



The Complete Guide to Punctuation

Learn how to punctuate properly!

published by <http://www.LousyWriter.com>

Cover design: Brian Scott

LEGAL NOTICE:

The Publisher has strived to be as accurate and complete as possible in the creation of this report, notwithstanding the fact that he does not warrant or represent at any time that the contents within are accurate due to the rapidly changing nature of the Internet.

While all attempts have been made to verify information provided in this publication, the Publisher assumes no responsibility for errors, omissions, or contrary interpretation of the subject matter herein. Any perceived slights of specific persons, peoples, or organizations are unintentional.

In practical advice books, like anything else in life, there are no guarantees of income made or improvement of skill. Readers are cautioned to rely on their own judgment about their individual circumstances to act accordingly.

This book is not intended for use as a source of legal, business, accounting or financial advice. All readers are advised to seek services of competent professionals in legal, business, accounting, and finance field.

We encourage you to save or print this book for easy reading.

You may freely distribute this ebook to others without prior permission from the publisher or author, as long as it is NOT altered and this ebook is distributed in its entirety.

You may freely give away this ebook, bundle it with other products, give it away as a free bonus product, or link to www.LousyWriter.com to download this ebook. You may not sell this ebook for money.

For more FREE ebooks on how to write better, visit <http://www.LousyWriter.com>

Punctuation treats the use of points in dividing written composition. Punctuation help us divide discourse into sentences, and divide again into parts, to show the relation of these parts to one another.

Punctuation is based almost wholly on grammatical analysis. Proper use of punctuation can be diverse; in fact, excellent, well-trained writers doubt if the rules of punctuation are fixed and definite. While it is true that minor uses of punctuation, like the comma, are fixed rules and observed by all reputable writers, there is much left to the judgment of the writer.

The chief grammatical points are :

1. The Period (.)
2. The Comma (,)
3. The Semicolon (;)
4. The Colon (:)
6. The Interrogation Point (?)
7. The Exclamation Point (!)

In addition, several other characters are used in writing for various purposes. Among these are :

1. The Dash (—)
2. Marks of Parenthesis ()
3. Quotation Marks ("")
4. The Hyphen (-)

and others of minor importance, the use of which I will explain later.

The Period (.)

The Period was the first point introduced, and was used originally to indicate the completion of a sentence. The principal rules for the use of the period are the following :

Rule 1. Complete Sentences. — A period should be placed at the end of every declarative or imperative sentence.

Ex. — "Many hands make light work."

Ex. — "Rodger Federer reached the finals today."

Remark. — Lengthy compound sentences are frequently broken into a number of shorter sentences. In such cases a period follows each of the shorter sentences.

Note. — The conjunctions "and," "but," etc. are frequently used simply to introduce a sentence. In such cases they do not indicate any connection with a preceding sentence.

Ex. — "And the crowd dispersed after the sale was over." " But he walked away in shame, dragging his broken bat behind him."

Rule 2. Abbreviations. — A period should be placed after every abbreviated word.

Ex. — Jas., Cr., Ph.D., Rev. Chas. Smith, D. D., LL.D.

Note 1. — When an abbreviated name becomes a nickname, as Ben, Tom, Sue, etc., it is not followed by a period.

Note 2. — Ordinal adjectives, as 2d, 4th, 8th, 10th, etc., are not abbreviations, but substituted forms for second, fourth, eighth, tenth, etc. No period should be placed after any of them.

Note 3. — When the abbreviation is the last word of the sentence, only one period is necessary at the end of the sentence.

Note 4. — When the Roman numerals are used a period is usually placed after each; as, George III., Chaps. V., VI., and VII.

Note 5. — When letters are doubled to indicate the plural, as pp. for pages, MM. for messieurs, or LL.D. for Legum Doctor (Doctor of Laws), only one period is used to indicate the abbreviation.

Note 6. — When abbreviated words become current abridged expressions, as consol for consolidated, no period is used.

Note 7. — When the abbreviation represents separate words, a period follows each; as, Legum Doctor, LL.D., Post Master, P. M.

Rule 3. Complete Expressions. — A period should be placed after each of the following : headings, titles, signatures, imprints, advertisements, etc., which the expression is complete in itself.

Ex. — Punctuation. Webster's Dictionary. Trump Towers & Co., New York. Wanted, a computer programmer. Lesson 16.

