

Help Centres – English Support



Adjective Order and Punctuation

When we use more than one adjective to describe a noun, we must use a specific order for these adjectives. The chart below shows the different categories of adjectives and the order they are placed in front of the noun.

- A. In the examples below, we do not put commas between the adjectives because they are all from different categories. These are called ***Cumulative Adjectives***

Examples:

1. ***One mean big old round white sheep-herding*** dog lives next door.

Number	Opinion	Size	Age	Shape	Colour	Origin	Material	Purpose	Noun
one			old			sheep		herding	dog
	mean			round					
		big			white				

2. ***Two beautiful small antique square brown Canadian maple*** coffee tables are on sale at the antique store downtown.

Number	Opinion	Size	Age	Shape	Colour	Origin	Material	Purpose	Noun
two			antique			Canadian			tables
	beautiful			square			maple		
		small			brown			coffee	

- B. If a sentence has more than one adjective from the same category, then we need to put commas between them. You can also tell if you need commas if you can put ‘and’ between the adjectives and it sounds okay. These are called ***Coordinate Adjectives***.

Examples:

1. The ***kind, handsome*** man helped me with my shopping bags.

❖ *kind & handsome* are both opinion adjectives, so a comma or and can be used

2. The ***blonde, blue-eyed*** woman wore a beautiful white dress.

❖ *blonde & blue-eyed* are both colour adjectives, so a comma or and can be used