

THE COMMA

Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the Comma But Were Afraid to Ask

Commas are the most used and most frequently misused punctuation marks. Basically, the comma is used to signal a pause. It can help make the meaning of a sentence more clear, but if it is used carelessly, it can cloud the meaning of a sentence entirely. The most important rule of thumb to follow when using commas is use a comma only when you are sure you need it.

COMMAS ARE NEEDED TO LINK.

RULE 1: Use a comma to separate independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction.

Coordinating Conjunctions:

for	and	nor	but
or	yet	so	

An independent clause is a group of words that could be a complete sentence (with the proper punctuation).

I wanted to go, but I didn't have enough money.

This sentence contains two independent clauses; they are separated by a comma and but.

I was hired for the job, and I start work Monday.

Again we have two independent clauses, which are connected by a comma and the conjunction and. Note that the comma precedes the connecting word.

You should pay your bills when they are due, or you will have to pay an interest charge.

Two independent clauses are connected by a comma and the conjunction or. Note the placement of the comma.

Trish ran for office and was elected.

In the above sentence there is no comma because we do not have two independent clauses. Only one subject controls the sentence, Trish; the two verbs refer to the same subject.

Exercise (Rule 1)

Put commas where necessary in the following sentences.

1. He thinks he should be a star but he really isn't very talented.
2. I can type very fast but I make a lot of mistakes.
3. June is taking French and physics this semester.

4. My wife tries to rush me yet I always take my time.
5. We visited Dublin so our trip was complete.
6. I'm taking flying lessons but I can't seem to get the hang of making turns.
7. Randy will graduate this year and he hopes to get a job in the clothing industry.
8. You had better behave or you will get into trouble.
9. He is very bright but can't seem to get his head together.
10. The snow was very heavy yet it was beautiful.

RULE 2: Use a comma between words, phrases, or clauses in a series.

Use commas to separate three or more items in a series.

I enjoy baseball, basketball, and tennis.

In this sentence, the items in the series are separated by commas. Note that the comma follows the item. Since the last item is the last word of the sentence, there is no need to put a comma after it; it is followed by a period.

She knows how to sing, dance, and play the piano.

Again the items in the series are separated by commas.

Examples:

A trio composed of Marie, Ellen, and Frances sang at the entertainment.

Jack walked into my office, took off his hat, and sat down.

I came, I saw, but she conquered.

The recipe calls for eggs, butter, milk, and cheese.

The result should be a rich, light, fluffy soufflé.

Note that there are no commas in the sentence below. There are only two items in the series; therefore, no comma is required.

We bought books and newspapers.

Sometimes in printed literature, newspapers, or magazines, the final comma before the conjunction is left out. Most JCCC instructors prefer that you follow the rule precisely and put in the final comma.

Exercise (Rule 2)

Put commas where necessary in each of the following sentences.

Example

1. *She was lonely, depressed, and nostalgic.*
2. We bought books magazines and records.
3. I am hungry and tired.
4. He stormed out of the house went for a walk and came back the next morning.
5. I've been to South America Central America and Canada.
6. Bend me shake me break me; do anything you want.
7. The letter was signed sealed and delivered.
8. We had a wild party and a tough morning after.
9. Her grandparents were either Italian Greek or Syrian.
10. For lunch we had soup salad and a sandwich.

RULE 3:

Use a comma between coordinate adjectives not joined by and. Coordinate adjectives are two or more adjectives (describing words) that equally modify the same noun or pronoun. To test whether or not the adjectives are coordinate (1) insert an "and" (2) rearrange the adjectives. If the sentence still makes sense, the adjectives are coordinate.

a blue wool suit (adjectives not coordinate)

test: a blue and wool suit--does not work

an expensive, well-tailored suit (adjective coordinate)

test: an expensive and well-tailored suit--works so you need a comma

a new tennis court (not coordinate)

test: a new and tennis court—does not work

a muddy, rough court (adjectives coordinate)

test: a muddy and rough court—works so you need a comma

Exercise (Rule 3)

Put commas where necessary in each of the following sentences.

