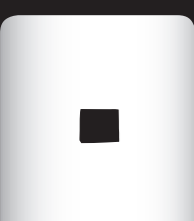


The 15 Punctuation Marks.

In order of how much they do
(and how hard they should be to learn)




Period
Ends a sentence flatly



Question Mark
Ends a sentence with curiosity



Exclamation Mark
Ends a sentence with gusto



Asterisk
Suggests a further comment, clarification or qualifier




En Dash
Replaces the word "through" or "to" when suggesting a duration of time




Semicolon
Joins two related complete sentences
Separates list items when commas are in the list items




Brackets
Indicate editorial comments by someone other than the author
Indicate asides or other parenthetical information already in parentheses




Parentheses
Suggest related but unnecessary information
Clarify a writer's frame of mind
Indicate citations or page references




Ellipsis
Indicates an omission of words in a quote
Indicates hesitating speech in dialogue
Suggests that something is being left out




Em Dash
Expands with emphasis a main clause
Separates and draws special attention to ideas
Suggests an interruption in thought or change in direction




Quotation Mark
Indicates a direct quotation
Indicates a dictionary definition
Indicates the words on a sign
Suggests sarcasm or snarkiness
Highlights a word in a sentence
Indicates short media pieces, like poems, songs, articles, and chapter titles



Colon
Expands or clarifies a main clause
Introduces lists
Comes after salutations
Separates hours from minutes
Separates titles from subtitles
Indicates dialogue in plays
Suggests ratios



Hyphen
Creates compound adjectives
Combines two-digit numbers
Clarifies verbs with common prefixes
Joins prefixes to capitalized words
Joins a letter or a number to a word
Joins a prefix to a date
Separates words with same three letters in a row



Apostrophe
As single quotation mark, indicates quote within a quote
Omits letters and numbers
Creates a plural for a single letter
Makes a noun possessive
Gives possession to a singular noun that ends in 's'
Makes abbreviations possessive
Creates plural possessions
Creates compound possessions
In headlines, used as a double quotation mark



Comma
Separates items in a list
Separates coordinate adjectives
Separates coordinating conjunctions
Separates dependent clauses
Separates conditional clauses
Separates appositives
Comes after introductory phrases
Comes after interjections
Comes after direct address
Comes after a title
Separates the day of the month from the year
Separates numbers larger than 999
Separates cities from states
Comes after abbreviations i.e. and e.g.
Comes before quotations