

Workshop Two Supplement One. More Examples of the Comma

You should study these additional examples of how to use the comma to strengthen your understanding of appropriate comma use and to give you further ideas about how to construct sentences that maintain clarity.

1. Separate the items in a list of three or more items added to a main clause.

- A: The pie is full of peas, carrots, and garlic.
- B: Those in the good seats jangled their rings, watches, and bracelets.
- C: I could not choose between Ramsey, Lawson, Oliver, or Smith.
- D: The town was small, rural, but ugly in its architecture.

2. Use the comma to set off non-restrictive information.

- A: The dog, a scruffy bag of hair, ate her dinner, a plate of boiled beef, with a knife and fork.
- B: My father, small, plump, and bespectacled, drank glasses of mulled wine.
- C: The neighbours, who I must have offended, ignored me in the street.
- D: The men drank beer, glasses of it, before trying to play football.

3. Use the comma to join an introductory word, phrase, or clause to the main clause.

- A: Despite its shabby appearance, the house was charming.
- B: Although I am a fan of his music, I do not appreciate Barry Manilow's sense of humour.
- C: Playing for all he was worth, Elton tried to interest the audience in his second-rate tunes.
- D: With great concentration, the little boy set off on his new tricycle.
- E: However, he crashed into the fence.

4. Put a comma before a coordinating conjunction (and, yet, but, or, nor, yet, so, for) when you join two main clauses to form a compound sentence.

- A: The boy went crazy, and he threw the meringues on the floor.
B: The carpet was patterned, so the stain was barely visible, but the snooty hosts asked me to leave anyway.
C: The party was dull as dishwater, nor could it be spiced up with ample supplies of alcohol.

5. More examples of the EVIL Comma Splice.

- A: I apologised, they continued to ignore me in the street.
B: Mandy came and she gave without taking, Barry sent her away.
C: The pie was delicious, yet Ramsey said that it was similar to a dish that his wife would cook, it was an insult to her.

6. Examples of sentences that lose CLARITY. Try to work out how these sentences should be punctuated.

- A: The butcher sold meat, vegetables and televisions.
B: Janey could not decide between John, and Adam.
C: Although Adam was nice, he smelled of mould and grime, and sour drink.
D: I apologised but they continued to ignore me in the street.
E: Mandy came, and she gave without taking but Barry sent her away.
F: The pie was delicious yet Ramsey said that it was similar to a dish that his wife would cook, it was an insult to her.