

The Comma Sutra



Item	Reason/Rule
Introductory Element	<p>Place commas after introductory information. This signals to the reader that the actual sentence is coming.</p> <p>Ex. Before you add a comma, you should understand the reason for it.</p>
Independent Clauses	<p>Place a comma between two independent clauses joined by <i>for</i>, <i>and</i>, <i>nor</i>, or <i>yet</i> (FAN BOYS). This signals to the reader that one complete thought (sentence) is ending and another is beginning.</p> <p>Ex. I am on jury duty, and I am making a film called <i>Jury Gone Wild</i>.</p>
Sentence Interrupter	<p>Place a comma around words or phrases that interrupt the sentence. This is essentially telling the reader that this one little element isn't necessary, and that you are now getting back to the good stuff.</p> <p>Ex. Jury duty is, I believe, karma in action.</p>
Items in a Series	<p>Place a comma between two or more items in a series if they are not separated by the word <i>and</i>. In this case, the comma is replaced the word <i>and</i> for convenience and to avoid repetition.</p> <p>Ex. He is tall, slim, and pleasant.</p> <p>(Note that without the comma, you would have to say "He is tall <i>and</i> slim <i>and</i> pleasant.")</p>
Conventional Situation	<p>This is the garbage rule that covers commas after salutations in friendly letters, commas between city and state, and commas after dates.</p>