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comma, comma, comma, comma, comma, chameleon

While there are many comma rules, if you learn these 3, they'll take you a long way!

Using Commas

- * Divide between lists of 3 or more things
- * Connect full sentences with commas and FANBOYS
- * Set off extra information
 - * Show contrast
 - * Separate direct address.
 - * Set off an exclamation



ITEMS IN A SERIES

Use the comma between a list of 3 or more things—items, phrases, or sentences.

List of
items

I went to the store and bought milk,
bread, coffee, and tortillas.

List of
phrases

I like teaching grammar, reading books,
and watching movies.

List of
sentences

I used to get really frustrated when
using commas, then I learned the rules,
and now I don't worry as much at all!



ITEMS IN A SERIES

The comma between the last two things in a series always help the reader understand them as separate items. It's called the Oxford comma.



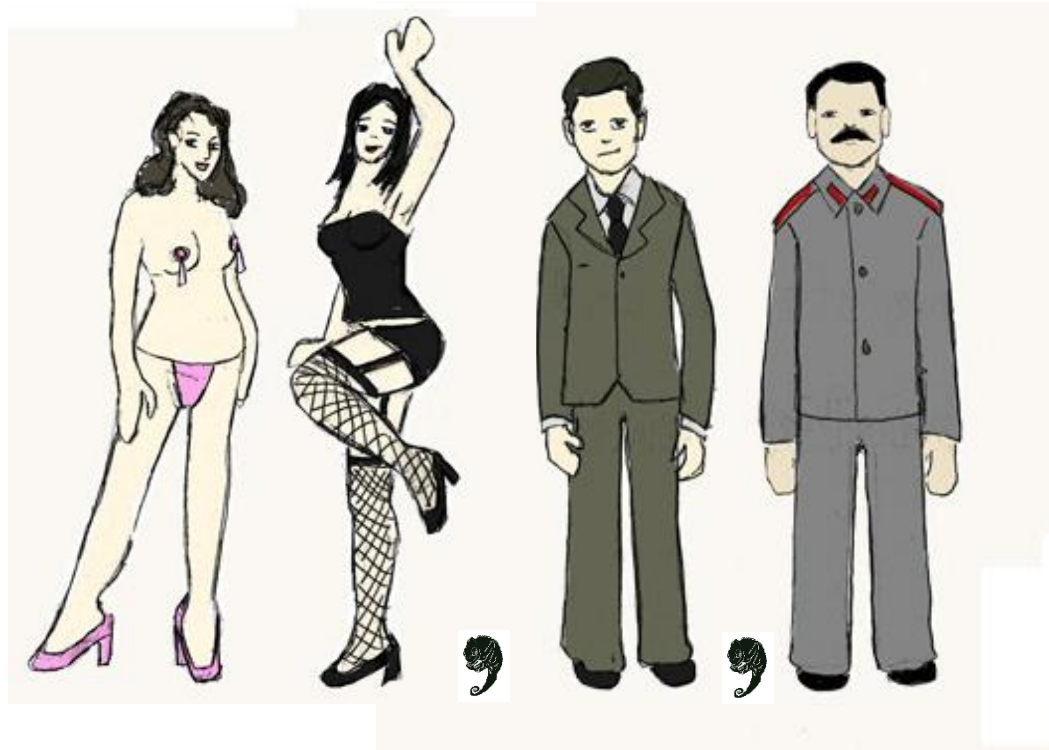
Here's why it's important:

ITEMS IN A SERIES, THE OXFORD COMMA

Three different
sets of people
were invited.

With the Oxford comma:

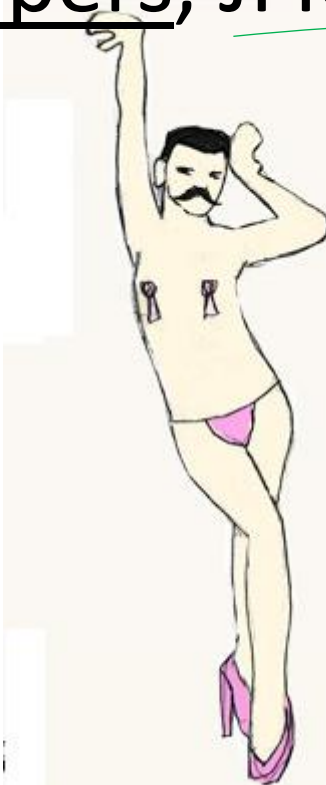
We invited the strippers, JFK, and Stalin.



