

## Punctuate to clarify meaning: use serial commas

Use serial commas to remove ambiguity. What's a serial comma? A serial comma is the comma before the last item in a list. It comes before the "and" at the end of the list.

### Compare:

The cars were painted blue, red and black and white.

The cars were painted blue, red and black, and white.

In the first sentence, you can't be sure if one of the cars is a two-tone red and black or a two-tone black and white. In the second sentence, the meaning is clear.



A tip from the BCIT editing community  
– Jim, Kathleen, Gary, Barb

*Advocates for the reader's comprehension*