

PUNCTUATION



Punctuation is the use of spacing, conventional signs, and certain typographical devices as aids to the understanding and correct reading of written text, whether read silently or aloud. Punctuation refers use of the marks, such as full stop, comma, and brackets, used in writing to separate sentences and their elements and to clarify meaning.

This unit aims at developing learners' ability to differentiate common punctuation marks. Demonstrate an understanding of punctuation through correct usage.

 Time of completion	2 weeks
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Lessons of the Unit:

Lesson-1 : Definition and Kinds
Lesson-2 : The Common Punctuation
Lesson-3 : Terminal Punctuations
Lesson-4 : Pausing Punctuations
Lesson-5 : Other Punctuations

Lesson-7.1 Definition and Kinds



Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- differentiate common punctuation marks;
- know different use of punctuation marks in British and American English.

Punctuation marks, such as full stop, comma, and brackets, are used in writing to separate sentences and their elements and to clarify meaning. Punctuation is used to create sense, clarity and stress in sentences. You use punctuation marks to structure and organize your writing. There are a number of punctuation marks that are commonly used in English grammar.

The punctuation marks are as follow:

- Periods
- Commas
- Semicolons
- Colons
- Question Marks
- Exclamation Points
- Quotation Marks
- Parentheses and Brackets
- Apostrophes
- Hyphens
- Dashes
- Ellipses
- Slashes

The correct usage of the punctuation marks will make your writing easier to read and more appealing.

British vs. American English

There are a few differences between punctuations in British English and American English. The following chart is showing in details some of those differences:

	British English	American English
The " ." symbol is called	a full stop	a period
The " !" symbol is called	an exclamation mark	an exclamation point
The " () " symbols are called	brackets	parentheses
The " [] " symbols are called	square brackets	brackets
The position of quotation marks	Joy means "happiness".	Joy means "happiness."
The punctuation for abbreviations	Dr, Mr, Mrs, St, Rd, Ct	Dr., Mr., Mrs., St., Rd., Ct.



Summary:

There are fifteen basic punctuation marks in English grammar. These include the period, comma, exclamation point, question mark, colon, semicolon, bullet point, dash, hyphen, parenthesis, bracket, brace, ellipsis, quotation mark, and apostrophe. Without knowing and learning punctuation marks accurately learners will not be able to write sentence correctly.

Lesson-7.2 The Common Punctuations



Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- place comma and question marks;
- avoid misplacement of comma and question marks.

Punctuation is one of the most important aspects of written English, and yet it is one that is taken most lightly. It is, in fact, this feature of writing that gives meaning to the written words... much like pauses and changes in tones of the voice when speaking. An error in punctuation can convey a completely different meaning to the one that is intended. It's very important, and a tiny, misplaced comma or question mark can cost millions of dollars or break someone's heart.

For example:

Your book, John.

Your book, John?

Although the words are same here, the two sentences mean completely different things because of the period (or full stop) and the question mark.

The same goes here:

Don't stop.

Don't, stop.

The commas after the *don't* and the *don't*, have made fully different in the meanings of the sentences. In the first sentence one is saying someone not to stop while in the second sentence he is saying someone not to go. So the meaning is different.

Another example of how punctuation can change the meaning of a sentence:

He was bitten by a dog which hurt him.

He was bitten by a dog, which hurt him.

The first sentence means the dog hurt him. The second sentence means the bite hurts him. The comma after the *dog* has completely changed the meaning of the second sentence.

A classic example which is generally given during teaching punctuations as the best can be this –

A woman without her man is nothing.

Now see the differences that punctuation can make given below:

A woman, without her man, is nothing.
A woman: without her, man is nothing.

So, we can easily notify how meanings can be different or opposite just because of wrong placements of comma.

This is very important to know how punctuation marks work for the meanings of the sentences. It is to be surely known when and how to use them in order to produce a good piece of writing; more importantly, conveying the correct messages.

Have a look at these given examples if there are any misplacements of punctuations. If you do not understand the importance of appropriate placement of punctuations then you will surely understand its function after seeing these.



