

Commas with Introductory Elements

11i. Use a comma after certain introductory elements.

- EXAMPLES** Well, it's your turn to wash the dishes. [A comma sets off the mild interjection *well* at the beginning of the statement.]
- Smiling with relief, I jumped into the cool water. [A comma appears after the introductory participial phrase *Smiling with relief*.]
- Next to the soap-filled sink, there were piles of dishes. [A comma appears after the long introductory prepositional phrase *Next to the soap-filled sink*.]
- After we had finished drying the last glass, it was time put the dishes away. [A comma appears after the introductory adverb clause *After we had finished drying the last glass*.]

EXERCISE A Each of the following sentences contains either an introductory interjection or participial phrase. If the sentence is incorrectly punctuated, add commas where they are needed. If the sentence is already correctly punctuated, write C on the line provided.

Examples _____ 1. Oh, I see your point. [The introductory interjection *Oh* must be set off from the rest of the sentence by a comma.]

_____ ^C 2. Snoring like a chainsaw, I woke myself up. [A comma correctly sets off the introductory participial phrase *Snoring like a chainsaw* from the rest of the sentence.]

_____ 1. Hey is that a dollar bill stuck to your shoe? [Is there an introductory interjection that needs a comma to set it apart from the rest of the sentence?]

_____ 2. Swallowing nervously Carl wiped his sweaty hands on his jeans. [Does the sentence begin with a participial phrase that describes *Carl*?]

_____ 3. Encouraged by the cheers of the fans, Reggie took his place on the pitcher's mound.

_____ 4. My this has been an exciting first day.

_____ 5. Raising her arms the vice-presidential nominee predicted victory.

_____ 6. Sure there are a few bugs in the software program.

_____ 7. Locked into our old views about eating how can we improve our diet?

_____ 8. Well, maybe we should simply disband the committee altogether.

_____ 9. Thinking of a dozen topics Wynnne couldn't decide where to begin her research.

_____ 10. Yes isn't that the most interesting painting in the exhibit?

for CHAPTER 11: PUNCTUATION pages 280–81 continued

Other introductory elements include prepositional phrases and adverb clauses. Use a comma after two or more introductory prepositional phrases or after one long introductory prepositional phrase. Use a comma after an introductory adverb clause.

EXAMPLES **At the store on the corner,** we can buy more apples. [The two introductory prepositional phrases *At the store* and *on the corner* are followed by a comma.]

After the long, dangerous migration south, the geese were exhausted. [The long introductory prepositional phrase *After the long, dangerous migration south* is followed by a comma.]

When the acorns fell from the trees, squirrels gathered and stored them. [The introductory adverb clause *When the acorns fell from the trees* is followed by a comma.]

EXERCISE B Each of the following sentences contains an introductory prepositional phrase or an introductory adverb clause. If the sentence is incorrectly punctuated, insert commas where they are needed. If the sentence is already correctly punctuated, write C on the line provided.

Examples _____ 1. If you want to keep something safe, put it someplace no one will find it.
[The introductory adverb clause *If you want to keep something safe* must be set off from the rest of the sentence by a comma.]

_____ C 2. When I realized the importance of the papers, I decided to put them away.
[The introductory adverb clause *When I realized the importance of the papers* is correctly set off from the rest of the sentence by a comma.]

_____ 11. Behind the poster of a buffalo you will find a wall safe. [Do two prepositional phrases introduce the sentence?]

_____ 12. Because it is strong, we keep our most valuable items inside the safe. [Does an adverb clause introduce the sentence?]

_____ 13. When it is locked the safe is almost impossible to crack.

_____ 14. In addition to that we can't forget where we've hidden the key.

_____ 15. After we searched the room, we discovered a great place in which to hide the key.

_____ 16. Although our sister didn't like the choice we knew what to do.

_____ 17. Since we didn't want to forget where we hid it we decided to keep the key nearby.

_____ 18. Against our sister's repeated advice we hid the key on the back of the poster.

_____ 19. With all of her objections you'd think that we'd left the key in plain sight.

_____ 20. If she doesn't understand our reasoning about hiding places she can hide her valuables somewhere else.