

When to use a comma

1. When separating phrases that are unnecessary

Example:

My dog, Marley, loves bacon.

2. Linking two independent clauses with a conjunction

Example:

I love to learn about all types of grammar, but commas are my favorite.

3. When you address someone in particular

Example:

What do you think, Ms. Wright, about the new policy?

4. When making a list

Example:

I need to buy bread, milk, and coffee.

5. When there is more than one adjective modifying a noun.

Example: This is the best, most awesome class I have ever taken.

6. After an introductory phrase.

Example:

Once I go over the directions, you may ask questions.

When to NOT use a comma

1. When separating two independent clauses without a conjunction

Example:

INCORRECT: This is my favorite book, it is also my favorite movie. (This is called a comma splice)

2. After the conjunction

Example:

CORRECT: This is my favorite book, and it is also my favorite movie.
INCORRECT: This is my favorite book and, it is also my favorite movie.

3. When separating a dependent clause and an independent clause with a conjunction.

Example:

CORRECT: This is a great book but a terrible movie.
INCORRECT: This is great book, but a terrible movie.

