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# Punctuation in English                    **© GFH Schmittinger** *2012*

**Capital letters**

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|---|---|
| 1. the first letter in a sentence | **T**he man walked home. |
| 2. all names (people, places, countries, days,months) | **P**eter, **S**tuttgart, **G**ermany, **M**onday, **M**arch |
| 3. abbreviations and acronyms | **SMS, VAT** (all letters) |
| 4. titles of books, films etc. | **W**innetou, **T**he **G**olden **G**oblet |
| 5. the personal pronoun **I** | Do you know who **I** am? |

**Full Stop (.)**

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|---|---|
| 1. at the end of a sentence | I am clever. |
| 2. usually at the end of an abbreviation | Mr**.** Jones, Main St**.** |

**Comma (,)**

|  |  |
|---|---|
| 1. to separate clauses | After I had eaten, I went home. |
| 2. between separate items in a list | Buy the following: apples, pears, bananas |
| 3. in question tags | You know him, don't you? |
| 4. before or after "she said" in conversations | "I love it, " she said. |
| 5. in decimal fractions | 55,7 litres of petrol |

**Question Mark (?)**

| At the end of a direct question. | How did you do that? |
|---|---|

**Exclamation Mark (!)**

| At the end of a sentence to show surprise, shock | I did it! |
|---|---|
| At the end of a command. | Get out! |

**Hyphen (-)**

|  |  |
|---|---|
| 1. to join words and some prefixes to form compound words | air-conditioner, part-time |
| 2. when a word is divided at the end of a sentence | I went to the cine-**ma** |
| 3. in some numbers | twenty-seven, eighty-nine |

**Colon (:)**

| to introduce a list of items | Buy the following: apples, pears, bananas |
|---|---|

**Semicolon (;)**

| to separate parts of a sentence when there is no conjunction | We had a great time; then everyone went home. |
|---|---|

**Apostrophe (')**

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|---|---|
| 1. for missing letters in contractions | let's go (let us go), don't do that (do not) |
| 2. to indicate possession / ownership | John's girlfriend, Justin's song |

**Quotation marks (")**

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|---|---|
| 1. to show words someone has spoken | She said:"Well done!" |
| 2. to emphasise a slang expression | Howdy?" : How do you do? |

**Brackets ()**

|  |  |
|---|---|
| 1. for cross reference | That is a fact (See chapter 9). |
| 2. to supply more information / an extra thought | Peter (that old rascal) did it again. |