

# Perfect Punctuation



## Rules to Remember

### Keep in mind...

- ✓ Punctuation marks are simply signals, pointing out how the written language should be spoken.
- ✓ Periods, question marks, and exclamation points end sentences.
- ✓ Commas signal a pause.
- ✓ Coordinating conjunctions join two independent clauses (sentences).
- ✓ Independent clause + coordinating conjunction + independent clause = a compound sentence.
- ✓ Dependent clauses cannot stand alone; independent clauses can stand alone.
- ✓ Appositives identify or rename nouns and pronouns.
- ✓ Non-restrictive phrases aren't necessary to make a sentence complete.
- ✓ Mild interjections include words like *well* and *oh*.
- ✓ Words that address people are treated like mild interjections.
- ✓ Transitional words and phrases are used to link thoughts between sentences.
- ✓ Semicolons ( ; ) mark a halfway point in strength between a comma and a period.
- ✓ A participle resembles a verb but is used as a modifier. Participles usually end in *-ing* or *-ed*.

## Punctuation Rules

### Commas

- ✓ A comma usually precedes a coordinating conjunction that separates two independent clauses.
- ✓ Commas separate items in a series.
- ✓ Commas set off appositives from the rest of a sentence.
- ✓ Commas set off non-restrictive phrases because they aren't necessary to make complete sentences.
- ✓ Commas separate mild interjections from the rest of the sentence.
- ✓ Commas separate titles or people's names used in direct address from the rest of the sentence.
- ✓ Commas set off transitional words and phrases from the rest of a sentence.
- ✓ A comma follows a dependent clause that comes before an independent clause.
- ✓ A comma follows a single participle or participial phrase that introduces a sentence.
- ✓ A comma always separates the name of a city from the name of a state (example: Chicago, Illinois).
- ✓ A comma follows a friendly salutation.

### Colons

- ✓ A colon (:) follows a formal salutation.
- ✓ A colon follows a sentence or phrase that introduces a list.

### Semicolons

- ✓ Use a semicolon (;) instead of a conjunction to separate two closely related independent clauses, or sentences.
- ✓ Use semicolons to separate items in a series when commas appear between the semicolons.

### Quotation Marks

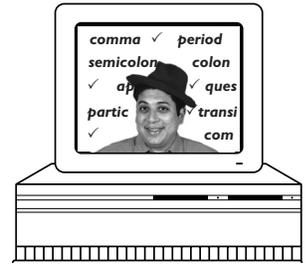
- ✓ Quotation marks surround the exact words that someone is saying or has spoken.
- ✓ Commas are used to separate a direct quotation from the "he said/she said" part of the sentence.
- ✓ Commas used in a split quotation are "in and then out"—inside the first set of quotes and outside the second.
- ✓ Use quotation marks to indicate shorter works, or parts of works, such as articles, chapters, songs, poems, short stories, and parts of musical compositions.

### Italics and Underlining

- ✓ Use italic type or underlining to indicate longer works, such as book titles, magazine titles, and albums.

name \_\_\_\_\_

# Perfect Punctuation



## Using Commas Correctly Practice Worksheet 1

*Insert commas into the following sentences. Then, using your "Rules to Remember" sheet, tell which comma rule applies. Remember: You can find additional comma rules underneath the "Quotation Marks" heading. Only use rules that apply to commas.*

1. First of all the student store will no longer sell water pistols.

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Melvin the class clown ate his notebook. (Note: This sentence is about Melvin.)

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Hey Jerry that's enough yodeling.

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

4. "I love raindrops roses and kittens" Susan gushed romantically "but I hate bright copper kettles."

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

5. When he was bowling last night Manuel who's in my gym class dropped the ball on his foot.

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Stacey's campaign for treasurer was very imaginative but she lost the election.

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Sobbing softly Maria told her sad story to the counselor.

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Susan Edwards who wore the fluorescent yellow dress to school yesterday won an award for journalism.

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

9. "Lou I saw you reading in the library" said George.

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

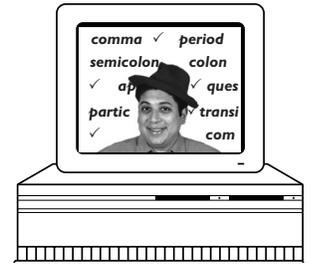
10. Well Pansy my prize-winning Persian cat has her own bedroom. (Note: This sentence is about Pansy.)

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

name \_\_\_\_\_

# Perfect Punctuation



## Using Commas to Combine Sentences Practice Worksheet 2

**A.** Combine these sentences using appositives. Remember to put commas in the correct places.

**Example:** Lee Smith is a well-known designer.

He created this style.

