Comma Rules Printable Worksheet: Examples, Practice, and Answer Key

Rubric

Rubric for grading the four practice sentences.

1. Commas are placed only where a stated rule applies.

2. Series commas separate three or more items consistently.

3. Introductory material is followed by a comma when the rule applies.

4. Nonessential information is set off by commas on both sides.

5. Coordinate adjectives are separated by a comma when reversible or joinable by 'and.'

6. No comma is added between two items in a list or before a conjunction that does not join independent clauses.','7. Reasoning cites the rule used for each comma.','8. Alternative valid placements are accepted when they follow the same rule and preserve meaning.

Comma Rules Printable Worksheet: Examples, Practice, and Answer Key

Complete worked example / separate answer key

Insert commas: 'The hikers checked the map filled their bottles and started the climb.'

Answer: The hikers checked the map, filled their bottles, and started the climb.

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Original tasks 1, 2, 3, 4 / complete keys

Task 1

Insert commas: 'The bakery sells muffins cookies and bread.'

Answer: The bakery sells muffins, cookies, and bread.

Reason: The list has three items, so commas separate them. The comma before 'and' is the series comma.

Check: Count the items: muffins, cookies, bread. Confirm two commas appear and the sentence reads smoothly aloud.

Task 2

Insert commas: 'After the game ended the players shook hands.'

Answer: After the game ended, the players shook hands.

Reason: The opening clause 'After the game ended' introduces the main clause, so a comma follows it.

Check: Remove the opening clause; the main clause still stands. Confirm the comma sits after 'ended.'

Task 3

Insert commas: 'My aunt who teaches history writes mystery novels.'

Answer: My aunt, who teaches history, writes mystery novels.

Reason: The clause 'who teaches history' is nonessential information about 'my aunt'; removing it leaves a complete sentence, so it is set off by commas on both sides.

Check: Remove 'who teaches history' and read the sentence: 'My aunt writes mystery novels.' If the core meaning remains, the commas are correct.

Task 4

Insert commas: 'It was a bright sunny afternoon.'

Answer: It was a bright, sunny afternoon.

Reason: The adjectives 'bright' and 'sunny' equally describe 'afternoon' and can be reversed or joined by 'and,' so a comma separates them.

Check: Try 'a sunny, bright afternoon' and 'a bright and sunny afternoon.' If both sound natural, the comma is justified.

Comma Rules Printable Worksheet: Examples, Practice, and Answer Key

Separate answer key: correct sentences for the four exercises, one-sentence reasoning for each, and a check method.

Exercise	Correct Sentence	Reasoning	Check Method
1	The bakery sells muffins, cookies, and bread.	The list has three items, so commas separate them. The comma before 'and' is the series comma.	Count the items: muffins, cookies, bread. Confirm two commas appear and the sentence reads smoothly aloud.
2	After the game ended, the players shook hands.	The opening clause 'After the game ended' introduces the main clause, so a comma follows it.	Remove the opening clause; the main clause still stands. Confirm the comma sits after 'ended.'
3	My aunt, who teaches history, writes mystery novels.	The clause 'who teaches history' is nonessential information about 'my aunt'; removing it leaves a complete sentence, so it is set off by commas on both sides.	Remove 'who teaches history' and read the sentence: 'My aunt writes mystery novels.' If the core meaning remains, the commas are correct.

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Separate answer key: correct sentences for the four exercises, one-sentence reasoning for each, and a check method.

Exercise	Correct Sentence	Reasoning	Check Method
4	It was a bright, sunny afternoon.	The adjectives 'bright' and 'sunny' equally describe 'afternoon' and can be reversed or joined by 'and,' so a comma separates them.	Try 'a sunny, bright afternoon' and 'a bright and sunny afternoon.' If both sound natural, the comma is justified.

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Worked example / Worked Example

Worked example with prompt, reasoning, answer, and check.

Prompt: Insert commas in this sentence: 'Although the museum was crowded we enjoyed the sculpture garden and the photography exhibit.'

Reasoning: The opening word 'Although' begins a dependent clause that introduces the main clause, so a comma follows 'crowded.' The list has two items only ('the sculpture garden and the photography exhibit'), so no comma is needed between them.

Answer: 'Although the museum was crowded, we enjoyed the sculpture garden and the photography exhibit.'

Check: read the sentence aloud; the pause after 'crowded' marks the end of the introductory clause, and the two-item list remains unseparated.

Comma Rules Printable Worksheet: Examples, Practice, and Answer Key

Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Commas are placed only where a stated rule applies.
- [ ] Series commas separate three or more items consistently.
- [ ] Introductory material is followed by a comma when the rule applies.
- [ ] Nonessential information is set off by commas on both sides.
- [ ] Coordinate adjectives are separated by a comma when reversible or joinable by 'and.'
- [ ] No comma is added between two items in a list or before a conjunction that does not join independent clauses.
- [ ] Reasoning cites the rule used for each comma.
- [ ] Alternative valid placements are accepted when they follow the same rule and preserve meaning.

Reflection: What did you check, what did you change, and what will you try next?