ITEMS IN A SERIES, THE OXFORD COMMA

 Without the Oxford comma:

We invited the strippers, JFK and Stalin.



*Extra information—the
strippers' names.*

ITEMS IN A SERIES, REVIEW

Use the comma between a list of 3 or more things. This is sometimes called the serial comma.



List/Serial commas with:

- * Individual Items
- * Phrases
- * Sentences

Don't forget:

- * Use the Oxford Comma in this class and in formal writing.

I like cooking my family
and pets.

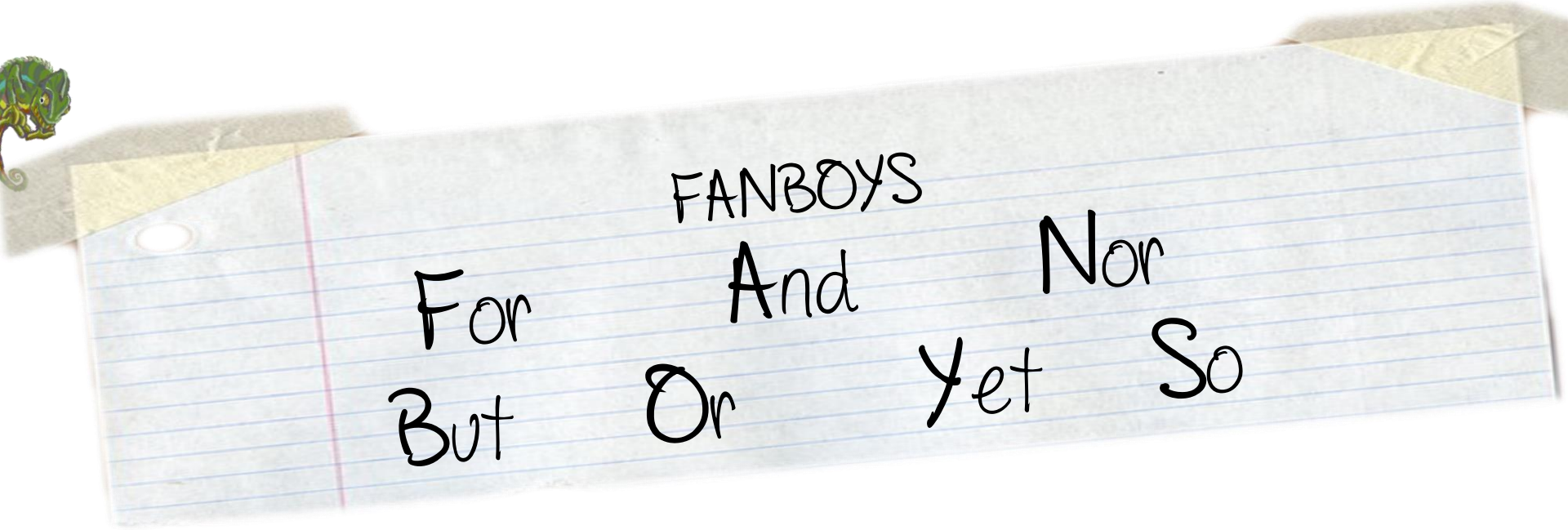
Use commas.
Don't be a psycho.

som^{ee}cards
user card



FANBOYS TO COMBINE SENTENCES

Use the comma before a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS) linking complete sentences.



Sentence , **[FANBOYS]** sentence .

Sentence , sentence , **[FANBOYS]** sentence .

(formulae for the basic way to combine sentences)

FANBOYS TO COMBINE SENTENCES



Check to make sure each part is a complete sentence.

I could have caught the ball, **but** I was distracted.

2 complete sentences:

I could have caught the ball.

I was distracted.

I wanted to stay home, Marcus wanted to go out to eat, **and** Shondra wanted to go swimming.

