

USING COMMAS

Rules for Comma Use

ELEMENTS IN SERIES

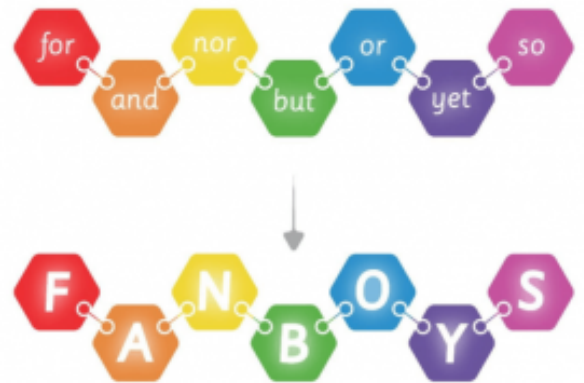


Use a comma to separate the elements in a series (three or more things), including the last two. "He hit the ball, dropped the bat, and ran to first base."

BEFORE CONJUNCTIONS

Use a comma + conjunction (and, but, for, nor, yet, or, so) to connect two independent clauses, as in "He hit the ball well, but he ran toward third base."

Co-ordinating Conjunctions



These words join words, phrases and clauses.



BEFORE INTRODUCTORY PHRASES

Use a comma to set off introductory elements, as in "Running toward third base, he suddenly realized how stupid he looked."

ADDITIONAL USE

- To separate words that interrupt the flow of a sentence*
- To separate a direct quotation from the rest of a sentence*
- To separate components of dates, numbers, and addresses*



EXERCISE 1:

Separate the listed items in the following sentences by adding commas. Not every sentence needs commas.

1. Her favorite science fiction authors are Terry Brooks Ray Bradbury and Marian Zimmer Bradley.
2. She served her guests coffee and cake.
3. At the store, she bought milk orange juice pasta and tea.
4. The instructor showed a video explained some key concepts and led a class discussion.
5. Basketball hockey football baseball and soccer are popular spectator sports.
6. She played the piano and sang in the school choir.
7. He is taking history psychology political science and economics this term.

EXERCISE 2:

Add commas where needed in the sentences. Note that not all sentences need commas.

1. The Alouette satellite was launched in 1962 and the Anik satellite was launched in 1972.
2. The two satellites were used for communication and were launched with American rockets.
3. The satellites were Canadian but the Americans launched them.
4. Julie Payette is a woman scientist so she is a role model for Canadian girls.
5. Girls are good at science in elementary school but often they lose interest in science in high school.
6. Girls tend to do as well as boys in science courses yet they often think it is for boys.
7. Julie Payette studied engineering and joined Canada's space program