

University of Mohammed Boudiaf, M'sila.

Department of psychology

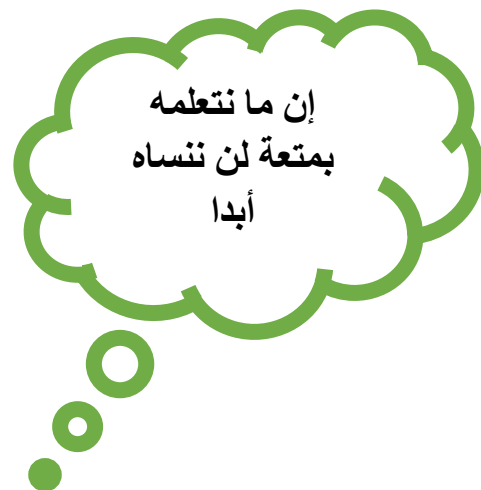
Module: English language.

Level: Master two.

Specialty: work and organizational psychology.

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Lesson 04(grammar)

Basic Punctuation Rules

Punctuation marks are the “traffic signals” of a language. When correctly used, they guide the reader through the text and makes comprehension easier. However, when incorrectly placed, they can also change the meaning of a sentence.

Use of the period

There are only two uses of the period (also known as “full stop” in British English):

- To mark the end of a sentence expressing a statement (if you are unsure whether the words constitute a sentence, look for a verb which is an essential component of a sentence)
- To signify an acronym - [N.A.T.O. for North Atlantic Treaty Organization (although increasingly it is acceptable and even preferable not to use full stops in such cases)]

Uses of a Comma:

1) In a list

Oxford comma ~ the comma before “and” or “or” in a series of items.

Example: Ham, eggs, and chips

2) Before dialogue

Example: Mark said, “Good morning!”

3) Mark out additional information

Example: The girl, who is wearing a pink shirt, is my sister.

4) Before a conjunction (e.g. and but or for while yet) introducing an independent clause

Example: The boys wanted to stay up until midnight, but they grew tired and fell asleep.

5) Enclose parenthetical expressions (additional information) between commas

Example: The best way to see a country, unless you’re pressed for time, is to travel on foot

Uses of the Apostrophe

1. Indicates a possessive in a singular noun

Example: The café’s menu

But when the possessor is a regular plural, the apostrophe follows the “s.”

Example: The cafés’ menus

2. Indicates time or quantity.

Two Week’s Notice

The Café will open in two month’s time.

3. Indicates the omission of figures in dates

Example: Batch ’08 is so excited to graduate.

4. Indicates the omission of letters

Examples: The training starts at 8 o’ clock every day.

The gov't is set to battle the insurgents in Basilan.

It's (it is) your turn.

It's been several years (It has been several years).

Uses of Semi-colon

1) Separate two related sentences where there is no conjunction (such as “and” or “but”), and where using only a comma would be ungrammatical.

Example: She is a good writer; she has published several books.

2) Organizes syntax thought where many commas are used

Example: We bought dairy products like milk, butter, and cheese; vegetables such as carrots, potatoes, and spinach; and some fruits like bananas and mangoes.

3) Linking words such as “however,” “nevertheless,” “also,” “consequently,” and “hence” require a semi-colon.

Example: He spent a lot for the campaign; however, the majority of the public saw through his pretense and did not vote for him

Uses of Colon:

1) Separates statements “placed baldly in dramatic opposition”

a. Lawrence could not speak: he was drunk.

b. Man proposes: God disposes.

It is also used when the second statement reaffirms, explains or illustrates the first

2) Starts lists

a. Please purchase the ff: furniture, glassware, ingredients, and linen.

















3) Sets off book and film sub-titles from the main titles

a. Gandhi II : The Mahatma Strikes Back

4) Separates dramatic characters forming a dialogue:

Philip: How do you get to Cebu?

o Anne: You can go there by plane, by ship, or by bus.

 comma	 semicolon	 colon	 full stop	 exclamation mark	 question mark
 apostrophe	 quotes	 double quotes	 hyphen	 dash	
 stroke or slash	 parentheses or (round) brackets	 square brackets	 ellipsis	 asterisk	