

PUNCTUATION

Delgado Community College

What is punctuation? Punctuation refers to the marks used in writing to separate sentence, clauses, and other elements to clarify meaning.

Type	Mark	Rule	Example
Period	.	Used at the end of a sentence as a full stop. Abbreviations have periods as well.	The school year is over. Mr. Mrs. St.
Question mark	?	Used to end a direct question	Did you complete your homework?
Exclamation point	!	Used to express strong emotion	The Saints won!
Semicolon	;	Used to connect two independent clauses that are related. Used as a super comma in a list.	Drew Brees is a great player; he won the MVP.
Commas	,	To separate items in a series (3 or more) Used after introductory words Used with a coordinating conjunction in compound sentences Used with parenthetical information Used with non-essential elements Used with transitions Used with quotations, addresses, dates	I ate bacon, ham, and eggs. This morning, I ate bacon, ham, and eggs. This morning, I ate ham and eggs, <u>and</u> I am still hungry. My sister, wearing her bright boots, sloshed through the mud piles. Breakfast, which is the most important meal of the day, is my favorite time to eat. However, I will call her tomorrow. "I saw her," she said; 1,000; New Orleans, LA.
Colons	:	Used to direct attention to words that follow the colon.	She was a contender: sharp footwork and swift fists
Apostrophe	'	Used to show possession or mark missing letters	Girl's shoes can't, won't
Quotation marks	" "	Used in direct quotations or titles of short works	"Hello," she said.

Other punctuation marks:

Ellipsis [...] are three spaced dots that indicate omission of words.

Dashes [--] are used to set off material you want to emphasize.

Slashes [/] are used to show lines of poetry in writing.

Parentheses [()] are used to enclose supplemental material.