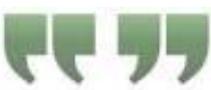
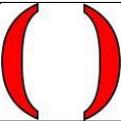


Developing your key writing skills

Tips and guidance



PUNCTUATION EXPLAINED

Capital letter		begins a sentence also used for names of people, places and titles
Full stop		indicates that a sentence has finished
Comma		indicates a slight pause in a sentence, separates clauses in a complex sentence and items in a list
Question mark		goes at the end of a question
Exclamation mark		goes at the end of a dramatic sentence to show surprise or shock, also shows shouting
Apostrophe		shows that letter(s) have been left out or indicates possession
Speech marks		indicates direct speech, the exact words spoken or being quoted
Colon		introduces a list, a statement or a quotation in a sentence
Semicolon		separates two sentences that are related and of equal importance, it takes the place of a connective also used to separate complicated lists, where each item has several words
Dash		separates extra information from the main clause by holding words apart, they are stronger than a comma
Brackets		can be used like dashes, they separate off extra information from the main clause
Ellipsis		to show a passage of time, to hook the reader in and create suspense

Using Apostrophes



Apostrophes have two uses:

1. **Apostrophes show you that some letters have been taken out to shorten it. When two words are made into one, we call them contractions.**

- **Do not** becomes **don't**.
- **I will** becomes **I'll**.
- **Could have** becomes **could've**.

I'm I haven't you're
I've She's isn't won't
We've He's not wouldn't
shan't they've shouldn't

The apostrophe goes where the letters have been removed.

You use apostrophes this way in **informal** writing. You should not shorten words when you are writing more formally – such as in essays.

NOTE - sometimes words are shortened in an irregular way. The apostrophe, however, is still used to show where letters are missing.

For example: **will not** becomes **won't**.

2. **Apostrophes show you that something belongs to something else. To show belonging you add 's**

- The cat's tail - says that the tail belongs to the cat.
- The car's lights - says that the lights belong to the car.
- Tony's hair - says that the hair belongs to Tony.

Usually the apostrophe goes before the **s**.

If the owner already ends in **s** then the apostrophe goes after the **s** that is already there. You just need to add an apostrophe. For example:

- The dogs' bowls - says that the bowls belong to some dogs.
- The boys' coats - says that the coats belong to some boys.
- The cars' wheels - says that the wheels belong to some cars.

Watch out for plurals that don't end in **s**. Words like men and children don't end in **s**, but they are talking about lots of people. These words use 's to show possession. For example:

- The men's hats - says that the hats belong to the men.
- The women's house - says that the house belongs to the women.
- The people's princess – says that the princess belongs to the people.

It, when showing possession does not have an apostrophe. For example:

- Its leg was huge.
- The cat licked its paw.
- The book had lost its cover.



Sentences

A sentence must start with a capital and end with a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark. A sentence must contain a **main** clause (also called an **independent** clause). A main clause is a group of words which contains a verb and makes sense on its own.

*He walked to the end of the road.
I shivered.*

Simple sentences

A sentence which contains **only one main clause** is known as a simple sentence. Simple sentences are often short and simple:

The dog barked.
I love books.

However you can modify a simple sentence by adding adjectives and adverbs for extra information:

The big black dog barked loudly.
I absolutely love fiction books.

Compound sentences

A compound sentence consists of **two main clauses** joined together by a **co-ordinating conjunction**. Co-ordinating conjunctions are words which join two parts of a sentence together so that neither part is more important than the other e.g. and, but, or, so, nor, either, neither.

David likes music **and** Susan likes shopping.
I am hungry **but** there is no time for lunch.
He was late **so** he ran for the bus.

Complex sentences

A complex sentence consists of a **main clause plus one or more subordinate clauses** (also called **dependent clauses**). A subordinate clause cannot stand on its own and may come before, after or in the middle of the main clause.

Sweets are very nice **although they are bad for your teeth**.
Although they are bad for your teeth, sweets are very nice.
Sweets, **although bad for your teeth**, are very nice.

You can recognise subordinate clauses by looking for the **subordinating conjunctions** which introduce them. Subordinating conjunctions are words which join two parts of a sentence so that one part is less important than the other. E.g. although, because, if, when, until, unless, after, before, as, in order that, while.

Minor sentences

Minor sentences are those which, strictly speaking, are not sentences at all. They may lack a subject or a main verb but nevertheless we understand what is meant.

Wish you were here.
No parking.



Homophones

Homophones are words which have the same sound, but have a different meaning and spelling. Here are some of the most tricky ones:

Allowed/aloud

We are **allowed** to go.
He whispered **aloud**.

Hear/here

Can you **hear** me at the back?
Here it is. Over here!

Its/it's

The dog wagged **its** tail.
It's not fair. (It is..)
It's been raining. (It has...)

Know/no

Do you **know** the answer?
No. I have **no** idea.

One/ won

Only **one** man came to the presentation.
I **won** a prize at the competition.

Our/ Are

It was **our** car
There **are** many shops in Birmingham

Past/ passed

She was stuck in the **past**.
She had **passed** her exam.

Piece/ peace

I had a **piece** of pie for dessert.
We all hope to live in **peace**.

Their/there/they're

They have lost **their** cat.
There is a present for you.
They're here. (They are...)

