Comma Rules

Use a comma...

1. **before a coordinating conjunction** (and, or, but, nor, yet, for, so) that separate two independent clauses:

   *She is a very smart young lady, but sometimes she cannot see what is right in front of her.*

   *David is really good at soccer, and he is an excellent student as well.*

2. **after an introductory word, phrase or clause** that comes before a main clause:

   *However, I find the curtains in Mrs. Schirel’s house to be tacky and distracting.*

   *Because we were having so many computer problems, everyone in the lab lost their papers.*

   *Clearly, Amy doesn’t know how to tie her shoes.*

   *If you get this last question right, you will win $1,000,000; if you get it wrong, you walk away with nothing.*

3. **around words, phrases and clauses in the middle of a sentence** when they are not essential to the meaning of the sentence:

   *My best friend, Marissa, took me out to dinner for my birthday.*

   *Kanye West, a famous performer, took a big risk during the 2009 VMA awards.*

4. **between items in a series:**

   *She broke the chair, the fridge, the toaster and my muffin pan!*

   *If she starts paying attention in class, gets her work in on time and does some extra credit, she might be able to pass.*

5. **before and after a quotation** within a sentence:

   *“There are many strange things in the world,” he said, “I think your brother is one of them.”*
She stood on top of the table and yelled, “We’re not gonna take it!”

6. **before an afterthought:**

   She was awesome, especially when she made jokes.

7. **to set off geographical names, items in date and professional titles:**

   He was from Atlanta, Georgia.

   My dog died on March 14\textsuperscript{th}, 1990, when he fell into the river.’

   I will never forget my old address, 354, 6\textsuperscript{th} Ave South, St. Joseph, New Mexico.