



VIDEO & PODCAST TRANSCRIPT #020

How to Use a COMMA

Slide 1:

How to use a comma.

Slide 2:

The most common uses of a comma are

1. when writing a list:

e.g. The pens were available in blue, red, green, and yellow.

2. when writing a date:

e.g. January 1, 2020

3. when writing a large number:

e.g. 100,000

Slide 3:

However, there are other ways of using a comma that can make a big difference to how people understand what you write.

Note the following examples to add power and clarity to your writing . . .

Slide 4:

1. Use a comma to separate the two parts of a sentence where a question follows a statement.

For example . . .

Slide 5:

The picture shows the Eiffel Tower, looking up from ground level.

The sentence reads: We visited the Eiffel Tower on the first day of our holiday, or was it the second day?

Slide 6:

2. Use a comma to separate an introductory phrase from the main point of the sentence.
For example . . .

Slide 7:

The picture shows a woman holding an umbrella, waiting in the rain.

The sentence reads: In spite of the fact it was raining, she still went to meet her friend.

Slide 8:

3. Use a comma to separate words that are inserted to explain a preceding word or phrase.
For example . . .

Slide 9:

The picture shows a flight of marble steps.

The sentence reads: The steps were completely clear, apart from the danger cone on the first step.

Slide 10:

4. Use a comma to separate explanatory or unnecessary words, that, if left out, would not change the meaning.
For example . . .

Slide 11:

The picture shows a café with a closed sign.

The sentence reads: By the time we got there the café had closed, unfortunately.

Slide 12:

A word of caution - don't pepper your writing with commas when they are not really necessary. This can irritate the reader.

A good guide is to read what you have written out loud, and take note of where you naturally pause. Probably that is where a comma is needed.

Slide 13:

Just remember the main function of a comma is to indicate which parts of a sentence are the most important, and which parts are supplementary, or not essential.

The comma is not there for ornamental purposes. Rather it is there to do a job, namely, to separate the various elements in a sentence to make the meaning clear.

That's how to use a comma!

Slide 14:

Get my FREE Vocabulary Builder and add these advanced words to your vocabulary!

- Obsolete
- Sporadic
- Ludicrous
- Tantamount
- Sceptical

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Slide 9 - danger cone

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Slide 11 - cafe closed

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