

## 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: The Great Depression ruined Americans’ livelihoods, yet it also drove them to be resourceful and use government assistance to survive.
- Use a comma to set off introductory elements like clauses, phrases, or words that come before the main clause.
  - Example: Under the New Deal, millions of Americans tried to get jobs through the Civil Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA).
- Use commas to separate three or more words, phrases, or clauses written in a series.
  - Example: A never-ending stream of bills was passed to relieve poverty, reduce unemployment, and speed economic recovery.

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