

Commas in Lists



Use **commas** to separate **items in a list**. There should be a comma between each thing in a list except the last two. These two are separated with '**and**' or '**or**'.

I donated three films, two books, some old clothes **and** a really difficult puzzle.

1 Add commas in the correct places in this paragraph.

I am going to the supermarket with my mum her sister and my best friend. We need to buy some more cereal a couple of pints of milk a pack of dishcloths and some baking ingredients. We are going to bake some chocolate-chip cookies a batch of flapjacks a sponge cake and a raspberry cheesecake. We haven't got any flour butter sugar or raspberries at the moment.

2 Rewrite these sentences with commas in the correct places.

You will need 500 g sugar 200 g flour 300 g butter and some raisins.

.....

.....

Please bring a packed lunch a swimming costume and a few pens.

.....

.....

The journey was quite long very tiring and really boring.

.....

.....

3

Write the items in the list into a sentence using commas in the correct places.

I need to

To do

clean the kitchen

bake some flapjacks

do my homework

tidy my bedroom

4

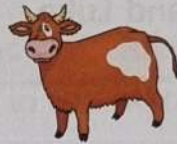
Use the items below to complete the sentences. Each list should have four things in it. Remember to put commas in the correct places.



a microwave



a brand-new
camera



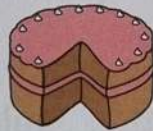
a herd of cows



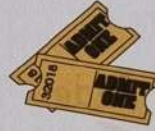
lots of benches



a squirrel



a week's supply
of cake



two theatre
tickets

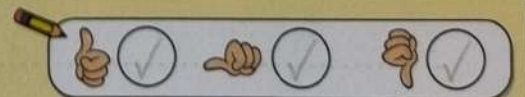


two rabbits

Enter the competition to win

On the walk we saw

"I can use commas to separate items in a list."



Commas to Avoid Confusion



A sentence might cause **confusion** if there is **more than one possible meaning**. **Commas** help to avoid confusion by making it clearer what a sentence means.

Without commas, this sentence is **confusing**.



I invited my brothers Sam and Luke.

I invited my brothers, Sam and Luke.

I invited my brothers, Sam, and Luke.

Adding a comma

(or two commas)

makes the meaning of the sentence clearer.

The sentence with **one comma** suggests I invited my brothers, who are called Sam and Luke. The sentence with **two commas** suggests I invited my brothers **as well as** Sam and Luke.

It's OK to put a comma with 'and' if the sentence is confusing without one.

1 Add a comma to each sentence below to change the meaning.

No babies are cute.

I don't want to fight Jade.

Clara loves painting books and baking cakes.

I only told my parents, James and Aneesah.

2 Read the sentences below. Explain how the meaning of the sentence changes when the comma is added.

I am frightened of cricket bats and thunderstorms.

I am frightened of cricket, bats and thunderstorms.

.....

.....

.....

3

Draw a picture in the box below each sentence to show what it means.

The table was piled high with chocolate cake and crisps.

The table was piled high with chocolate, cake and crisps.

4

Add a comma or commas to each sentence, so that it has the same meaning as the sentence in the box.

Ella's favourite things are summer holidays and going on long walks.

Ella has three favourite things.

As the man turned blue doctors started to worry.

Doctors started to worry as the man turned blue.

It's time to start cooking children.

I'm telling some children it's time to start cooking.

I took a photo of the woman with a camera.

I used a camera to take a photo of the woman.

Max the neighbour's cat is making strange noises.

A cat called Max is making strange noises.

"I can use commas to avoid confusion."



Commas After Subordinate Clauses



Use a **comma** to separate a **main clause** from a **subordinate clause** in a sentence — but only when the **subordinate clause** comes **first**.

While I'm at the gym, I listen to my music.

The **main clause** makes sense on its own. It's the **most important** part of a sentence.

You don't need a **comma** if the subordinate clause is at the **end** of a sentence.

A sentence with a **main clause** and a **subordinate clause** is a **complex sentence**.

I listen to my music while I'm at the gym.

A **subordinate clause** doesn't make sense on its own. It's **less important** than the main clause.

1 Add commas in the correct places in the sentences below.

Once ☐ I'd finished eating ☐ I started reading my new book.

As I ☐ got on the bus ☐ I ☐ dropped my bag.

Although ☐ I am scared ☐ of sharks ☐ I love visiting the aquarium.

Rather than ☐ going out ☐ we stayed in ☐ and watched a film.

2 Underline the subordinate clauses and add commas where needed.

While you were distracted I swapped our plates.

You can go to the party as long as you wear something sensible.

Now that you've told me that everything makes much more sense.

Until we've found the solution we'll keep trying to work it out.

I'll come and help you as soon as I can.

Since we're all here I'd like to tell you something.

3 Put commas in the sentences that need them.

I'm really tired because I've been walking all day.

When I realised what I'd done I apologised immediately.

Bob started laughing after we'd told him the joke.

Although I like the album this song isn't my favourite.

