

Punctuation Cheat Sheet

Apostrophes

- Use to show possession or in a contraction.
 - Jill's uniform
 - Plurals: board members' votes, Mrs. Williams' registration form
 - It's Monday (signifies omission – it is)
 - You're going to be late (signifies omission – you are)
 - Your hat is getting wet (signifies possession)
- Do not use when referring to a group of people.
 - The Halters want us to meet them at the zoo
- Use one apostrophe if two people own a single project; if ownership is separate, it's indicated by an apostrophe after each name.
 - Kylie and Tara's Bronze Award project (joint ownership)
 - Kylie's and Tara's Bronze Award pins (separate ownership)

Commas

- Do not use a comma between the month and year (e.g. May 2010).
- Use a comma to separate the day from the year (e.g. January 26, 2010).
- If used in a sentence, the year is set off from the rest of the sentence with a comma (e.g. On October 1, 2009, the new membership year began).
- Use a comma to introduce a quote, unless it is a partial or indirect quote (e.g. Jan said, "Girl Scouts is great").
- Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction joining independent clauses (e.g. Nearly everyone loves to eat Thin Mint cookies, but I prefer to eat Tagalong cookies).
- Use a comma between all items in a simple series except the final conjunction (e.g. Carrie, Emma and Morgan went to the event). For a series of complex terms, though, use commas after each for clarity.
- Use a comma between coordinate adjectives (e.g. Lucia's Gold Award project was an amazing, admirable display of leadership).
- Use a comma to set off a non-restrictive clause or phrase (e.g. Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington, which was established in 2008, serves girls in 37 counties).

Quotations

- Use quotation marks to enclose a direct quotation.
- Use single quotation marks to enclose a quotation within a quotation.
- Place periods, commas, question marks and exclamation points inside quotation marks.
- Do not use quotation marks to draw attention to familiar slang, to disown trite expressions or to justify an attempt at humor.

Other Punctuation

- Punctuation should be outside of the parentheses even if the item in parentheses is a separate sentence.
- If a bullet point is a complete sentence or finishes a sentence, use appropriate punctuation. Must be consistent.
- Do not capitalize seasons and numbers of the days in a month (e.g. fifth of June).
- Use numbered lists if items are in sequence; bulleted lists for items that are non-sequential