

# Punctuation – Full Stop

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The ‘full stop’ is also called a ‘period’ in American English.

It appears as a single dot at the bottom of the line after the last word.

It is most often used to end a sentence that is neither a question, nor an exclamation.

It is used in abbreviations, titles, initials, and acronyms.

It is also used in decimal numbers.

There are differences between UK and US English with quotes.

# Full Stop - Abbreviations

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Common words such as days, months, address parts are often abbreviated.

The abbreviation is usually only in the written form.

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| ➤ The appointment is for Mon. afternoon.   | (Mon. = Monday)        |
| ➤ My address is 23, North St., Plymouth.   | (St. = Street)         |
| ➤ Her birthday is on 23 <sup>rd</sup> Feb. | (Feb. = February)      |
| ➤ We are open between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.    | (a.m. = ante meridiem) |

If the abbreviated word is at the end of the sentence, a second full stop is NOT required, as shown in the last example.

# Full Stop - Titles

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Titles are a specific form of abbreviation.

Dr., Mr., Mrs. are actually abbreviations of Doctor, Mister, Mistress.

They are so common, in UK English, the full stop is usually omitted.

In US English, they are still used.

- UK: Dr Brown will see you now.
- US: Dr. Brown will see you now.

# Full Stop - Initials

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Initials are used instead of the full name and are therefore abbreviations, which require a full stop to show this.

For example, my name is Derek J. Smith.

The 'J' stands for John and there is a space after the full stop.

If there are several consecutive initials, you have several options:

- George R. R. Martin wrote *Game of Thrones*.
- George R.R. Martin wrote *Game of Thrones*.
- George RR Martin wrote *Game of Thrones*.

If you're uncertain, refer to a style guide and above all, be consistent.

# Full Stop - Acronyms

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Acronyms usually use the first word of a phrase and are usually spoken as a separate word.

Most acronyms are written in uppercase, without a full stop.

However, some acronyms are so common that they are written in lower case, as a normal word.

- NASA is sending a new probe to outer space.
- He needs that report asap.
- Please use this laser pointer. (light **a**mplification by **s**timulated **e**mission of **r**adiation)
- I bought some new scuba gear. (**s**elf-**c**ontained **u**nderwater **b**reathing **a**pparatus)
- He says he saw a U.F.O. last night. (**u**nidentified **f**lying **o**bject)

# Full Stop – Ellipsis

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An ellipses is three dots together, like this...

It is used to indicate a continuation that the reader should provide.

- I told him, “It’s your round...”
- We’re on holiday - we should do something...
- Tomorrow is Saturday – no work...

# Full Stop – Decimal Numbers

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A full stop separates the whole number from the decimal component.

We don't call it a full stop, though – we say 'point'.

- $1.5 + 3.2 = 4.7$  (please check this).
- The grocery bill was \$37.23.
- That will be £167.48, please.



# Full Stop – UK/US Differences

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There are differences between UK and US English with quotes.

In UK English, the full stop goes *outside* the quote.

In US English, the full stop goes *inside* the quote.

- UK: The doctor said, “I have good news for you”.
- US: The doctor said, “I have good news for you.”
- ??: I told my boss, “I need time off over Christmas”.