

Commas in Sentence Parts

Comma Rules Part I

1. Use commas after introductory words, mild interjections, phrases, and clauses.

No, our crew was unable to call for help.

Well, that's too bad.

In the spring of 1930, marine science took a step forward. (introductory prepositional phrase)

To make the half-mile dive, scientists designed a deep-sea vehicle. (introductory infinitive phrase)

Blooming in our yard, the lilac bushes smelled sweet. (introductory participial phrase)

When I saw the score of the Gopher's Game, I was amazed. (adverb clause)

Fortunately, the game ended well. (introductory adverb)

2. Use commas to set off nouns of direct address such as names or titles.

James, you need to finish your homework.

3. Use commas to set off parenthetical expressions or interrupters.
however, therefore, for example, I suppose, moreover, etc.

The problem, **however**, was just beginning.
The reason, **I suppose**, is that he never knew my mother.

4. Use a comma to set off a tag question.

You have read that book, **haven't you?**

5. Use commas to set off nonessential elements in a sentence.

Charles Dickens, **the famous author**, wrote *Great Expectations*.

6. Use a comma before a conjunction when it joins two independent clauses.

I've read *Great Expectations*, **but** I haven't read *David Copperfield*.

1. Use a comma after every item in a series except the last one in the list.

I like potatoes, celery, and green peppers.

2. Use a comma between 2 or more adjectives of equal rank that modify the same noun.

A **thick, damp** fog blanketed the coastline.

NOT: The big brown dog ran into my yard.

Cumulative modifiers usually follow this order, based on their meaning: size, shape, condition or age, color, origin or material