**Lee Smith, a well-known designer, created this style.**

1. Barnaby Quig sneezes anytime he hears people abusing the language in their speaking and writing.  
He is an English linguaphile.

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2. Pablo Picasso was a great artist.  
He was born in Spain.

---

3. Chocolate is my favorite dessert.  
It gives me the energy to do my homework.

---

**B.** Combine these sentences using participles or participial phrases. Remember to put commas in the correct places.

**Example:** Sam typed 80 words-per-minute.

He finished the paper in no time.

**Typing 80 words-per-minute, Sam finished the paper in no time.**

4. Gwen tripped over the trash can.  
She chased the school bus all the way down the street.

---

5. I fasted for 24 hours.  
I licked the plate clean.

---

6. Connor failed to understand his wife's grocery list.  
He asked several employees at the grocery store where he could find garlic butter onions.

---

7. Bryce was overjoyed.  
He went onstage to accept his Oscar for Best Actor in *Perfect Punctuation*.

---

name \_\_\_\_\_

# Perfect Punctuation



## Inserting Commas Correctly

### Practice Worksheet 3

*Insert commas into the following story, wherever they are necessary. Look at your "Rules to Remember" sheet again for hints that will help you correctly locate where commas should be placed in the story.*

An ordinary palm tree in Little Havana a primarily Hispanic section of Miami Florida was believed to perform miracles. This was because Julio Mendoza an old man with cataracts had rubbed some of the sap of this tree into his eyes rinsed them with water and could see.

Actually there is a little more to the story than that. The whole story is that the old man had faith that the tree sap would heal his eyes and miracles only happen to people who believe in them.

Overjoyed Julio shouted "Maria I can see again! Alfredo it's a miracle! The old tree gave my eyes light!" The word spread.

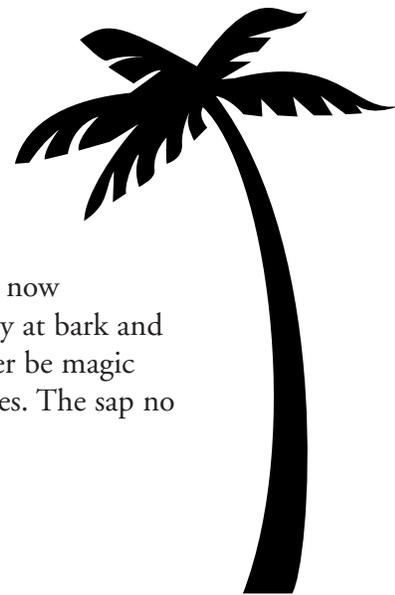
Then everyone with an ailment gathered around the old tree. People with arthritis and migraines claimed that their headaches and body aches disappeared.

Pushing to catch a glimpse of its strong branches thousands more people crowded around the tree. As greater crowds gathered police who arrived at the scene much later than everyone else were forced to divert traffic from the area. Moreover some people began selfishly chipping at the twisted bark with knives screwdrivers and small saws.

One old woman who had faith that the old tree would heal her grandson came to watch and listen. After watching for a long while she became very sad. "The tree has lost its power" she said. "My grandson Manuel" she moaned "will never be healed by the magic tree."

Indeed the tree was losing life. Julio who was cured and could now see also stood helplessly and watched as people continued to chip away at bark and branches. Because he could see he cried. He knew the tree would never be magic again because people had cut into the bark to get a piece for themselves. The sap no longer flowed in it.

"The next time I discover something magic" Julio cried "I'm going to keep it a secret." After that experience he certainly did.



name \_\_\_\_\_

# Perfect Punctuation



## Recognizing and Punctuating Clauses, Phrases, and Participles

### Practice Worksheet 4

*Below are some dependent clauses, non-restrictive phrases, transitional phrases, and participial words and phrases. Use each one, exactly as it is written, in an original sentence. Then, underline the original phrase/clause within each new sentence, and identify its type on the line above the sentence. Don't forget to use the proper punctuation. Remembering what you learned in the video, add commas wherever necessary.*

1. after Barnaby heard Bryce rehearsing his monologue

Type of phrase/clause: \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

2. who was extremely angry at me for eating her favorite cereal

Type of phrase/clause: \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

3. if you don't clean your room tonight

Type of phrase/clause: \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

4. having corrected Connor's grocery list

Type of phrase/clause: \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

5. on the other hand

Type of phrase/clause: \_\_\_\_\_

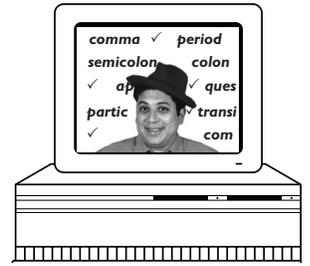
Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

