

Legal Transcription

Transcription Training for Beginners - Module 3: Correct Use of Punctuation

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TRANSCRIPTION: Transcription Training for Beginners - Module 3: Correct Use of Punctuation | *escribr Transcription*

Introduction: Why Punctuation Matters

[00:02] Welcome to Module 3: Correct Use of Punctuation.

[00:10] Why is punctuation important in transcription? Punctuation gives meaning to the words. A transcriber needs to type accurately what the speaker wants to convey.

[00:20] A punctuation error can often completely change the intended meaning of a sentence. Let's take a look at the picture below and read the featured article's subtitle.

[00:30] Do you think the sentence conveys clearly what it actually means? What's missing?

[00:36] If you had a good laugh after reading the sentence, then you totally get what is missing. A simple comma can alter the meaning big time.

[00:51] Read the sentences below and try to differentiate the meaning of one from the other. The first sentence sounds scary—it's like from a horror movie or something.

[00:59] In the second sentence, we added a comma after the word "eat," and the sentence becomes an invitation from someone.

[01:06] Do you think that's possible? Can the murderer actually protest his innocence after his death? That sounds impossible, don't you think?

[01:23] To correct the sentence, we place a period after the word "innocence" and a comma after the word "after."

[\[01:30\]](#) Now let's take a look at another hilarious example. In this sentence, the punctuation marks are not correctly used.

[\[01:37\]](#) We give the correct meaning to this sentence by using the correct punctuation. So, can you see the big difference now?

[\[01:44\]](#) If punctuation is not used correctly, it completely changes the meaning of the sentence.

[\[01:52\]](#) Sometimes punctuation is taken for granted in transcription, when in fact it plays a huge role.

Section 1: The Period

[\[02:04\]](#) **Rule number one:** Always place the period inside the quotation mark.

[\[02:20\]](#) **Rule number two:** Place the period outside a single quote.

[\[02:30\]](#) **Rule number three:** If single quotation marks are used inside quotation marks, place the period before the final single quotation mark.

[\[02:44\]](#) **Rule number four:** If a sentence ends with a question mark or exclamation point, the period is omitted.

Section 2: The Comma

[\[03:12\]](#) **Rule number one:** Use a comma after the first digit of a four-digit number.

[\[03:23\]](#) **Rule number two:** A degree or certification shown after a person's name should be set off with commas.

[03:34] Rule number three: When directly addressing someone, it should be set off with commas.

[03:51] Rule number four: When a date consists of the day of the month followed by the year, the day of the month should be followed by a comma. When the day of the week is provided before the month, the day of the week should be followed by a comma.

[04:09] Rule number five: Commas should be used to separate geographic elements. The final geographic element should also be followed by a comma when it appears in the middle of a sentence.

[04:25] Rule number six: When a noun is modified by more than one adjective, each of which independently modifies the noun, the adjectives should be separated by a comma.

[04:41] Rule number seven: A comma is required when an adjective or adverb is repeated for emphasis.

[04:53] Rule number eight: A comma is used to set off introductory words to a sentence.

[05:15] Rule number nine: Use a comma when a sentence starts with a mild interjection.

[05:32] Rule number 10: An afterthought that follows the main clause can be set off with a comma.

[05:54] Rule number 11: A comma should be used before a question tag. Question tags are the short questions that we put on the end of sentences.

[06:13] Rule number 12: The trend with labels is to omit the comma.

[06:23] Rule number 13: Do not use a comma between the month and the year when they are the only two elements in the date.

[06:36] Rule number 14: Do not use any commas if conjunctions separate all the items of the

series from each other.

[06:46] Rule number 15: The phrase "as well as" usually doesn't regard commas unless it's part of a non-restrictive clause.

[07:00] What is a non-restrictive clause? It is an adjective clause that adds extra or non-essential information to a sentence.

[07:10] The meaning of the sentence would not change if the clause were to be omitted.

[07:27] Rule number 16: When a sentence ends with an adverb that is essential to the meaning of the sentence, the adverb should not be set off with a comma.

[07:47] Rule number 17: Non-restrictive information is set off with a comma. When the non-restrictive is found within rather than at the end of the sentence, it should be set up with a pair of commas.

[08:19] Rule number 18: Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction that joins two independent clauses.

[09:00] Rule number 19: Do not use a comma before a coordinating conjunction if the sentence contains only one independent clause.

[09:13] Rule number 20: If the dependent clause comes before the independent clause, separate it with a comma.

[09:42] Rule number 21: Use commas to set off expressions that interrupt the sentence flow—expressions like "nevertheless," "after all," "by the way," "on the other hand," "however," and others.

Section 3: Semicolons, Colons, and Others

[10:09] Semicolon Rule number one: Use a semicolon between two independent clauses linked by a transitional expression.

[10:23] Semicolon Rule number two: Use a semicolon between two independent clauses when a coordinating conjunction is not used.

[10:47] Colon Rule number one: Use a colon before introducing a list, a formal quotation, or an enumeration.

[10:59] Colon Rule number two: Do not use a colon when the listed items are incorporated in the flow of the sentence.

[11:40] Apostrophe Rule number one: The word "it's" with an apostrophe 's' is the contraction of "it is." "Its" without an apostrophe is the possessive form.

[12:02] Apostrophe Rule number two: Use an apostrophe to indicate the last two digits of a year. Don't use an apostrophe when referring to a person's age.

[12:21] Apostrophe Rule number three: Do not use apostrophes to form a plural noun.

[12:50] Apostrophe Rule number four: The possessive of a singular noun is formed by adding an apostrophe and an 's', whether the singular noun ends in 's' or not.

[13:15] Question Mark Rule number one: Use a question mark at the end of the sentence when the sentence begins as a statement but contains a question within it.

[14:45] Dash: Use a pair of dashes when the speaker suspends but does not cancel the idea in mid-sentence and then continues the idea.

[15:11] Hyphen: Two or more words that collectively act as an adjective should be hyphenated when they appear immediately before the noun they modify.