

Punctuation

. **period** Use a period at the end of declarative and imperative sentences and when writing abbreviations.

? **question mark** Use a question mark at the end of a question.

! **exclamation point** Use an exclamation point at the end of a sentence that expresses strong emotion.

, **comma** Use a comma to separate items in a series, to join independent clauses with a conjunction, and to set off a direct quotation in a sentence.

“ ” **quotation marks** Use quotation marks to enclose direct quotations and some titles.

' **apostrophe** Use an apostrophe when writing possessive nouns and contractions.

: **colon** Use a colon before certain lists and when writing the time.

; **semicolon** Use a semicolon between two independent clauses if a conjunction is not used.

- **hyphen** Use a hyphen to join two words that are put together to form a single idea, and when writing fraction words and some number words.

() **parentheses** Use a pair of parentheses to enclose explanations and other useful information in a sentence.