

## Uses of the Comma

### **1. Use a comma to separate items in a series (more than two items).**

Example: Maria's children are sweet, polite, and intelligent.

Note: The comma before the "and" is optional.

### **2. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction to combine two simple sentences.**

Example: Juan spent the summer in Europe, for he likes to travel.

### **3. Use a comma to follow introductory words, expressions, phrases, and clauses.**

Example: Well, I had no idea that he was lying to me.

Finally, I had to face the truth about my friend.

At the beginning of the year, I had no idea he was so friendly.

Before I met my husband, I didn't trust men.

### **4. Use commas before and after an appositive phrase—a phrase that interrupts the main idea of a sentence to provide more information about one of its nouns.**

Example: Jackie Tuttle, our reading teacher, has taught for many years.

### **5. Use commas around nouns in direct address.**

Example: I thought, Matthew, that you knew better than that.

### **6. Use a comma in numbers of one thousand or larger.**

Example: 1, 999

### **7. Use a comma to set off words spoken in dialogue.**

Example: My son told me, "Stop telling me what to do."

### **8. Use a comma where it is necessary to prevent a misunderstanding.**

Example: Kicking, the child was carried off to bed.

**Practice: Insert commas, as necessary, in the following sentences.**

1. I have traveled to Africa South America and Australia.
2. The coat she was wearing was old dirty and full of holes.
3. My parents taught me many things and I would like to make them proud.
4. I do not want to go to the library nor do I want to go to the mall.
5. Having never seen a penguin I thought it was a skunk.
6. "Come on" he said "give me one more chance."
7. After the movie we went to the beach and talked for two hours.
8. Seriously I had never planned to become a high school principal.
9. Smiling the lady handed me a flyer.
10. Sarah Brightman a famous singer is coming to Santa Cruz.
11. I don't know and I will never know what happened that night.
12. I'm hoping however that you will reconsider.
13. I told you Sandra to make a move on.
14. My mother just won a lottery of \$10000000.
15. "Let them" she said "eat cake."
16. Before eating the child said her prayers.
17. Happily she finished her homework.
18. When you can come and visit us.
19. Skin cancer seldom kills doctors say.
20. I'm not sure and I don't want to know.