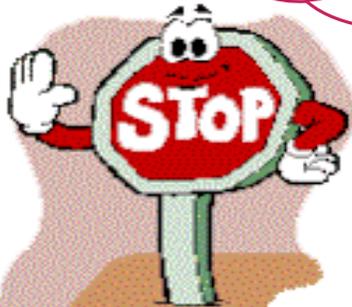


WHO AM I ?



PUNCTUATION AND MECHANICS

I THINK I AM
FINISHED .



Wow ! I MAKE
PEOPLE
SURPRISE.



PUNCTUATION

It is signs and symbols we use in writing to make our meaning clear. The purpose of punctuation is practical not ornamental. The reason for punctuation is to make the meaning clear.

When we speak we can help to make our meaning clear by changing the tone of our voice, by pausing, or by using gestures. If we speak for two or three minutes without pausing or changing the tone of our voice no one will understand what we are trying to say. The same thing in writing if we write two or more sentences together without showing where to stop no one would understand the meaning , thoughts, and ideas we are trying to express.

FOR EXAMPLE

Let us see what happens if we remove all the punctuation marks from this paragraph:

the great ship groaned it was like a whole town in travail great limbers were smashed like matchwood it moved yes it actually moved one waited in suffocated excitement it moved slowly at first but soon it gathered speed the massive coils of chain were suddenly galvanized into life and writhed like worms they sent up clouds of rust like red brown smoke she had reached the water she liked the water she knew it was her own element oh she did it beautifully.

Without the punctuation marks we cannot see the relationship between sentences. So we cannot understand the paragraph very easily. Now read the paragraph again with the punctuation marks :

The great ship groaned. It was like a whole town in travail. Great limbers were smashed like matchwood. It moved. Yes, it actually moved. One waited in suffocated excitement it moved slowly at first, but soon it gathered speed. The massive coils of chain were suddenly galvanized into life and writhed like worms. They sent up clouds of rust like red-brown smoke. She had reached the water. She liked the water. She knew it was her own element. Oh! - She did it beautifully.

A. END PUNCTUATION MARKS

When we come to the end of the sentence we must put a punctuation mark. The symbol we use will depend on the kind of a sentence we have written. There are three symbols we can use to mark the end of a sentence:

1. The full stop ()
2. The question mark ()
3. The exclamation mark ()

1. The full stop

The full stop is the most important punctuation mark. It is used at the end of all sentences except direct questions or exclamations. You should use full stops frequently and beware not to prolonging your sentences by using commas where a sentence should be started. Do not link two complete sentences with only a comma or run two sentences together without any punctuation. for example:

Wrong: Our house is in Mansour, it is very beautiful.

Right: Our house in Mansour. It is very beautiful.

Wrong: Think what you like I don't care.

Right: Think what you like. I don't care.

On the other hand, you most not put a full stop until you have reached the end of a sentence.

2. The question mark

A- The question mark has the same force as the full stop in marking the end of a sentence. It is used at the end of a direct question. For example:

- **Where are you going? He asked.**
- **Has he arrived at the office yet?**

B- Do not use a question mark with an indirect question. An indirect question is really a statement about the question and therefore ends with a full stop. For example:

- **He asked us where we were going.**

C- The question mark may be used to indicate doubt. For example:

- **He was born in 1990 (?) and died in 1980.**

3. The exclamation mark

The exclamation mark is used after exclamations or exclamatory sentences. It indicates surprise, enthusiasm or loud speech. For example:

- **How happy everyone would be if there is no pain.**

Finally, note that question mark and exclamation mark both contain a dot under them (? !). It is therefore incorrect to write a full stop, colon, semi-colon, or comma after the

B- NON-END PUNCTUATION MARKS

1. The comma (,)

This is the most frequently used of all the question marks or stops. The comma indicates a short pause. Just as pauses and variations in voice pitch help to convey the meaning of spoken sentences, commas help to clarify the meaning of written sentences. The sound of a sentence when spoken can serve as a guide in using commas. As a general rule, a comma should be used whenever a slight pause is to be made. A pair of commas encloses parts of a sentence as well as indicates short pauses.

