1. Use a comma:
   - before a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or) when joining independent clauses (two parts of a sentence that may stand on their own).
     - Learning a new language can be exciting, but I just don’t have the time for it.
   - after an introductory word group.
     - After eating dinner, I sat down on the couch and promptly fell asleep.
   - between all items in a series.
     - I plan to shop, eat, read and sleep over Christmas break.
     - Note: Many publications omit the comma between the last two items; however, be certain that this does not cause any ambiguity within the sentence.

2. Use an apostrophe when:
   - a noun is possessive.
     - Jessica’s speech was mesmerizing.
   - forming contractions.
     - Don’t forget to lock the door when you leave.
   - pluralizing numbers mentioned as numbers, letters mentioned as letters, words mentioned as words, and abbreviations.
     - Remember to ask for their ID’s.
   - COMMON MISUSES
     - The cat was cute; it’s collar was purple. (It’s means it is)
     - Clerk’s Clerks are very knowledgeable. (nouns that are not possessive)

3. Use quotations to:
   - set off direct quotations.
     - Muriel exclaimed, “Don’t let them in. I’m not ready.”
     - NOTE: The period is inside the final quotation mark. For in-text citations, write the sentence as normal, but place the period after the citation.
       - “Dogs will never rule the Earth” (Brown, 2004).
   - to set off titles of newspaper and magazine articles, poems, short stories, songs and book chapters.
     - The headline read, “Local Couple Scrutinized Due to Suspicious Activity.”
     - NOTE: Titles of books, plays, Web sites, and films and names of magazines and newspapers are put in italics or underlined.
   - to set off words used as words.
     - The words “affect” and “effect” are commonly misused.