcher in the Rye, The Wizard of Oz, Briggs and Sons

Indirect speech, for the first spoken word.

Example: She said, "My name is Mary."



Capital letters are also used:

For acronyms.

Examples: TAFE, CIA

For titles of days, months.

Examples: Monday, July