



## PUNCTUATION—END OF SENTENCE: THE PERIOD, AND QUESTION & EXCLAMATION MARKS

In any writing you do, you need to keep the reader in mind. To make your message easy to understand, use the full stop, and question and exclamation marks to help perfect and emphasise what you mean.

Name & Symbol	What it does
1. <u>End of sentence:</u> <u>Full stop</u> [ . ]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use a full stop to signal the completion of a thought; end a <b>declarative sentence</b> (a sentence that makes a statement or declares something) [e.g. Muscle cramping may be the first sign of heat-related illness.]</li><li>Insert a full stop directly after the final word and follow this with a space [e.g. ...data is available. For the current study...]</li><li>Use a full stop at the end of an <b>indirect question</b> [e.g. The question is whether the legislation can be supported.]</li><li>If a sentence ends with a <b>parenthetical</b>, place the full stop outside the closing parenthesis [e.g. There is more tourist movement in December-January (the peak travel period).]</li><li>If the information within the parenthesis is a complete sentence, the full stop is placed inside the parenthesis [e.g. The advertisement's caption uses clear and direct language (It also elicits a reaction in the viewer/consumer.)]</li></ul>
2. <u>End of sentence:</u> <u>Question mark</u> [ ? ]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use a question mark at the end of a <b>direct question</b> [e.g. What is the correlation between chocolate intake per capita and dental cavities?]</li><li>If a question occurs within a longer sentence, you use a question mark [e.g. The key question, What is the correlation between chocolate intake per capita and dental cavities? was not answered].</li><li>Requests phrased as questions end with a period [e.g. Would you please forward the report to all persons indicated below.]</li></ul>
3. <u>End of sentence:</u> <u>Exclamation Mark</u> [ ! ]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The exclamation mark is used to express strong emotions: excitement, surprise, astonishment, shock, protest or dismay; they are usually used with Oh! Wow! Oh No! etc.</li><li>Although used in literary texts, business, technical, scientific and regulatory writing aims to communicate information objectively, not emotionally, so avoid exclamation marks</li></ul>

### Useful links

#### Style guides:

APA Style: <http://www.apastyle.org/search.aspx?query=Punctuation>

Harvard Style Manual: <http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/tips-grammar-punctuation-and-style>

MLA Style: <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/GramPunct.html>

The Chicago Manual of Style:

Name & Symbol	What it does
	<p><a href="http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/ganda/data/faq/topics/Punctuation.html">http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/ganda/data/faq/topics/Punctuation.html</a></p> <p><u>Other Punctuation Guides:</u></p> <p>The University of Western Australia: <a href="http://guides.is.uwa.edu.au/">http://guides.is.uwa.edu.au/</a>  Curtin University: <a href="http://libguides.library.curtin.edu.au/c.php?g=202308&amp;p=1332771">http://libguides.library.curtin.edu.au/c.php?g=202308&amp;p=1332771</a>  The University of Auckland: <a href="http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/subject-guides/med/setref-vancouver.htm#additional">http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/subject-guides/med/setref-vancouver.htm#additional</a></p> <p><u>Other links:</u></p> <p>Purdue Online Writing Lab: <a href="https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/">https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/</a>  The Punctuation Guide: <a href="http://www.thepunctuationguide.com/apostrophe.html#possessives">http://www.thepunctuationguide.com/apostrophe.html#possessives</a>  The Writer’s Handbook: <a href="https://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/index.html">https://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/index.html</a>  Pearson Education Online Handbook:  <a href="http://wps.ablongman.com/long_longman_ohb_1/27/7023/1797996.cw/index.html">http://wps.ablongman.com/long_longman_ohb_1/27/7023/1797996.cw/index.html</a></p>

## References

- Chalker, S., & Weiner, E. (1994). *The Oxford dictionary of English grammar*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press Inc.
- Lauchman, R. (2010). *Punctuation at work: Simple principles for achieving clarity and good style*. New York, NY: American Management Association.
- Penn, J. (n.d.). The punctuation guide. Retrieved from <http://www.thepunctuationguide.com/index.html>
- Punctuation. (2015). In Cambridge University Press (Ed.), *Cambridge dictionaries online*. Retrieved from <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>
- Strunk, W., & White, E.B. (1999). *The elements of style* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: NY: Longman.
- Teaching and Learning Support (TaLS). (n.d.). *Punctuating with apostrophes*. Retrieved from [https://www.une.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/13111/WC\\_Punctuating-with-apostrophes.pdf](https://www.une.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/13111/WC_Punctuating-with-apostrophes.pdf)
- Tredinnick, M. (2008). *The little green grammar book*. Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales Press Ltd.
- Truss, L. (2003). *Eats, shoots & leaves: The zero tolerance approach to punctuation*. London, England: Profile books Ltd.