

How to use ... apostrophes

When should I use an apostrophe?

- 1. To show that a letter has been omitted (missed out). Example: do not don't, will not won't, I am I'm.
- 2. To show possession when the item belongs to one person, the apostrophe goes before the 's'. Example: Mia's letter, Sally's dog, the girl's hair.
- 3. To show possession when the item belongs to more than one person, the apostrophe goes after the 's'. Example: the teachers' staff room, the boys' football team.



How to use ... commas in clauses

When should I use commas in clauses?

1. Use a comma before a conjunction (but, or, yet, so) to join two independent clauses.

Example – I went to Paris, but it wasn't wonderful.

- 2. Use a comma after an introductory element.
 - Example After a short nap, I got right back to work.
- Use a comma to embed a clause.
 Example Proust, a French writer, is my favourite writer.



How to use colons

When should I use a colon?

- To introduce a list, but only if the clause before the colon makes sense on its own.
- × The potion contained: snails' tails, bats' wings and garlic.
- ✓ The potion contained strange items: snails' tails, bats' wings and garlic.
- 2. To introduce an idea that is an explanation or continuation of the one before the colon. Again, the clause before the colon must make sense on its own.
- × You are left with: escape.
- ✓ You are left with only one option: escape.



How to use ... commas in lists.

When should I use commas in lists?

 Use commas to separate items in a series of three or more things.

Example – I bought apples, carrots, pasta and milk.

2. Use commas to separate adjectives.

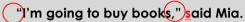
Example – A thin, tall wizard appeared from the mists.



How to use ... direct speech

Open speech marks around the part that is spoken out loud.

There must be punctuation <u>inside</u> of the closing speech marks.



A new line is needed when a new person

speaks.

Her teacher replied, "That's a great idea."

Use a comma to introduce the speech.



How to check ... your grammar

What are the common mistakes?

- 1. Verb tense check that you have the same tense throughout.
- × I woke up to the sounds of alarms. I am afraid.
- ✓ I woke to the sound of alarms. I was afraid.
- Check that your sentence makes sense by looking to see if you have included a subject.
- × Looking at the stars.
- ✓ Looking at the stars, I felt hope.
- 3. Modal verbs you should not be writing should of, could of.
- ✓ Should have, would have, could have.



How to use ... end punctuation

How should I use end punctuation?

- 1. To show the type of sentence. Example: statements end with a full stop (.), questions end with a question mark (?) and sentences showing strong feelings or high volume end with an exclamation mark (!).
- Take care don't use a comma to join two sentences that actually
 make sense on their own and you <u>don't need</u> a comma to join
 them. This is called a comma splice.
- × Jim usually gets on with everybody, he is an understanding person.
- ✓ Jim usually gets on with everybody. He is an understanding person.



How to use ... semi-colons

When should I use a semi-colon?

- 1. To join two independent clauses that are linked. Both sides of the semi-colon must make sense on their own.
- × The man shouted; the day ended.
- ✓ The man shouted; the boy stepped backwards.
- 2. Use a semi-colon between items in a list if any of the items contain commas.
- My favourite writers include John Keats, a Romantic poet; Jonathan Franzen, an American writer; and Masud Ahmed, my dad.



How to use ... there, their and they're.

1. There – a place, or used with the word 'are' or 'is'

Example – The box is over there. There are five cakes.

2. Their – used to show belonging.

Example – Their house is lovely. Their fur is very soft.

3. They're – a contraction for the words they are.

Example – They're going on holiday.