3 complete sentences:

I wanted to stay home.

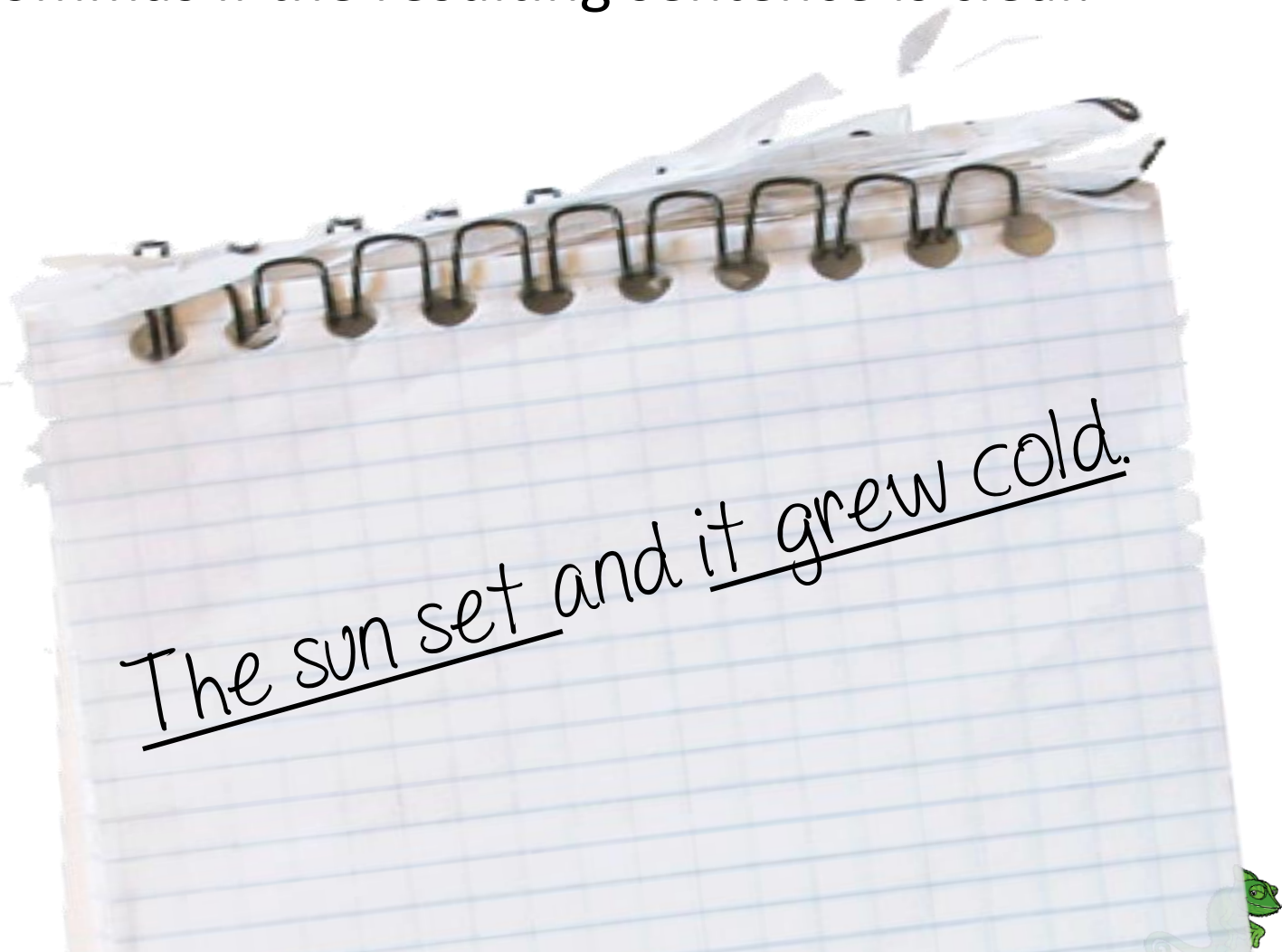
Marcus wanted to go out to eat.

Shondra wanted to go swimming.

FANBOYS TO COMBINE SENTENCES

Exception

When the sentences are short and closely related, you can skip the commas if the resulting sentence is clear.



