

Comma Rules

Rule #1: SOBAY Sentences

Use commas in (SOBAY) compound sentences. A compound sentence is made up of two independent clauses joined by one of the following conjunctions: so, or, but, and, yet

Anthony wanted an A in math class, so he studied for many hours.
Jamie's dad said she could go to the party, or she could go to the movies.
Logan wanted a new iPad, but he didn't save enough money.
The kitchen was remodeled, and it contains many modern conveniences.
Daniel needed new shoes, yet he spent his money on a new video game.

Rule #2 Adjectives

Use commas between adjectives if it makes sense to rearrange them or if you can place an "and" between them. If it does not make sense, you do not need a comma.

The brown, shaggy dog ran past the children.
Rearranged: The shaggy, brown dog ran past the children.
Place an "and": The brown and shaggy dog ran past the children.

Rule #3 Items in a Series

Use commas to separate three or more words, items, or phrases.

I bought red apples, yellow bananas, and green pears at the grocery store.

We will visit the museum, the aquarium, and the zoo during our trip.

He ate Frosted Flakes cereal, dressed for school, and brushed his teeth.

Rule #4 Extra Information

Use commas with extra information (introductory, parenthetical, nonessential, direct address).

Introductory
Before you leave for break, be sure to complete all of your work.

Parenthetical
The new girl, who is from New York, started at our school today.

Nonessential
Yes, you may attend the class trip since you have earned it.

Direct Address
Will you be going to the graduation ceremony, Mr. Smith?

Rule #5 Special Situations

Use commas in special situations (letter, dates, geographical information, addresses, numbers, quotations).

Dear Beth,
Sincerely,
Anna

All homework is due by Friday, October 31, 2016.

The class will travel to Venice, California and Phoenix, Arizona.

Riverview School
300 Prosser Street
Silver Lake, WI 53150

12,587,025
102,314
1,951

"As Ms. Brown told us," the student said, "the assignment is due today."