ENGLISH

Grammar: Punctuations

Advanced Punctuation

What is Punctuation?

Punctuation plays an important role in organising your written content. In the chapter on basic punctuation, you studied about using the full stop, the exclamation mark, the question mark, the comma, quotation marks and capitalisation. In this chapter, we will study and understand the use of

- Brackets
- The Semicolon
- The Colon
- The Apostrophe

Brackets ( ) [ ]

Round brackets **( )** are used to include non-essential information in a sentence. They are also called parentheses.

- *Mount Everest **(**8,848 m**)** is located in the Himalayas.*

Round brackets are also used to enclose the comments of the writer.

- *Shivani threw tantrums **(**as a habit**)** at the launch party.*

Square brackets **[ ]** are used for clarification and addition of information.

- *Born on an unusual day **[**29th February**]**, Sumit had every reason to believe he was special.*
- *He **[**the Mayor**]** announced a reward for anyone who would track the thief.*

Semicolon (;)

A semicolon marks a stronger pause than a comma but is weaker than a full stop. A semicolon is used

Between independent clauses where coordinating conjunctions are omitted

- *The senior classes are allowed to go to the canteen for lunch; the lower classes must eat in their luncheon cube.*

Between independent clauses set off by transitional elements

- *Bad weather continues to affect the valley; consequently, all the roads leading to the highway are blocked.*

In lists with internal commas

- *The new hospital will have a neonatal ICU on the first level; cafeteria, chemist, radiology and X-ray on the second floor; dialysis department on third floor; and a library, restrooms and an open canteen on the third floor.*

In combination with a comma in elliptical constructions

- *In 1972, Jayant had only a pair of clothes and 20 rupees with him; five years later, he became the owner of the largest garment manufacturing unit in his village.*
- *Some relatives brought food; others, clothing; yet others, merely an aura of disinterest.*

Colon (:)

A colon is used

To introduce a list after an independent clause

- *The restaurant specialises in three cuisines: Vietnamese, Chinese and Japanese.*

Do not use a colon when the listed items are incorporated into a simple sentence.

- ***Correct**: The therapist dealt with patients suffering from anxiety, depression and memory loss.*
- ***Incorrect**: The therapist dealt with patients suffering from: anxiety, depression and memory loss.*

Between independent clauses when the second explains or illustrates the first

- *Terrence has very little time to learn French: his new job starts next week.*
- *All three of her grandchildren are involved in philanthropy: Bernard heads an NGO, Jasmine donates 20% of her annual income to UNICEF and William teaches blind children for free.*

To introduce a quotation after an independent clause

My father's reaction after I told him that the bus school fees would be hiked next month: "Take away all my money!"

Apostrophe (')

An apostrophe is used

<u>To show possession</u>

- *Sujata's gift was delivered in the morning.*
- *The twins' parents were worried about the children's health.*

<u>To show time period</u>

- *We will need a month's time to renovate the house.*

<u>To show omission in contractions</u>

- *It is a wonderful life.*
- *It's a wonderful life.*

- *He'd sit on the shore for hours watching his pet dog play with the waves.*
- *He would sit on the shore for hours watching his pet dog play with the waves.*

- *There's a sale on new books in the store in the next building.*
- *There is a sale on new books in the store in the next building.*

ATTENTION!
The word **'it's'** doesn't refer to a possessive form. The possessive form is **'its'** and it doesn't take an apostrophe.
- *The car wasn't looking bright red anymore. **Its** colour had started to fade in the sunlight.*
- *This is my car. **It's** an SUV. (it's = it is)*

Basic Punctuation

What is Punctuation?

Punctuation is a system of using certain marks to organise one's writing.

Why Use Punctuation?

Read the following unpunctuated sentence:

1. samantha John and Maria ate sandwiches cakes and burgers at the party

Now read the punctuated sentence below:

2. **S**amantha**,** John and Maria ate sandwiches**,** cakes and burgers at the party.

Sentence 2 is clearer in readability compared to sentence 1 as punctuation has been correctly used.

Therefore, **punctuation is used to clearly communicate the meaning of a sentence**.

Let us look at some basic punctuation marks.

Basic Punctuation

Let us examine and understand the use of

- Full stop
- Capitalisation
- Question mark
- Exclamation mark
- Quotation marks
- Comma

Full stop (.)

- A full stop is primarily used to **mark the end of a sentence**.
    - I went to buy some grocery in the morning**.**
    - My name is Rohit. I am a student**.**

Exception: A full stop is not used to end exclamatory sentences and questions.

- The full stop is also used after **abbreviations, titles, names and degrees**. However, rules regarding this usage vary with British and American English.

