

Why do we need commas?

The dog said my dad is scratching at the door and needs to go for a walk.

Are you going to the movie with Mary Jane?

To eliminate confusion!

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Insert commas where needed.

In the beginning Henry Lisette Steve the kid next door the brilliant but conceited Gail from Buffalo New York and Luis all remembered their lines for the play.

Were you correct?

In the beginning, Henry, Lisette, Steve, the kid next door, the brilliant, but conceited, Gail from Buffalo, New York, and Luis all remembered their lines for the play.

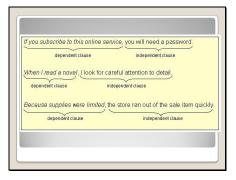
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Do NOT confuse *phrases* and *clauses*!

A phrase is a group of words that is missing either the subject or the predicate. The big hairy man carrying the umbrella (missing the predicate... "carrying" is not the predicate; it's just describing his looks). Walking slowly away from the door (This is missing a subject. Who is walking away?) Remember a CLAUSE is a group of words that includes BOTH a subject AND a predicate. Some clauses can survive on their own (independent); some rely on other words to make them survive (dependent).



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dependent clause independent clause

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Rule #1- Use a comma and a conjunction (and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so) to separate two independent clauses. The eighth grade class was ready for the field day, but administration did not allow the event to continue because of the rain.

Because of the rain, the eighth grade class was ready for the field day, but administration did not allow the event to continue.

FANBOYS

(a way to remember all 7 conjunctions).





•When two complete sentences are joined by a comma, and there is no conjunction present, we get a **comma splice**. •Incorrect: She decided not to contribute to the project anymore, she had done her share of the work. **Correcting the Problem:** These are closely related sentences, but each of them completes a thought; therefore, they either need a period, a semicolon, or a comma with a conjunction between them. Correct: She decided not to contribute to the project anymore. She had done her share of the work.

Correct: She decided not to contribute to the project anymore; she had done her share of the work.

Correct: She decided not to contribute to the project anymore, yet she had done her share of the work.

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Comma splices can be avoided by using a period between two complete sentences.

Incorrect: A Minneapolis bridge collapsed last night, several people were reported missing.

Correct: A Minneapolis bridge collapsed last night. Several people were reported missing.



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Rule #2- Use a comma to set off the elements of a series (three or more things), including the last two. My favorite holidays are Christmas, Halloween, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, and Thanksgiving.

Mrs. Beadel loves reading, writing, and speaking.

Grandma makes spaghetti and meatballs, macaroni and cheese, and pizza.