

Comma Uses

Reteaching

Use **commas** after *first*, *second*, and so on when they introduce a series. Use **commas** between two or more adjectives of equal rank that modify the same noun. In a series of three or more, use a **comma** after every item in the series except the last one.

When packing for a long hike, follow these steps: first, pack comfortable, easy-care clothing; second, pack toiletries such as soap, shampoo, and suntan lotion; and third, include any first-aid supplies or medicines you may need.

Use **commas** after introductory words or mild interjections such as *oh*, *yes*, *no*, and *well*; after an introductory prepositional phrase that contains additional prepositional phrases; and after verbal phrases, adverb clauses, and adverbs used as introductory elements.

Yes, it's important to plan the trip carefully.

In an emergency in the forest, these items will come in handy.

When you're out on the trail, you'll appreciate the extra time you took to pack.

Use **commas** to set off words of direct address, such as names, titles, terms of respect, and phrases used to address an individual directly. Use **commas** to set off one or more words that interrupt the flow of thought in a sentence.

Tina, you are ready, or so it seems, to begin your trek.

Use **commas** to set off these nonessential elements: clauses, participial phrases, and appositives.

This trail, which my brother walked last year, will be difficult.

My partner, interested in photography, is taking along two cameras.

My favorite sport, hiking, is both inexpensive and fun.

Using Commas Correctly

Insert commas where necessary in the following sentences.

1. We toured the gardens in the following sequence: first the herb garden; second the lily pond; third the camellia garden; fourth the rose garden.
2. We learned that the oil in the jojoba plant is used in food preparation in lubricants for automobiles and in cosmetics.
3. Prickly pear cacti have flattened padlike stems.
4. While walking through the garden we were awed by the size of the eucalyptus trees the beauty of the water lilies and the agelessness of the yuccas.
5. Yes we enjoyed the different kinds of cacti.
6. Helen have you ever seen such a tall dangerous-looking cactus before?
7. This garden one of the oldest in the state is maintained by the local botanical club.
8. That herb which has been used in medicines for years grows well in this climate.
9. We decided at least I did that we would begin a garden at home.
10. The blossoms of the camellia may be red white pink or spotted with color.
11. We decided that these were the things we liked best in the garden: first the sweetbriar roses; second the golden barrel cactus; third the red camellias.

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More Practice

A. Using Commas

Underline the words in each sentence that should be followed by a comma. If no commas are necessary, write **None** on the line.

1. My favorite outdoor activities are hiking skiing and swimming. _____
2. At the end of this rugged steep trail you will get a great view of the valley below. _____
3. Michael can you read that trail marker? _____
4. The Appalachian Trail if I'm not mistaken extends almost 2,000 miles. _____
5. Naturally I would like to hike that trail sometime in my life. _____
6. The places I plan to hike are the following: first the Appalachian Trail; second a mountain trail in the Alps; third the trail to the Mount Everest base camp in Nepal. _____
7. Well I suppose I need to get into better shape for any of those treks. _____
8. While I see beautiful scenery I will be increasing my lung capacity and strengthening my leg muscles. _____
9. Planning my next trip will take time I'm sure. _____
10. My friend Chris who has already hiked in this area will come along on the trip. _____
11. By the time we return from our hike I will be in even better shape . _____
12. What I experience on the trail will give me more confidence. _____

B. Using Commas in Writing

Insert commas where they are needed in the following paragraphs.

Many novels have been made into movies. The film *The Grapes of Wrath* was based on the novel by John Steinbeck. The story centers on an Oklahoma family named the Joads. They lose their home by bank foreclosure in the 1930s pack up their meager belongings and migrate to California to start a new life. The film starred Henry Fonda Jane Darwell and John Carradine. The talented creative actors worked together to convey a feeling of compassion for the poor.

Oliver! was a musical based on Charles Dickens's novel *Oliver Twist*. The fantastic choreography lively music and spectacular setting made this movie a memorable one. The songs "Consider Yourself" and "Food, Glorious Food" remain popular.

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Application

A. Writing with Commas

Add commas where they are needed in the following paragraph.

Hiking is a sport that can be enjoyed by almost anyone. It is healthy inexpensive and fun. What are some basic rules of hiking? Well safe hiking demands that you do the following: first build up your endurance before you begin a long difficult hike; second take along necessary first aid and medical supplies; third never hike alone in the wilderness no matter how confident you feel. Of course just walking around your neighborhood is a good way to get into shape. One more advanced kind of hiking orienteering requires skills in map reading using a compass and traversing unfamiliar territory. A related sport that hikers enjoy is mountaineering. Mountain treks which should be attempted by only the most experienced of hikers can be difficult and dangerous. Even taking the danger into account it is clear that hiking is a sport you should consider trying.

B. Using Commas in Writing

Rewrite the sentences by following the directions in parentheses.

1. They packed the picnic basket. (Include a series of items.)

2. This was going to be a feast. (Include two adjectives of equal rank that modify the same noun.)

3. When they planned the menu, they considered three factors: nutrition; the expense of the food; the preferences of the guests. (Include *first*, *second*, and *third* to introduce a series.)

4. The picnic was a success for a number of reasons. (Include a series of reasons.)

5. The guests had a wonderful time. (Include a nonessential clause.)
