

# SID Lingua Inglese 1

WRITING SKILLS:

PUNCTUATION

# Contents

1. The names of punctuation marks
2. The various uses of hyphens (this is rather detailed)
3. Example texts illustrating the meaningful use of punctuation marks
4. When to use (initial) capitals and when NOT to use them
5. The limited use of scare quotes in English
6. Practice in using punctuation: putting the punctuation back into an unpunctuated newspaper article about depleted uranium.

What are they called?

Name the punctuation marks on the next slides

1. :
2. ;
3. .
4. ( )
5. [ ]
6. !
7. ?
8. '
9. .
10. A
11. a

1. : *colon*
2. ; *semi-colon*
3. . *full stop*
4. ( ) *round brackets*
5. [ ] *square brackets*
6. ! *exclamation mark*
7. ? *question mark*
8. ' *apostrophe*
9. . *full stop*
10. A *capital letter*
11. a *small letter*

12. “ ”

13. ‘ ’

14. -

12. “ ”
- a) Speech / quotation marks
  - b) Double inverted commas
  - c) Scare quotes\*

13. ‘ ’
- d) Single quotation marks
  - e) Single inverted commas

14. -
- a) Hyphen
  - b) Dash



‘Scare quotes’ indicate that the use of a word is ironical, incorrect, non-standard: they are more English

# Notes on use of punctuation



Hyphens in compounding

1. Note how compounds can evolve over time:

*Web site* → *web-site* → *website* (in today's use)

2. Note how a hyphen can change the meaning / avoid ambiguity:

*three monthly reports* = *three reports [of the monthly kind, i.e. reports that are released once a month]*

*three-monthly reports* = *reports that are released every three months*

*James has ten-pound notes* = *notes worth ten pounds*

*James has ten pound notes* = *ten notes worth one pound each*

3. Note the difference between the compound adjective *full-time* and *full time* used as adverb:

*She is a full-time / part-time worker.      She works full time / part time.*

4. Hyphens are used with compound nouns & adjectives made from particle verbs (which don't use the hyphen):

*They **set up** [founded] an agency*

*The **set-up** involved a great deal of planning*

5. Most types of adjectival compound use the hyphen. Some examples:

*A far-reaching investigation. A wide-ranging study*

*Is a **carbon-neutral** world possible by 2050?*

***User-generated** content (UGC), alternatively known as **user-created** content (UCC), is any form of content, such as images, videos, text and audio, that have been posted by **users** of online platforms such as social media and wikis*

*If something is **custom-built**, it is built according to someone's special requirements.*

***Data-driven learning** involves the use in the classroom of **computer-generated** concordances to get students to explore regularities or patterning in the target language, and the development of activities and exercises based on concordance output.*

6. Hyphens are used with some initial letters, e.g. e-

*We send our members a twice-monthly **e-newsletter***

7. Hyphens are used:

a) with these prefixes: *all- self- cross- ex- :*

*all-encompassing self-sustaining cross-border ex-minister*

b) after prefixes before proper nouns, numbers and abbreviations:

*non-NATO member*      *trans-Atlantic network*      *mid-1940s*

- c) when the prefix ends in a vowel and the base word it precedes begins with a vowel too:

*to co-occur*    *to re-assess*    *to pre-empt (but also to preempt)*

- d) to make the meaning absolutely clear, e.g.

*to re-examine* (to examine again)

*to re-think / to re-consider* (to think or consider again)

Use a hyphen after the following prefixes in most words: "all-", "cross-", "ex-", and "self-" (e.g., "self-service," "ex-boyfriend," "all-encompassing"). Most "servo-" words are also hyphenated with the following two exceptions: "servomechanism" and "servomotor."

Hyphens are used after all prefixes preceding a proper noun, a number, or an abbreviation (e.g., "trans-Atlantic network," "mid-1960s," or "non-GABAergic responses").

Insert a hyphen when the prefix ends with the same vowel that the base word being connected to it begins with (e.g., "intra-arterial," "co-occur," "anti-immune").

Include a hyphen after a prefix to ensure the true meaning of a word is clear (e.g., "re-sign," which means "to sign again" and "re-create," which means "to make over again").

Here are some very common prefixes that don't usually have hyphens after them:

8. These prefixes generally don't take hyphens:

*anti bi co contra counter de extra infra inter intra*

*micro mid multi non over peri post pre pro*

*proto pseudo re semi sub super supra trans*

*tri ultra un under whole*



Here are some correct uses of punctuation marks: what is their function in each case?

# COLON, DASHES AND SQUARE BRACKETS

The expressiveness of the individual, and therefore his capacity to give impressions, appears to involve two radically different kinds of sign activity: the expression that he *gives* and the expression that he *gives off*. [...] Of the two kinds of communication – expressions *given* and expressions *given off* – this report will primarily be concerned with the latter.

