

Punctuation

Full stop (Bre) period (Ame) (.)

At the end of a sentence that is not a question or an exclamation:

I knocked at the door. There was no reply.

I knocked again.

Sometimes in abbreviations: Jan. e.g. a.m.

In internet and e-mail addresses (said 'dot')

<http://www.oup.com.uk>

Comma (,)

To separate words in a list: though they are often omitted before and: a bouquet of red, pink and white rose's tea, coffee, milk or hot chocolate

To separate phrases or clauses:

If you keep calm, take your time, concentrate and think ahead, then you're likely to pass your test.

Worn out after all the excitement of the party, the children soon fell asleep.

Before and after a clause or phrase: that gives additional, but not essential, information about the noun it follows:

The Pennine Hills, which are very popular with walkers, are situated between Lancashire and Yorkshire.

(Do not use commas before and after a clause that defines the noun it follows) The hills that separate Lancashire from Yorkshire are called the Pennines.

To separate main clauses, especially long ones, linked by a conjunction such as and, as, but, for, or:

We had been looking forward to our holiday all year, but unfortunately it rained every day.

To separate an introductory word or phrase, or an adverb or adverbial phrase that applies to the whole sentence, from the rest of the sentence:

Oh, so that's where it was.

As it happens, however, I never saw her again.

By the way, did you hear about Sue's car?

To separate a tag question from the rest of the sentence:

It's quite expensive, isn't it?

You live in Bristol, right?

Before or after 'he said', etc. when writing down conversation:

Come back soon, she said.

Before a short quotation:

Disraeli said, 'Little things affect little minds'.

Colon (:)

To introduce a list of items:

These are our options: we go by train and leave before the end of the show; or we take the car and see it all.

The garden had been neglected for a long time: it was overgrown and full of weeds.

To introduce a quotation, this may be indented:

As Kenneth Morgan writes:

The truth was, perhaps, that Britain in the years from 1914 to 1983 had not changed all that fundamentally.

Others, however, have challenged this view...

Semicolon

(;)

Instead of a comma to separate parts of a sentence that already contain commas:

She was determined to succeed whatever the cost; she would achieve her aim, whoever might suffer on the way.

In formal writing, to separate two main clauses, especially those not joined by a conjunction:

The sun was already low in the sky; it would soon be dark.

Question mark

(?)

At the end of a direct question:

Where's the car?

You're leaving already?

Do not use a question mark at the end of an indirect question:

He asked if I was leaving.

Especially with a date, to express doubt: John Marston

(1575-1634)

Exclamation mark (Bre)

(!)

Exclamation point (Ame)

At the end of a sentence expressing surprise, joy, anger, shock or another strong emotion:

That's marvelous!

'Never!' she cried.

In informal written English, you can use more than one exclamation mark, or an exclamation mark and a question mark:

'Your wife's just given birth to triplets.' 'Triplets!'

Apostrophe

(')

With s to indicate that a thing or person belongs to somebody:

My friend's brother

The waitress's apron

King James's crown / King James' crown

The students' hooks

The women's coats

In short forms, to indicate that letters or figures have been omitted:

I'm (I am)

they'd (they had/they would)

the summer of '89 (1989)

Sometimes, with s to form the plural of a letter, a figure or an abbreviation:

Hyphen (-)**To form a compound from two or more other words:**

Hardhearted

Fork-lift truck mother-to-be

To form a compound from a prefix and a proper name:

Pre-Raphaelite

Pre-European

When writing compound numbers between 21 and 99 in words:

Seventy-three

Thirty-one

Sometimes, in British English, to separate a prefix ending in a vowel from a word beginning with the same vowel:

Co-operate

Pre-eminent

Dash (—)**In Informal English, Instead of a colon or semicolon, to indicate that what follows is a summary or conclusion of what has gone before:**Men were shouting women were screaming, children were crying — it was chaos:
You've admitted that you lied to me—how can I trust you again?**Singly or in pairs to separate a comment or an afterthought from the rest of the sentence:**

He knew nothing at all about it—or so he said.

Dots/ellipsis (...)**To indicate that words have been omitted, especially from a quotation or at the end of a conversation:**

...challenging the view that Britain ... had not changed all that fundamentally.

Slash/oblique/Forward Slash (/)**To separate alternative words or phrases:**

Have a pudding and /or cheese

Single / married / widowed/ divorced

In internet and e-mail addresses to separate the different elements (often said 'forward slash')

<http://www.oup.com.uk/elt/>**Quotation marks**

Am(' ') Br(" ")

To enclose words and punctuation in direct speech:

'Why on earth did you do that?' he asked.

'I'll fetch it,' she replied.

To draw attention to a word that is unusual for the context, for example a slang expression, or to a word that is being used for special effect, such as irony:

He told me in no uncertain terms to 'get lost'.

The words were impressed in the same of tactical necessity.

Brackets/Parentheses ()

To separate extra information or a comment from the rest of a sentence:

Mount Robson (12 972feet) is the highest mountain in the Canadian Rockies.

