

The 10 Comma Rules

Rule #1

Use a comma between items that are listed in a series, which contain 3 or more words or clauses.

Examples: We went to a movie, went bowling, and then went to a party.
I bought some chocolate cake, ice cream, and apple pie for the party.

Rule #2

Use a comma when quoting the words of others.

Examples: Michelle grabbed her keys and said, "I love peanut butter."
"Don't blow your nose on the sofa," my mother warned.

Rule #3

Use a comma when writing dates and addresses.

Examples: My address is 7 ½ Lalaloopsy Lane, Candyland, AR
We are going to Swaziland on February 29, 2018

Rule #4

Use a comma after introductory phrases.

Examples: After dropping the cake, I served it to my brother.
Despite my advanced age, I still enjoy aggressive inline skating.

Rule #5

Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS) when it joins two independent clauses.

Examples: I broke my leg in two places, but I still ran the marathon.
The weather was rainy, so we didn't eat broccoli in the swimming pool.

Rule #6

Use a comma after a subordinate/dependent clause that begins a sentence.

Examples: While the elephant read the paper, the panda cooked breakfast.
If I were you, I would try the ghost pepper ice cream with wasabi.

Rule #7

Use a comma to set off an adjective if it is not essential to the meaning of the sentence. (Adjective clauses usually start with words like *that*, *which*, or *who*.)

Examples: My uncle, who repairs shoes, has a beautiful soul.
The car, which has only two wheels, drives in circles.

Rule #8

Use a comma when using conjunctive adverbs. Conjunctive adverbs are words like *however*, *therefore*, *on the other hand*, *nevertheless*, *especially*, *consequently*, *for example*.

Examples: I announced to the world that I would win the championship,
however, I didn't.
My disgrace was beyond my ability to accept, therefore, I lived under
a rock for 3 years.

Rule #9

Use a comma to break up the flow of a sentence.

Examples: Abby, learn these comma rules! (Yeah, I'm talking to you!)
Boy, you better watch it!

Rule #10

Use a comma to set off an appositive word or phrase that is used to describe another noun.

Example: My classes, the most advanced and intelligent in the school, do okay.
His foot, broken in three places, didn't feel very good.