Comma Handout

Remember that an *independent clause* is "a clause that can stand alone as a sentence, containing a subject and a predicate with a finite verb." An *independent clause* communicates a complete thought.

Common and Proper Uses of the Comma

- Use a comma and a conjunction to connect two independent clauses.

  - Example: Using technology frequently throughout the day often requires people to multitask, and excessive multitasking is dangerous for the brain.

- Use a comma to set off introductory elements like clauses, phrases, or words that come before the main clause.

  - Example: On the other hand, some research indicates that using technology can benefit a person's brain.

- Use commas to separate three or more words, phrases, or clauses written in a series.

  - Example: Students are distracted by the constant need to check their e-mail, social media feeds, or texts.

Further reference: The Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL): http://owl.english.purdue.edu (search terms: commas).