

# USING A COMMA



## TO SEPARATE A LIST OR SERIES

*Mary bought milk, sugar, butter  
and cream.*

*At the zoo we saw tigers, pandas,  
crocodiles and elephants.*

## BETWEEN TWO CLAUSES JOINED WITH FANBOYS

*They went to get ice-cream,  
but came back with candy floss.*

*I do not want to do this,  
nor do I want to do that.*

## ADDING A PAUSE TO A SENTENCE

*Once upon a time, there was an  
evil witch.*

*A long, long time ago, dinosaurs  
roamed the earth.*

# USING A FULL STOP

## THE END OF A SENTENCE

*The sun was shining and the birds  
were singing.*

*That was the best chocolate I  
have ever tasted.*

## IN WEBSITE AND EMAIL ADDRESSES

*www.google.com  
www.lego.com*

*mrs\_email@yahoo.com  
mickeymouse@disney.com*

## ABBREVIATIONS

*He couldn't sleep and it was  
approaching 11 p.m.*

*Strong (adj.) — having the  
power to move heavy weights.*



# USING AN APOSTROPHE

## CONTRACTION

*It's so good to finally have some pleasant weather.*

*You're looking very smart this morning.*

## POSSESSION

*Please take a seat in Andrew's office.*

*My dog's bed is softer than my own!*

## POSSESSIVE PLURAL

*The aeroplanes' wings were gliding through the clouds.*

*Three days' dental work is needed to repair your teeth.*

# USING A QUESTION MARK



## AT THE END OF A QUESTION

*What time does the football  
game finish?*

*What is the biggest mammal  
in the world?*

## GOOD QUESTION WORDS

*Who?*  
*What?*  
*When?*  
*Which?*  
*Where?*

## DO NOT USE WITH A FULL STOP

*What time does the football  
game finish? . X*

*What is the biggest mammal  
in the world? . X*

# USING AN EXCLAMATION MARK



## TO INDICATE STRONG FEELINGS OR HIGH VOLUME

*Remove your hand from the  
cookie jar!*

*Our sponsored walk raised  
over £3000!*

## USE VERBS THAT ARE LINKED TO THE PURPOSE

*“Don’t answer back!” he yelled  
angrily.*

*All of the party guests shouted  
“happy birthday!”*

## USE SPARINGLY FOR EFFECT

*I can’t believe you threw me  
a surprise party.*

*I can’t believe you threw me  
a surprise party!*

# USING SPEECH MARKS

”

## TO SHOW WHAT'S BEING SPOKEN

*"What's the time Mr Wolf?"  
the children chanted.*

*The wizard muttered his spell  
repeating "hocus pocus."*

## WITH COMMAS, QUESTIONS AND EXCLAMATION MARKS

*"Mum!" Sarah shouted,  
"where are my football boots?"*

*"They're over there," she sighed  
with frustration.*

## WITHIN A SENTENCE

*"Simon stopped, took a deep breath and  
called back, "I'm over here."*

*The police officer shouted, "freeze!"  
as loud as she could.*

# USING CAPITAL LETTERS



## FOR PROPER NOUNS

*Doctor Pollock was always late  
for her appointments.*

*The capital of Spain is Madrid.*

## AT THE START OF SENTENCES

*My favourite season is spring  
because it's full of colour and hope.*

*Although it can be quite rainy at times,  
my favourite place is Scotland.*

## DON'T FORGET I'M AND I

*It's not easy being a gymnast,  
I have to practise a lot.*

*When I'm sick I like to watch  
the Narnia films.*

# USING A COLON

## TO INTRODUCE AN ELEMENT OR SERIES OF ELEMENTS

*There are three types of muscle in the body: cardiac, smooth, and skeletal.*

*We have two options here:  
stay and fight, or run like the wind.*

## SEPARATING INDEPENDENT CLAUSES

*A dolphin is not a fish:  
it is a warm-blooded mammal.*

*The research is conclusive: climate  
change is a reality.*

## COLON MISUSE

*The three types of muscle in the body  
are: cardiac, smooth, and skeletal. X*

*When I graduate, I want to go to:  
Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. X*

# USING A SEMICOLON



## TO CONNECT RELATED INDEPENDENT CLAUSES

*Riding a bicycle is good exercise;  
I ride mine everyday.*

*Rosie has gone to the library;  
David has gone to play rugby.*

## IN A SERIAL LIST

*I need the 7-day weather forecast  
for the following cities:  
London, England;  
Edinburgh, Scotland; Cardiff, Wales;  
Belfast, Northern Ireland.*

## WITH CONJUNCTIVE ADVERBS

*I needed to go for a walk and get some  
fresh air; also, I needed to buy milk.*

*Roses look beautiful; however, I don't  
think they smell very good.*

# USING A HYPHEN



## TO JOIN WORDS OR PARTS OF WORDS

*This rock-hard cake is absolutely impossible to eat.*

*We're looking for a dog-friendly hotel.*

## FOR WRITTEN NUMBERS

*I've watched the Lord of the Rings movies one-hundred-and-forty times!*

*My pet tortoise is sixty-three years old.*

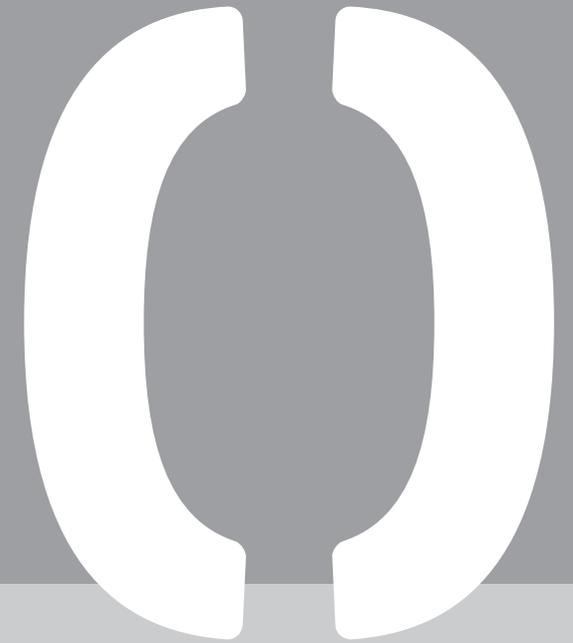
## WITH A PREFIX

*Ex- (ex-husband).*

*Self- (self-assessed).*

*Mid- (mid-nineties).*

# USING PARENTHESES



## TO ADD INFORMATION OR CLARIFICATION

*I went to the park to meet  
James (my big brother).*

*I love all fruit (except bananas) but  
I'm very picky with vegetables.*

## BRACKETS, COMMAS OR DASHES

*Tim studied, all night, for the big exam.*

*Joe's favourite team - whom he had  
supported since the age of six - was  
the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.*

## SENTENCES STILL MAKE SENSE WITHOUT PARENTHESES

*Tim studied for the big exam.*

*Joe's favourite team was  
the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.*

# USING AN ELLIPSIS

## TO CREATE SUSPENSE BY ADDING A PAUSE

*Captain Hook opened the chest and discovered the treasure had ... gone!*

*Peter, can you, um ... never mind, I forgot what I was saying.*

## TO SHOW CONTENT HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM A QUOTE

*Rebecca likes chocolate, which she never shares. She has a bar in the cupboard.*

*Rebecca likes chocolate ... she has a bar in the cupboard.*

## TO SHOW THE TRAILING OFF OF A THOUGHT

*Remember when we went camping? That was one crazy rainstorm ...*

*That rollercoaster looks too scary. I don't think I can go on it ...*