

PUNCTUATION CHART

This chart will go over several different types of punctuation, their purpose, and an example of how to use it properly.

Punctuation	Purpose	Examples
period [.]	End a sentence	Most sentences end in a period.
question mark [?]	Indicate a question	"What time is it?" she asked. "How much longer?" he asked.
Exclamation point [!]	Express emotion	"I hate you!" he shouted. "I love you!" she shouted.
semicolon [;] or comma [,] + conjunction [and, or, nor, for, so, but, yet]	Connect complete sentences (two independent clauses)	It is raining; the dog is wet. <i>or</i> It is raining, and the dog is wet.
comma [,] but if one or more items in that list already have a comma, use a semicolon [;]	Connect items in a list	My lunch is a sandwich, an apple, and a bag of pretzels. <i>but</i> My dinner is a salad of spinach, carrots, and tomatoes; a bowl of pasta; and two breadsticks.
quotation marks [" "]	Indicate a quotation	"To be or not to be" is one of the most famous lines from <i>Hamlet</i> .
comma [,] or, less commonly, colon [:]	Introduce a quotation (words directly spoken)	She yelled, "Let's get out of here!" The president declared: "We will prevail."
apostrophe [']	Show possession or contraction	Why is Lisa's wallet in Ben's backpack?

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colon [:] if what precedes the colon is a complete sentence	Introduce a list of three or more items	There are three things I want to do before I die: go on a cruise, go skydiving, and learn to surf.
commas [,]	Separate a word or phrase that is relevant but not essential information	Elaine, my roommate, is from Chicago. Her nickname as a child, her mother told me, was "Boo-boo."
parentheses [()]	Separate a word or phrase that is relevant but secondary information	There is an exception to every rule (including this one).
colon [:]	Introduce an explanation (what follows "explains" or "answers" what precedes)	You know what they say about real estate: Location is everything.
ellipsis [...]	To show information is omitted	"... was really good at public speaking."
brackets [()]	To show information was added	"[Winston Churchill] was really good at public speaking."
hyphen [-] unless the first word is an adjective ending in <i>-ly</i>	Connect two words that work together as one object or modifier	Mother-in-law, five-year-old son, highly rated
en dash [-]	Show the span between two numbers or the scores of a game	The score is 14-21. He lived from 1953-2016.
em dash [—]	Separate a word or phrase for emphasis	Never steal from that store — never. It's not just a bad idea — it's illegal.