



WRITING WORKSHOP 3

Sponsored by the Office of Graduate Studies

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Today's Topics

Period •

Comma ,

Semicolon ;

Colon :

NOTE

Some of the rules presented in this PowerPoint will vary depending on style guide, dictionary, and region.

Most of the information in these slides come from the following:

- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition
- The Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition
- Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition

PERIOD



PERIOD – SPACING & LOCATION

Periods are used at the end of sentences and are followed by a single space

(**Note:** while the majority of publications and style guides recommend a single space between sentences, the newest edition of the APA publication manual recommends two spaces for drafts)

In American English, periods and commas go inside quotation marks

Periods will typically go outside of parentheses that are included within another sentence (such as this).

PERIOD - ABBREVIATIONS

Periods are used with some abbreviations:

- initials of names (J. R. R. Tolkien)
- “United States” used as an adjective (U.S. Navy)
- Latin abbreviations (i.e.)

PERIOD - ABBREVIATIONS

Periods should be avoided with the following:

- state names (MO)
- capital letter abbreviations/acronyms (APA, NASA)
- at the end of a web address (grad.mst.edu).
- measurement abbreviations (cm, ft, kg)
Exception: in. for inches

COMMA | ,

COMMA

From the Chicago Manual of Style (p. 311):

“Especially in spoken contexts, [the comma] usually denotes a slight pause. In formal prose, however, logical considerations come first. Effective use of the comma involves good judgment, with ease of reading the end in view.”

COMMA – USES

Use a comma when listing three or more items

- I need to buy milk, bread, and eggs.

Note: Some style guides (such as AP) avoid the serial (or Oxford) comma. For technical papers, it is best to include the comma to avoid confusion.

Confusing: Bring Mary, a singer and a dancer.

COMMA – USES

Use a comma when joining two complete sentences combined with a coordinating conjunction

- Cedar shavings covered the floor, and paper was available for shredding and nest building.
- I adjusted the temperature and turned off the light.

COMMA – USES

Use a comma in a sentence that starts with a subordinating conjunction (or introductory phrase)

- Although he was tired, John had to keep working on his project.

COMMA – USES

Use a comma in conditional “if/then” statements

- If you have any questions, please let me know.

Use a comma to emphasize contrast

- She received a high mark on the exam, not the low one she expected.

COMMA – USES

Use a comma with nonessential clauses and phrases

- The game, which was created in 1908, is very competitive.
- I discussed my paper with the librarian, who said that I should add more sources.
- This summer I'll be traveling to the city where I was born.
- This summer I'll be traveling to Arlington, where I was born.

Note: phrases and nonessential elements in the middle of a sentence will be offset with commas before *and* after

COMMA – USES

Use a comma with nonessential appositives

- My wife, Pam, likes pizza. (you only have one wife)
- My sister Pam likes pizza. (you have more than one sister)
- Shakespeare's play *Julius Caesar* is read in many high schools.
(Shakespeare has multiple plays)

COMMA – USES

Use a comma after e.g., i.e., and etc.

- Some believe that serif typefaces (e.g., Times New Roman and Georgia) are easier to read.
- Arial, Helvetica, Times New Roman, etc., are commonly used in print and digital formats.

Note: You do not need a comma after “etc.” if it ends a sentence.
Do not use “etc.” if your list is introduced with *such as*.

COMMA – OTHER USES

Use a comma in a direct address: Rachel, see me after class.

Use a comma with dates

- The presentation took place Wednesday, April 19, 2017, in Norwood 208.

Use a comma in numbers over 999: 1,056,955 (Note: there are many exceptions.)

Use a comma with cities and states

- We traveled to Springfield, Missouri, to attend the seminar.

COMMA – OTHER USES

Use a comma with *the more...the more* phrases

- The more I thought about food, the more I wanted to eat.
- Exception: short phrases such as *the more the merrier*

Use a comma with *that is, namely,* and similar expressions

- The committee (that is, its more influential members) wanted to drop the matter.

Use a comma with *or* when meaning *in other words*

- The online video blog, or vlog, was quite entertaining.

COMMA - AVOID

Do not use a comma before a restrictive clause

- The switch that stops the recording device also controls the light.

Do not use a comma to separate the subject from the predicate

- Preparing and submitting his report to the committee for evaluation and possible publication was one of the most difficult tasks Bill had ever attempted.
- Students that prepare, submit, and publish during graduate school are more likely to find employment. (comma between items of a list, but no comma after *publish*)

Do not use a comma between two parts of a compound predicate

- All subjects completed the first phase of the experiment and returned the following week for Phase 2.

COMMA – “such as” and “including”

Do not use a comma with *such as* and *including* when included in a restrictive clause

- Games such as *Monopoly!* are best played with a group.

Use a comma with *such as* or *including* when included in a nonrestrictive clause

- Some of the dogs in the parade, such as the Dalmatians and Pomeranians, were very energetic.

Note: Be careful when using *including* to introduce a list.

Experiments including Case 1 and Case 2 were used to test this theory.

(Were only experiments that included Case 1 and Case 2 used, or are Case 1 and Case 2 examples of experiments that were included?)