Note. — The title-page of a book usually consists of three parts : 1. The title of the book ; 2. The name of the author, with his honorary titles appended ; 3. The name of the publisher, with the place of publication. Each of these parts is followed by a period.

Ex. — A History of Education, by F. V. N. Painter, A. M., Professor of Modern Languages and Literature in Roanoke College, New York: D. Appleton & Co.

The Comma (,).

The Comma is used to mark the least degree of separation in the divisions of a sentence. The word "comma," like the words "semicolon" and "colon," was used originally to denote the portion of the sentence cut off, rather than the mark.

The following are the chief rules for the use of the comma:

Rule 1: Compound Sentences. — A comma is used to separate the members of a compound sentence when the degree of separation is too slight for the use of a semicolon.

Ex. — "There was an abundance of clues, but we could not find the location."

Rule 2. Relative Clauses. — Relative clauses, that are explanatory or which present an additional thought are set off by commas; but when such clauses are restrictive in sense they are not so separated.

Remark. — A restrictive clause limits its antecedent to some particular meaning, while a non-restrictive clause is equivalent to an additional thought. Thus, in the sentence "The pupil *who is studious* will improve" the clause in italics is restrictive, the sentence being equivalent to "The studious pupils will improve."

In the sentence "John, *who is studious*, will improve" the clause in italics is non-restrictive, the sentence being equivalent to "John will improve," and the additional thought, "John is studious."

In the first example, the restrictive clause limits the meaning not only to "pupil," but to a particular pupil, "The pupil who is studious" while in the second sentence the sense is not affected by the clause "who is studious." This clause simply adds the thought that "John is studious."

Note 1. — If several words intervene between the relative and its grammatical antecedent, a comma should be placed before the relative clause, even when used restrictively, as in the following:

Ex. — "He lives most wisely, who employs his time most usefully."

Note 2. — A comma should be placed before the relative clause, even when the latter is restrictive, if the relative is followed by a word or a phrase enclosed by commas; as, —

"They who, lavishing in their higher position in society, kindly welcomed us, should receive our gratitude."

Note 3. — When the relative has for its antecedent several nouns or clauses in succession, it should be separated from the last by a comma, even though the relative clause be restrictive; as, —

"There were present laborers, mechanics, and laid-off people who doubted the arguments he offered."

If the comma were omitted after "merchants," the meaning of the sentence might be taken to be that it was only the merchants that doubted.

Rule 3. Dependent Clauses. — Dependent clauses are usually set off by commas.

Ex. — "If you desire success, you must win it."

Note. — "A dependent clause requires another to complete its meaning. It is usually introduced by some subordinate conjunction or a conjunctive adverb, as if, though, when, etc, and often precedes the clause on which it depends.

When the dependent clause follows that on which it depends, it is in many cases not set off by a comma; as, "He will come if you wish us to do so."

When the dependent clause follows the main clause, and is introduced by "*that*," it is not set off by a comma unless "*that*" is equivalent to "*in order that*," and, is placed at some distance from the verb; as, —

"I believe that he will come."

"I shall listen to what he says, that I may learn what argument he offers."

Rule 4. Parenthetical Expressions. — Parenthetical words and phrases should be set off by commas.

Remark. — Expressions are parenthetical when they are placed between the related parts of a sentence, but are not strictly essential to its meaning.

The following are among the expressions most commonly used as parenthetical:

after all, in short, now and then,

as it were, in a word, no doubt,

as it happens, in reality, of course,

beyond question, in truth, on the contrary,

for the most part, in general, on the other hand,

generally speaking, in the mean time, without doubt,

in fact, in the first place, you know,

accordingly, however, perhaps,

consequently, indeed, then,

doubtless, moreover, therefore,

finally, namely, too.

When one of these parenthetical expressions occurs at the beginning or at the end of a sentence, only a single comma is used to separate the expression from the main part of the sentence.

When any of the expressions above are used to modify some particular part of the sentence, they lose their parenthetical character, and are no longer set off by commas. Observe the use of the word "*however*" in the following:

"We will, however, do our duty," "However, we will do our duty." "However well we do our work, we get but little praise."

Note. — Some words, known variously as independent adverbs, expletives, etc., as now, well, why, yes, no, again, further, first, secondly, etc., when they stand at the beginning of a sentence, are set off by a comma. This is true also of *now and then* and *here and there* (here when used to introduce contrasted expressions; as, —

"Now, all is harmony; then, all was confusion."

