**12 BASIC COMMA RULES**

**Use a comma:**

1. to separate items in a list of three or more; the comma before the and is called the Oxford comma
2. between two coordinating adjectives if they describe the noun equally, if you can put and between them, or if you can switch the order with its sounding weird
3. before coordinating conjunctions such as FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, or so) that combine two independent clauses
4. before and after interrupters and nonessential elements such as appositives, participial phrases, or other groups of words that can be removed without changing the basic meaning of the sentence
5. after a transition or introductory element that comes at the beginning of a sentence
6. after an adverbial phrase with more than three words that comes at the beginning of a sentence
7. for conventions, like between the day of the week and the month, between the day of the month and the year, and between the city and state or country
8. after the opening of a friendly letter, but use a colon after the opening of a formal or business letter
9. after the closing of any kind of letter
10. after a name followed by Jr., Sr., Ph.D. etc.
11. to separate a speaker from the words he/she says when there are quotation marks; do not use a comma in the place of an exclamation point or question mark
12. before and/or after someone’s name when you are speaking to them.