

Doing! Punctuation:

The Five Things Punctuation Helps You DO With Your Writing

1) To Connect Sentences (independent clauses)	
,	with a comma + coordinate conjunction (FANBOYS—for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) He likes to go out to movies, but she prefers staying at home.
;	with a semi-colon He likes to go out to movies; she prefers staying at home.
2) To Separate Introductory Elements	
,	to separate transition words However , nothing we did made a difference.
	to separate introductory phrases After the show , we plan to go out to eat.
	to separate dependent clauses When I lost my phone , I thought I was going to go crazy.
3) To Separate Interrupting Elements	
,	separate with two commas My older brother, the one from Phoenix , will be here tomorrow.
--	separate with two dashes I always thought— didn't you? —that the moon was made of cheese.
()	separate with parenthesis I always thought (didn't you?) that the moon was made of cheese.
4) To Separate Items in a List	
,	separate with a comma The soup needed carrots, onions, potatoes, and lots of salt.
;	separate with a semi-colon (when any single item has a comma in it) The evening was beautiful: the breeze blew softly; the lightening bugs were out; and the twinkling, diamond-like stars were peaking out.
5) To Point to or Highlight	
(to set up a list or direct readers to explanations, examples, or significant phrases or words)	
:	point with a colon The room is a mess: the bed is unmade, clothes cover the floor, and dirty dishes are everywhere.
--	point with a dash He was an amazing person— he was everyone's friend.