

The 6 Most Basic Comma Rules

1. Use a comma when there is a list.

Example: Today I ate hot peppers, tacos, and pizza.

2. Use commas within compound sentences. (Sentences in which two complete thoughts are joined by and, but, yet, so, for, or, nor.)

Example: I had a lot of homework to do, so I locked myself in my room until it was finished.

3. Always use commas with complex sentences in which the dependent clause is at the beginning.

Example: Although I asked you not to interfere, I see that you couldn't resist.

4. Use a comma in introductory phrases like *by the way*, *in order to*, etc.

Example: In order to be successful in a paper, one must use commas correctly.

5. Use commas with transition words such as *first*, *next*, *but*, *however*, etc.

*Example: Next, we went to the baseball game.
I want to go; however, I have homework to do first.*

6. Use a comma when introducing a quote.

Example: Ben Stein said, "Metaphors be with you."

As one may see, commas are easy to use as long as you practice! The Writing Center hopes that the information provided is helpful and useful to you in your endeavors in college writing! If you have any questions, feel free to stop into the Writing Center for a one- on- one consultation with a trained Writing Consultant!