6. startled

Type of word: \_\_\_\_\_

Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

name \_\_\_\_\_



# Perfect Punctuation

## Using Quotation Marks, Semicolons, and Colons Correctly

### Practice Worksheet 5

*Insert the proper punctuation into the following sentences. Then, using your "Rules to Remember" sheet, tell which rule applies. Although you will also need to insert commas, you do not need to state the comma rule—unless the comma(s) is used with quotations.*

1. Mark said I know how many spots a giraffe has.  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_
2. The following electives will be offered next year conversational Japanese advanced basketweaving shoemaking and comic books as literature.  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_
3. I will go said Merv where the wild goose goes.  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_
4. I finished reading a Walt Whitman poem Song of Myself for English class.  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_
5. The winners were as follows Carl Colon first place Colin Comma second and Lotta Quotations third.  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_
6. My sister's hair was a mess this morning I hid her brush.  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Marvin Muscle thinks that A Tale of Two Cities is a song actually it is a book by Charles Dickens.  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_
8. To Whom It May Concern  
I am writing to inquire about the possibility of obtaining a summer job with Super Sundae Shoppe.  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Anita if you haven't finished your homework then you can't watch television tonight said her mother.  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rule: \_\_\_\_\_

name \_\_\_\_\_



# Perfect Punctuation

## Using Quotation Marks Correctly

### Practice Worksheet 6

Read the following dialogue between Barnaby and his punctuation agent, Sabrina. Then, on this sheet or another sheet of paper, rewrite this dialogue in the form of a story. You will need to use quotation marks. Remember to start a new paragraph every time the speaker changes. Also, challenge yourself to use at least one split quotation, to vary where you put the "he said/she said" part of the sentence, and to use different words for "said."

**BARNABY**

Sabrina, take a bow. Your performance was wonderful. I really think Bryce finally understands why punctuation is so important to his monologue.

**SABRINA**

I know; I think it's great, Barnaby. Do you think he'll get the part?

**BARNABY**

As long as he remembers the ABCs of commas, quotation marks, semicolons, colons, and all of that other good stuff we taught him today, Bryce will be fine. I'd say we're Oscar-worthy teachers, wouldn't you? Uh oh, Sabrina. Ah...AH-CHOO! I've got another case coming through on my monitor. It's Sam's second one today. I'll have to get back to you.

**SABRINA**

Sure thing, Barnaby. Break a leg!

**BARNABY**

I just might do that if I keep on sneezing! Ah-chhoooo!

**Story** (if you need more room, use the back of this sheet or another sheet of paper)

name \_\_\_\_\_

# Perfect Punctuation



## Where's the Quote? Practice Worksheet 7

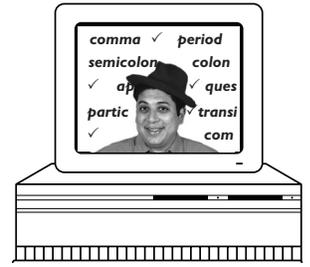
*The sentence below can be punctuated in eight different ways. In each case, the meaning will change. You should use quotation marks in all but one of the examples. Keep in mind that, in some of the versions, the meaning will be almost identical. Can you do it?*

**George Gray said Mary Beth is on the phone.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_



name \_\_\_\_\_



# Perfect Punctuation

## Using Quotation Marks and Italics or Underlining Correctly

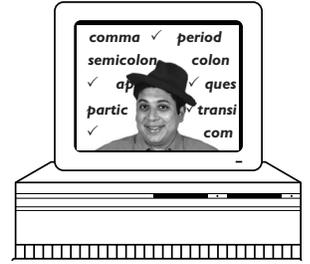
### Practice Worksheet 8

Long works (books, albums, etc.) are indicated by italics (on a word processor) or underlining (when writing longhand). Quotation marks are used for shorter works, such as poems, songs, and articles. Insert the proper quotation marks and underlining into the following sentences. Remember: Only the **title** of the book, magazine, or newspaper, etc. is underlined or italicized. (Example: *Newsweek* magazine or Newsweek magazine—not *Newsweek magazine* or Newsweek magazine).

