

Grade 7 English FAL

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What Are the 14 Punctuation Marks in English Grammar?

There are 14 punctuation marks that are commonly used in English grammar. They are the full stop (period in American English), question mark, exclamation point, comma, semicolon, colon, dash, hyphen, parentheses, brackets, braces, apostrophe, quotation marks, and ellipsis. Following their correct usage will make your writing easier to read and more fun to read.

Today we will learn more about the *full stop* (period in American English), *question mark*, *exclamation mark*, *comma*, *semicolon*, *colon*, *quotation mark* and *apostrophe*.

Sentence Endings

Three of the fourteen punctuation marks are appropriate for use as sentence endings. They are the full stop (period), question mark, and exclamation mark.

The **period** (.) is placed at the end of sentences, statements thought to be complete and after many abbreviations.

- As a sentence ender: *Pietie and Sannie went to school.*
- After an abbreviation: *Junior - Jr.* Professor - Prof.

Use a **question mark** (?) to indicate a direct question when placed at the end of a sentence.

- *When did Sannie leave for school?*

The **exclamation mark**(!) is used when a person wants to express a sudden outcry or add emphasis.

- Within dialogue: *"Holy cow!" screamed Sannie.*
- To emphasise a point: *My teacher's rants make me furious!*

Comma, Semicolon, and Colon

The comma, semicolon, and colon are often misused because they all can indicate a pause in a list of things or a sentence.

The **comma** is used to show a separation of ideas or things within a sentence. Additionally, it is used in numbers, dates, and letter writing after the salutation (greeting) and closing (ending).

- Direct address: *Thanks for all your help, John.*
- Separation of two complete sentences: *We went to the movies, and then we went out to lunch.*
- Separating lists or elements within sentences: *Sannie wanted the black, green, and blue dress.*

{Some people believe we have to add a comma before the conjunction. I want you to only put a comma before the conjunction if the sentence becomes too long}

The **semicolon** (;) is used to connect independent clauses. It shows a closer relationship between the clauses than a period would show.

- *John was hurt; he knew she only said it to upset him.*

A **colon** (:) has three main uses. The first is after a word introducing a quotation, an explanation, an example, or a series.

- *He was studying four subjects: Afrikaans, English, Mathematics, and Arts.*

The second is between independent clauses when the second explains the first, similar to a semicolon:

- *I didn't have time to get changed: I was already late.*

The third use of a colon is for emphasis:

- *There was one thing she loved more than any other: her dog.*

A colon also has non-grammatical uses in time, ratio, business correspondence and references.

- The school closes at 14:00.

Quotations marks

Quotations marks (" ") are a pair of punctuation marks used primarily to mark the beginning and end of direct words being quoted.

- *"Don't go outside," she said.*

Single quotation marks (' ') are used most frequently for quotes within quotes.

- *Marie told the teacher, "I saw Marc at the playground, and he said to me 'Bill started the fight,' and I believed him."*

Apostrophe

An **apostrophe** (') is used to indicate the omission (to leave out) of a letter or letters from a word or the possessive form of a noun (something belongs to...).

- Omission (to leave out / shortened form) of letters from a word: {I have}**I've** seen that movie several times. She {was not}**wasn't** the only one who knew the answer.
- Possessive form of the noun: **Sara's** dog bit the neighbour.
- Plural for lowercase letters: *Six people were told to mind their p's and q's.*

Punctuate sentences using full stops, commas, capital letters, exclamation marks and question marks:

- (1) what are you going to do today jannie
- (2) what an amazing try
- (3) i am going to go home if i finish my schoolwork on time
- (4) i hate it
- (5) when are you going to go shopping in mossel bay
- (6) i live in hartenbos in a house just off the ocean
- (7) stop that now
- (8) who has left this mess on the table in my classroom
- (9) do you attend hartenbos primary school
- (10) pretoria is the capital city of south africa, in the continent of africa
- (11) prof van huyssteen works at stellenbosch university on zulu road
- (12) help help me i'm drowning
- (13) our head teacher is called mr joubert
- (14) my name is anton hoek and i support the stormers
- (15) why is this the final sentence on the page

Answers:

- (1) **What** are you going to do today, **Jannie**?
- (2) **What** an amazing try!
- (3) **I** am going to go home, if i finish my schoolwork on time?
- (4) **I** hate it!
- (5) **When** are you going to go shopping in mossel bay?
- (6) **I** live in **Hartenbos**, in a house just off the ocean.
- (7) **Stop** that now!
- (8) **Who** has left this mess on the table in my classroom?
- (9) **Do** you attend **Hartenbos** primary school?
- (10) **Pretoria** is the capital city of **South Africa**, in the continent of **Africa**.
- (11) **Prof.** van **Huyssteen** works at **Stellenbosch University**, on **Zulu** road.
- (12) **Help**, help me! **I'm** drowning!
- (13) **Our** head teacher is called **Mr Joubert**. *(No full stop after Mr in British English)*
- (14) **My** name is **Anton Hoek** and **I** support the **Stormers**!
- (15) **Why** is this the final sentence on the page?