

COMMA RULE 1:

COMMAS IN A SERIES (ITEMS IN A SERIES)

- Use a comma to separate three or more items in a series.

Examples:

1. Sam, Ed, and Gloria sat down.
2. They passed the plate, served the scrumptious food, and ate hungrily.

- Two items in a series do not need a comma.

Example: I handle the editorials and draw the cartoons.

- When items in a series are separated by conjunctions, there is no need for commas.

Examples:

1. She owns a dog and hamster and fish.
2. Bob listened to the comedian and laughed at his hilarious jokes.

Practice Comma Rule #1...

1. _____

2. _____

COMMA RULE 2: ADJECTIVES IN ORDER

(SUBSTITUTE FOR ADJS. OUT OF ORDER WT)

- Two or more adjectives before a noun
- Use a comma to separate two or more adjectives immediately before a noun.
- Do not put a comma after the last adjective.

Example: My Labrador retriever is an energetic, playful dog.

***Exception:** Some adjectives are so closely connected in meaning to the nouns they modify that no comma is needed to separate them for another adjective.

Examples:

1. oak chest
2. horned owl
3. electric light

Practice Comma Rule #2...

1. _____

2. _____

COMMA RULE 3: COMPOUND SENTENCES

- Use a comma before the FANBOYS conjunctions (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) when they join independent clauses in compound sentences.

Examples:

1. Lisa offered to get the tickets, and I accepted.
2. They have been practicing all night, but they didn't seem tired.

Please Note:

Simple sentence: one clause:

1. The game will start at six o'clock.
2. We went to the park and had a lot of fun.

Compound sentence: two or more independent clauses:

1. We can wait for Ken, or we can leave.
2. We went to the park, and we had a lot of fun.

• Sometimes a **semicolon (;)** is used to join two independent clauses in a compound sentence. Refer to the sentences below.

Before: The music started, so the dance had begun.

After: The music started; the dance had begun.

Practice Comma Rule #3...

1. _____

2. _____

COMMA RULE 4: APPOSITIVES AND APPOSITIVE PHRASES

- An appositive is a word that identifies or explains the word it follows (may be a phrase). Commas separate the appositive/appositive phrase from the rest of the sentence.
- The appositive comes second.

Examples:

1. John, my cousin, is here today.
2. Her daughter, Amy, is ten years old.
3. Mr. Moskowitz, the principal, offered to help me.
4. He read his daughter the book, *Maniac Magee*.

Practice Comma Rule #4...

1. _____
2. _____

Comma Rule #4: Appositive and Appositive Phrases

Directions: Add commas where they belong in the five sentences below.

1. The puppy Lola is the cutest dog I've ever seen.
2. My friend Bill is going to the movies with me.
3. My school Voorhees Middle is the best school ever.
4. The race car driver Fred Thompson won the Indy 500 in an upset.
5. She read the children students at Signal Hill a book about bunnies.

COMMA RULE 5: DIRECT ADDRESS

- A word used to speak to another person **directly**, by name or title, is in direct address. In written conversation, a word in direct address is set off by commas.

Examples:

1. Kevin, please answer the phone.
2. Your sister needs you, Kelly.
3. Stop, you fool!
4. Please, Uncle Sam, may I have more money?
5. Get off the furniture, Snowball!

Practice Comma Rule #5...

1. _____
2. _____

COMMA RULE 6: PARENTHETICAL EXPRESSIONS

- Parenthetical Expressions are set off by commas.
- Parenthetical Expressions are words and phrases such as however, for example, on the contrary, of course, in fact, and by the way—they are much like Signal Words.
- Parenthetical Expressions help to further explain or offer an opinion. Think of the parenthesis punctuation mark, ()—hence the name **parenthetical**. You use a parenthesis () when you want to give your reader more information or elaborate.

Examples:

1. The weather, in fact, was perfect.
2. To tell the truth, Penelope is my best friend.
3. Jason, on the other hand, prefer cookies to brownies.

Practice Comma Rule #6...

1. _____
2. _____

Comma Rule #6: Parenthetical Expressions

Directions: Add commas where they belong in the five sentences below.

Signal words in fact are the perfect examples of when to use Comma Rule #6.

Lisa on the other hand likes to go rollerblading.

However most students still think gum chewing is ok.

In conclusion we should always use Comma Rule #6 for our signal words.

COMMA RULE 7: INTRODUCTORY WORDS

•Use commas to set off words of introduction. (No, Yes, Well, Why, Oh)

Do not confuse introductory words with interjections (words that show emotion: Wow! Ah! Oh! Yessss! Ugh!)

Examples:

1. No, I did not see him.
2. Yes, I can go to the mall.
3. Well, I think you are wrong.
4. Correct, I did do that yesterday.
5. Fine, I'll babysit as long as I can go out tomorrow.

Practice Comma Rule #7...

1. _____

2. _____

Comma Rule #7: Introductory Words

Directions: Add commas where they belong in the five sentences below.

1. Yes you can bake cookies.
2. No I did not see him in class.
3. Well that's how the cookie crumbles.
4. Yes I would love to go.
5. Fine I'll do it.

COMMA RULE 8: DATES AND ADDRESSES

- Use commas to separate items in dates and addresses.

Examples:

September 29, 1971  *Between the day of month and year*

Voorhees, New Jersey  *Between the name of the city and state*

- You do not need a comma to separate state and zip code.

Example: Voorhees, NJ 08043

Examples in Sentences:

1. He was born on June 11, 1999, and is twelve years old.
2. Her address has been 311 Adams Drive, Clementon, New Jersey 08012, since May.

Practice Comma Rule #8...

1. _____
2. _____

