

Use of Comma

—— *in* ——

Transcription





In ancient times of the **Greek** and **Romans** the comma was used to indicate pauses in sentences. Transcriptionists can use the same technique. However there are places where the use of comma can change the context of the sentence.

For example

*The CEO, **Jack Hauser** and **Brett** were present in the meeting. This sentence implies that the CEO is Jack Hauser.*

The CEO, Jack Hauser, and Brett were present in the meeting. This sentence implies that three people were present at the meeting.

To ensure accuracy, a transcriptionist needs to pay attention to the nuances in the tone of the speaker.

Though the use of comma in general writing has decreased over the years, we transcriptionists should not hesitate to use the comma to make things clear. The Online Writing Lab at Purdue recommends the following use of commas:

DO'S

- ✓ Use a pair of commas in the middle of a sentence to set off clauses, phrases, and words that are not essential to the meaning of the sentence. Use one comma before to indicate the beginning of the pause.



- ✓ Use commas to separate three or more words, phrases, or clauses written in a series.

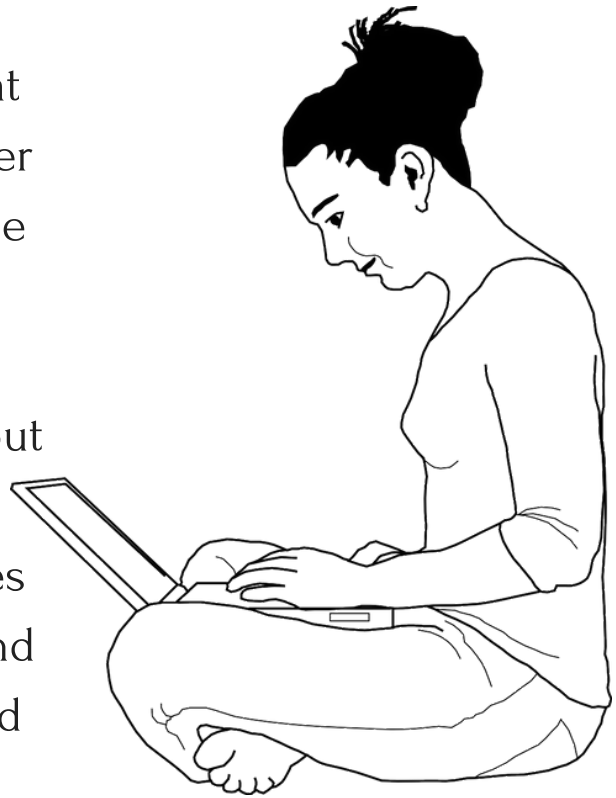
- ✓ Use commas to separate two or more coordinate adjectives that describe the same noun. Be sure never to add an extra comma between the final adjective and the noun itself or to use commas with non-coordinate adjectives.





- ✓ Use a comma near the end of a sentence to separate contrasted coordinate elements or to indicate a distinct pause or shift.

- ✓ Use commas to set off phrases at the end of the sentence that refer to the beginning or middle of the sentence. Such phrases are free modifiers that can be placed anywhere in the sentence without causing confusion. (If the placement of the modifier causes confusion, then it is not "free" and must remain "bound" to the word it modifies.)



- ✓ Use commas to set off all geographical names, items in dates (except the month and day), addresses (except the street number and name), and titles in names.

- ✓ Use a comma to shift between the main discourse and a quotation.

- ✓ Use commas wherever necessary to prevent possible confusion or misreading.

Don't

- ❌ Do not use commas to set off essential elements of the sentence, such as clauses beginning with *that* (relative clauses). *That* clauses after nouns are always essential. *That* clauses following a verb expressing mental action are always essential.



- ❌ Don't put a comma between the two nouns, noun phrases, or noun clauses in a compound subject or compound object.

- ❌ Don't put a comma after the main clause when a dependent (subordinate) clause follows it (except for cases of extreme contrast).



- ❌ Don't use a comma to separate the subject from the verb.
- ❌ Don't put a comma between the two verbs or verb phrases in a compound predicate.

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