

Common Punctuation Patterns	
<b>Combining</b> <i>A is B, and C is D.</i> <b>Simple Principle:</b> Put a comma before the conjunction when combining independent clauses; the conjunctions that are used in the pattern are <i>for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so</i> (FANBOYS). <i>A is B because C.</i> <i>A is B, although C.</i> <b>Simple Principle:</b> If a subordinate clause is essential to the meaning of the sentence, a comma is usually unnecessary; if the clause is inessential, a comma is helpful. <i>A is B and C.</i> <b>Simple Principle:</b> A comma is unnecessary when combining two elements that are not themselves independent.	
<b>Separating</b> <i>A is B. C is D.</i> <b>Simple Principle:</b> A period is the basic way to separate complete sentences. <i>A is B; C is D.</i> <i>A is B; however, C is D.</i> <b>Simple Principle:</b> A semicolon can be used to separate sentences, conveying a close relationship between the two sentences. In some cases, that close relationship will be represented by expressions such as <i>however, thus, nevertheless, moreover, accordingly, conversely, for example, of course, in other words, in short, as a result.</i>	
<b>Listing</b> <i>A is B, C, and D.</i> <b>Simple Principle:</b> A list can be contained within a single sentence with commas after parallel list items. It is your choice whether to use the serial comma. <i>A is the following: B, C, and D.</i> <i>A is the following: B; C; and D.</i> <b>Simple Principle:</b> A list can be introduced by a complete sentence followed by a colon. When those list items are complex (or have internal punctuation), you can use semicolons in the place of commas.	
<b>Introducing</b> <i>A is B: C.</i> <i>A is the following: B, C, and D.</i> <i>A is B: C is D.</i> <b>Simple Principle:</b> Use a colon after a complete sentence to show that what follows fulfills the promise of that sentence. A colon can be followed by a word, phrase, or sentence.	
<b>Interrupting</b> <i>A, which is B, is C.</i> <i>A (minor interruption) is C.</i> <i>A— which is B— is C.</i> <b>Simple Principle:</b> When interrupting yourself, you can choose between commas, parentheses, and dashes, each of which has a different impact on the reader. In all cases, make sure to use punctuation to signal both the beginning and the end of the interruption. <i>A that is B is C.</i> <i>A, which is B, is C.</i> <b>Simple Principle:</b> Interrupting yourself with a relative clause requires you to be aware of whether that clause is integral or supplementary. If the clause is integral, commas are not required; if the clause is supplementary, use commas to show the reader that this information is inessential.	