He thinks that modern musk (I.e. anything written after 1900) is rubbish.

To enclose cross-references:

This moral ambiguity is a feature of Shakespeare's later works (see Chapter Eight).

Around numbers or letters in text:

Our objectives are (1) to increase output, (2) to improve quality and (3) to maximize profits.

Square Brackets: []

Around words inserted to make a quotation grammatically correct:

Britain in [these] years was without.

Italics : (*Italics*)

In handwritten or typed text, and in the examples in follow are follow, italics are Indicated by underlining.

To show emphasis:

I'm not going to do it –You are.

... proposals which we cannot accept under any circumstances.

To indicate the titles of books plays, etc: Joyce's Ulysses.

The title role in Puccini's Tosca a letter in The Times

For foreign words or phrases: the English oak (Quercus robur)

I had to renew my permission di soggiorno (residence permit).

Quoting Conversation:

When you write down a conversation, you normally begin a new paragraph for each new speaker. Quotation marks enclose the words spoken:

"You are sure of this?" I asked.

He nodded grimly.

"I am certain."

Verbs used to indicate direct speech, for example he said, she complained, are separated by commas from the words spoken, unless a question mark or an exclamation mark is used:

"That's all I know," said Nick.

Nick said, "That's all I know."

"Why?" asked Nick.

When he said or said Nick follows the words spoken, the comma is placed inside the quotation marks, as in the first example above. If, however, the writer puts the words said Nick within the actual words Nick speaks, the comma is outside the quotation marks:

"That", said Nick, "is all I know."

Double quotation marks are used to indicate direct speech being quoted by somebody else within direct speech:

'But you said you loved me! "I'll never leave you, Sue, as long as I live." That's what you said, isn't it?'

Examples of punctuations from text book

Ans. "I want you to understand me, Dell," he said. "Nothing like a haircut could make me careless for you. But if you'll open that you may know what I felt when I came in."

2) Punctuate the following lines.

i have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed we hold these truths to be self evident that all men are created equal

Ans.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self - evident; that all men are created equal."

3) Punctuate the following lines.

all the crops finished nothing left he said but the gongs were still beating the men still shouting and Margaret asked why do you go on with it then.

Ans. "All the crops finished. Nothing left," he said. But the gongs were still beating, the men still shouting, and Margaret asked: "Why do you go on with it, then?"

4) Punctuate the following lines.

do you not perceive answered the camel-man i wished to show you that what is good for camels is not therefore good for poor old men and women

Ans.

'Do you not perceive?' answered the camel-man. 'I wished to show you that what is good for camels is not therefore good for poor old men and women'.

5) Punctuate the following lines.

do you not perceive answered the camel-man i wished to show you that what is good for camels is not therefore good for poor old men and women

Ans.

"Do you not perceive?" answered the camel-man. "I wished to show you that what is good for camels is not therefore good for poor old men and women".

6) Punctuate the following lines.

if they fail they are expected to bring the case before the qazi to seek justice but in the present case the parents have agreed to get my bloodshed for the trash of this world

Ans.

"If they fail, they are expected to bring the case before the Qazi to seek justice. But in the present case, the parents have agreed to get my bloodshed for the trash of this world.

7) Punctuate the following lines.

does your throat hurt you added the mother to the child but the little girl s expression didn't change nor did she move her eyes from my face

Ans.

"Does your throat hurt you?" added the mother to the child. But the little girl's expression didn't change nor did she move her eyes from my face.

8) Punctuate the following lines.

life is like a race jorkens went on in which they tire after a while and sit down or get

9) Punctuate the following lines.

i was seen with the pocketbook who saw me Mr. manana the harness man saw you pick up the pocketbook

Ans.

"I was seen with the pocketbook? Who saw me?" "Mr. Manana, the harness man saw you pick up the pocketbook"

10) Punctuate the following lines.

well you didn't have to snatch my pocketbook to get some suede shoes said Mrs. Luella bates Washington Jones you could have asked me

Ans. "Well you didn't have to snatch my pocketbook to get some suede shoes," said Mrs. Luella bates Washington Jones. "You could have asked me."

11) Punctuate the following lines.

the towns empty but we found native life in the hills sir dark people yellow eyes Martians very friendly we talked a bit not much they learn English fast

Ans. "The town's empty, but we found native life in the hills, sir. Dark people. Yellow eyes. Martians very friendly we talked a bit, not much. They learn English fast."

12) Punctuate the following lines.

now you coming to something son he said as he pushed down the top wire s that he could cross the fence this is something i want you to see

Ans.

"Now, you're coming to something, son," he said as he pushed down the top wire s that he could cross the fence. "This is something I want you to see!"

13) Punctuate the following lines.

mr. steward looked embarrassed. i m afraid i m not at liberty to tell you that he said however i assure you the organization is of international scope

Ans.

Mr. Steward looked embarrassed. "I'm afraid I'm not at liberty to tell you that," he said. "However, I assure you, the organization is of international scope",

