

# COMMAS

A **comma** separates items in a list.

I like to eat **apples, oranges, bananas and grapes.**

Note: a comma is not needed before the 'and' unless it makes the meaning clearer.

A **comma** is often used **before a co-ordinating conjunction.**

I like swimming, **but** I love tennis!

Remember: a main clause comes before and after the 'FANBOYS' co-ordinating conjunction.

A **comma** is used **after a subordinate clause at the start of a sentence.**

**After a short rest,** Jim carried on running.

Remember: if you remove the **subordinate clause,** the main clause will still make sense.

A **comma** is used **before and after an embedded (subordinate) clause in the middle of a sentence.**

The children, **happy and excited after their trip,** told their parents what they had seen.

Remember: if you remove the **embedded (subordinate) clause,** the main clause will still make sense.

A **comma** can be used **after an adverb, adverbial or fronted adverbial at the start of a sentence.**

**Surprisingly,** I was picked for the team!

**With a wave,** the family left for the beach.

Use a **comma** when **addressing a person or group or before a 'tag phrase'.**

Let's eat, **Grandma.**

This is great, **isn't it?**

Commas are also used with direct speech – see separate grammar page.



A comma **CANNOT** be used to separate two main clauses. If you could substitute a full stop, a comma is probably wrong.