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Description automatically generated**Colons**

1. **Used to introduce a list**

* Everything that comes before the colon should make sense on its own
  + *The shopping list contained three items: bread, butter and a jar of strawberry jam*

1. **Used to introduce a quotation**

* Remember that it’s possible to introduce a quotation into your writing without using a colon
  + *The Inspector makes a reference to war in final speech: ‘fire and blood and anguish’*

1. **Used to introduce an idea that is an explanation or continuation of the one that comes before it**

* Think of the colon as a ‘gateway’ that invites the reader to learn more
  + *Chelsea performed poorly last season: they finished in sixth place*

1. **Used to add emphasis to an idea**

* This is a technique that should be used sparingly and with care
  + *The politician was keen to promote one particular virtue: honesty*

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Description automatically generated**Semi-Colons**

1. **Used to separate ‘complicated’ items in a long list**

* Remember that commas will suffice in most cases
  + *The kit list was vast: football boots, each with red laces; shinpads for the game and for training; shorts…*

1. **Used to join two independent clauses that are closely related to imply a subtle link**

* Think of a main clause as being a sentence in its own right
  + *The garden needed a lot of work; the weeds had grown to the height of the fence*

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Description automatically generated**Full Stops**

1. **Used to show that a sentence has come to an end**

* Think of sentences as ‘units of sense’ that help to enhance clarity
  + *Eventually, the clock said 3 o’clock and the bell rang.*

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Description automatically generated**Commas**

1. **Used to separate items in a ‘simple’ list**

* Only use commas if there are three or more items
  + *She opened the door and saw that the desks, chairs, pens and worksheets had already been tidied*

1. **Used to separate adjectives**

* A comma can be used instead of the word ‘and’
  + *The large, fearsome dog generated a great deal of attention*

1. **Used before certain conjunctions**

* Two common ones are ‘but’ and ‘so’
  + *Sabine was doubtful that the game would go ahead, but she arrived at the stadium anyway*

1. **Used after introductory words or phrases**

* Common ones are ‘although, ‘however’, ‘despite’, ‘firstly’ and ‘finally’
  + *Despite wanting to loudly celebrate, the team quietly walked-off the pitch*

1. **Used to enclose helpful additional information that is not vital**

* The sentence should make sense by itself if the additional information is removed
  + *Mrs Smith, the manager, asked the checkout staff to meet after the last customer had left*

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Description automatically generated**Exclamation Marks**

1. **Used to express particularly strong emotions**

* Common emotions are excitement, surprise and anger
  + *That was truly amazing!*

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Description automatically generated**Ellipsis**

1. **Used to show that words have been omitted from a sentence or passage**

* Square brackets are needed to show that the words were not removed by the author
  + *The Inspector delivers a powerful final speech: ‘We don’t live alone […] we are responsible for each other’*

1. **Used to suggest a pause or uncertainty**

* This is something that could create a sense of tension or convey a sense of quiet reflection
  + *Adam waited for the interviewer to respond and decided to make eye-contact… Still no answer*

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**Question Marks**

1. **Used at the end of a direct question**

* A direct question is one that requires an answer
  + *Where is my next lesson?*

1. **Used at the end of a rhetorical question**

* Rhetorical questions are asked without the expectation of a direct answer being received
  + *Do you want to spend your lunch break in detention?*

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Description automatically generated**Apostrophes**

1. **Used to show that words have been shortened**

* Apostrophes replace ‘missing’ letters
  + *She’d invited him to the party, even though he’d already said he couldn’t make it*

1. **Used to show ownership**

* Remember to place the apostrophe after the ‘s’ in plural nouns
  + *The crocodiles’ den was near to the bird’s nest*