

## USE OF PUNCTUATIONS

Enjoy this poem on Punctuation before you begin

### Punctuation - Poem by Stanley Cooper

Punctuation, stepchild tool of writing  
Does not get it's write-ful due  
If we stopped this literate slighting  
It would be a literal coup

The period we see as a dot  
Has such a vital essence  
The reason we use it a lot  
Is to forestall a run-on sentence.

Colons: are sometimes used  
To act as sentencing braces  
Colons called semi; help us fuse  
Connecting multiple phrases

To combine a compound adjective  
The hyphen-comes into play  
Question marks? are for the inquisitive  
While commas, show delay

If writing is your avocation  
And hope writing you will master  
Punctuate with punctuation  
Averting literal disaster

[https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/punctuation/accessed on 6th september2019](https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/punctuation/accessed%20on%206th%20september2019) at 9.30pm

## PUNCTUATION

Punctuation according to the Merriam – Webster dictionary is :

“The act or practice of inserting standardized marks or signs in written matter to clarify the meaning and separate structural units.”

! ( ) ; : \ " " , . / ? -

Punctuation can make an enormous difference in the meaning of whatever one writes. Proper punctuation marks can make or break the impact of an otherwise well-framed

sentence. The proper use of punctuation strengthens the precision and quality of the idea that is communicated.

**Observe the following : How the use of punctuations changes the meaning**

1. Let's eat, Grandma!  
Let's eat Grandma!
2. Mohit eats, shoots, and leaves.  
Mohit eats shoot and leaves.
3. Woman! Without her, man is nothing.  
Women, without her man, is nothing.

**Why punctuate?**

When we speak, we can pause or emphasize certain words and phrases to help people understand what we are saying. In writing, we use punctuation to show pauses and emphasis and help the reader to understand what we mean.

**14 Punctuations of English Grammar**

**Punctuations that indicate sentence endings : -**

Three out of the fourteen punctuation marks are used to indicate end of a sentence

- **Period (.)**  
• For Example : Sita sang a song.
- **Question Mark (?)**  
• Where is my car?
- **Exclamation mark (!)**  
• The huge elephant sat on the man!

See for yourself

<b>Paragraph without end punctuation</b> Do you like to dance My friend and I dance for a charity event that is organized annually. Last year we performed on a classical song The audience enjoyed our performance It	<b>Same paragraph with end punctuation</b> Do you like to dance? My friend and I dance for a charity event that is organized annually. Last year we performed on a classical
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was fun would you like to join us next year.

song. The audience enjoyed our performance .It was fun! Would you like to join us next year?

### Incorrect Use of End Punctuation.

Consider these three sentences

1. Ashish wants to marry Rolika.
2. Ashish wants to marry Rolika!
3. Ashish wants to marry Rolika?

The words are the same in each sentence but the end punctuation changes the meaning.

1. Ashish wants to marry Rolika.

By using a period, the writer is simply stating a fact without showing any feelings about the situation.

2. Ashish wants to marry Rolika!

With a exclamation mark the writer shows emotion about the situation. In the above sentence the writer is probably excited.

3. Ashish wants to marry Rolika?

By using a question mark, the writer has turned the sentence into a question. Although the above sentence is grammatically incorrect it is frequently used incorrectly in conversational tones. In this sentence, the writer seems surprised and is asking for clarification.

## **Comma, Semicolon and colon**

### **COMMA(,)**

The comma (,) is used to indicate a separation of ideas or elements within the structure of a sentence.

- Commas are used to separate three or more words, phrases or clauses in a series.
- For example, the refreshment includes chips, salsa and a soft drink.
  
- Commas are also used for phrasing.
- For example, It is time to eat, Ankit!
  
- Comma is used for separation of two complete sentences.
- For example, We went to the park and then we went out for lunch.

### **Semicolon (;)**

- Semicolon (;) is used to connect independent clauses. It shows a closer relationship between the clauses than a period (.) would show.
  - For example : Mona was hurt; she knew he only said it to upset her.
  
- Semi colon (;) is used to separate a complex list of items, especially containing commas.
  - For example : I visited Jaipur, India, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri-lanka.

### **Colon (:)**

- The colon (:) has many uses
- It introduces a list
- For example, I was given the following suggestions: to call the manager, to visit the office, or to write a letter.
  
- It is used after a word introducing a quotation, an explanation, an example, or a series.
  
- For example : He was planning to study four subjects : History, Politics, Sociology and Economics.

- It is used for emphasis :
- For example, There was one thing she loved more than any other : her dog.

### **Dash (-) and Hyphen (-)**

- These marks are often confused with each other due to their appearance but they are very different.
- A dash is used to separate words into statements. There are two common types of dashes : en dash and em dash.
  - En dash : Twice as long as a hyphen the en dash is a symbol that is used in writing to indicate a range or connections.
    - For Example 1947-1955 or Lucknow – Agra.
  - Em dash : Longer than en dash the em dash can be used in place of a comma, parenthesis or colon to enhance readability or emphasize conclusion of a sentence.
    - For example, she gave him an answer \_\_\_\_\_ yes!
- A hyphen is used to join two or more words together into a compound term and is not separate by spaces.
  - For example, part-time,
  - Well-known, back -to -back
- The hyphen is used in nouns that consist of a verb and a preposition
- For example, hold –up,
- Washing-up, telling -off
- It is used in adjectives that have been formed by combining two or more words:
  - For example old fashioned shop,
  - Out-of-reach shelf, self detonating bomb.

