

Punctuations

Introduction to Punctuations

Imagine yourself driving a racing car. What do you do in a car race? You drive as fast as you can, and try to beat your opponents to the finish line. If the racing track is an absolutely straight path, then there would not be much of a problem. But what if the racing track is full of twists and turns? Do you think that only driving fast will do? No. You will have to learn the art of guiding your car through the twists and turns without crashing.

Now imagine that your car is the fastest. However, its brakes are faulty and the steering wheel doesn't work. Do you think you will be able to win the race? Forget winning the race, will you be able to complete the race with your bones and senses intact? The answer seems easy enough—'no'.

Consider the following sentence:

He is dumb.

This seems easy enough as it makes its meaning clear. What if this sentence is part of a larger group of sentences?

What was the difference between the two versions? The difference was the presence of certain **marks or signs** in the second passage. These marks and signs are called **punctuation marks**.

Punctuation marks are used for punctuating sentences, in order to make them readable and understandable. **Punctuating is the act of interrupting and punctuation marks are the interruptions.**

We had begun with the example of a fast racing car, with faulty brakes and steering wheel. The brakes and the steering wheel give the driver of the car a certain amount of control over the vehicle he drives. If these are faulty, then you can well imagine what will happen. It is the same case with a passage without punctuation marks. They give the reader of the passage a certain amount of control over its meaning. It is no good having the fastest car when the brakes and the steering wheel are faulty. Similarly, a brilliantly written, but unpunctuated, passage doesn't have much of an effect upon the reader.

Punctuation Marks 1

Full stop

For ending a sentence

For example:

Close the door properly.

Question Mark

For asking questions

For example:

Where are you going?

Exclamation Mark

For ending sentences, phrases and words which show some strong feeling or emotion.

For example:

Oh! I have a terrible headache.
My god! What have you done now?
What a beautiful weather!

Punctuation Marks 2

Comma

For separating 3 or more items in a series

For example:

My favourite players are Sachin Tendulkar, V. V. S. Laxman, Virendra Sehwag and Rahul Dravid.

For separating 2 or more adjectives

For example:

She is a smart, witty and highly talented woman.

For breaking up dates and addresses

For example:

You can find him at 67/3A, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi-27.

He was born on Friday, February 29, 2008.

Inverted Commas

For showing a direct speech

For example:

Gini said, “Don’t step in the house!”

Or

Gini said, ‘Don’t step in the house!’

For showing a quotation

For example:

In his autobiography, Gandhi makes it clear that he wished to tell the story of his “numerous experiments with truth.”

Or

In his autobiography, Gandhi makes it clear that he wished to tell the story of his ‘numerous experiments with truth’.

For marking a special word or phrase

For example:

I am reading Shakespeare’s “Hamlet.”

Or

I am reading Shakespeare’s ‘Hamlet’.

Punctuation Marks 3

Apostrophe

For contracting words

For example:

I **do not** want to see that movie.

Becomes

I don’t want to see that movie.

Here are some contractions for you!

Words	Contraction
Do Not	Don't
Did Not	Didn't
Does Not	Doesn't
Is Not	Isn't
Are Not	Aren't
Was Not	Wasn't
Were Not	Weren't
Cannot	Can't
Have Not	Haven't
Has Not	Hasn't

Had Not	Hadn't
Will Not	Won't
Words	Contraction
I Am	I'm
You Are	You're
We Are	We're
They Are	They're
He Is	He's
She Is	She's
It Is	It's
That Is	That's

Who Is	Who's
Words	Contraction
I Will	I'll
You Will	You'll
He Will	He'll
She Will	She'll
It Will	It'll
We Will	We'll
They Will	They'll
Who Will	Who'll
Words	Contraction

I Have	I've
You Have	You've
We Have	We've
They Have	They've
I Had/Would	I'd
You Had/Would	You'd
He Had/Would	He'd
She Had/Would	She'd
We Had/Would	We'd
They Had/Would	They'd
Who Has	Who's

For showing the possessive case of nouns

For example:

Jeetu's dog barks loudly.

(Singular noun)

Congress' victory in the general elections was unexpected.

(Singular noun ending with the letter 's')

Mom! Take me to the children's park.

(Plural noun)

Sara is going to live in a girls' hostel.

(Plural noun ending with the letter 's')