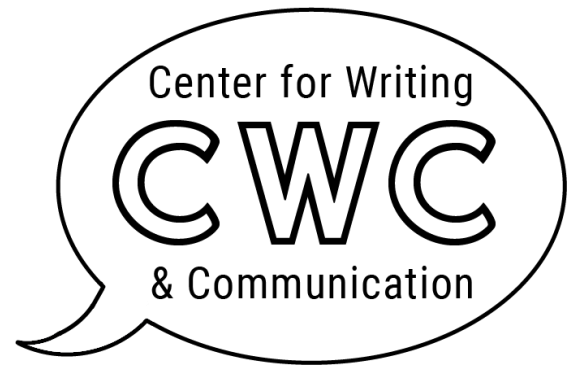


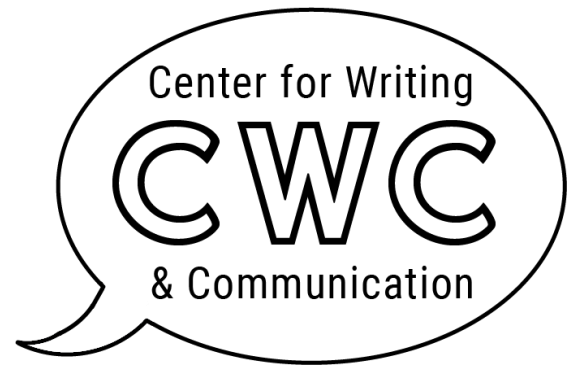
Comma Usage



Commas can be used in multiple different places in a paper, and commas have multiple different rules associated with them that may be hard to memorize or remember. However, there are a few important rules to keep in mind:

- Use a comma to **join two independent clauses** or complete sentences. You use a comma and a conjunction (**for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so**) to join these two sentences or clauses together. An easier way to remember these conjunctions is to think of the acronym “**FANBOYS**.”
 - **Example:** Tom was not much of a basketball player, **but** he noticed that a pretty girl was watching, so he decided to give it a shot.
- Use a comma after **an opening word or phrase**. This will separate the opening phrase from the rest of the sentence and make it less confusing to the reader as to what it is the sentence is talking about.
 - **Example:** **Because she was about to miss the bus**, Kathy ran down the sidewalk with her jacket half on and her backpack unzipped.
- Use a comma to **set off more relevant information** in a sentence. This will help the reader know that you are describing more about what you just mentioned in the sentence.
 - **Example:** Joshua’s father, **who was a well-known doctor in California**, always took his stethoscope with in case of emergencies.
- Use a comma between **coordinate adjectives**. Coordinate adjectives are many adjectives used to describe one noun. If someone wanted to use the words “large,” “shiny,” and “rubber” to describe a balloon, that person would have to use commas to separate those adjectives.
 - **Example:** Rachel carried the **large, shiny, rubber** balloons to her house for the party.
- However, if the same person were to use the words “two” and “red” to describe the same balloons, that person would not use commas to separate those adjectives.
 - **Example:** Rachel carried **two red** rubber balloons to her house for the party.

Comma Usage



- How can you know when to use commas and when not to use commas in this case? The answer can be pretty simple. If you have more than one adjective describing a noun, and those adjectives are separated by commas, try to mix up the order of the adjectives to see if the sentence still makes sense.
 - *Example:* Instead of *Rachel carried the large, shiny, rubber balloons to her house for the party, why not try Rachel carried the shiny, large, rubber balloons...* It is easy to see in this sentence how the adjectives describing the balloon can be mixed up and the sentence still makes sense.
- If, however, you have adjectives of number (two), quality (rubber), and color (red) that are describing a noun, you would not use commas because when you mix the order of these adjectives, the sentence does not make sense.
 - *Example:* The sentence *Rachel carried two red rubber balloons to her house for the party* makes sense. However, if you mix the adjectives to make the sentence *Rachel carried red rubber two balloons to her house for the party* the sentence does not make sense. Therefore, these adjectives do not need commas.

With all of this being said, just remember, if you have three or more adjectives describing one noun and you are not sure whether or not to use commas, try using the commas and mixing up the adjectives to see if the sentence still makes sense. If the sentence makes sense with the mixed up adjectives, you use commas. If the sentence does not make sense with the mixed up adjectives, you do not need commas. Try to remember that nouns of quality, color, and number do not need commas separating them from the noun (i.e. big red balloon).