Example The noisy, enthusiastic freshman class assembled in Section F of the stadium.

1. The old gray mare ain't what she used to be.
2. We need to get rid of the evil-smelling dilapidated couch.
3. Four long pencils sat in a container on her desk.
4. The new Apple G5 computers arrived Monday.
5. Wearing her expensive attractive new outfit she looked terrific.

COMMAS ARE NEEDED TO SEPARATE.

RULE 4: Use a comma after a long introductory phrase or clause. Use a comma after a short introductory phrase if it is necessary to avoid unclear meaning. Usually phrases or clauses with five or more words require a comma; shorter phrases or clauses do not. Check with your instructor or the Writing Center when you are unsure.

Intro. adverb clause

When he arose to give his speech, he was greeted with thunderous applause.

Intro. participial phrase

Being in a hurry, I was able to see him only briefly.

Intro. gerund phrase

Turning the corner, Tom ran squarely into a police officer.

Intro. infinitive phrase

To get a seat, we have to arrive by 7:30 p.m.

Intro, prepositional phrase

Before noon, Tom only drinks coffee.

Sentence structure

Finally, out of ten finalists, Minnie won the talent contest.

Indicate a pause

At the same time, we knew it was not the kind of movie that we should be seeing.

For meaning

Hesitantly, she handed him her school ID card.

Exercise (Rule 4)

In the following sentences insert commas to set off inversions and introductory constructions where desirable.

Example

1. *Dissatisfied with our blocking*, the coach announced an extra session on defense.
2. In a last desperate effort to score the team went into a spread formation.
3. If you want it take it.
4. On learning that his wife had never formally renounced her share of the property and could still block its sale we told the real estate agent that we were no longer interested.
5. As far as I know that is the answer.
6. Just the other day I saw his mother.
7. Whoever he is he should be punished.
8. If he objects tell him to talk to me.
9. Knowing that he had a tendency to make a ten-minute speech in five minutes Hugh timed his delivery with a stop watch.
10. Angry my roommate threw the tickets in the fireplace.

RULE 5: Use commas for contrast or emphasis and with short interrogative elements.

Interrogative element

You will try to do the work, won't you?

Contrasting element

He is a man of experience, not a theorist.

I met George, not John.

Emphasis

The longer they went on, the harder we listened, the less we understood.

Exercise (Rule 5)

Put commas where necessary in the following sentences.

- Example
1. He was merely ignorant, not stupid.
 2. We want a new house a new life.
 3. Take your trays to the center table.
 4. I want you to listen to me not her.
 5. You don't take success for granted do you?

COMMAS ARE NEEDED TO ENCLOSE

Rule 6: Use commas to set off nonessential appositives, phrases, and clauses. (Do not use commas to set off essential appositives, phrases, and clauses.)

Nonessential material, simply defined, is material that may be interesting but is not absolutely necessary for the main idea of the sentence. That is, any material that can be left out of the sentence without changing the main idea is nonessential.

Mr. Turner, who was defeated in the election four years ago, is running for office again.

The material set off by the commas is nonessential; that is, the main idea of the sentence would not be changed if that material were omitted.

A hiccup remedy *that usually works* is hard to find.

There is no nonessential material in this sentence. Do not be tempted to write this sentence as follows:

A hiccup remedy, *that usually works*, is hard to find.

This is incorrect because the group of words that usually works is essential to the meaning of the sentence.

If this group of words were omitted, the sentence would read, "A hiccup remedy is hard to find." An important part of its meaning would be lost.

Jaws, *which is about killer sharks*, was written by Peter Benchley.

If we omit the nonessential material between the commas, the sentence would read: Jaws was written by Peter Benchley. The main idea of the original sentence still stands; the group of words which is about

killer sharks is nonessential.

Peter Benchley's Jaws is about killer sharks.