COMMA – before “as”

You may or not need a comma before *as* depending on the meaning of your sentence:

- I drove the car home as it was snowing. (it was snowing while you were driving)
- I drove the car home, as it was snowing. (you drove home because it started snowing)
- Communication patterns must be created so that parallel transmissions are possible when using the RS formula or the DL method, as shown in Figure 1.
(Figure 1 shows an example of how patterns must be created.)
- Communication patterns must be created so that parallel transmissions are possible when using the RS formula or the DL method as shown in Figure 1.
(Figure 1 modifies *using* and forms a restrictive clause.
Parallel transmissions are possible when using the formula/method in the way shown in Figure 1.)

COMMA – “therefore,” “thus,” “however,” etc.

You may or not need a comma before/after adverbs such as *therefore, thus, and however.*

- Current studies have tried to make gasoline-powered engines more efficient. A truly efficient gasoline-powered engine remains, however, a pipe dream.
- Other sources of energy must therefore be explored.
- Gasoline-powered engines are inefficient and thus unsuitable for this study.
- Gasoline-powered engines are inefficient; therefore, other sources must be investigated.

COMMA EXERCISE

1. In separate studies, it was shown that inhibition of NO synthesis resulted in a reduction in blood flow to portions of the lung that were hypoxic.
2. In Figure 4.3, on the other hand, the diameters all appear much smaller.
3. Free water has a high (relative) permittivity at frequencies ranging from 1 GHz to 10 GHz, and it decreases thereafter, as shown in Figure 2.
4. Thus, observations of less change in the loss factor of the reactive sample compared to the non-reactive sample are consistent with the stated hypothesis in the previous paragraph (i.e., more sensitivity of S-band to free water).

SEMICOLON | ;

SEMICOLON– NO CONJUNCTION

Use a semicolon with no conjunction between two closely related independent clauses

- She spent most of her time surfing; she needed a waterproof watch.
- The upperclassmen are permitted off-campus lunch; the underclassmen must remain on campus.

SEMICOLON- WITH ADVERB

Use a semicolon with an adverb to connect two closely related independent clauses

- The snowstorm was approaching the airport; consequently, all flights had been postponed.
- The experiment could have been accomplished with only two test subjects; however, eight were used to increase accuracy.

SEMICOLON- EXPRESSIONS

A semicolon can be used before expressions such as *that is*, *for example*, or *namely* when followed by an independent clause.

- I spend a lot of time outside; for example, I went on a camping trip last summer.

SEMICOLON- COMPLEX LIST

A semicolon can be used in a list that has internal punctuation

- The membership of the international commission was as follows: France, 4; Germany, 5; Italy, 3; United States, 7.
- The patterns were blue, green, red; red, green, blue; and green, blue, red.

SEMICOLON EXERCISE

1. The loss factor measurements appear to confirm the trend for saline water [39]; however, direct measurements of pore solution composition (not readily possible) are needed to fully validate this.
2. The sonde presently used is located in the center of the borehole; this location enables the engineer to reduce microphonics and standoff sensitivity.
3. As an engineering assistant, I had a variety of duties: participating in pressure ventilation surveys; completing daily drafting, surveying, and data compilation; and acting as a company representative during a roof-bolt pull test.

COLON | :

COLON– USES

Use a colon after an independent clause to elaborate on or amplify the preceding information

- There are three types of muscle in the body: cardiac, smooth, and skeletal.
- The watch came with a choice of three bands: stainless steel, plastic, or leather.

COLON– USES

A colon may be used between two independent clauses (similar to a semicolon)

- The research is conclusive: climate change is a reality.
- I had a choice to make: I could either stay here, or I could go with them.

COLON– USES

A colon may be used to introduce a series of related sentences

- I have several plans for my immediate future: First, I'm going to win the lottery. Second, I'm going to buy a unicorn. Third, I will marry Brad Pitt.
- Joe had several options: He could eat the soup, which sounded good but might not be enough food. He could eat the salad, though he wasn't sure if he would like the dressing. Or he could order the sandwich, which he had liked last time.

COLON- AVOID

Do not use a colon to separate a noun from its verb, a verb from its object or subject complement, a preposition from its object, or a subject from its predicate.

- The three types of muscle in the body are: cardiac, smooth, and skeletal. 
- The menagerie included: cats, dogs, and mice. 

COLON – OTHER NOTES

The first word after a colon will be lowercase if it is part of a single sentence.

The first word after a colon will be capitalized if it introduces two or more sentences, dialogue, or a direct question.

- I had one question: Why did the new procedure improve performance?

Only space once after a colon.

Do not use a colon after expressions such as *namely* or *for example*.

COLON EXERCISE

1. Finally, I want to thank IT personnel for helping setting up the classes and other computer related work: Rebecca Swierz, Jesse Becker, and Daniel Lee.
2. The MATLAB editor has menus such as saving, viewing, and debugging.

REFERENCES

General Reference:

Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rob-reinalda/confused-by-the-comma_b_5635688.html

Commas before "As"

<http://hgpublishing.com/blog/comma-before-as-or-because/>

<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/qanda/data/faq/topics/Commas/faq0014.html>

Colons

<http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/education/grammar/colons>

<https://www.grammarly.com/blog/colon-2/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

T/D Boot Camp

Apr.
24-28

Library 202

Copyright for the Graduate
Student

May 3

Library 204

Stress Relief

May 10

Toomey Atrium

Write-In

May 24

Library 203