FANBOYS TO COMBINE SENTENCES

Do not use a comma if each part isn't a sentence!



I wish I had a cup of coffee and a piece of homemade chocolate cake!

Complete sentence!

I wish I had a cup of coffee

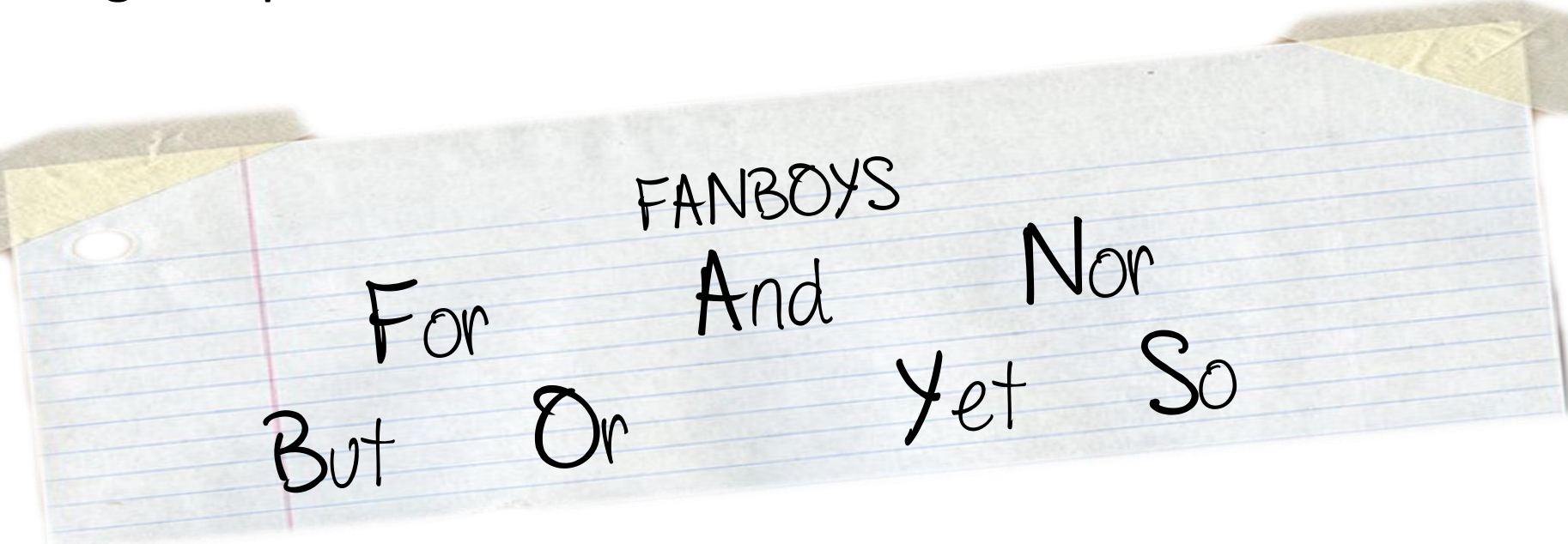
Not a complete sentence!

a piece of homemade chocolate cake!

What about that piece of cake?

FANBOYS TO COMBINE SENTENCES, REVIEW

Use the comma before a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS) linking complete sentences.



FANBOYS

For And Nor

But Or Yet So

Sentence , **[FANBOYS]** sentence .

