Exclamation mark

*How to use it:* Expression of surprise or other strong emotion (very rare in business writing).

*Example:* We won the game!

Period

*How to use it:* At the end of a sentence

*Example:* Always put a period at the end of a sentence.

Question mark

*How to use it:* At the end of a sentence that asks a question

*Example:* How long does it take to get to school each morning?

Quotation marks

*How to use it:* To indicate a specific phrase

*Example:* Students get “real-world” experiences in the internship.

To indicate a specific statement said by someone

*Example:* The bus driver said, “Please step inside and sit in your seats.”

To highlight or emphasize a point

*Example:* There is only one goal left to pursue: get funding for the program.

Semicolon

*How to use it:* To bring two related thoughts together

*Example:* Students need to prepare for college; most of them will need counseling first.

When creating a list that includes commas

*Examples:* Tom Smith, principal; Heather John, counselor; and Jane’s parents attended the meeting.

Brackets [ ]

*How to use it:* To clarify information in a quotation

*Example:* “Montgomery County [Maryland] has the 16th largest school district in the nation,” he explained.
Capitalization

*How to use it:* Proper nouns: Names of people, places; concepts/ideas, and titles

*Examples:* Reverend Thomas Wright; Christianity and Judaism

Abbreviations

*Example:* NAACP, U.S., Dr. Williams

Beginning of sentence

*Example:* He is very ambitious.