In this sentence there is no nonessential material.

Essential modifiers are so much a part of the whole subject that they cannot be omitted without changing the basic meaning of the sentence. Nonessential modifiers, on the other hand, can be omitted without significant change in basic meaning. Compare the following revisions with the originals.

All students who miss five classes will be required to do an additional assignment.

All students . . . will be required to do an additional assignment. (This is not what the original statement meant.)

Writing Center peer tutors, who are all good writers, help students with their writing.

Writing Center peer tutors . . . help students with their writing. (This is substantially what the original statement meant.)

Essential modifiers are not set off by commas because they are an essential part of the element they modify. Nonessential modifiers are similar to the interrupting constructions shown earlier and are, therefore, enclosed by commas. The examples already given illustrate this difference in punctuation.

Exercise (Rule 6)

Underline phrase or clause then determine if commas are necessary in the following sentences.

- Example
1. His car, which had been repaired at Moe's Garage, broke down again.
 2. The man wearing the Stetson is his uncle.
 3. The tall man who happened to be wearing a Stetson said he had never been west of Chicago in his life.
 4. The suit that he bought two years ago fits him better than the one he bought last winter.
 5. The doctor looking very grave came toward us.
 6. The girl evidently on the edge of tears could hardly finish her story.
 7. My girl's mother who used to be an English teacher helps me with my themes.
 8. The dog which had evidently been trained sat beside the table and begged charmingly for food.
 9. I had a talk with her father who is not so crotchety as you led me to believe.

10. I had a talk with the man who witnessed the accident.

Writing Center

RULE 7: Use commas with sentence modifiers, such as absolutes and sentence elements which interrupt the flow of the sentence.

Use commas on both sides of a word (or group of words).

An absolute is a phrase that consists of a noun or pronoun and a participle and any modifiers. An absolute modifies the entire sentence.

Examples for absolute:

My schedule having been arranged, I felt like a full-fledged college freshman.

They left the room unhappy over their performance on the examination, a passing grade being no more than a remote possibility.

Examples for interrupter:

Bob is, to tell the truth, unhappy about the circus coming to town.

To tell the truth interrupts the flow of the sentence and, therefore, is set off from the rest of the sentence with commas.

Croissants, for example, are delicious with coffee.

For example interrupts the flow of the sentence and, therefore, is set off from the rest of the sentence with commas.

Other expressions that are generally set off with commas include:

in fact	at any rate
of course	to tell the truth
by the way	finally

I think

We are, of course, pleased with your grades.

When an interrupter is very long, it is set off by dashes. The question of how long is very long becomes a matter of individual taste. Most writers prefer to use dashes only for an interrupter that can stand logically and grammatically as a sentence or for one that is internally punctuated.

Examples: Guinea pigs--they are not actually pigs at all--make good pets.

Your last letter, by the way, was very puzzling.

Ricky, not knowing what the question was, was dumbfounded.

In these sentences, the interrupting phrases add information to, or comment upon the situation. They are set off with commas.

Exercise (Rule 7)

Put commas where necessary in each of the following sentences.

1. Alice in her last paper improved her spelling.
2. His eyes looking sad the little boy wanted to leave the meeting.
3. I believe on the other hand that there is too much violence on television.
4. The boat having arrived at the dock the passengers began to embark.
5. Too much of a good thing of course can spoil you.
6. The girl decided to mend her evil ways her friends turning against her.
7. Jogging as it turns out has helped me lose weight.
8. The crowd booed the comedian the joke being distasteful.
9. Your theory I am certain is worthy of more consideration.
10. A handkerchief tied around her neck the square dancer do-si-doed.

Commas are Needed to Enclose

RULE 8: Use commas to set off a name used in direct address.

I am sorry, sir, for what I have done.

(The interrupting word, sir, tells us to whom the statement is being made.)

In these sentences, the interrupting phrases add information to, or comment upon the situation. They are set off with commas.