  British English: Dr, St, Mr, Mrs, Ms, MA, PhD

  American English: Dr**.**, St**.**, Mr**.**, Mrs**.**, Ms**.**, M**.**A**.**, Ph**.**D.

- The full stop is also used when writing **time** using the British English convention.

  British English: 10.30 a.m., 07.15 P.M.

  American English: 10:30 am, 07:15 PM

Capitalisation

Writing a word with its first letter as a capital letter and the remaining in lower case is known as capitalisation.

Capitalise the first word of every sentence

- *Prof. Diwan went to the library.*
- *We all would like to wait for the guests.*

Capitalise the first word of direct speech

- *Sam asked mother, "How much more time for father to come home?"*

Capitalise the first word after a period

- *I have three sisters and four brothers. They are older to me.*

Capitalise proper nouns and proper adjectives

- *The British ruled over India and Australia.*
- *Marie Curie was a Polish physicist.*

Capitalise names of days and months

- *We will meet Stanley at the café on Tuesday.*
- *Geeta is flying to Paris in November.*

Capitalise names of institutions

- *Father sent his children to the Oxford University.*
- *Ravi wanted to go to the National Defence Academy.*

Capitalise names of historic buildings

- *The Eiffel Tower is at the Champ de Mars in Paris, France.*
- *The Taj Mahal is the tomb of Shah Jahan's favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahal.*

Capitalise names of books, magazines and newspapers

- *My uncle works for The Hindu.*
- *Shalin is an editor in India Today.*
- *Vikram Seth wrote A Suitable Boy.*

Capitalise important historical events

- *The Great Depression occurred in the 1930s.*
- *The Holocaust was a genocide carried out by Hitler and his army during World War II.*

Capitalise the first letter of nationalities, religions, races of people and languages

- *My uncle is a Turkish man who settled in India.*
- *Dhruv was a Muslim boy adopted by Hindu parents.*
- *My cousin speaks Spanish, Sanskrit and Portuguese fluently.*
- *The skeletal remains belonged to the Mongolian race.*

Capitalise the names of festivals

- *Holi is a festival of colours.*

- *My friend made a beautiful crib for Christmas.*

Question mark (?)

A question mark is added at the end of a direct question statement.

- *Is that the famous Qutab Minar?*
- *How much does this antique mirror frame cost?*
- *Dorothy asked, "Why are we waiting here?"*
- *Isn't it true that pollution is responsible for global warming?*

Do not use a question mark for indirect questions.

- *Mother asked what I would eat for dinner.*
- *Daniel asked Susanne where they were going in the evening.*

Exclamation mark (!)

Sentences which express strong outbursts of feelings and emotions end with an exclamation mark.

- *This is such a beautiful village!*
- *Oh dear! Your injury looks very bad!*
- *What a pretty sight!*
- *This is insane! (informal)*

Quotation marks (" ") (' ')

Use double quotation marks (" ") to

- Enclose direct speech

"I am going to the departmental store in the evening," Farhan told Riya.

"William," Jeremy called out from the library, "Your books are here on the table."

Use single quotation marks (' ') to

- Insert quotations within quotations

They said, "Mom cried, 'Don't take away my babies.'"

- Enclose titles of films, books etc. when not using *italics*.

The chapter 'Refraction' will be taught by Prof. Kumar.

Do you know who wrote 'Gitanjali'?

Comma (,)

A comma is used within a sentence to introduce a pause.

Use a comma to

Separate words and word groups in a series

- *We bought carrots, potatoes, onions and beetroots.*
- *The dying man nominated his son, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law, brother and nephew as the inheritors of his estate.*

Separate words, phrases, clauses and pairs of words in a sentence

- *Laurel and Hardy, Romeo and Juliet, and Charlie Chaplin's movies are timeless classics.*
- *The car rammed into the security cabin, broke the windshield, slid alongside the road, and finally stopped against an old building.*
- *Raghu likes to eat pasta, but his mother says it is unhealthy.*

Separate the words like *yes* or *no* from the rest of the sentence

- *Yes, I have finished doing my homework.*
- *No, that is not how you play with your pet.*

Separate transitional words and phrases

- *Life can be very demanding. However, there are ways to reduce stress. In fact, you can begin by leading a simple life.*
- *Of course, you will have to pay a hefty price for last minute cancellation.*

Separate the date and the year when written in the MMDDYY form

- *I was born on June 4, 1998.*

Separate question tags.

- *You are Hetal Diwan, aren't you?*
- *We don't have to wait here until they arrive, do we?*

> The full stop, capitalisation, question mark, exclamation mark, quotation marks and comma are basic punctuation marks used in English. Punctuation marks are used in written text to separate sentences and mark pauses to make the content clearer in terms of readability.