

Commas and Coordinating Adjectives

Coordinating adjectives are adjectives that describe the same noun and are equal in importance. Ask yourself these questions as a way to determine if the adjectives are coordinating adjectives.

A. Does the sentence make sense if “and” is added between the adjectives?

B. Does the sentence make sense if the adjectives are reversed?

If the answer is yes to these questions, then they are coordinating adjectives.

Use a comma between coordinating adjectives.

Example 1:

He was a sweet, helpful child. These are coordinating adjectives. The sentence still sounds sensible if it is written as “He was a sweet and helpful child,” or “He was a helpful, sweet child.”

Example 2:

They lived in an old brick house. These are not coordinating adjectives. The sentence sounds awkward if it is written as “They lived in an old and brick house,” or “They lived in a brick old house.”

Decide if the adjectives below are coordinating adjectives and check the appropriate box. Rewrite each of the sentences and add commas where they are needed.

1. We went down the long dirt road.

coordinating adjectives

non-coordinating adjectives

2. The quiet respectful class listened to the guest speaker.

coordinating adjectives

non-coordinating adjectives

3. The mighty winter storm howled through the night.

coordinating adjectives

non-coordinating adjectives

4. They liked the fun surprise party.

coordinating adjectives

non-coordinating adjectives

5. The choir sang a happy merry song.

coordinating adjectives

non-coordinating adjectives

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