Threw/ through

He **threw** the ball to his father.
He went **through** the tunnel.

To/too/two

Everyone wants **to** come to my party.
I've eaten **too** much. You have **too**.
Bicycles have **two** wheels.

Weather/ whether

The **weather** has been quite beautiful this week.
I don't **whether** he will come or not.

Were/we're/where

(rhymes with her) We **were** hoping you would win.
(rhymes with ear) **We're** very pleased.
(rhymes with air) **Where** is my shirt?

Which/ witch

Which vacation should we choose?
Sarah was burned as a **witch** during the Witch Trials

Whole/hole

The **whole** school was invited.
I have a **hole** in my shoe.

Whose/who's

Whose pencil case is this?
Who's coming to dinner? (Who is...)
Who's been eating my porridge? (Who has..)

Wood/ would

The desk is made out of **wood**.
I **would** like to visit you soon.

Write/right

Just **write** your name here.
He was **right**.

Your/You're

Where is **your** homework?
You're late! (You are...)



Some commonly misspelt words with spelling advice to help you remember the correct word



achieve	i before e	necessary	one c, two s's
across	one c	noticeable	remember the middle e
apparently	-ent not -ant	occasion	two cs, one s
appearance	ends with -ance	pavilion	one l
argument	no e after the u	persistent	ends with -ent
basically	ends with -ally	piece	i before e
beginning	double n before the -ing	politician	ends with -cian
believe	i before e	possession	two s's in the middle and two at the end
business	begins with busi-	preferred, preferring	two rs
calendar	-ar not -er	propaganda	begins with propa-
completely	ends with -ely	publicly	ends with -cly
definitely	-ite- not -ate-	really	two ls
disappear	one s, two ps	receive	e before i
disappoint	one s, two ps	referred, referring	two rs
embarrass	two rs, two s's	religious	ends with -gious
environment	n before the m	remember	-mem- in the middle
existence	ends with -ence	resistance	ends with -ance
familiar	ends with -iar	sense	ends with -se
finally	two ls	separate	-par- in the middle
foreign	e before i	siege	i before e
forty	begins with for-	successful	two cs, two s's
forward	begins with for-	surprise	begins with sur-
friend	i before e	therefore	ends with -fore
further	begins with fur-	threshold	one h in the middle
government	n before the m	tomorrow	one m, two rs
guard	begins with gua-	truly	no e
happened	ends with -ened	unfortunately	ends with -ely
humorous	-mor- in the middle	until	one l at the end
immediately	ends with -ely	weird	e before i
independent	ends with -ent	wherever	one e in the middle
interrupt	two rs	which	begins with wh-
knowledge	remember the d		

Word classes

Nouns - naming words

Nouns give a name to a person, place, animal, idea or object

Susan, Bromsgrove, kangaroo, table, happiness

Proper nouns

A **noun** used as a name for unique individuals, events, or places.

Note - Susan and Bromsgrove start with a capital letter because they are **proper nouns**.

The **dog** made **Susan** Laugh.

Verbs – doing words

To jump, to shout, to experiment, to discuss

He **jumped** with joy when he got his amazing exam results.

Adjectives – words to describe nouns

Beautiful, clever, cruel

She was a **beautiful** woman.

Adverbs – words to describe verbs

Softly, quickly, kindly

He spoke very **softly** when he gave her the news.

Pronouns – replace nouns

I, he, she, it

You, your, mine, our, their, we, us

Susan was so happy that **she** was going to the concert with **us**.

Conjunctions– linking words in a sentence

And, but, moreover, so, because

I like going to Spain **because** the weather is lovely.

Prepositions – words used with a noun to show place, position or time

In, with, through, to, at

He went **in** the house **at** 2 o'clock.

Determiners – help you to be more specific about which noun

A dog, **The** dog, **Some** dogs, **Every** dog, **This** dog

Interjection – words that are often used to express joy, pain or surprise

Oh wow! It's beautiful.

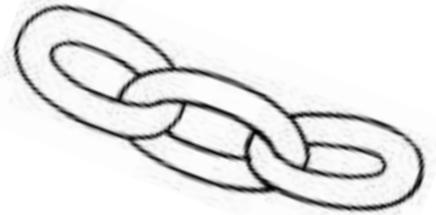
Gosh, I'm hungry.



Some useful connectives

For adding information

And	also	as well as
moreover	too	furthermore



For sequencing ideas or events

firstly	secondly	thirdly
finally	eventually	then
next	meanwhile	afterwards

whilst

since

To compare

equally	likewise	similarly
as with	like	in the same way



To contrast

whereas	instead of	alternatively
otherwise	unlike	but

on the other hand

To show cause and effect

because	so	therefore
thus	consequently	



To further explain an idea

Although	however	unless	except
apart from	yet	if	as long as

To emphasise

above all	in particular	especially
significantly	indeed	notably



To give examples

for example	such as	for instance
in the case of	as revealed by	

Instead of 'shows'

Implies	conveys	indicates	describes	infers
displays	introduces	emphasises	portrays	proves
establishes	presents	exhibits	reinforces	explains
reveals	exposes	suggests	highlights	hints
symbolises	illuminates	unveils	illustrates	clarifies
confirms	demonstrates	produces	represents	signifies