Expressions of direct address and mild interjections are interrupters and require commas. A few examples are cited here to illustrate the variety of expressions of direct address.

Doctor	my friends	sir
ladies and gentlemen	no	well
madam	please	yes
Mr. Jones	oh	

I tell you, man, not to go on this way if you want to keep your independence. (The flow of the sentence is interrupted by the expression of direct address. Commas are needed.)

Please, John, help me with my calculus problems so that I can pass my examination. (John interrupts the flow of the sentence. It must be set off by commas.)

Can you, dear friend, find a way to solve this problem without involving me or the others in the group?

Exercise (Rule 8)

- Example
1. I told you once, Margie, and I will not tell you again.
 2. Slide Joe slide!
 3. I must admit James my error.
 4. Yes sir I'll take care of that right away.
 5. You see Jane I am calling him now.
 6. When will you leave Mary?
 7. Yes Virginia there is a Santa Claus.

RULE 9: Use commas with conjunctive adverbs.

Conjunctive adverbs are one category of single-word interrupters. The most frequently encountered conjunctive adverbs are the following:

accordingly	furthermore	instead	notwithstanding
also	hence	likewise	otherwise
anyhow	henceforth	moreover	still
besides	however	meanwhile	therefore
consequently	indeed	nevertheless	thus

Notice that conjunctive adverbs can function either as adverbs or as conjunctions. When they function as adverbs, they require no punctuation. When they function as conjunctions, they must be set off by commas. (When conjunctive adverbs are used to join independent clauses, they are preceded by a semicolon and followed by a comma.)

Adverb

However earnest the poor child is, we cannot take the time to deal with her constant complaints. (The adverb However modifies earnest and must not be punctuated.)

Still responding to the eloquence of the candidate's lengthy address, we found ourselves unwilling to leave the hall. (The adverb Still modifies responding. No punctuation.)

Conjunction

A hyperactive child may be a constant source of annoyance, however, and create ever greater disturbances as he grows taller and stronger. (The conjunctive adverb, coming between the compound verbs may be and create, interrupts the movement of the sentence. Commas must be

used.)

The union agreement specified, moreover, that employees would not work overtime when other union members were unemployed. (The conjunctive adverb stands between the verb specified and the object of the verb, the following clause which is that employees. . . . Therefore, commas must be used.)

Exercise (Rule 9)

Put commas where necessary in the following sentences.

1. The college boards for example are standardized tests.
2. I think therefore that we should adjourn immediately.
3. Mary hates spinach nevertheless she will eat it.
4. We'll take the dog to the vet however sick it is.
5. You are indeed an exasperating person.

RULE 10: Use commas with degrees and titles and elements in dates, places, and addresses and in numbers with 5 digits or more.

Examples: July 22, 1947, was a momentous day in his life.

Birmingham, Alabama, gets its names from Birmingham, England.

Do you know who lives at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D. C.?

Alfred E. Timberlake, Ph.D., will be the principal speaker. (Ph.D. is nonrestrictive.)

I live at 610 South Street, Dayton, Ohio 54123.

OR

610 South Street
Dayton, Ohio 54123

Apt. 5, Wellington Arms, 1515 Broadway, St. Paul, Minn.
Sunday, January 1, 1978.

On March 8, 1977, we were married in Atlanta, Georgia.

53,622

660,598

7,218,932

A one-item address or date is an exception to this rule:

May 5 is my brother's birthday.

The house at 412 Fisher Street is the one that people say is haunted.

Exercise (Rule 10)

Put commas where necessary in each of the following sentences.

1. Paul was born on September 3 1953.
2. Renee works at State Hospital 600 Washington Street Evanstown Kansas.
3. The paper is due on May 15.
4. The play opens on September 1 1978 at the Stoner Theater 50 Broad Street Fresno California.
5. We celebrated our anniversary July 19 in Charleston South Carolina.

Write one sentence in which you tell when and where you were born. Punctuate it correctly.

COMMAS ARE NEEDED FOR CONVENTION.