Rule 5. Intermediate Expressions. — Clauses and expressions not parenthetical in character, but come between the essential parts of a sentence, are set off by commas.

Ex. — "Physical exercise, especially in the open air, is of great importance to health."

Rule 6. Transposed Elements. — Transposed phrases and clauses are usually set off by commas.

Ex. — "Of all the cases considered, his was the worst."

Note 1. — The comma is placed also after a surname when it precedes the name ; as, — Johnson, Dr. Samuel; Watson, W. H.

Note 2. — When the connection is very close in the case of transposed elements, the comma is not used; as, "At daylight the gun was fired to kill the zombies."

Rule 7. Series. — In a series of words, all being the same part of speech, a comma should follow each word of the series.

Ex. — "The mind is that which thinks, feels, wills." "The air, the earth, the water, teem with life."

Note 1. — When the conjunction is omitted between the last two words of a series, a comma is placed after the last, unless it precedes a single word; as, "Days, months, years, have passed away."

Note 2. — When the words in the series are connected by conjunctions, the comma may be omitted; as, "Days and months and years have passed since we saw him."

Note 3. — When the conjunction is omitted between all except the last two of the series, it is common to put a comma before the conjunction, but many writers omit it.

Note 4. — In such expressions as "*A fragrant little flower*" no comma should be placed between the two adjectives, as we do not mean a fragrant and a little flower. The word "fragrant" really modifies the expression "little flower."

Rule 8. Words in Pairs. — When words are used in pairs, a comma should be placed after each pair.

Ex. — "Poor and rich, weak and strong, young and old, must submit to Death's summons."

Rule 9. Apposition. — Words in apposition, together with their adjuncts, are set off by commas.

Ex. — "Johnson, the historian and police officer, was a native of New Hampshire." Rev. Noah Porter, D. D., LL.D.

Note 1. — When several words contain a description of some person or thing, if the name be mentioned it should be set off from the rest of the sentence by a comma; as, "The greatest of poets among the ancients, Homer, was blind."

Rule 10. Words in the Vocative. — Nouns or pronouns in the Nominative Case Independent by address, with their accompanying words, are separated from the remainder of the sentence by commas.

Ex. — " I am, my dear sir, your friend."

Rule 11. Absolute Construction. — Words placed in the Nominative Case Absolute are separated from the remainder of the sentence by commas.

Ex. — "The war having ended, we were dismissed."

Rule 12. Omission of the Verb. — When in a sentence the verb is omitted in clauses following the first, a comma takes its place.

Ex. — "Homer was the greater genius; Virgil, the better artist."

Rule 13. Logical Subject. — When the logical or complete subject ends with a verb or consists of parts subdivided by commas, it is separated from the two main parts of the sentence by a comma.

Ex. — "They who hesitate, fail." "Wheat, barley, and other grains, are the chief products."

Rule 14. Notations. — A short quotation, or an expression resembling a quotation, is preceded by a comma.

Ex. — Anthony Robbins says, " Knowledge is power."

Ex. — "The question now is, How shall we find a remedy?"

Rule 15. Numeral Figures. — When any numbers, except dates are expressed by figures consisting of more than four characters, they are separated by commas into groups of three, beginning at the right

Ex.—" The population of Boston, in 1992, was 1,390,406."

Rule 16. Ambiguity. — A comma is sometimes needed to prevent ambiguity.

Thus, in the sentence, "I woke, and thought upon my dream," the omission of the comma after "woke " would convey the meaning that "I woke upon my dream and thought upon my dream."

The Semicolon (;)

The Semicolon is used to separate parts of sentences less closely connected than those separated by commas.

The following are the most important rules for the use of the semicolon:

Rule 1. Parts of Sentences. — A semicolon should be placed between parts of a sentence when the subdivisions of these parts are separated by commas.

Ex. — "Our first work is to lay the foundation; our second, to build the superstructure."

Note. — When the members are lengthy, they are sometimes separated by a semicolon, though no commas are used ; as, — "So many hours I must rest; So many hours I must study."

Rule 2. A General Term. — A general term having several particulars in apposition may be separated from the particulars by a semicolon.

Ex. — "Nouns have three persons; First, Second, and Third."

Note. — Some authors prefer to use a dash, or a comma and a dash, instead of the semicolon ; as, "Nouns have three persons, — First, Second, and Third."

