

ENGLISH · KS2

Punctuation

Every mark, with rules and examples

Basic Punctuation

Endings and joins

- Full stop (.): ends a statement. The sky is blue.
- Question mark (?): ends a question. Where are you going?
- Exclamation mark (!): ends an exclamation. What a day!
- Comma (,): separates items in a list, or marks a pause. I bought apples, pears and bananas.
- Comma after a fronted adverbial: Slowly, he opened the door.
- Comma to mark a subordinate clause: When the bell rang, we left.
- Semicolon (;): joins two related main clauses. It was raining; we stayed in.
- Colon (:): introduces a list or explanation. We packed three things: a torch, water and a map.
- Dash (—): adds extra information. The car — old but reliable — kept going.
- Brackets (): add extra information. The boy (her brother) waved.

Other Punctuation

Apostrophes and speech

- Apostrophe for contraction: don't (do not), she's (she is)



- Apostrophe for singular possession: the dog's bowl, James's car
- Apostrophe for plural possession: the dogs' bowls (multiple dogs)
- Speech marks ("") around what is said: "Hello," she said.
- Capital letter inside speech: "Where are you going?" he asked.
- Comma before speech marks: He said, "It's late."
- New speaker = new line
- Hyphen (-): joins words (well-known, twenty-one)
- Ellipsis (...): shows a pause or trailing off