RULE 11: Use commas after the salutation and complementary closing of a personal letter.

Dear Aunt Mary,

Sincerely yours,

RULE 12: Use commas with expressions like he said, she remarked, and she replied when used with quoted matter.

Example: "I was able," she replied, "to complete the assignment in less than an hour." (Note: The commas always goes inside the quotation marks.)

Exercise (Rules 11-12)

1. Dear Sue

I am sorry I cannot attend your party as I will be out of town that day. I hope it is successful and that I will see you again soon.

Sincerely
John

2. "We are going with John and Sue to the zoo Friday" she told us.
3. "When" he asked "are you going to the museum?"
4. "Dear Sue" the letter began "we hope you are well."
5. Fred thought to himself "I wonder what Mary is doing right now."

RULE 13: Use commas to prevent misreading or to mark an omission.

Example: Misreading - Above, the mountains rose like purple shadows.
- To John, Harrison had been a sort of idol.

Separating repeated words - Whatever is, is right.

Omitted words - You take risks in committing crime; in obeying the law, none at all.

Exercise (Rule 13) - Put commas in the following sentences if needed.

1. The day after a salesman called about a similar product.
2. Outside the yard needs watering; inside the walls need painting.
3. Never never will you be allowed to do that.
4. To Mary Sue was a good friend.
5. That your essay was turned in late is unfortunate.

In the following sentences insert commas where they are needed for ease of reading or are conventionally required. Some of the sentences may be satisfactory as they are.

1. This summer our family tried a split vacation. Dad went fishing in Minnesota with Bill and me and mother took my sister to New York.
2. Below the town glittered with a million lights.
3. My roommate learned about the deal and wrote a story about it for the Daily.
4. Housman said "And malt does more than Milton can to justify God's ways to man."
5. The author was Housman not Pope. He was born on March 26 1859.
6. Will you please forward my mail to 1620 Third Avenue Anoka Minnesota?
7. I expect to be there as long as the fishing is good.
8. The correct sum is 64530 not 64350.
9. I'll take orange juice ham and eggs and coffee.
10. He praised the food and the waitress seemed pleased.

11. He married Helen and her sister served as bridesmaid.
12. "I wonder" he said "if she still lives in Geneva Illinois."
13. "I think not" I answered. "She was living in Kansas City Missouri when I last heard of her.
14. Throughout the ceremony was inspiringly conducted.
15. The room was a clutter of discarded clothing strewn books and newspapers overflowing ash trays and dirty dishes.
16. After all their hopes were too ambitious.
17. We tried to look in the cellar windows but someone had placed cardboard rectangles against them on the inside.
18. I cannot stay longer for mother will be expecting me to meet her at the station.
19. The students sat tensely while the test papers were being distributed and then began to write feverishly.
20. The letter should be addressed to A. D. James M.D. Christie Clinic Champaign Illinois.

MISUSE OF THE COMMA

Too many commas are often more annoying than too few. The following "don'ts" should be carefully observed.

Do not use a comma instead of a period between independent sentences.

Such a use may cause serious misinterpretation.

Comma Splice

He spoke very quietly, as I listened, I had the impression that he was speaking to himself.

There was nothing more to be said, when they took that attitude, further negotiation was impossible.

Conventional Punctuation

He spoke very quietly. As I listened, I had the impression that he was speaking to himself.

There was nothing more to be said. When they took that attitude, further negotiation was impossible.

Do not use a comma between closely related elements except to mark an interrupting construction.

The commas should reveal the structure of a sentence, not disguise it. Closely related elements (subject-verb, verb-object, verb or noun and modifier) are unnecessarily separated if a single comma is placed between them. If, however, these elements are interrupted, a pair of commas to enclose the interrupting construction helps to bridge the interruption.

Misuse of Comma Between Related Elements

My car, is at the service station,

He said, that he would try.

The student who lost this money, needs it badly.