Rule 3. Short Sentences. — Short sentences which have a slight dependence on one another as to sense are usually separated by semicolons.

Ex. — "Be what you want in life; live by your beliefs; let no one stop you."

Note. — This rule differs somewhat. Some writers prefer to use the colon and others the period instead of the semicolon, but the preference is in favor of the semicolon.

Rule 4. Successive Clauses. — A semicolon is used to separate several successive clauses in a complex sentence when they have a common dependence on a principal clause.

Ex. — "When my heart should cease to throb; when my life has passed away; when my body has been consigned to the grave — then I should remember all these things in my favor."

Note. — Some writers prefer to separate the principal clause from the others by a colon, and the others from one another by a comma and a dash.

Rule 5. Additional Clauses. — An additional clause which presents a contrast can be cut off by a semicolon.

Ex. — "Honesty is the best policy; but he who acts on that principle is not an honest person."

Note. — When the additional clause follows without the use of a connecting word, some writers use a colon instead of a semicolon.

Some of the connecting words most commonly used are namely, for, but, yet etc.

Rule 6. Yes and No. — " Yes" or "no," when forming part of an answer and followed by a proposition, is usually cut off by a semicolon.

Ex. — "Yes; I think I can answer you."

Note. — When yes or no precedes a vocative expression, the semicolon follows the expression; as, "No, my friends; the time has not yet come for action."

The Colon (:)

The Colon is used to separate parts of sentences less closely connected than those separated by the semicolon.

The following are the most important rules for the use of the colon:

Rule 1. Parts of Sentences. — A colon should be placed between the parts of sentences whose subdivisions are separated by semicolons.

Ex. — "You have called yourself an atom in the universe; you have said that you were but an insect in the solar blaze: is your present pride consistent with these professions?"

Rule 2. Additional Clauses. — An additional clause not formally connected with the preceding clause is set off from the latter by a colon.

Ex. — "Apply yourself diligently to study: it is the only sure way to success."

Note. — This rule differs from Rule 5 under the Semicolon mainly in the omission of the conjunction which formally connects the clauses.

Rule 3. Quotations. — When a quotation is introduced, but not as the object of a verb, it should be preceded by a colon.

Ex. — The speaker addressed the meeting as follows: "Fellow citizens, I am glad," etc.

Note. — When a quotation follows transitive verbs as say, exclaim, reply, shout, cry, and similar verbs, as the direct object, it should be preceded by a comma instead of a colon; as, The speaker said, "Fellow citizens, I am glad," etc.

Rule 4. Formal Introduction. — A colon is placed after such expressions as "is," "like these," "as follows," "the following," and similar terms, when they promise or introduce something, whether a quotation or not.

Ex. — "The sentence is this: I will succeed, or die in the attempt."

Rule 5. Title Pages. — In a title page, when an explanatory expression is put in apposition with the main title, without the use of a conjunction, the two are separated by a colon.

Note. — In a title page a colon is usually placed between the names of the publishers and the name of the city in which they are located; as, — Philadelphia: Roberts & Co.

The Interrogation Point (?)

The Interrogation Point is used to show that a question is asked.

Rule 1. Questions. — An interrogation point should be placed after every direct question.

Ex. — "Is this your work?"

Note 1. — A direct question is one that admits of an answer; as, "Why did he not come?" An indirect question is one that is merely spoken of; as, "They asked why he did not come."

Note 2. — When several questions are thrown together to form one sentence, the sentence begins with a capital letter, but an interrogation point should follow each question ; as, "What is the meaning of all this excitement? Of all this laughter? Of all this confusion?"

Note 3. — A series of interrogative sentences may sometimes be closely related, and yet each be distinct in itself. In such case each sentence begins with a capital letter, and is followed by an interrogation point; as, " Does he hunt? Does he shoot? Is he in debt? Is he temperate?"

Note 4. — When a question is not complete until the end of the sentence is reached, only one interrogation point should be used, and that at the close of the sentence; as, "Which is the older, John or James?"

The Exclamation Point (!)

The Exclamation Point is used to indicate some emotion.

Rule 1. Interjections. — The exclamation point is placed after interjections when they show strong emotion.

Ex. — "Hurrah! We are free again."

Note 1. — When the emotion expressed belongs to the whole phrase or sentence, the exclamation is usually placed after the entire expression, rather than after the interjection; as, "Shame upon your conduct!"

