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RIVERFRONT TIMES

Apropos of Nothing

It's National Punctuation Day!

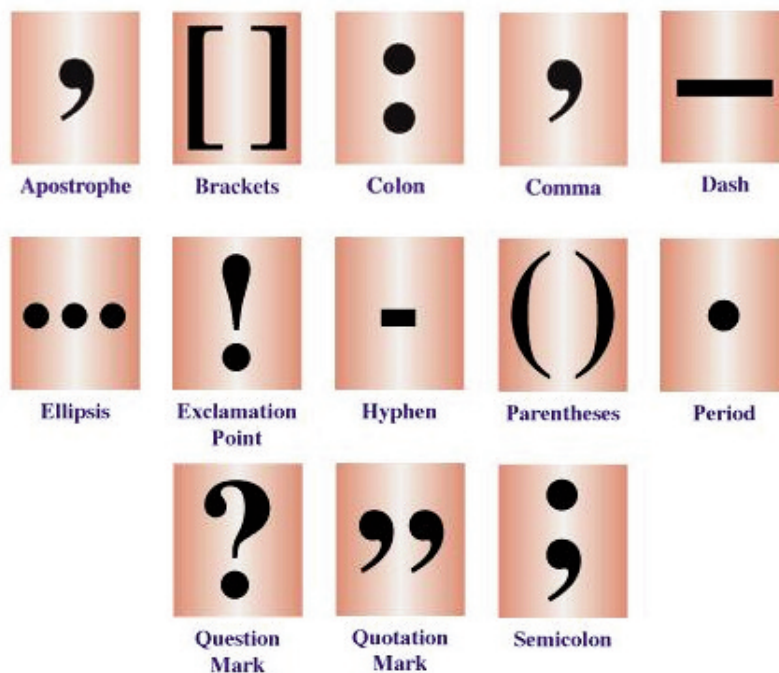
By Aimee Levitt Fri., Sep. 24 2010 at 1:48 PM

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It's finally here: a day devoted to "celebration of the lowly comma, correctly used quotation marks, and other proper uses of periods, semicolons and the ever-mysterious ellipses."



As a former teacher of freshman composition, I feel I must remind you, gentle readers, that we should honor punctuation *every* day (not to mention proper spelling), but the special [National Punctuation Day](#) rituals recommended by Jeff Rubin, the festival's founder, seem particularly appealing:

- Sleep late.
- Take a long shower or bath.
- Go out for coffee and a bagel (or two).
- Read a newspaper and circle all of the punctuation errors you find (or think you find, but aren't sure) with a red pen.
- Take a leisurely stroll, paying close attention to store signs with incorrectly punctuated words.
- Stop in those stores to correct the owners.
- If the owners are not there, leave notes.
- Visit a bookstore and purchase a copy of Strunk & White's *The Elements of Style*.
- Look up all the words you circled.
- Congratulate yourself on becoming a better written communicator.
- Go home.
- Sit down.
- Write an error-free letter to a friend.
- Take a nap. It has been a long day.

The National Punctuation Day website is sponsoring a punctuation-themed haiku contest. An example:

Dot dot ellipses
 The yada yada of print.
 So on and so forth.

Or you could prepare a National Punctuation Day meatloaf using [this recipe](#). First person to send in a photo of a meatloaf in the form of a punctuation mark wins a National Punctuation Day t-shirt.

Personally, I'd rather eat food that already comes punctuation-shaped, like, say, a croissant. (It could be a comma or an apostrophe, or you could eat two and say they're quotation marks!) Or a cookie (period) or three (ellipses).



image via

Norma Martinez-Rubin, originator of the punctuation meatloaf, shows off her semicolon.