The last illustration contrasts a restrictive with a nonrestrictive clause. The comma is misused in the versions at the left because the subordinate clause is not an interruption but a necessary part of the whole subject. It is a restrictive modifier.

Do not use commas excessively.

The modern tendency, especially in informal writing, is to keep punctuation to a minimum. Hence it is usual to avoid commas which serve no recognizable purpose. Moreover, it should not be assumed that a comma must be used in a particular sentence because convention recommends its use in sentences of that type. The conventions are statements about general practice. There are times when slavishly following the rules will chop a sentence to pieces by commas. In such cases, either revise the sentence or ignore the strict letter of the convention. The following examples illustrate excessive and adequate punctuation:

Excessive

However, it is not, in my opinion, desirable.

Yesterday, a little, old lady in a dilapidated old Ford, picked me up and brought me home.

Sometimes, she would appear in an elaborate beach outfit, sometimes, she wore a simple, white suit, and, occasionally, she put on a red, white, and blue bathing suit, with a detachable skirt.

Adequate

However, it is not in my opinion desirable.

Yesterday a little old lady in a dilapidated old Ford picked me up and brought me home.

Sometimes she would appear in an elaborate beach outfit, sometimes she wore a simple white suit, and occasionally she put on a gold lamè bathing suit with a detachable skirt.

Comma errors to AVOID

Separating subject and verb

subject verb

Wrong: Balloons and streamers, decorated the hall.

Separating verb and object

verb object

Wrong: She gave, whatever *money* was needed.

Correct Use of Comma Between Related Elements

My car, which is at the service station. needs a thorough overhauling.

He said, when I asked him, that he would try.

The student, who had lost money on other occasions, was reprimanded for his carelessness.

The comma splice

Wrong: The general hesitated, the chance of victory was lost. (Two sentences put together with a comma is incorrect. Use a period or a semicolon.)

Splitting the unsplittable

Wrong: Ken found he could not concentrate yesterday, even though he usually likes to work on warm, dry, days.

The bacon-and-eggs mistake (paired words treated as single items)

Right: You may order anything you want at my diner as long as you order sausage and eggs, ham and eggs, or bacon and eggs.

How to Use Commas

1. Use them to separate three or more items in a series.
2. Use them between two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction.
3. Use them after introductory material when it is long or the meaning might otherwise be unclear.
4. Use them to set off nonessential material or words that interrupt the flow of the sentence.

Review

Write "C" if the sentence is punctuated correctly or "X" if it contains an error in comma usage. Be prepared to explain your answers.

- ___ 1. We have never since we moved here had to lock our doors.
- ___ 2. As Socrates said, "Know thyself."
- ___ 3. Every morning, before I eat I do fifty push-ups.
- ___ 4. The cake that was in the oven, is overdone.
- ___ 5. Yes, sir, I know what you mean.
- ___ 6. This couch, which we bought at a flea market is very comfortable.
- ___ 7. On December 5 I will be twenty-six years old.
- ___ 8. You should, however, return the books on time.

_____ 9. Do you know what I mean, or are you confused?

_____ 10. When I failed the test I nearly cried.

Put commas where necessary in each of the following sentences.

1. You must therefore work overtime tonight.
2. Stop thief!
3. While waiting for the bus we told each other jokes.
4. I have never Mr. Davis been so insulted.
5. The television set which was stolen last week was found in the basement of a warehouse.
6. The store is located at 520 Elm Street Lewistown Michigan.
7. We must if we are ever to change our ways begin today.
8. She has often considered but never consented to marriage.
9. Sometimes when I am feeling blue a good record can lift my spirits.
10. I hope of course that we win the championship.
11. In one sense I am happy that she has gone away.
12. We plan if the weather is good to go swimming tomorrow.
13. He had always wanted to participate in the Olympics but he had never trained properly for the trials.
14. The recipe directs you to mix the batter with one egg add the premeasured packet of chocolate chips and bake the mixture for forty-five minutes in an oven set at 350 degrees.
15. Time as it always does has a way of changing things.
16. When studying I sometimes listen to music.
17. These dishes which we rented for the party were made in England.
18. A sandwich if made with whole wheat bread is delicious and healthful.
19. There has never been as far as I can remember such a destructive storm.
20. "This" she said "is it."