(Erving Goffman: *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*)

# COLON, DASHES AND SQUARE BRACKETS

The expressiveness of the individual, and therefore his capacity to give impressions, appears to involve two radically different kinds of sign activity: the expression that he *gives* and the expression that he *gives off*. [...] Of the two kinds of communication – expressions *given* and expressions *given off* – this report will primarily be concerned with the latter.

The colon introduces specific instances of a general category

The dashes mark off extra information in the text

The square brackets enclosing dots are used by editors or writers editing a text, to indicate that something has been removed.

# COLON

Aristotle distinguishes three basic elements in government: deliberative, the executive, and the judicial.

*(Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics)*

# COLON

Aristotle distinguishes three basic elements in government: deliberative, the executive, and the judicial.

*(Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics)*

The colon introduces the supporting, specific information.

# COLON & QUESTION MARKS

What is the physiological basis of color vision? We will consider this issue by subdividing it into two questions: (1) How are wavelengths transduced into receptor activity? (2) How is the receptor output coded so that it yields the psychological attributes of color, such as the sensory experience of unique blue? (Gleitman: *Psychology*)

# INVERTED COMMAS & COMMAS

We talk of 'falling in love', but the process is usually slower than this would suggest. Usually it takes time to build up a firm sentiment, but various factors may speed up the process.

(C.J.Adcock: *Fundamentals of Psychology*)

# INVERTED COMMAS & COMMAS

We talk of ‘falling in love’, but the process is usually slower than this would suggest. Usually it takes time to build up a firm sentiment, but various factors may speed up the process.

The inverted commas are used to highlight that the word or expression marked off in this way is in some sense ironical or has a non-literal meaning.

The comma separates two clauses in a compound sentence.



## ROUND BRACKETS, COMMAS, AND INITIAL CAPITAL LETTERS

Hannah Arendt's first major work was *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), which attempted to understand the horror both of Nazism, in terms of the concentration camps, and Stalinism, with reference to the ruthlessness of the purges.

The round brackets are used to insert the dates (and sometimes the author surname) after the citation of a work.

The lexical (but not the grammar) words in book titles have initial capital letters (and are often italicised, as here, rather than inserted between inverted commas). Also –isms, especially when they are eponymous (like Stalinism) have initial capital letters.

## COLON & SEMI-COLON

The main products are: butter, cheese, milk, eggs; lamb, pork, veal, beef; oats, barley, rye and wheat.

## COLON & SEMI-COLON

The main products are: butter, cheese, milk, eggs; lamb, pork, veal, beef; oats, barley, rye and wheat.

The colon introduces the specific information for the general category (main products). The semi-colons divide up the list into further sub-categories (dairy; meat; grains).

When we use initial capital letters  
(and when we don't)

Days of the week

*Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday*

Months of the year

*October, November,  
December*

Nationality adjectives, nations  
and continents

*French, German, Chile, Africa*

Titles of works of literature and  
art

*Macbeth, Guernica*

Legal documents

*The Bill of Rights; the  
Declaration of Independence*

Many abbreviations

*RSVP\*, UN, PhD, Msc*

***\*Répondez, s'il vous plaît***

Proper names and titles

*The Pope, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, Mr Trump*

Specific instances of institutions

*A university but the University of Venice*

Specific places

*Camp David, the Champs Elysées, the River Seine, Manhattan*

Religious holidays or national festivals

*Ramadan, Yom Kippur, Thanksgiving*

*When we DON'T use initial capital letters*

NOT with

*country, state, nation, region*

NOT with institutions in the general sense:

*He attended university for two years. (but she attended Durham University for two years)*

# Exclamation marks ..

.. are very rarely used in academic writing, so avoid them in your essays

!!!



# Inverted commas as 'scare quotes'

Frequently used in Italian, to mark off a particular word or expression in order to distance the writer from it in some way, or to suggest that it has some other, un-common meaning.

This use is NOT so frequent in English: use sparingly.

# The definitive full stop

Say 'Hello'  
to the Full Stop  
before it shuts you down

Say 'Hello'  
to  
the American period  
the definitive full stop that says:  
'That's it, folks! '  
in other words  
it says: 'Enough! ' 'That's it! '  
' I'm done! ' ' I'm finished! '

But some people never get  
that, do they?  
they just keep going on;  
but now I'll take my cue  
and say no more.  
**FULL STOP.**  
**PERIOD.**

Well, not really ...