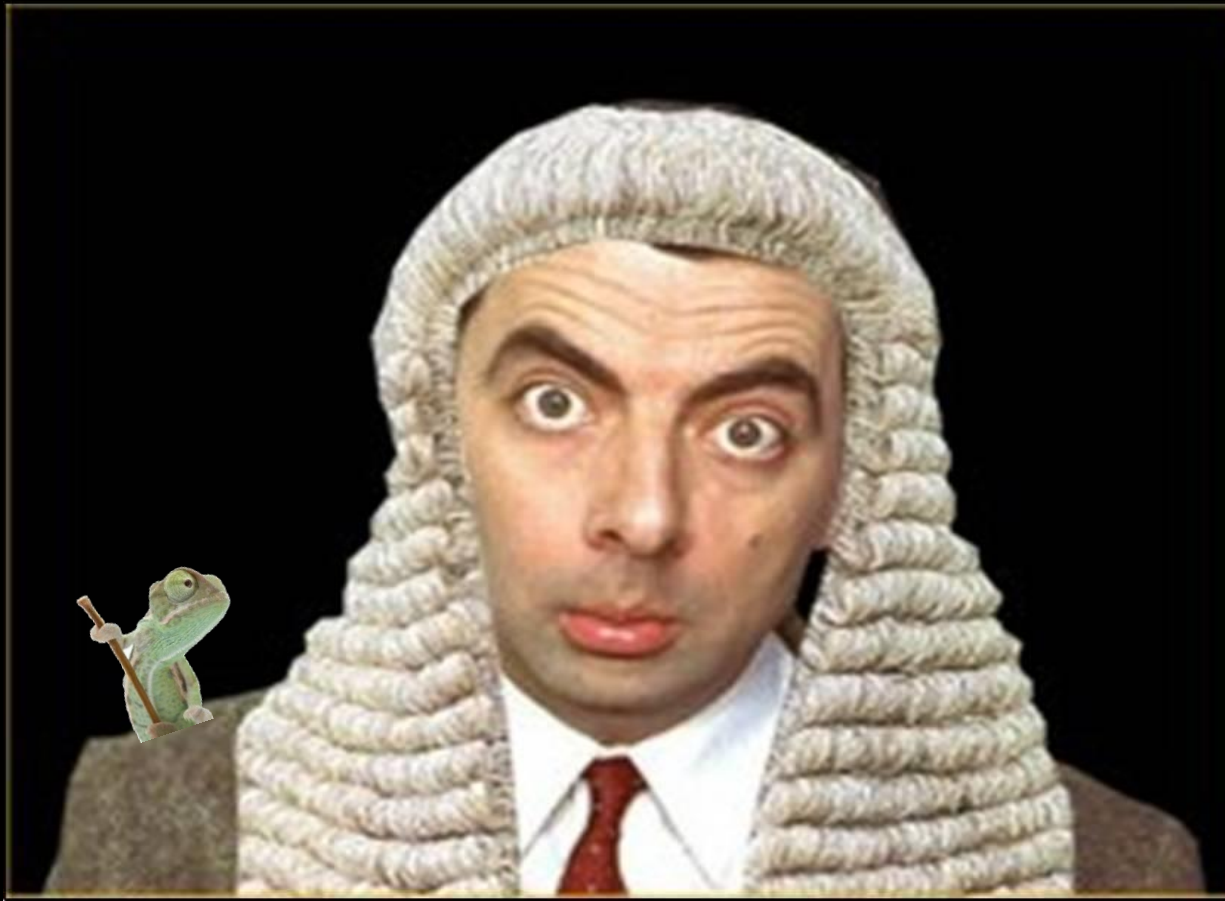
Sentence , sentence , **[FANBOYS]** sentence .

(formulae for the basic way to combine sentences)

EXTRA INFORMATION

The criminal said the judge was an idiot.

The criminal , said the judge , was an idiot.



EXTRA INFORMATION

When you have extra information like details, things that set context, or that give readers a clearer picture, and they don't contribute to the central meaning of your sentence, put commas around them: they're extra.

When Irwin was ready to iron, his cat
jumped on the ironing board.

Extra detail

When Irwin was ready to iron,
his cat jumped on the ironing board.

Main sentence

EXTRA INFORMATION

The extra information might come at the beginning, middle, or end of your sentence.

(non-restrictive = extra info)

(not necessary)

From Terri Mann to Grace Haddox, EPCC has a number of good English teachers.

Your handwriting, said the teacher, is amazing!

My dad, Clayton Wood, was really smart!

EXTRA INFORMATION

If the details point to something specific and taking them out changes your meaning, don't separate them out with commas.

* restrictive = necessary info *

The student **who made an A** helped me study for my test. *Necessary, it tells which specific student.*

The book **Ready Player One** is super! *Necessary, it tells which specific book.*



EXTRA INFORMATION

If the details point to something specific and taking them out changes your meaning, don't separate them out with commas.