Note 2. — When an interjection is repeated several times, the repeated words are separated from each other by a comma, and the exclamation point is put only after the last; as, "Well, well! I cannot stand that."

Rule 2. Exclamation. — An exclamation point is placed after every exclamatory expression.

Ex. — "Magnificent! Gorgeous!" were the words of all. "How very simple it is!"

Note. — It is usually best to put the point where the full force of the exclamation is brought out. Thus, "Charge, Chester, charge on, Stanley, on!"

Rule 3. — More than one exclamation point may be used to express wonder, irony, contempt, or great surprise.

Ex. — "Believe in his honesty! I would rather trust the honesty of a thief."

The Dash (—)

The Dash is used to indicate a sudden change in the sense or the construction of a sentence.

Note. — The dash has its legitimate use, and is necessary in many kinds of composition, but it is frequently used by unskilled writers as a substitute for the comma, the semicolon, the colon, the marks of parenthesis, and even the period. It should not be used as a substitute for any of these. The use of the dash for any of the marks here mentioned is permissible only where none of them can be correctly used.

The following are the most important rules for the use of the dash :

Rule 1. Sudden Change. — A dash is used to mark sudden or abrupt change in the construction or the sense of a sentence.

Ex. — "I am broke and in debt— what day is today?"

"He had no malice in his mind — No ruffles on his shirt."

Rule 2. Parenthesis. — The dash is sometimes used to set off parenthetical expressions when the connection is not so close as to require commas.

Ex. — "Those who hated him most heartily — and no man was hated so heartily — admitted that his mind was exceedingly brilliant."

Rule 3. A Pause. — The dash is sometimes used to indicate a pause made for rhetorical effect.

Ex. — "It was admitted by all that this boy was a model child — when he was asleep."

Note. — The dash is also sometimes used to denote an expressive pause; as, "The wind roared — ceased — sighed gently — roared again — then died quietly away."

Rule 4. Omission. — The dash is used to indicate an omission.

Ex. — "One morning in the summer of 2011—the town of was greatly agitated at a recent occurrence."

Rule 5. Summing Tip. — The dash is sometime used to denote a summing up of particulars.

Ex. — "Father, mother, brother, sister — they are all dead."

Rule 6. Repetition. — When a word or an expression is repeated emphatically or for rhetorical effect, a dash should be inserted before each repetition.

Ex. — "Here lies the dust of Cicero— Cicero I who once thrilled the world with his eloquence."

"I wish," said my uncle Toby, with a deep sigh — "I wish, Jed, I were asleep."

Rule 7. Reflex Apposition. — When words at the end of a sentence stand detached and are in apposition with preceding parts of a sequence, they are separated from the preceding portion by a dash.

Ex. — ^Three of the world's greatest authors — Stephen King, James Patterson, and Danielle Steele.

Rule 8. Titles Run in. — When a title or a heading instead of standing over a paragraph, is run in so as to make a part of the paragraph, it is separated from the rest of the line by a dash. For illustration see any of the foregoing rules.

Rule 9. Dialogue. — The parts of a conversation or a dialogue, if run into a paragraph instead of beginning separate lines, are separated by dashes.

Ex. — "Good-morning, Mr. Smith." — "Good-morning, sir." — " I hope you are well." — " I am quite well; how is your health ?"— " Good, very good."

Rule 10. With Other Pauses. — The dash is often placed after other marks to add effect.

The following are the basic instances:

- a. After a sidehead; as " Remark 2. — ," etc.
- b. Between the end of a paragraph and the name of the author, if both are placed on the same line ; as, —
"Procrastination is the thief of time." — Young.
- c. Between short quotations brought together in the same line. (See Example under Rule 9.)

The Marks of Parenthesis ().

The curves, or marks of parenthesis, are used to enclose such words as break the unity of the sentence and have little, if any, connection with the remaining part of it.

Ex. — "I have seen a man (if you can call him a man) insult a defenseless boy."

Remark 1. — The sentence embracing curves is punctuated as it would be were no parenthetical part included.

Whatever point may be needed is placed after the last curve, unless some other mark precede the last curve, in which case the point is placed before the first curve; as, —

1. "Pride, in some disguise or other (often a secret to the proud man himself), is the most ordinary spring of action among men."