For example:

A- When the lightning struck Mohammed Ali fainted.

B- When the lightning struck Mohammed, Ali fainted.

Notice how the change in the position of the comma completely changes the meaning of the sentence. Sentence (a) could be written as:

Mohammed Ali fainted when the lightning struck.

Sentence (b) has a completely different meaning:

Ali fainted when the lightning struck Mohammed.

Commas are very important because the omission of a comma or the insertion of a comma in the wrong place can give an entirely different meaning from what you intend.

The main uses of the comma are as follows:

1. To separate the items in enumeration, for example:

- Baghdad, Mosul, and Basra are the largest cities in Iraq.**
- We can go to Basra by rail, by road, or by air.**

2. To mark off words and phrases like however, indeed, therefore, too, for instance, no doubt, in fact, etc. For example”

- This proved, however, to be a mistake.**
- He was, in fact, the best student in class.**

2. The semi colon (;)

The semi colon marks a longer pause than is indicated by a comma. The semi colon should be used when you want the reader to see that the thoughts contained in two independent clause are closely related. In a sense, the semi-colon is also a linking mark. It can show that a number of short sentences are linked in meaning.

For example:

The professor asked the student to close the door of the classroom; there was too much noise out in the hall.

We arrived late for the party; in fact, we were so late that everyone had left by the time we got there.

I walked up behind Ali as quickly as I could; however, he still heard me.

3. The colon (:)

The colon marks a longer pause than the semi colon or comma. The main uses of the colon are:

To stand for “ as follows “

- Lyric poetry includes various types: the ode, the sonnet, and the song.

2. To prepare the reader for a second thought contrasting or balanced with the first part of the sentence. For example:

- Speech is silver: silence is gold.

4. The dash (—)

The dash is used so that a sentence is broken off in the middle. For example:

- If you persist in following up the matter — but what is the use of my speaking?

The sentence may be broken off in order to expand or to add an explanation of what has been said.

- This machine is very easy to operate — you merely press the lever and turn the handle.

When a pair of dashes is used to separate parts of a sentence. For example:

- Schooldays — or so we are told — are the happiest days of our lives.

C- ENCLOSING PUNCTUATION MARKS

1. Brackets () []

A- Brackets, round () or square [] are used to enclose any words which are not grammatically necessary to the sentence, but which are added by way of explanation or as an aside. The words inside the brackets are said to be in parenthesis. For example:

- I know (at least, this is what I have been told) that he lost much money in business.

B- They are used to enclose cross-reference. The word abacus [see page 20] denotes a special educative toy.

2. Inverted commas (“ ”)

A- Inverted commas are used to enclose the exact words spoken by somebody, either in conversation with someone else or to himself as a thought. For example:

- The old gentleman was very worried. “I did have my ticket,” he said.

“That’s all right, sir,” answered the inspector kindly.

B- Inverted commas are also used to enclose quotations from speech or from books, and before and after titles of books, plays, magazines, newspapers, etc. For example:

- “The curfew tolls the knell of parting day” is the opening line of Gray’s “Elegy written in a country church yard”.

C- Never put inverted commas round a person’s real name or round name of a country, except when they are titles of books, plays, articles, poems, and so on. For example:

- Milton wrote “Paradise Lost” .

- Shakespeare wrote “Hamlet” .

D- PUNCTUATION MARKS USED WITHIN A WORD

1. The apostrophe (')

A- The apostrophe is used to indicate that a letter (or more than one letter) has been missed out. For example:

- three o'clock = three of the clock
- I'm = I am
- Haven't = have not
- It's = It is
- You're = you are

B- An apostrophe is used with the letter (s) after a noun to show possession. When one person is the owner, an (s) is added to the owing word. For example:

- The man's hand.
- Ali's book.

Plurals are usually formed by the addition of an (s'). When such formations are to possession, an apostrophe is added after the (s). For example:

- the boys' books.
- Smiths' home.
- ladies' coats.
- Workers' union.

