

# Commas Yes, Commas No

## The Rules

**YES**

**NO**

1	<p>Before a coordinating conjunction (and, or, but, nor, for, yet, so) that joins two complete sentences</p>	<p>To join two complete sentences: this would be a comma splice. Instead, to join two complete sentences, you need BOTH a comma and a coordinating conjunction.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He frowned, <b>but</b> she did not understand why.</li> <li>• We can go to the park, <b>or</b> we can watch a movie.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I threw the ball, the dog ran after it.</li> <li>• We went to the store, they were closed.</li> </ul>
2	<p>After an introductory word or phrase</p>	<p>Split two verbs that refer to the same subject or actor.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>After the Civil War</b>, slavery was abolished.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She cried, and called her mother.</li> </ul>
3	<p>To set off extra information (not essential to meaning of sentence) in TWO extra commas</p>	<p>Around essential information which is necessary to meaning of sentence</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terry and John, <b>my brothers</b>, play football.</li> <li>• Your paper, Mary, is very well written.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The player, <b>who scored the goal</b>, became a hero.</li> <li>• The dog, <b>that ate my shoe</b>, is staring at us.</li> </ul>

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

4	To set off parenthetical expressions	Before a clause beginning with “that” or after “such as”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You will, <b>of course</b>, want to be there.</li> <li>The result, <b>however</b>, was not as we expected.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>She told me, <b>that</b> the class was cancelled.</li> <li>Dairy products such as, <b>milk and cheese</b>, contain a lot of fat.</li> </ul>
5	To separate items in a list	Between subject and verb or between a verb and an object
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>She wrote about <b>France, Germany, and England</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>cat</b>, <b>climbed</b> a massive maple tree.</li> </ul>
6	Immediately after a verb that introduces a quotation (says, said, exclaimed, etc.)	After a coordinating conjunction (and, or, but, nor, for, yet, so)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Her father <b>said</b>, “Have some cake and ice cream.”</li> <li>I <b>asked</b>, “May I have another egg roll?”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I walked to the store <b>and</b>, bought a cookie.</li> <li>She walked around the house <b>and</b>, saw a moose.</li> </ul>

# Apostrophe

## Don't Misuse me!

Apostrophe Yes	Apostrophe No
<p>When making a noun possessive except in the case of "it."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John's ball, cat's meow</li> <li>• Chris' book, actors' roles</li> </ul>	<p>When making "it" possessive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Its leaf, its bone</li> </ul>
<p>When forming a contraction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He didn't, she can't</li> <li>• It's a great day.</li> </ul>	<p>When pluralizing a noun.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The boys run, the girls sing</li> </ul>
<p>When indicating a letter or number that has been purposefully excluded, such as when showing slang in speech.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I was goin' to town"</li> <li>• "She was movin' out"</li> <li>• "The '30s were rough"</li> </ul>	<p>When using possessive nouns/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The chair was his</li> <li>- The job was theirs</li> <li>- Victory was ours</li> </ul>
	<p>To pluralize names.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Smiths, the Browns</li> </ul>
<p>When pluralizing letters, symbols, or words treated as words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross your t's and dot your i's</li> <li>• That's a lot of ?'s</li> <li>• How many but's did you use</li> </ul>	<p>To pluralize abbreviations and decades</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UFOs, VCRs, PSATs</li> <li>- 1960s, 1990s</li> </ul>