Summary

While we all slip up from time to time, there are some basic punctuation mistakes you should never make in formal writing. For example, don't confuse "it's" and "its," don't use an apostrophe to pluralize nouns, and don't use semicolons and commas interchangeably.

Lesson-7.3**Terminal Punctuations**

Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- place period full stop or point;
- avoid misplacement of period full stop or point.

1. The period, full stop or point (.)

The period (known as a full stop in British English) is probably the simplest punctuation mark amongst all. It functions to stop the sentence with meaning. It is to put at the end of a sentence for a logical and complete thought that looks like appropriate.

Full stop sits at the end of a sentence when it is not a question but an explanation or statement.

Examples:

- Rome is the capital of Italy.
- I was born in Australia and now live in Indonesia.
- The Dalai Lama is the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people.

Indication to abbreviations:

Many abbreviations require a period or full stop.

Dr, Mr, Mrs, and Ms do not take a period in British English. But most of the abbreviations are formed with capital letters such as MA, CIA, BBA and some are formed as first letter of capitalization like Phd, B.Sc etc.

Examples:

- I will arrive between 6 a.m. to 7 a.m.
- We are coming on Fri., Jan. 4.

Period after a single word:

Sometimes a single word can form a sentence. In this case, if you place a full stop after the word it may convey a complete meaning as a complete sentence. That particular single word can be understood as a complete meaning like greeting or command. As examples:

- "Goodbye."
- "Stop."
- "Don't!"

Periods in numbers

In English numbers, periods are used to separate the whole number to decimal. A period used in a number is also called a "decimal point" and it is known as "point" until it refers to money.

Examples:

- \$10.43 = ten dollars and 43 cents
- 14.17 = fourteen point one seven

2. Question mark (?)

Using question mark while writing direct questions as follows:

- How are you?
- Where can I bargain for a good laptop?
- What did you think of this movie?

Do not use question marks while writing indirect questions as follows:

- a) (i) The coach asked the quarterback to sit on the bench. (correct)
- (ii) The coach asked the quarterback to sit on the bench? (incorrect)

- b) (i) I asked my brother if I could borrow fifty dollar. (correct)
- (ii) I asked my brother if I could borrow fifty dollar? (incorrect)

Use question marks while writing rhetorical questions, even though no answers are expected.

- How will the World Series turn out, after all is said and done?
- Who is really to blame for the world's problems?

While writing a question that concludes with an abbreviation, ends with a period as an usual and then add a question mark. Do not put a space between the period and the question mark.

- Weren't we supposed to head toward Washington, D.C.?

3. Exclamation mark (!)

Using exclamation mark to the end as an expression of strong feelings.

Examples:

- Wow! Sakib is splendid!
- Do not you dare to say that!
- Damn! What a mess!
- We won!
- We lost!



Summary

Terminal punctuation refers to the punctuation marks used to identify the end of a portion of text. Terminal punctuation marks are also referred to as end marks and stops. In languages using the ISO basic Latin alphabet, terminal punctuation marks are defined as the period, the question mark, and the exclamation mark.

Lesson-7.4 Pausing Punctuations



Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- place comma, colon and semicolons;
- avoid misplacement of comma, colon and semicolons.

1. Commas (,)

The **comma** is used to show a separation of ideas or elements within the structures of a sentence. Additionally, it is used in numbers, dates, and letter writing after the salutation and closing.

- Direct address: *Thanks for all your help, John.*
- Separation of two complete sentences: *We went to the movies, and then we went out to lunch.*
- Separating lists or elements within sentence: *Suzi wanted the black, green, and blue dresses.*

Whether to add a final comma before the conjunction in a list is a matter of debate. This final comma is known as an Oxford or serial comma. It is useful in the complex series of elements or phrases but is often considered unnecessary in a simple series such as in the example above. It usually comes down to a style choice by the writer.

2. Colon and semicolons (:), (;)

We use colons to introduce lists:

There are three main reasons for the success of the government: economic, social and political.

We also use colons to indicate a subtitle or to indicate a subdivision of a topic:

Life in Provence: A Personal View

We often use colons to introduce direct speech:

Then he said: 'I really cannot help you in any way.'