As you're older than me you should go first.

4 Rewrite these sentences with commas in the correct places.

Even though it was cold I wanted ice cream.

.....

Despite the fact we lost we still had fun.

.....

Whereas Tom is calm Tim is always stressed.

.....

Before I left the house I turned the lights off.

.....

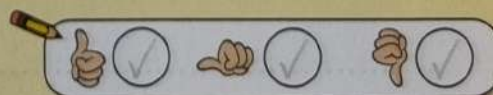
5 Add a subordinate clause to complete each of these sentences. Remember to use commas correctly.

..... I need to ring my sister.

..... Jim wasn't offended.

..... Simon wasn't scared.

"I can use commas after subordinate clauses."



Commas After Introductions


 chhhh...

Adverbial phrases tell you where, when, how or how often something happens. Use a comma after an adverbial phrase at the beginning of a sentence.

On my birthday, we went out for lunch.

1 Add commas in the correct places in the sentences below.

As quietly as possible James crept downstairs.

Very quickly Emily jumped out of bed.

In ten years' time my parents will be sixty.

Earlier today my teacher gave me detention.

In a very silly way Jack skipped across the yard.

In the kitchen there's a present for you.

2 Put a tick next to the sentences which use commas correctly and put a cross next to the ones that don't use them correctly.

Before dawn, everything is very peaceful.

In Italy pizza and pasta, are very popular foods.

As quickly as possible, he packed his bags.

Under the new rules, we can't wear jewellery to school.

Last week the boys, won the football match.

<input type="checkbox"/>
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Rewrite the incorrect sentences with commas in the right places.

.....

.....

3 Rewrite these sentences with commas in the correct places.

Before school Kim made her packed lunch.

.....

On Tuesday I am going to the cinema.

.....

Every morning my dad runs 5 km.

.....

In town there is a really big skate park.

.....

4 Match each adverbial phrase to the correct main clause. Then write out the complete sentences. Remember to put commas in the correct places.

Adverbial Phrases

Main clauses

On the left

he crept through the house.

Every year

she set off for school.

Like a mouse

we visit my aunt.

Earlier than usual

you can see my old house.

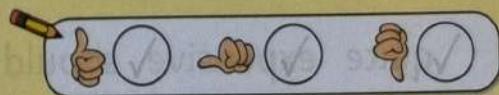
1.

2.

3.

4.

"I can use commas after adverbial introductions."



Commas for Extra Information



Commas can also be used to separate **extra information** in a sentence.

The commas help to **avoid ambiguity** (ambiguity is when something could have more than one meaning).

The pupils, **who had eaten lunch**, went outside.

The sentence should still **make sense** when the **extra information** is **removed**.

- 1 Put a tick next to the sentences which use commas correctly and put a cross next to the ones that don't.

The flight, even though it felt really long, only took three hours.

☐

My brothers who are twins, are called Jim and Joe.

☐

We saw, my teacher Mr Harris, in the park.

☐

Dr Grey, our family doctor, told me to try to get more sleep.

☐

Rewrite the incorrect sentences with commas in the right places.

.....

.....

.....

- 2 Add commas in the correct places in the sentences below.

On Thursday the day after tomorrow I am going on holiday.

I am going with my two sisters Becky and Charlotte and our

mum. We're spending a few days in Portugal a really hot

country before flying back to England. The holiday which was

quite expensive should be really fun.

3

Rewrite each sentence with the commas in the **correct** places.

The charity auction which raised hundreds of pounds was a great success.

.....

.....

Pepperoni my favourite pizza topping is a kind of sausage.

.....

.....

The shepherd who'd lost all his sheep was very upset.

.....

.....

4

Rewrite the sentences below, adding the **extra information** in the boxes. Use **commas** where they are needed.

Charles Dickens was born in 1812.

a famous English writer

My pet mice are adorable.

called Sammy and Sally

My parents get on really well.

who met fifteen years ago

"I can use commas to separate extra information."



2 Underline the subordinate clauses and add commas where needed.

Many people came to the fair until it started to rain.

While she was shopping we prepared her surprise.

Even though I love most fruits I hate apples.

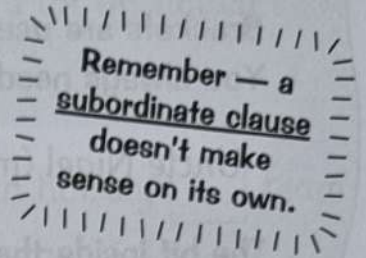
If I get home in time I'll start making our tea.

Although the pirate was very scary his parrot was hilarious.

You can help me with the decorations since you're so early.

Provided that you've brought your trunks we can go swimming today.

You can't go to football practice unless you've done your homework.



3 Explain how adding or moving a comma changes the meaning of these sentences.

My least favourite things about school are history teachers and detention.

My least favourite things about school are history, teachers and detention.

.....

.....

In the town square, people were looking at the shops.

In the town, square people were looking at the shops.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

"I can use commas correctly."