## **Brackets / Braces / Parentheses**

Brackets, braces and parentheses are symbols used to contain words that are a further explanation or considered a group. They are used interchangeably as there is no fixed rule regarding their usage in modern writing.

**Brackets** can be used to add a comment as a clarification to a quote. Generally brackets are the squared off notations ([ ]) used for technical explanations or to clarify meaning. However, the sentence still makes sense even if the information contained in the brackets is removed.

For example, She (Mrs. Jain) was the last person to leave the party.

Braces ( { } ) or curly brackets are used usually to contain two or more lines of text or listed items to show that they are considered as a unit. Their use is limited to mathematical expressions  $3\{1+[5-z]\}=z$  Braces are used sparingly in literary texts and writing.

Parenthesis ( ( ) ) are curved notations used to contain qualifying remarks or additional comments. Parentheses can be comfortably interchanged with a comma in most cases without changing the meaning of a sentence.

For example Sita and Gita (who are actually twins) both have blue eyes.

## **Apostrophe, Quotation Marks and Ellipsis**

**Apostrophes ( ' )** are used to show ownership and missing letters in contractions. Misplaced apostrophes can cause confusion for readers. It is also used to denote plural for lowercase letters.

For example (to denote possessive case or ownership) : Sonia's dog bit my friend.

or example : (to denote missing letters) : I've seen the movie several times.

For example (to denote plural for lowercase letters) : My class mates were told to mind their p's and q's.

**Quotation marks :** (" ") are a pair of punctuations that mark the beginning and end of a passage / line / attributed words to someone else.

They are used with commas to inform the reader that someone is talking or being quoted.

For example, my teacher said, "Punctuations are very important. Without correct punctuation marks, your writing would be very confusing."

Maya Angelo said, "if you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude"

Note : Single quotation marks ( ' ') are generally used for quotes within quotes.

For example, Mona told her mother, "I saw Sonu at the park and he said to me 'Ajay started the fight' and I believed him."

**Ellipsis (...)** is most commonly represented by three periods (...). It is used in writing to show an omission of letters or words. It is used by scholars writing research papers to quote parts of lengthy speeches. This helps them to avoid copying lengthy texts that is not needed.

For example (to denote omission of words) Shalu began to count, "one, two, three ...." Until she got to ten, then she went to find her friends.

For example (to use ellipsis within a quotation) When Nehru gave the world famous speech on India's Independence. "At the stroke of midnight...." It left every Indian jubilant and motivated.

### **Task : Do as Directed**

#### **Activity I**

Punctuate the following sentences. Use capital letters where needed.

1. Sonia said to Anu Rahul is a nice guy
2. I like playing with my friends Mona ridhi sanya
3. We went through the cloudy mountains near mussorie on our way to kemtpy falls
4. Akbar the greatest of the mughal emperors ruled wisely
5. My favourite soap is dove and my favourite toothpaste is colgate

6. Long ago in a village near Jaipur there lived a famous man called baldev singh
7. I'm an Indian and that's why I respect the Indian constitution
8. Mohan was honest sincere hard working
9. Hindus muslims Sikhs Christians live together in India
10. My friend simmi speaks French and she is teaching me some words

**Task : Do as Directed**  
**Activity II**

Use appropriate Punctuation marks in the following sentences.

1. We had a great time in Turkey the kids really enjoyed it
2. Some people work best in the mornings others do better in the evenings
3. What are you doing next month
4. My mother had to go to the market she had to buy a few things
5. Did you understand why I was upset
6. It is a fine idea let us hope that it is going to work
7. We will be arriving on Monday morning at least I think so
8. A textbook can be a wall between teacher and class
9. The boys mother sat in a chair
10. In the words of Murphys law anything that can go wrong will go wrong

**Task : Do as Directed**  
**Activity III**

In this exercise, you will review basic punctuation.

You will read a description of my friend Sumit. The description is written without punctuation. Edit the description, adding the appropriate periods, commas, apostrophes and capital letters.

Sumit is one of the most honest people I know he is tall and slim with black hair and he always wears a t-shirt and blue jeans his jeans has holes in it and his football shoes are scruffy too he usually sits at the back of he class and he often seems to be asleep however when the exam results are given out the always gets an "A" I don't think hes as lazy as he appears to be

**Task : Do as Directed**  
**Activity IV**



Punctuate these sentences using full stops, capital letters, exclamation marks and question marks.

1. what are you going to do today seema
2. what an amazing book
3. i am going to go home if I finish my homework on time
4. i love it
5. stop that now
6. who has left this watch on the table in my room
7. london is the capital city of England in the united kingdom
8. dr hussain works at city hospital on bunglow road
9. help help me I'm drowning
10. our head teacher is called mrs Sharma

**Task : Do as Directed**

**Activity V**

Punctuate sentences using full stops, capital letters, exclamation marks and question marks.

1. who was the first person to land on the moon
2. i hope the Diwali holidays come soon
3. stop hitting me
4. i live just off the ridge street in kamla nagar
5. is it going to be raining soon
6. does david Cameron work for queen Elizabeth
7. stop it watch what you're doing
8. don't shout at me
9. my auntie worked for a bangle factory in Ajmer
10. when can i take you dog bailey for a walk
11. why can't i speak to mr parvin today