* It depends *

The concert **that was expensive** was well worth it!

Necessary, it identifies which concert was worth it!

We went to the concert, **which was expensive**.

extra info

The teacher gave us extra credit, **which was worth ten points**.

extra info


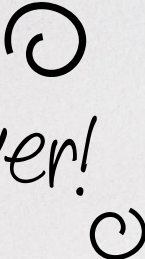
The teacher gave us extra credit **which was worth ten points!**


Not extra if I needed that 10 points!

EXPRESSING CONTRAST

Another type of extra info. Use the comma to set off phrases expressing contrast.


Cats rule, dogs drool!

 I like ice cream, not liver! 

It was the part with the
explosions, not the kissing,
that we liked! 



EXTRA INFORMATION

Exception

A comma need not follow short introductory phrases and clauses if leaving it out does not create confusion. Pay attention to context.

In 1975 I was five years old. That was the year I first went to school. *Since these sentences are more about the year 1975, we don't use the comma.*

In 1975, I was five years old. I didn't worry about bills or work at that age! *These sentences are really about being five, so the comma helps point to being five as the more important part of the sentence.*

A FEW OTHER GUIDELINES

 **Tyler** 
Fucking a dude
Like · Comment · 50 minutes ago near 

 **Joseph**  likes this.

 **Aaron**  Can't believe it's taken you this long.
41 minutes ago · Like

 **Tyler**  naw man, I mean like, fuckin a dude!
37 minutes ago · Like

 **Aaron**  You have cleared up nothing.
35 minutes ago · Like

 **Aaron**  Use a comma unless you're fucking a dude.
35 minutes ago · Like ·  1

 **Paul** 
class canceled! all day to do whatever i fucking want! i love fucking college guys!
Like · Comment · Share · 29 minutes ago near 

 2 people like this.

 **Tim**  Wait? What?
26 minutes ago · Like ·  3

 **Matt**  Dude, You have got to figure out this whole comma thing.
25 minutes ago · Like ·  11

lamebook.com

 
Man bacon makes anything taste good! Even hospital salad!
Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · 9 minutes

  Man Bacon!? And today we learn the importance of commas.
2 seconds ago · Like

don't wear black people

Like · Comment

 2 people like this.


WHAT?????!!!!!!

 **Sandeep**
wake up eat poop school eat school poop running work work work eat poop sleep. <<
my next 4 days
Like · Comment · 13 minutes ago · 

 **Iris**  Seriously dude, commas. I read that as you wake up and eat poop.
7 minutes ago · Like

Because the Internet's a very public place to misuse commas!

DIRECT ADDRESS



When you directly address someone by using their name or some word as a name, use a comma to set it off:

Ms. Wood, can you explain commas to me?

Loan me some money, bro!

Not doing this correctly can lead to problems.
Take the next straightforward sentence:

WITH THE COMMA:

Let's Cook, Grandma!



WITHOUT THE COMMA:

Let's Cook Grandma!



EXCLAMATIONS

When use you an exclamation, use a comma to set it off.



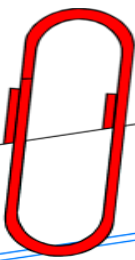
Man, bacon makes anything taste good! Even hospital salad!

Class canceled! All day to do whatever I fucking want! I love fucking college, guys!

Fucking A, dude!

Not doing this correctly can lead to very confusing status updates and texts!

EXTRA INFORMATION, REVIEW.



If you can take the info out of the sentence, and it still has the essential meaning, use commas!


If you take the info out, and the sentence has a different meaning, is unclear, or the essential meaning is different, don't use commas.



COMBINING IT ALL

We can combine all of these aspects:

(extra info) While I was looking out the
window, my dog Lil Buddy, who
(extra info) is somewhat of a scallywag and
at times very sneaky, ran in and
jumped on the counter, and
(extra info) much to my surprise, he started
talking, saying, "Hey human, give
(extra info) me some bacon!"
subject
predicate
subject
predicate
direct address



Using Commas

- * Divide between lists of 3 or more things
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 - * Set off extra information
 - * Show contrast
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 - * Set off an exclamation
- 