

Learning Skills, Room 120

Punctuation Guidelines

- **PERIOD**
 1. At end of sentence. Example: Birds fly.
 2. After some abbreviations. Example: Mr., U.S.A.
- ? **QUESTION MARK**
 1. At the end of question. Example: Who is he?
 2. To express doubt. Example: He weighs 250 (?) pounds.
- ’ **APOSTROPHE**
 1. To inform possessive. Example: Bill’s bike
 2. Omitted letters. Example: isn’t
 3. Plurals of symbols. Example: 1960’s, two A’s
- () **PARENTHESIS**
 1. Supplementary material. Example: The map (see illustration) is good.
 2. Stronger than commas. Example: Joe (the bad guy) is dead.
 3. Enclose numbers. Example: Her car is (1) a Ford, (2) too slow.
- :
- COLON
 1. Introduce a series. Example: He has three things: money, brains, charm.
- ;
- SEMICOLON
 1. Stronger than a comma. Example: Peace is difficult; war is hell.
 2. Separate clauses containing commas. Example: He was tired; therefore, he quit.
- “ ”
- QUOTATION MARKS
 1. Direct quote. Example: She said, “Hello.”
 2. Titles. Example: He read “Shane.”
 3. Special words or slang. Example: He is “nuts.”
- ,
- COMMA
 1. Independent clauses. Example: I like him, and he is tall.
 2. Dependent clause that precedes a main clause. Example: After the game, we went home.
 3. Semi-parenthetical clause. Example: Bill, the tall one, is here.
 4. Series. Example: He likes candy, ice cream, and diamonds.
 5. Multiple adjectives. Example: The big, bad, ugly wolf.
 6. In dialogue. Example: She said, “Hello.”
 7. Dates. Example: July 4, 1776.

8. Titles. Example: Joe Smith, Ph.D.
9. Informal letter salutation. Example: Dear Mary,
10. Letter closing. Example: Yours truly,
11. Inverted names. Example: Smith, Joe
12. Separate city and state. Example: Los Angeles, California



EXCLAMATION POINT

1. Show strong emotion. Example: She is the best!



DASH

1. Show duration. Example: 1949-50, Rome-London
2. Parenthetical material. Example: The girl - the pretty one - is here.
3. To show omissions. Example: She called him a ---.

Basic Sentence Patterns

Parts of speech are put together to form sentences. The list of basic sentence patterns and variations shows the most common arrangements of words. Remember that every sentence must have at minimum a noun (or pronoun) and a verb. This is sometimes called a subject and a predicate.

N/V	noun/verb	children sang
N/V/N	noun/verb/noun	Bill paid the worker.
N/V/ADV	noun/verb/adverb	Anne sewed quickly.
N/LV/N	noun/linking verb/noun	Arthur is President.
N/LV/ADJ	noun/linking verb/adjective	Chris looks sleepy
N/V/N/N	noun/verb/noun/noun	Chuck gave Marie flowers.

Negative - It is raining. / It is not raining.

Question - The bottle is empty. / Is the bottle empty?

Use of there - A man is at the door. / There is a man at the door.

Request - You mow the grass. / Mow the grass.

Passive - The dog chased the fox. / The fox was chased by the dog.

Possessive - Robert owns this car. / This is Robert's car.

Prepositional phrase added - This is Robert's car in the garage.

Adverbial phrase added - Birds fly quietly together.

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