

Commas and Introductory Elements: Words

An introductory element in a sentence is the word, phrase, or clause that appears at the beginning of the sentence and before the main clause.

Example 1: Yesterday we went to the water park.

In Example 1 *Yesterday* is an introductory element. The main clause begins with the subject of the sentence, *we*. The introductory element is a single word, *Yesterday*. If the introductory element is only modifying the verb or other specific part of the sentence, it does not require a comma following it. That is the case with Example 1, as *Yesterday* modifies only the verb.

If the single word introductory element applies to the whole sentence, a comma is needed.

Example 2: Happily, they all survived the shipwreck.

In Example 2 *Happily* is an introductory element that is a single word. It modifies the entire sentence. There should be a comma after this introductory element.

Rewrite the sentences below, adding commas in the correct places.

1. Quickly he walked into the elevator.
2. First we must make the beds.
3. Meanwhile the other clowns did somersaults.
4. Softly Arabella sang a lullaby.
5. However Kyle would know more about dinosaurs than George.

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However, Kyle would know more about dinosaurs than George.