

## Commas – revision

Commas are a common form of punctuation taught to students and are therefore expected to be used routinely. They act as the ‘amber’ in the traffic light system; they tell us to take a brief pause when reading – not as long as a full stop.

*Commas are used:*

- 1.** to indicate natural pauses
- 2.** to add extra information to a sentence
- 3.** to separate items in a list

*For example:*

1. When he saw the pirate ship on the horizon, the captain gave the alarm.
2. Paul Mann, our star player, broke his leg in the match on Saturday.
3. When I go shopping I need to buy: eggs, bread, milk, cheese and butter.

Be careful when using commas as they change the meaning of a sentence.

E.G:

Eats shoots and leaves.  
Eats, shoots and leaves.

The old lady collected all sorts of things: silver, paper, hats, clocks and tablecloths.

The old lady collected all sorts of things: silver paper, hats, clocks and tablecloths.

The old lady collected all sorts of things: silver, paper hats, clocks and tablecloths.

**Commas – practise**  
**Commas – dividing parts of a sentence**

Two parts of a sentence are linked together by a joining word like and, but, although, because, which or who. You need to put a comma before the joining word - e.g. The boy shouted as loudly as he could, but no one could hear him.

Add commas to divide the separate parts of the following sentences.

1. Sally bought some flowers for her house but they wilted in the heat.
2. Billy had always wanted to be a writer although he didn't know where to start.
3. The boy was excited to go to the theme park but he was too small for the rides.
4. Dan's room was tidy and that was how his mother liked it.
5. Amanda's homework was submitted a day early which was very unusual for her.

Using a comma plus a joining word (and, but, although, because, which or who), join these pairs of sentences.

1. The dog ate his dinner. He didn't chase the cat.
2. She was upset. She had missed the last train home.
3. Tom was at a football match. He had a party to go to later.
4. Selma bought some expensive shoes. She now had no money left.
5. Fred found a fifty pound note on the pavement. It was a fake.



**Commas – practise**  
**Commas – adding extra information**

When writing a sentence you often provide additional information to make it more interesting to the reader.

When the second part of a sentence provides extra information about the first part, you divide the two parts with a comma. You can then use the words *who*, *which*, *where* or *when* after the comma.

E.G: Danny is a very talented football player, which is why he plays for Liverpool FC.

Add extra information to the following sentences by using commas and *who*, *which*, *where* or *when*.

1. My granny is a terrible cook
2. Harry ran across the road
3. My puppy chewed my socks
4. I will meet you at the restaurant
5. I have a gorgeous fluffy kitten

You can also add information in the middle of a sentence. You need to cushion the extra information with two commas.

E.G: The girl fell off of her chair.  
becomes

The girl, **who was laughing hysterically**, fell off of her chair.

Rewrite the following sentences by adding extra information and commas.

1. The man slid into the room.
2. My sister is called Rosie.
3. The dog bit the postman.
4. My friend works in an office.
5. The teacher set a class detention.



### Commas – in a list

Commas are used to separate items in a list. A comma is optional but recommended before an *and*.

E.G: To build the shed we will need a hammer, nails, and a saw.

Dogs love toys, bones, and long walks.

Robbie is a sweet, caring, and polite boy.

Add commas to the following sentences to separate the items in a list.

1. I have travelled to Spain France Italy and Sweden.
2. To make a perfect cup of tea you need a teabag sugar milk and hot water.
3. Burglars love open windows, dark streets and unlocked cars.
4. In London tourists can visit Buckingham Palace London Dungeons and the London Eye.
5. The job requires employees to be punctual efficient hardworking and professional.

. . . this,  
that,  
and the  
other.