

# When to Use Commas in English Sentences

## After a conjunction to link complete sentences

- a. When you are joining two complete sentences, use a conjunction (and, but, for, or, nor, so) and put the comma before the conjunction.

**Example** – “I wanted to go to the movie, but I had an exam the next day.”

This example is correct because “I wanted to go to the movie” and “I had an exam the next day” are both complete sentences. However, if you remove the “I” from the sentence, you no longer have a complete sentence and should not use a comma.

## After an introductory clause or phrase

- b. When any type of introductory phrase or clause is followed by an independent clause, place a comma between them.

**Example** – “Once he figured out how to do the calculations, the class became easy for him.”

## When providing additional information

- c. When adding additional information to the sentence, use the word “which” (or “who” if a person) and set off the information with commas.

**Example** – “The dinner, which was cooked by my uncle, was delicious.”

- d. When providing necessary information to the sentence, use the word “that” (or “who” if a person) and do not use a comma.

**Example** – “The dinner that was cooked by my uncle was delicious.”

- e. The first rule also applies to appositives, in which you do not use an additional word, but rather just the information alone. When using an appositive, set it off with two commas.

**Example** – “Jane Doe, our history professor, was in the library.”