COMMA TIP 4

Know when to use a comma with \textit{and}.

When you write, only three patterns require \textit{and}.

**Pattern 1 – Joining two main clauses**

First, you can use \textit{and} to connect two \textit{main clauses}. In this pattern, you should \textit{always} use a comma.

\textbf{Main Clause} \+ , \+ and \+ \textbf{Main Clause}.

My dog Floyd sleeps on the bed, \textit{and} my cat Buster naps in the bathtub.

Dirty dishes fill the kitchen sink, \textit{and} damp towels litter the bathroom floor.

Pattern 1 works with all the coordinating conjunctions: \textit{and}, \textit{but}, \textit{for}, \textit{nor}, \textit{or}, \textit{so}, and \textit{yet}.

**Pattern 2 – Joining any two units except main clauses**

You can also use \textit{and} to connect any \textit{two items}. These items can be any grammatical unit except main clauses. When you have only two items, you do not need a comma with \textit{and}.

\textbf{Item} \+ \emptyset \+ and \+ \textbf{Item}.

My dog Floyd has too many fleas \textit{and} too much hair.

Buster, my cat, enjoys knocking glasses off the kitchen counter \textit{and} dragging toilet paper streamers through the house.

Pattern 2 also works with \textit{but}, \textit{nor}, \textit{or}, and \textit{yet}. 
**Pattern 3 – Joining Three or More Items in a Series**

When you have three or more items in a series, use a comma with the *and* that connects the last item.

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ITEM   ,   ITEM   ,   +   and   +   ITEM
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My computer needs more RAM, a faster processor, *and* a color printer.

George has bad breath, no money, *and* an annoying mother, but Sherry Lynn still wants to date him.

Pattern 3 also works with *but, nor, or, and yet*. 

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**Quick Test**

**Directions:** Add commas where necessary.

1. Tony wanted to order a pizza from Papa John’s □ and some Peking duck from Lam’s Garden.

2. Debbie rushed to get the report typed □ and Martha frantically answered the phones.

3. I don’t know when to leave my credit card at home □ and when to say no to a Big Mac with fries.

4. When Mike took his Toyota to the dealership, the mechanics wanted to put in a new starter, replace his shocks □ and overhaul the transmission.

5. Because George snores to wake the dead □ and because Fuzzball, the dog, barks at the slightest sound, Alice never gets a good night’s sleep.