

# 4 English punctuation



1 full stop



2 comma



3 colon



4 semicolon



5 apostrophe



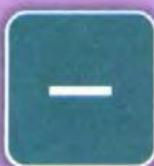
6 question mark



7 slash



8 brackets



9 dash



10 exclamation mark



11 hyphen



12 quotation marks

## Some important punctuation rules

A **full stop** is used at the end of a sentence that is not a question or an exclamation, and is sometimes used in **abbreviations**. Each new sentence must begin with a **capital letter**.

A **comma** in writing is like a **pause** in speech. It is used:

- to **separate** parts of a sentence, e.g. *After we left, someone tried to phone us.*
- often between adjectives, e.g. *He bought a powerful, expensive car.*
- to separate words in a **list**, though it is usually **omitted** before *and*, e.g. *I went to France, Germany, Italy and Spain.*
- when words or phrases **interrupt** the normal order of a sentence, e.g. *I decided, however, that I needed something to eat first.*

A **colon** is often used to introduce **further details** such as an explanation or a list, e.g. *The shop is full of antiques: tables, chairs, wardrobes, mirrors and so on.*

A **semicolon** is sometimes used in formal writing **instead of** a full stop when two sentences are very closely **connected**. It is also used to separate two main clauses, e.g. *I went round this morning; nobody was there.* These are often clauses not joined by a link word **such as** *and* or *but*.

**Apostrophes** show where we have **left** letters **out of** a word, e.g. *I'm* = I am; *don't* = do not; *I'd* = I would OR I had. They are also used to show that something belongs to somebody or something, e.g. *Mark's car* = the car belonging to Mark; *the children's room*.

## GLOSSARY

abbreviation	a short form of a word: <i>TV</i> is an <b>abbreviation</b> for <i>television</i> .
capital letter	A B C are <b>capital letters</b> ; a b c are <b>small letters</b> .
pause	a short period of time when sb stops talking
separate	keep people or things away from each other
list	a series of names, items, or numbers: <i>a shopping list, a list of countries</i>
omit formal	If you <b>omit</b> sth, you don't include it. SYN <i>leave sth out</i>

interrupt	stop sth or sb so that it or they cannot continue
further	more, extra: <i>Do you have any <b>further</b> questions?</i>
details	small pieces of information about sth
instead of sb/sth	in the place of sb/sth
connect	put two or more things together SYN <b>join</b>
such as	You use <b>such as</b> to introduce an example. SYN <i>like</i>

**1 Complete the words.**

► com <u>m</u> <u>a</u>	4 bra _____
1 full s _____	5 semi- _____
2 col _____	6 exclu _____ m _____
3 hyp _____	7 apo _____

**2 What punctuation is used in 1–8 below? You don't need to repeat full stop each time.**

► We went home early. full stop.....

1 She had beautiful, long hair. ....

2 What are you doing? ....

3 Congratulations! ....

4 It's too late. ....

5 Breakfast was incredible: fruit, eggs, toast and cheese! ....

6 Someone (not me) left the door open. ....

7 It was only a five-minute walk – he still took a taxi. ....

8 'It's only me,' he said. ....

**3 Underline the main stress in these words. Use the  to help you. Practise saying the words.**

► connect	3 apostrophe	6 separate	9 question mark
1 details	4 omit	7 connect	10 abbreviation
2 instead	5 interrupt	8 shopping list	11 exclamation

**4 Complete the sentences.**

► An **abbreviation** is a short form of a word.

1 A **pause** is a short period of time when somebody stops .....

2 If you give **details** of something, you give more .....

3 **Omit** and **leave out** have a similar meaning, but **omit** is more .....

4 **Like** and **such as** can both be used to introduce an .....

5 If you **interrupt** a conversation, you ..... it.

6 If you **connect** something, you put two or more things .....

**5 Complete the sentences.**

► Sentences have to begin with a capital letter.

1 I wrote a ..... of irregular verbs in my notebook.

2 I would use this dictionary ..... of the other one; it's much better.

3 We often use **and** or **but** to ..... two parts of a sentence.

4 In this application form, you have to give ..... of your work experience.

5 **Prep.** is an ..... for **preposition**.

6 You need to use more adjectives ..... as **beautiful** and **attractive**.

7 The teacher said we can ..... out Exercise 5 and go on to Exercise 6.

8 You can use brackets to ..... information from the rest of the sentence.

9 The director had to ..... the lesson to tell us to leave the building quickly.

10 I always write a ..... list when I buy food.

**6 What punctuation is missing, and where?**

► We live there. A full stop is missing at the end of the sentence.

1 she works in Bristol. ....

2 He's a tall thin boy. ....

3 The book is *in* on the table. Which is correct? ....

4 We have two choices stay here and wait, or go and look for them. ....

5 This is my boyfriends watch. ....

6 After that fortunately we had no more problems. ....