2. "While we all desire fame, (and why should we not desire it) we should do nothing unfair to gain it."

Remark 2. — The part within the curves is punctuated according to the rules heretofore explained, just as if no parenthesis be used.

Remark 3. — The dash is preferred to the curve by many writers at present, and is quite extensively used.

Quotation Marks (" ").

A quotation is the introduction into one's discourse of words uttered by someone else.

Quotation Marks are two inverted commas at the beginning, and two apostrophes at the close, of the part quoted.

The following are the rules for the use of quotation marks :

Rule 1. Direct quotation. — Quotation marks are used to enclose a direct quotation.

Ex. — James said, " I am going to love her the rest of my life."

Note 1. — When other words occur between the quoted parts, only the quoted words are enclosed by the marks; as, "There is but one way," said the businessman, "to ensure success, and that is by earnest effort."

Note 2. — When the quotation is not direct, no marks are needed. Observe the difference in the following:

He said, " I will be there in time."

He said he would be there in time.

Rule 2. A quotation within a quotation. — When one quotation is included within another, the included quotation is enclosed by single quotation marks.

Ex. — I find the following: "I rise for information,' said a member. ' I am very glad to hear it,' said another nearby; 'for no one needs it more.'"

Note 1. — If a quotation included within another contains another included quotation, the latter is enclosed by double quotation marks; as, I found in a book this sentence : "Someone has written, 'What a world of wisdom is contained in the words of Sarah — "Life if real, life is precious; and the grave is not its goal.'"

Rule 3. Quoted Paragraphs. — When a number of quoted paragraphs come in succession, the inverted commas precede each, but the closing quotation marks follow the last paragraph only.

Remark. — When a quotation is made the marks should enclose the punctuation marks as well as the words. Notice the difference in the following:

1. His remark was, "Why must you go?"
2. Was his remark, "Must you go " or "Will you go?"

The first sentence embraces a quoted question; the second is a question itself, and therefore ends with the interrogation point.

Note. — Authors sometimes put words or phrases used in illustration in quotation marks; as, "in" and "into" are closely related.

The Hyphen (-)

The Hyphen is used to connect words. In the formation of compound words the hyphen should be used between the parts of the compound so long as each of these parts retains its own accent; thus, rose-tree; milking-stool. The hyphen is retained also in temporary compounds; as, cloudcapped, health-destroying. When, however, the accent is placed upon but one part of the compound, or the compound is one that has become permanent, the hyphen is not used; as, blackboard, penman, policeman.

The hyphen is used also to indicate the division of a word at the end of a line.

In dividing words syllables should never be broken, but the words should be separated by closing the line with a full syllable and a hyphen, and beginning the next line with the next syllable.

Note 1. — The hyphen is sometimes used to indicate the divisions of a word; as, ma-nip-u-late.

Note 2. — The hyphen is used also to distinguish words spelled alike, but of different meaning and pronunciation; as, re-creation, recreation.

Note 3. — The hyphen may be used also to separate two adjacent vowels; as co-operate, pre-existent.

The simplest rules with regard to the division of words into syllables are the following:

1. Join consonants to the vowels whose sounds they modify; as, an-i-ma-tion, as-tron-o-my.
2. Let prefixes and suffixes form distinct syllables when it can be done without misrepresenting the pronunciation; as, im-print-ing, re-ject-ed, di-rect-or.

Other Punctuation Marks

The following are the most important of the remaining marks used in printed discourse. Some of them are used wholly by printers, and the others are mostly so used :

Brackets [] are used to enclose some word or words necessary to correct an error or afford an explanation; as, "They [the baseball players] came directly from Holland."

Note 1. — Brackets are used in dictionaries and similar works to enclose the pronunciation or etymology of a word; as, Belles Lettres [bel letr].

Note 2. — Brackets are used also in dramas to enclose directions to the players.

The Apostrophe (') is used to indicate the omission of letters or figures. It is used

1. To form contractions; as, don't, for do not; isn't, for is not; o'er, for over.
2. To form plurals; as, 6's, +'s, s's, instead of 6es, + es, ses.
3. To indicate the possessive form of the noun; as, king's, widow's, etc.
4. To indicate in the case of dates the century figures; as, '74 for 1974.

The Ellipsis [],[*], [...]**, is used where letters or words have been omitted ; as.
Gen. G * * * t, for Gen. Grant; or Mr. B e, for Mr. Boone.