

# **BUSINESS PUNCTUATION**

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Business Punctuation by Charles Currier Beale

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**CHARLES CURRIER BEALE**

**BUSINESS  
PUNCTUATION**



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# Business

# Punctuation

BY CHARLES CURRIER BEALE

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY

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## FOREWORDS.

The art of punctuation\* is of comparatively recent origin, being generally ascribed to the celebrated Venetian printer, Aldo Manutius (1447-1515), who was the first in modern times to introduce a system of punctuating-marks. The system of Manutius (whose name is remembered by book-lovers, as the publisher of the famous Aldine editions of ancient authors), more or less modified and extended, is that in common use today. Aristophanes of Alexandria (200 B. C.) is said to have invented punctuation, but it was soon neglected. Albinus Alcuinus (735-804) partially restored it, at the request of Charlemagne, using a point called the stigma, and also a line, of varied form. The Anglo-Saxons, according to Bosworth, used this stigma sparingly in prose, but frequently, in poetry, to mark the end of the metrical lines.

It may not be out of place to say here that the commonness of poor punctuating is due largely to the fact that so little care has been exercised in teaching punctuation, and so much difference of opinion exists among those who

\*Punctuation, from the latin *punctum*, a point, is the art of pointing off by certain characters, to make the meaning plain, in printing or writing.

are considered authorities. Very few people understand the laws of punctuation, for the reason that they have not studied them sufficiently, or have studied a poor textbook.

We have endeavored, in the following compendium of punctuation, to represent those rules which are sanctioned by both authority and usage, where possible; and, where it has been necessary to choose, we have adhered to inherent correctness, in preference to long-established custom. The author can not, of course, lay any claim to originality, except in the minute details of presentation; but, he believes that he has presented, for the first time, a *brief* and easily understood treatise on punctuation, which may be safely followed in every particular.

The first edition of this work was published three years ago, under the title of "Punctuation in a Nutshell." It was especially designed for the use of stenographers and typewriters; but we believe the present thoroughly-revised and enlarged edition will be of service to all who are called upon to write, whether literary, professional, or business men; and with this hope it is offered to the public by

THE COMPILER.



## FOREWORDS TO THE THIRD EDITION.

The demand for this little book has so much exceeded my anticipations, that I am obliged to lay aside all other work, to revise it for the printers. During the time the first two editions have been on the market, opportunities for improvement have been noted, and such improvements have been embodied in the present edition. The most noteworthy change is the entire rewriting of the rules for the comma, and the addition of suitable exercises, in order to adapt it to class-work. Some matter which has been deemed unnecessary, has been omitted, and other more essential matter substituted for it. In preparing this book, it has been found that previous books on the subject were of little assistance, since they applied more directly to literary composition. While giving credit, therefore, for slight aid from the scholarly works of Wilson, Bigelow, Matthews, and others, I wish to make full acknowledgment of my indebtedness to the intelligent assistance and collaboration of Miss C. E. Burbank, to whose experience and suggestions, many of the most valuable portions of the book are due.

## Business Punctuation.

BY CHARLES CURRIER BEALE.

The marks of punctuation are of three kinds, grammatical, typographical, and referential. The grammatical, or rhetorical points are the period (.); comma (,); semi-colon (;); colon (:); and the hyphen (-), when used to form compound words.

### THE PERIOD. (.)

The period is used: 1. At the end of every sentence whose context does not require a mark of exclamation or interrogation. *Example.* A good correspondent is neat.

2. After all abbreviations, except those formed by using an apostrophe to show the omission of letters. *Ex.* F. o. b. C. o. d. Agt.

3. As a decimal point. NOTE.—The period must be used between dollars and cents, this being a true decimal. *Ex.* 3041.167. \$24.00. \$15.25.

4. After a heading, address, or signature. *Ex.* Part One. Philip Gould, Cambridge, Mass.

*Exercise.*

~~19.~~ Rewrite in accordance with preceding rules.

Mr Obadiah Cook, of Hallowell, Me, wanted to improve his education. His friends advised him to stay at home, and saw wood or hoe corn. He, however, was ambitious. He attended a first-class business college at So Framingham, Mass, paying \$45.14 for tuition, etc. He learned bookkeeping, stenography, and terms like "K d," "C o d," "f o b," and others. He soon obtained a position as stenographer to the Frt Agt of the B & M R R. He was rapidly promoted until he became G P A with a salary of \$5000.00 per year. Now his friends saw wood for him.

## THE COMMA. (,)

The rules for the comma, though usually perplexing, may be acquired by thorough study. The difficulty has been that most books have been too vague, to be understood easily. We have tried to make the following rules simple, and to illustrate them by practical business matter.

NOTE.—The functions of the comma are fourfold. First, to show that the word, phrase, or