The Comma

A. Use a comma between all items in a series.

B. Use a comma after an introductory word group, including a dependent clause coming at the beginning of a complex sentence.

C. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction joining independent clauses (a compound sentence).

D. Use commas to set off nonrestrictive elements. Do not use commas to set off restrictive elements.

E. Always place periods and commas inside quotation marks in American English.

1. In North Carolina there were white people Negroes and Indians.

2a. When Bessie and Sadie couldn’t find an apartment they moved in with their brother Lucius.

2b. They moved in with their brother Lucius when they couldn’t find an apartment.

3. It was his apartment but his sisters were the boss.

4a. The girl, who was flirting with Lucius, annoys Bessie and Sadie to death.

4b. Lucius’s girlfriend who annoyed Bessie and Sadie to death was very attractive.

5. All you had to do was say, “Let’s go”, and she’d say, “Just let me get my hat”.
