

## 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: I can see where you couldn’t be sure, since I’m not wearing 190 pounds of space gear.
- Use a comma to set off introductory elements like clauses, phrases, or words that come before the main clause.
  - Example: For most of human history, it was impossible to imagine that anyone would make it to the moon.
- Use commas to separate three or more words, phrases, or clauses written in a series.
  - Example: We had to help each other put on several layers, attach the life support pack to our backs, and put our helmets on our heads.

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