

Hands-On English with Linking Blocks Numbered List of Comma Rules

Number:

Rule:

1. Use commas in a series of three items or more.



Dad bought matches, flashlight, lantern, and wood.

Do not use a comma in compounds of only two items.

2. Use a comma with a GREEN conjunction between complete sentences. Look for the BLUE /RED simple sentence on each side.



Mom baked the cookies, and we ate them.

Do not use a comma by itself to join two sentences. That is a comma splice.

3. Use a comma between PURPLE adjectives that modify equally. If the word "and" would fit there, use a comma.



We watched the exciting, fun, challenging game.

Never use a comma between a PURPLE adjective and the BLUE noun that it modifies.

4. Use a comma to set off introductory elements.



Usually, the dog barks.



After the game, we get pizza.

5. Use a comma for sentence interrupters.



Towards evening, Nick, please shut the windows.

6. Use commas before opening and closing quotation marks when the quotation interrupts the sentence.



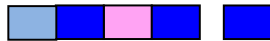
Mark told Jackie, "Go jump in the lake."

In the following sentence, the quotation doesn't interrupt the sentence. There is no pause, so commas aren't used.



Mark told Jackie to "go jump in the lake."

7. Use commas to separate numbers in dates. If the sentence continues after a date, use another comma.



My birthday is February 14, 2001.

8. Use commas to separate names of cities and states. If the sentence continues after the city and state, use another comma.



San Luis Obispo, California, is near the Pacific coast.

9. Use commas to set off appositives before and after if the appositive gives extra, unnecessary information that could be removed without damaging the sentence. Think of appositives as sentence interrupters.



Regis, my new puppy, snuggles with me.