Here are four rules governing the use of commas:

1. Use commas to separate items in a series.
2. Use a comma between two independent clauses if they are connected by one of the weak connecting words.
3. Use a comma after a long introductory phrase or clause and after a short introductory phrase if it is needed to make the meaning clear.
4. Use commas around words that interrupt the flow of a sentence and around nonessential material.

All of the following sentences are punctuated correctly. Write the number of the rule that applies to the use of the comma in each sentence. Use above 4 rules.

- Example ___ 1. One of my friends, Mark, is planning to get married.
- ___ 2. The scarecrow, which was made of straw, was dragged to the ground.
- ___ 3. I watered the plants, fed the dog, and cleaned the kitchen.
- ___ 4. They had a golden opportunity, but they could not capitalize on it.
- ___ 5. As a student of the arts, I am required to go to the museum once a week.
- ___ 6. The dean, however, was willing to listen to the demands of the student committee.
- ___ 7. Since I hurt my back, I have never shoveled snow.
- ___ 8. Dorothy, in her early years, was a dancer.
- ___ 9. The pitcher, who was brought up from the minor league last week, threw a shutout.
- ___ 10. We visited my parents, my wife's parents, and my sister.
- ___ 11. I will not repeat myself, so you had better listen carefully.
- ___ 12. This, of all things, you call a surprise!
- ___ 13. I'm sorry, Dad, for banging up the car.
- ___ 14. We played chess, checkers, and cribbage.
- ___ 15. So, after all that, you want to apologize!
- ___ 16. Shopping wisely, we bought sheets and pillowcases that matched.

- ___ 17. And now, for my final number, I will play a sonata by Beethoven.
- ___ 18. Have you ever, in your whole life, met such a man?
- ___ 19. This, above all, is what is important.
- ___ 20. I met her in the morning, and I married her in the evening.

Write sentences of your own, using the rule indicated by the number in the parentheses. The numbers refer to the rules in the previous exercise. If, for example, you are directed to write a sentence using (1), you should apply the rule that states, "Use commas to separate items in a series."

- (1) _____
- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____
- (3) _____
- (4) _____
- (4) _____

All of the following sentences contain errors in the use of commas. Correct the errors.

1. Mr. Perez as a final gesture waved his hand.
2. Never will you get away with that.
3. I had a bacon lettuce and tomato sandwich for lunch.
4. Who in your opinion is the world's greatest athlete?
5. She wrote a letter on her best stationery to the President.
6. As of next Saturday I am officially on a diet.
7. His answer which was wrong made the class laugh.
8. That dog barking at the tree, is mine.

9. Your case comes to court on November 20 1978.
10. When our guests arrived we greeted them at the door.
11. Once upon a time there was a girl named Goldilocks.
12. We met as we ordinarily do at the drugstore.
13. I waited, for nearly a month for your letter.
14. It is my choice however to travel alone.
15. For once try studying.
16. You are mine and I am yours.
17. Their new address is 78 Bounty Road Jackson Wyoming.
18. You are all prepared I'm sure for the test.
19. Ice cream if it is made at home is very good.
20. Never in a million years, will I leave you.

Add commas where needed in the following paragraph.

When we spent the day at my grandmother's cottage on the beach we had a great time. My wife and I together with two friends drove about sixty miles from our home to the small two-room beach house which had been built over a hundred years ago. We stopped at a small market to pick up some food for sandwiches and ate as soon as we arrived at the cottage. We spent the rest of the day eating drinking sunning ourselves going for walks and swimming. By the time the sun went down we were thoroughly exhausted. Isn't it strange I ask you that doing nothing can make someone so tired?