



Module: English Skills
Lesson: Commas



= Insert a comma

Example: While Sam regularly attends the engineering labs he does not attend the class lectures.



= These symbols are used to tell the author to delete something.

Obviously, if the symbol appears over top of a comma, it means “delete the comma.”

Example: While, Sam regularly attends the engineering labs, he does not attend the class lectures.

Comma Use: Some Basic Rules

1. Use a comma to separate items in a series (words, phrases, clauses):

The engineering students are willing to take Monday, Wednesday, and Friday classes and do not mind a three-day schedule. (*Note: The final comma before the conjunction is optional.*)

Faculty members enjoy having engineering majors in their classes as these students are willing to work hard, to pay attention in class, and to complete homework assignments.

2. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence:

The engineering students are willing to take Friday afternoon classes, but English majors typically avoid taking any classes on Friday.

Kyle works as a math tutor on Friday afternoons, and he earns a hefty paycheck for his efforts.

3. Use a comma after introductory words, phrases, and clauses:

On Friday afternoons, Kyle works as a math tutor.

Although engineering majors tend to be celebrated for being great mathematicians, many are also quite good writers.

4. Use commas to set off words and phrases that interrupt the flow of a sentence:

The new electrical circuits lab, according to Prof. Rosen, is truly remarkable.

The 3-D printing lab, which is located next to Wooster Science Building, has attracted many intrigued visitors.

5. Use commas to set off quotations:

“Kelly,” said Prof. Medina, “hand me that beaker.”

6. Use commas to separate the date from the month and when separating a city from a state:

July 6, 1535

Albany, New York