5 Basic Rules for Using Commas!

Use commas to separate three or more words, phrases, or clauses written in a series.
- Ex: His hobbies include writing, jogging, and reading.
- Ex: The branches of government include the executive, judicial, and legislative.

Use commas to separate independent clauses when they are joined by any of coordinating conjunctions.
- The coordinating conjunctions are: and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet
- Ex: Dave was incredibly smart, but also just as lazy.

Use commas after introductory clauses, phrases, or words that come before the main clause.
- Ex: Because I was not home, I could not answer the phone.
- Ex: If you are not feeling well, you should see a doctor.

Use a comma before you introduce a quote.
- Ex: Peter Parker was told by his uncle that, “with great power, comes great responsibility”.

Use commas to set off all geographic names, items in dates, addresses, and titles in names.
- Ex: New Orleans, Louisiana, is considered to be the birthplace of jazz.
- Ex: On October 18, 1926, Chuck Berry was born.
- Ex: Mehmet Oz, MD, is a famous TV personality.

From the Writing Center at the ARC