

Topic: Comma Placement

In a compound sentence

Use a comma to divide two complete sentences being joined with a coordinating conjunction FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so)

- She was the best student in the class, and her friend was the worst student in the class.

After an introductory or transitional word or phrase.

- First, be sure to consider your audience.
- However, don't base your entire paper on one source.

After a dependent clause that begins with a subordinating conjunction

Note: This applies only if the dependent clause is at the start of the sentence.

- When I get tired, I grab a cup of coffee.
- Since two people left the club, I had to find new members.
- The girl went to the store, and when she returned home, she showed her mom her new clothes.
 - The first comma is because of a compound sentence.
 - The second comma is because of the subordinating conjunction.

Around non-essential phrases or words/side notes.

- The boy, a teenager, applied for his driver's license.
- The boss gave his workers, who were tired and hungry, an early lunch break.
- I do, indeed, have a winner.

After or before a dependent clause that begins with a participle (an -ing verb).

- Waving her arms frantically, the girl signaled to the lifeguards that she needed help.
- The student always got a perfect score, angering many of her classmates who were hoping for a curve.

After or before a direct quote.

- She said, "I understand."
- "I understand," replied the woman.

Between some adjectives.

Note: Place a comma between 2 adjectives if the word "and" would sound right between the adjectives.

- The intelligent, attractive doctor...
- The dedicated medical students...
 - No comma is used. "And" would sound incorrect.

In a series (3 or more parts of speech).

- Go buy milk, eggs, and cheese. (3 nouns)
- He ran around the block, jumped over a puddle, and rushed to the bus stop. (three verbs)

In a direct address to a person (usually in commands).

- Sam, come to dinner.
- Okay, class, give me a minute.

After salutations.

- Sincerely,