



Writing Centre

Commas

Commas are used:

1. To indicate a pause and/or change in intonation.
2. To help meaning.
3. As a rule for the structure of a sentence.

Use a comma with:

1. Compound sentences

Compound sentences often use coordinating conjunctions: for, and, nor, but, or yet, so. The coordinating conjunction separates two independent clauses.

, for
, and
FULL SENTENCE , nor FULL SENTENCE
, but
, or
, yet
, so

For example:

I like cheese, but I do not eat cheese every day.
(full sentence) (full sentence)

I like cheese but not every day.
(full sentence) (not full sentence so no comma)

2. Series

For example:

I like hockey, baseball and badminton.
Kamloops is fun, beautiful and interesting.

3. Introductory Material

For example:

When I was young, I played with Barbies.
After her shower in the mornings, she eats breakfast.
To begin, Kamloops is a very fun place.

4. Interrupter

For example:

Kamloops, which is one of the best cities in BC, is located 3.5 hours from Vancouver.
The tutor was too tired, however, to go for a run.