1. My favorite part in *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë's most famous novel, is when Jane meets Mr. Rochester for the first time.
2. I wrote a poem titled *Why I Can't Clean My Room*, and when I read it to my mother, she rolled her eyes.
3. Whenever I run outside, I listen to Bruce Springsteen's *Born in the U.S.A.*; it's the best song on his album, which is also called *Born in the U.S.A.*
4. *Animal and Plant Kingdoms*, Chapter 14 in our biology textbook, is on our assignment sheet for next week.
5. Did you see that article called *Top 10 Restaurants in New York* in yesterday's *New York Times*?
6. Marla played *Somewhere Over the Rainbow* at her piano recital because her teacher thought the audience would enjoy it.
7. The latest hair styles for soap opera stars is the featured topic in this month's *Seventeen* magazine. I think the article is called *As the Hair Curls*.
8. I wanted to read Samuel Coleridge's poem, *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, at the poetry and literature festival this weekend; but since three other people are planning to perform it also, I am going to read an excerpt from Edith Wharton's novel, *Ethan Frome*, instead.
9. Obviously, we would look in Volume M of *World Book* for information about different types of music.
10. Alfonso soon realized that *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* would not be able to help him find out which poet wrote *The Raven*.

name \_\_\_\_\_

# Perfect Punctuation



## Recognizing Perfect Punctuation

### Practice Worksheet 9

Write + by each sentence in which all punctuation marks are used correctly. Place 0 by the incorrect ones. If the sentence is incorrect, rewrite it correctly below the original sentence.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ "I love my history class", said Larry.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ "When we arrived home," exclaimed Mr. Mitchell, "we found the house ablaze."
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Please pick up the following items from the grocery store; milk, eggs, and oatmeal cookies.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Morton sighed, "Computers are wonderful."
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Jack said sadly "Why can't I go, too?"
6. \_\_\_\_\_ When I read the book "Jane Eyre," I became so sad that I cried for three days straight.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Last week Dara received *Newsweek*, even though she doesn't subscribe to that magazine.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ "Do you like asparagus, he asked?"
9. \_\_\_\_\_ The newly elected officers were the following Noah Weisberg, president, Maria Perez, vice-president, Julia Horn, secretary, and Josh Walden, treasurer.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ "I don't know." said her friend. "Why would he do that?"
11. \_\_\_\_\_ The wolf huffed and puffed; he blew the bird cage over.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ "I received the following grades on my report card: three A's, three B's, and one B+," she said. "Does that mean," she added, "I can go to the Halloween party on Friday night?"
13. \_\_\_\_\_ Did I hear Mr. Rodriguez say, "Let's dance"?
14. \_\_\_\_\_ "On a Grecian Urn" is one of John Keats' best poems.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ "If I had studied," Sylvia said to her best friend, "I would have done better on the test."
16. \_\_\_\_\_ Mary screamed! "Run for your life."
17. \_\_\_\_\_ Dear Sir or Madam:  
I am writing to inquire about the job you advertised in last week's *Chicago Tribune*.

name \_\_\_\_\_

# Perfect Punctuation



## Quiz

Write + by each sentence in which all punctuation marks are used correctly. Place 0 by the incorrect ones.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ George Washington, slept here.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I have never read *Seventeen magazine*.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I have a subscription to *Seventeen* magazine.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ My muscles are sore today; I ran a marathon yesterday morning.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ If you go to the store can you please pick up milk, cheddar cheese, and raisins?
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Have you ever read "Snail's Pace," the new book about life in the fast lane?
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Sabrina shrugged her shoulders and said, "Quotation marks are easy".
8. \_\_\_\_\_ My brother, who is very irresponsible, is supposed to pick me up at the airport.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Dancing like a maniac down the street, Howard attracted a lot of attention.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ "Aimee was so hungry," I said. "That I could have fed her shredded newspapers."
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Actually Marvin asked me if I would go to the dance with him. Sorry, Stan.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ "I invited the following people to the movies: Jim, Ethan, Lynn, Carmen, and Cindy," she said. "Do you think," she added, "I should invite Kevin, too?"
13. \_\_\_\_\_ "Gabe, do want to work on our project, or should we go bowling instead?" asked Marie.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ If we leave now we'll need most of these items: brushes, combs, backpacks, crackers, and lettuce.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ Dear Jeffrey,  
Hey how's it going?
16. \_\_\_\_\_ We plan to go to the movie, but we won't eat dinner until later.
17. \_\_\_\_\_ Brittany on the other hand can't wait to eat.
18. \_\_\_\_\_ Whenever you're in doubt, of what to do, read the directions.
19. \_\_\_\_\_ Broken, the china plate lay at her feet.
20. \_\_\_\_\_ "I think," added Barnaby, "that I have to sneeze. Achhooooo!"