Now put back the punctuation

Article from the *Guardian newspaper*:

[Depleted uranium: an interactive guide](#) by Derek Brown

## **what is du and what is it used for**

depleted uranium is essentially a waste product of nuclear power generation it is mildly radioactive and more importantly immensely dense it is installed in tank busting shells which it helps to punch through even modern high tech armour

## **what is du and what is it used for**

depleted uranium is essentially a waste product of nuclear power generation it is mildly radioactive and more importantly immensely dense it is installed in tank busting shells which it helps to punch through even modern high tech armour

## **What is DU and what is it used for?**

Depleted uranium is essentially a waste product of nuclear power generation. It is mildly radioactive and, more importantly, immensely dense. It is installed in tank-busting shells, which it helps to punch through even modern high-tech armour.

## **does that make the shells nuclear weapons**

strictly no they are classed as conventional munitions but even so the heat and blast they generate cause horrific injuries especially in the confined space of an armoured vehicle and there are persistent worries about the effects of low grade radiation and what the world health organisation calls the chemical toxicity of the weapons

## **does that make the shells nuclear weapons**

strictly no they are classed as conventional munitions but even so the heat and blast they generate cause horrific injuries especially in the confined space of an armoured vehicle and there are persistent worries about the effects of low grade radiation and what the world health organisation calls the chemical toxicity of the weapons

## **Does that make the shells nuclear weapons?**

Strictly, no. They are classed as conventional munitions. But even so, the heat and blast they generate cause horrific injuries, especially in the confined space of an armoured vehicle. And there are persistent worries about the effects of low-grade radiation, and what the World Health Organisation calls the "chemical toxicity" of the weapons.

**how often are they used and where**

apart from training exercises du shells have been fired in anger in two main conflicts operation desert storm in the gulf in 1991 and more recently in the balkans



## **how often are they used and where**

apart from training exercises du shells have been fired in anger in two main conflicts operation desert storm in the gulf in 1991 and more recently in the balkans

## **How often are they used, and where?**

Apart from training exercises, DU shells have been fired in anger in two main conflicts: Operation Desert Storm in the Gulf in 1991, and more recently in the Balkans.

## **how many were fired**

more than 100000 [one hundred thousand] du shells were fired during the gulf war to knock out iraqi armour and strongpoints more than 30,000 rounds were fired by nato forces during the 1999 kosovo conflict most of them by us tank busting A10 ground support jets around 10,000 rounds were fired in operations around sarajevo in the latter stages of allied operations in bosnia

## **how many were fired**

more than 100000 [one hundred thousand] du shells were fired during the gulf war to knock out iraqi armour and strongpoints more than 30,000 rounds were fired by nato forces during the 1999 kosovo conflict most of them by us tank busting A10 ground support jets around 10,000 rounds were fired in operations around sarajevo in the latter stages of allied operations in bosnia

## **How many were fired?**

More than 100,000 DU shells were fired during the Gulf war, to knock out Iraqi armour and strongpoints. More than 30,000 rounds were fired by Nato forces during the 1999 Kosovo conflict, most of them by US tank-busting A10 ground support jets. Around 10,000 rounds were fired in operations around Sarajevo in the latter stages of allied operations in Bosnia.

**what side effects have been suffered by allied personnel**

there lies the controversy the british and us governments have long denied that du ammunition is harmful although since labour came to power in 1997 the ministry of defence has been chivvied into providing more information to serving and former service personnel up to this week however the authorities have resisted calls for thorough and wideranging tests on soldiers who were literally in the firing line [...]

## **what side effects have been suffered by allied personnel**

there lies the controversy the british and us governments have long denied that du ammunition is harmful although since labour came to power in 1997 the ministry of defence has been chivvied into providing more information to serving and former service personnel up to this week however the authorities have resisted calls for thorough and wideranging tests on soldiers who were literally in the firing line [...]

## **What side-effects have been suffered by allied personnel?**

There lies the controversy. The British and US governments have long denied that DU ammunition is harmful, although since Labour came to power in 1997, the Ministry of Defence has been chivvied into providing more information to serving and former service personnel. Up to this week, however, the authorities have resisted calls for thorough and wideranging tests on soldiers who were literally in the firing line.

## **what does the usa say**

the pentagon is sticking to the line that du may not be good for you but isnt especially harmful either except of course if its fired at you interestingly however there has been concern about the material within the military for at least ten years one of earliest warnings came in the so called los alamos internal memorandum dated march 1991

## **what does the usa say**

the pentagon is sticking to the line that du may not be good for you but isnt especially harmful either except of course if its fired at you interestingly however there has been concern about the material within the military for at least ten years one of earliest warnings came in the so called los alamos internal memorandum dated march 1991

**What does the USA say?** The Pentagon is sticking to the line that DU may not be good for you, but isn't especially harmful either - except, of course, if it's fired at you. Interestingly, however, there has been concern about the material within the military for at least ten years. One of earliest warnings came in the so-called Los Alamos internal memorandum, dated March 1991.