We commonly use a colon between sentences when the second sentence explains or justifies the first sentence:

Try to keep your flat clean and tidy: it will be sold more easily.

We use semi-colons instead of full stops to separate two main clauses. In such cases, the clauses are related in meaning but are separated grammatically.

Spanish is spoken throughout South America; in Brazil, the main language is Portuguese.

Semi-colons are not commonly used in contemporary English. Full stops and commas are more common.



Summary:

Pausing punctuations differentiate two main clauses. Pausing points include the comma, semicolon, and colon. The dash and ellipsis, covered elsewhere, can also indicate pause.

Lesson-7.5 Other Punctuations



Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- place parentheses, braces and brackets
- avoid misplacement of parentheses, braces and brackets

Quotation marks

Quotations marks (" ") are a pair of marks which is used primarily to mark the beginning and the end of a passage attributed to another and repeated word for word. It is also used to indicate meanings and the unusual or dubious status of a word.

- *"Don't go outside," she said.*
Single quotation marks (' ') are used most frequently for quotes within quotes.
- *Marie told the teacher, "I saw Marc at the playground, and he said to me 'Bill started the fight,' and I believed him."*

Parentheses, braces and brackets (), { }, []

Parentheses, braces and brackets are the symbols used to contain words that are a further explanation or are considered as a group.

Parentheses (()) are curved notations used to contain further thoughts or qualifying remarks. However, parentheses can be replaced by commas without changing the meaning in most cases.

- *John and Jane (who were actually half brother and sister) both have red hair.*

Braces ({}) are used to contain two or more lines of text or listed items to show that they are considered as a unit. They are not commonplace in most writing but can be seen in computer programming to show what should be contained within the same lines. They can also be used in mathematical expressions. For example, $2\{1 + [23-3]\} = x$.

Brackets are the squared off notations ([]) used for technical explanations or to clarify meaning. If you remove the information in the brackets, the sentence will still make sense.

- *He [Mr. Jones] was the last person seen at the house.*

Apostrophes

The **apostrophe** (') is used for several purposes, like-

- The marking of the omission of one or more letters (as in the contraction of *do not* to *don't*).
- The marking of possessive case of nouns (as in *the eagle's feathers*, or *in one month's time*).
- The marking of plurals of individual characters (e.g. *p's and q's*).

Dash and the Hyphen

Two other common punctuation marks are dash and hyphen. These marks are often confusing to each other due to their appearance though they are very different in action.

A **dash** is used to separate words into statements. There are two common types of dashes: en dash and em dash.

- En dash: Twice as long as a hyphen. It is a symbol (--) that is used in writing or printing to indicate a range, connections or differentiations, such as 1880-1945 or Princeton-New York trains.
- Em dash: Longer than the en dash. It can be used in place of a comma, parenthesis, or colon to enhance readability or emphasize the conclusion of a sentence. For example,

She gave him her answer --- No!

Whether you put spaces around the em dash or not is a choice of style. Just be consistent.

A **hyphen** is used to join two or more words together into a compound term and never separated by spaces.

For example: part-time, back-to-back, well-known etc.

Ellipsis

Often you see a sentence concluding with three dots, it indicates that only one part of the sentence or text has been quoted or that it is being left up to the reader to complete the thought.

As example:

- The Lord's Prayer begins, "Our Father which art in Heaven..."
- He is always late, but you know how I feel about that...

Slashes

The slash is a punctuation mark used in English. An explanation of what a slash means in a text depends on the context. Slashes can mean many different things, depending on how they are used.

- **To separate lines in prose**

A slash can show a line break in a poem, song, or play; usually, if several short lines are being written together on one long line. For example:

Mary had a little lamb/ little lamb, little lamb/ Mary had a little lamb.

- **To indicate "Or"**

Often, when a slash is used in a formal or informal text, it is meant to indicate the word *or*. The examples below illustrates this meaning of the forward slash.

When leaving the classroom, the teacher noticed that a student had left his/her backpack.

If/when Mary ever shows up, we can all head out to the party together.

