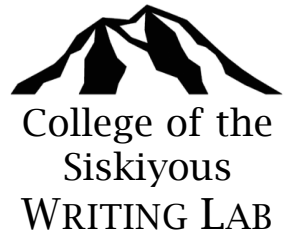


COMMA USAGE



INTRODUCTION: The comma was invented to help readers. Without it, sentence parts can collide into one another unexpectedly, causing misreadings. The guidelines, which are listed below, will help clarify the comma's functions.

For Most Writing, Comma Usage Can Be Separated into Six Basic Categories:

1) **Joining Independent Clauses with a Coordinating Conjunction**

- For, and, nor, but, or, yet, so—also known as FANBOYS—are the coordinating conjunctions.

Commas are probably the most common form of punctuation used by writers, but they are also probably the most misused.

2) **Separating Items in a Series**

It seems like some writers put commas in a cup, shake them up, and scatter them across the paper.

3) **Separating Introductions from the Main Clause**

- The introductory clause is the dependent clause, and the main clause is the independent clause.

Although this approach seems to be common practice, there is a better way.

4) **Separating Nonessential Material**

Many comma problems, in fact most, can be solved by reviewing a few basic guidelines.

5) **Separating Coordinate Adjectives**

- Coordinate adjectives modify a noun separately. Adjectives that can be joined with “and” are coordinate, so use commas to separate them.

We hope you agree that the comma is a valuable, flexible, creative tool for writing clearly.

6) **Other Standard Uses**

- Introducing direct quotations:
Joe said, “Commas are easy now.”
- In dates and addresses:
October 10, 2014
Weed, CA.
- In long numbers:
\$1,000,000
- In salutations and closings:
Dear John, I’m leaving.
Goodbye, Jane