



Commas

The comma was invented to help readers. Without it, sentence parts can collide into one another unexpectedly causing mis-readings. Use the following list of common comma uses for reference while writing!

Use commas...

→ Before a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS) joining independent clauses

- ◆ Ex: The Writing Center helps students become better writers, and we enjoy what we do!

→ After an introductory clause or phrase

- ◆ Ex: When students prepare for a Writing Center appointment, they usually collect any material they want to share with their tutor.

→ To set off transitional phrases

- ◆ Ex: In addition, sometimes students prepare questions for their tutor in advance of an appointment.
- ◆ Ex: The Writing Center is a peer-tutoring organization; therefore, we provide a comfortable environment for students.

→ Between all items in a list

- ◆ Ex: We can help you understand an assignment, brainstorm, with thesis statements, and much more!

→ Between adjectives not joined with “and”

- ◆ Ex: You will find kind, helpful tutors in the Writing Center.

→ To set off nonessential elements in a sentence.

- ◆ Ex: The Writing Center, located in 264 Bancroft, is a peer-tutoring organization.
- ◆ Ex: Tutors are required to take a class and intern in the Writing Center, which can be a bit intimidating at first.
- ◆ Ex: One of the Graduate Assistants in the Writing Center, Josh, really enjoys helping other students with creative writing.

→ With expressions like “he/she/they said”

- ◆ Ex: She said, “I always feel better after a Writing Center appointment!”
- ◆ Ex: My HMXP professors said, “I will give you extra credit if you go to the Writing Center.”

*The above material is borrowed from Winthrop University’s eighth edition of *Rules for Writers*, pages 294-308. Please see *Rules for Writers* for more specific information and/or more examples.