There are some words, however, that do not become plural by adding an (**s**). With these words an (**'s**) is needed to indicate possession. For example”

- Men'**s** coats.
- children'**s** books.

When a singular noun ends with an (**s**) or (**z**) sound add (**s**) to such nouns of one syllable but add only the apostrophe to such nouns of two or more syllables. For example:

- James = James**s's**
- Dickens = Dickens**s's**

C- An apostrophe is used to indicate unusual plurals. For example”

- I was active during the 1960'**s**.
- The word book has two o'**s**.

2. The Hyphen (-)

A- A hyphen is used to make compound words. It shows close connection between two words or two parts of a word. For example:

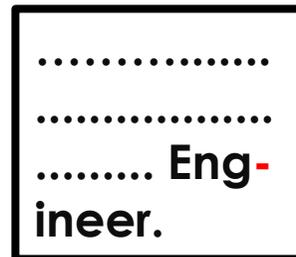
- a bad-tempered man
- a kind-hearted woman
- a ten-year-old boy
- two-sevenths
- twenty-seven
- three-eighths

B- It is used to link a prefix to a base. For example:

- anti-Nazi
- co-operative

C- It is used to indicate that printed word at the end of a line is not complete.

For example:



.....
.....
..... Eng-
ineer.

3. The abbreviation dot (.)

It resembles a full stop in shape. It is used as :

A- After a person's initials, but not always . For example:

- Mr. J. B. Shaw or J B Shaw

B- Notice that with capitals it is not used. For example:

- GB , UN , USA , etc., but used in expressions like: i.e. , e.g. , p.m. , a.m. , etc. , and so on.

2. MECHANICS

In addition to punctuation marks, we use certain other conventions to help make our meaning clear.

1. Capital Letters

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

A- Every sentence, and, in poetry, every line, must begin with a capital letter.

B- Proper nouns, and adjectives derived from them, must begin with capital letters. A proper noun is the name of a particular person, place, or thing. A proper adjective is derived from a proper noun. For example:

Iraq

Iraqi

Spain

Spanish

Shakespeare

Shakespearian

C- All the important words in the titles of books, plays, articles, etc., must begin with a capital letter. Articles (a , an , the), co-ordinating conjunctions, and short prepositions are not capitalized, except if they the first word of the sentence. For example:

- “**R**omeo and **J**uliet”

- “ **T**he **F**all of the **H**ouse of **U**sher”.

- “ **A** man for all **S**easons”

D- The names of the days of the week and the months of the year must be capitalized. But the names of the seasons are not capitalized unless they begin a sentence. For example:

- **M**onday

- **D**ecember

- **S**unday

- **A**pril

- **w**inter

- **s**pring

- **s**ummer

- **a**utumn

2. Numbers

A- All numbers except those that require more than three words are written out. For example:

ten , thirty – four , 155 , 78519

B- Use figures in dates and in references to times which include a.m. Or p.m. , for example:

3rd July , 1997 10:45 a.m. 5:30 p.m.

C- Do not begin a sentence with figures. For example:

- wrong : 356 people attended the game

right : Three hundred and fifty-six people attended the game.

Or

There were 356 people present at the game.

D- All numbers from 21 to 99 are hyphenated. For example:

33 thirty- three 78 seventy-eight

3. The Division of Words in Writing

Words sometimes have to be divided at the end of a line and part carried over to the next line. It is better to avoid doing this whenever possible. If, however, words are divided, it is important that they should be divided correctly. Use a **hyphen** only after the syllable that comes at the end of the line. Do not put a **single letter** of a word at the beginning of a line. Do not put (**-ed**) or any other **two-letter** ending at the beginning of a line. Do not divide **one-syllable** words such as “ **through** “ , “ **twelfth** ” , “ **house** ” , etc. Do not **split** in the middle of a syllable (write “ **infant** ” not “ **infa-nt** ”). If a word is already **hyphenated** it should be split only after the hyphen.