



Grammar Rules

Independent Clause:

- A group of words that contains a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought.
- Example: Josh worked all day, but he was still unable to complete the project.

Commas:

Use commas after introductory clauses, phrases, or words that come before the main clause.

Commas can also be used to separate nonessential elements apart from the rest of the sentence.

Lastly, commas are used for: items in a series, nonrestrictive clauses, appositives, direct addresses, and direct quotations.

Examples:

- **Commas after introductory clauses, phrases, or words:**
 1. After a long day at work, I like to relax by reading a book.
 2. Unfortunately, the weather didn't cooperate with our outdoor plans.
 3. Well, it looks like we're going to need a new plan.
- **Commas to separate nonessential elements:**
 1. My brother, who lives in Seattle, is coming to visit next week.
 2. The championship game, despite the heavy rain, was thrilling to watch.
 3. That book you lent me, believe it or not, changed my perspective on many things.
- **Commas for items in a series:**
 1. I need to buy eggs, milk, bread, and butter from the grocery store.
 2. She is talented, ambitious, and driven.
 3. For our trip, we packed clothes, snacks, a map, and a first-aid kit.
- **Commas for nonrestrictive clauses:**
 1. The painting, which was hung in the hallway, is now in the museum.
 2. Our cat, whom we adopted three years ago, is very mischievous.
 3. The documentary, which I watched last night, was incredibly insightful.
- **Commas for appositives:**
 1. My friend Alice, a skilled photographer, is showcasing her work at the gallery.
 2. William Shakespeare, the famous playwright, wrote numerous plays and sonnets.



3. The capital of France, Paris, is known for its beautiful architecture.
- **Commas for direct addresses:**
 1. Lisa, could you please pass the salt?
 2. Thank you, sir, for your assistance.
 3. No, Mom, I didn't forget to do my homework.
- **Commas for direct quotations:**
 1. The teacher said, "Please turn to page 82."
 2. "I can't believe it," she whispered, "he actually remembered my birthday."
 3. He shouted, "Everyone, out of the building now!"

Semicolons:

Semicolons are used between closely related independent clauses which are not joined by a coordinating conjunction.

Without a coordinating conjunction:

1. The weather is cold; we should wear our coats.
2. She loves to read mystery novels; he prefers science fiction.
3. The project deadline is tomorrow; everyone is working late tonight.

Before transitional phrases or conjunctive adverbs:

1. I didn't see the sign; therefore, I missed the turn.
2. He is qualified for the job; however, he lacks experience in this field.
3. They wanted to buy a new car; instead, they decided to save the money for a house.

With series that contain commas:

1. The conference will take us to Boston, Massachusetts; Los Angeles, California; and Austin, Texas.
2. She ordered a salad, with extra olives; a soup, without cream; and a steak, medium rare.



Colons:

- A colon is used to give emphasis, present dialogue, introduce a list or a text, and clarify compositions.
- Capitalize the first letter following a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence.

Examples:

- **To give emphasis**

Example: There was one thing she knew for certain: she would never give up.

- **To present dialogue**

Example: He shouted: "Leave the room immediately!"

- **To introduce a list**

Example: You need to buy the following groceries: milk, eggs, bread, and butter.

- **To introduce a text**

Example: In his speech, he quoted Shakespeare: "To be, or not to be that is the question."

- **To clarify compositions**

Example: The key to happiness is simple: live as if you were to die tomorrow.

Capitalization After a Colon:

- Capitalizing the first letter following a colon (proper noun): We visited two countries: France and Spain.
- Capitalizing the first letter following a colon (start of a complete sentence): She gave me one piece of advice: Always believe in yourself.



Parentheses:

Parentheses are used to enclose incidental or supplemental information. Also used to clarify, illustrate, or serve as a digression or afterthought.

In context of the SAT, they are used to enclose parenthetical elements.

Parenthetical element: a word or group of words that interrupts the flow of a sentence and adds additional (but nonessential) information to that sentence.

- **To enclose incidental or supplemental information**

Example: He finally answered (after taking what seemed like an eternity) and agreed to meet.

- **To clarify**

Example: The CEO (Chief Executive Officer) will attend tomorrow's meeting.

- **To illustrate or provide examples.**

Example: We visited several countries last year (e.g., France, Italy, Spain).

- **To indicate a digression or afterthought**

Example: I need to buy groceries (I forgot to add that to my list) on my way home.

- **To enclose citations or references**

Example: The theory is discussed in various studies (Smith, 2020; Johnson, 2021).

- **To provide translations**

Example: He greeted me in Japanese (konnichiwa) when we met.

- **To include information or figures that are not essential but helpful.**

Example: The population of the city has grown significantly (by 15% over the last decade).

- **To specify acronyms after the full term is given.**

Example: The document was sent to the Human Resources Department (HRD) for review.



Dashes

Use a dash to set off material for emphasis (think the opposite of parentheses), and to break up dialogue.

Dashes, specifically ‘em’ dashes (—), serve various purposes in writing, offering a versatile tool for punctuation. Here are some common uses with examples:

To indicate an interruption or break in thought.

Example: I was going to tell you—that is, before I was rudely interrupted **To set off a list or a clarification within a sentence**

Example: Three cities—Paris, London, and Rome—stand out as my favorites.

- **To provide an emphasis or definition**

Example: My best friend—a person who knows all about me, yet still enjoys my company.

- **To introduce an explanation, conclusion, or restatement**

Example: There's only one person who could have taken the last cookie—my brother.

- **To denote a sudden change in tone or thought**

Example: The sunset was beautiful—breathtaking, really.

- **To attribute a quote**

Example: "To be or not to be, that is the question." —William Shakespeare

- **To create a strong break or pause in a sentence, stronger than commas or parentheses.**

Example: Everything she owned was in that suitcase—clothes, books, pictures.

- **To replace parentheses for additional information or an aside that is closely related to the main clause.**

Example: His decision to leave early—that is, before the storm hit—saved his life.



Modifiers and Modifier Placement:

Modifier: words, phrases, and clauses that affect and often enhance the meaning of a sentence.

Example: I am going to Sonic for a **cherry limeade** slushy.

Modifier placement: assigning the correct modifier to the word that is modified.

Make sure the modifier actually modifies the correct word in the sentence.

Parallel Structure

Parallel structure: using a pattern of words to show that two or more ideas have the same level of importance.

Example:

- The black-necked Aracari is a small toucan with a red stripe across its **yellow belly**, a **healthy appetite for fruit**, and **has** a **large beak**.
- The black-necked Aracari is a small toucan with a red stripe across its **yellow belly**, a **healthy appetite for fruit**, and a **large beak**.

Tense:

Tense: a set of forms taken by a verb to indicate the time (and sometimes also the continuance or completeness) of the action in relation to the time of the utterance.

Examples: is, was, are, etc.

Logical comparison:

Logical comparison: a sentence that makes a comparison that is structurally and grammatically correct.

Example: you have higher odds of being injured by a dog than a shark.

You want to remember that while a question might sound good when you say it out loud, that does not mean it is structurally correct.

Example:

1. If I had to compare **the plays of Arthur to Shakespeare**, I would say **Shakespeare's is better**.



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2. If I had to compare the plays of Arthur to **those of** Shakespeare, I would say Shakespeare's is better.