- **To denote dates and fractions**

One of the most commonly recognizing usages of the forward slash is to indicate dates and fractions: ½



Summary:

Learners need to practice all punctuation marks including the period, comma, exclamation point, question mark, colon, semicolon, bullet point, dash, hyphen, parenthesis, bracket, brace, ellipsis, quotation mark, and apostrophe. Without knowing and learning punctuation marks accurately learners will not be able to write sentence correctly



EXERCISE

Lesson-1

Correct the following sentences with proper capitalization:

1. A perfect Spy is a book by Cooper
2. A Doll's House is a book by Henrik Ibsen
3. The Way Of The World is a play William Congreve.
4. Hotel california is a music album by Eagles.
5. The bible is the holy book.
6. The Book of mormon
7. Van Gogh's Starry night
8. The Land that Time forgot

Lesson-2

Dear John Punctuation

The Dear John punctuation example is a very commonly used story. It is about a man who received a beautiful letter from his beloved one. In this letter, his girlfriend tried to show how much she loves him and adores him. It is clear to anyone after reading her words that she can't live without him. Can she?

What will happen to the letter if there remains some punctuation mistakes which are entirely in different pattern?

Dear John,

I want a man who knows what love is. All about you are generous, kind, thoughtful people, who are not like you. Admit to being useless and inferior. You have ruined me. For other men, I yearn. For you, I have no feelings whatsoever. When we're apart, I can be forever happy. Will you let me be?

Yours,

Jane

Lesson-3

1. Who is your teacher.
2. Why did you stop here.
3. How did you do that.
4. What color is the shirt.
5. The dog is brown, right.

6. You paid the bill, didn't you.
7. Lisa is not here, is she!
8. Who cares.
9. Isn't it a beautiful day!
10. Are you kidding me.
11. I am driving to the city?
12. "There's a spider on my arm" yelled Jeremy.
13. They settled out of court and Jeremy got a million dollars (cash).

Lesson-4

1. Dalim could have called David, he lost his phone number
2. David walked to the concert but he was unable to walk home.
3. Don't miss classes or you cannot do well in the exam.
4. My favorite poets are Walt Whitman Rabindranath and Jibananda.
5. My favorite colors are red blue and green.
6. He says that stop talking and focus on the lecture.

Lesson-5

1. He said that he "hoped I would be there."
2. He said, I don't care.
3. "Why," I asked, don't you care?
4. Sam the boy from the school helped me with my homework.
5. The pig ate the ice-cream cone. {His favorite flavor was chocolate.}
6. The package includes several things (mainly CDs {compact discs}).
7. Sarna pen got lost.
8. Im at home.
9. You mustnot play in the class.
10. Burgers or pizza for dinner? Yeah, either/or is fine with me.
11. Isn't it a dog friendly hotel.
12. It's a closed door meeting.
13. he is a book loving student
14. The new nurse—who was wearing the same purple scarf as the old nurse—entered the room with a tray of Jello.

Answer Key

Lesson-1

1. A Perfect Spy is a book by Cooper
2. A Doll's House is a book by Henrik Ibsen
3. The Way of the World is a play William Congreve.
4. Hotel California is a music album by Eagles.
5. The Bible is the holy book.
6. The Book of Mormon
7. Van Gogh's Starry Night
8. The Land that Time Forgot

Lesson-2

Dear John:

I want a man who knows what love is all about. You are generous, kind, thoughtful. People who are not like you admit to being useless and inferior. You have ruined me for other men. I yearn for you. I have no feelings whatsoever when we're apart. I can be forever happy—will you let me be yours?

Jane

Now which letter do you think John would be preferable to receive?

Lesson-3

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2. Why did you stop here?
3. How did you do that?
4. What color is the shirt?
5. The dog is brown, right?
6. You paid the bill, didn't you?
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13. They settled out of court and Jeremy got a million dollars (cash)!

Lesson-4

1. Dalim could have called David; he lost his phone number.

2. David walked to the concert, but he was unable to walk home.
3. Don't miss classes, or you cannot do well in the exam.
4. My favorite poets are Walt Whitman, Rabindranath, and Jibananda.
5. My favorite colors are: red, blue and green.
6. He says that: "Stop talking and focus on the lecture."

Lesson-5

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