

# Commas after beginning phrases or clauses

Ex:

(beginning phrase)

After the play, we went home.

(beginning clause)

After we left the beach, we went home.

## PRACTICE THE CONVERSATION:

- A:** Will you please read the first sentence?  
**B:** *After the play, we went home.*  
**A:** Why is there a comma after *play*?  
**B:** We use commas after beginning phrases. *After the play* is a beginning phrase.  
**A:** Isn't it a sentence by itself?  
**B:** No.  
**A:** How do you know?  
**B:** There's no verb in it.  
**A:** Great. So it's less than a sentence. What do we do?  
**B:** We put a comma after it.  
**A:** Good. Will you read the second sentence?  
**B:** *After we left the beach, we went home.*  
**A:** Why is there a comma after *beach*?  
**B:** Everything before the comma isn't a whole sentence.  
**A:** Are you sure?  
**B:** Sure. It has a subject and verb, but the word *after* makes it less than a whole sentence.  
**A:** Huh?  
**B:** Listen to it by itself: *After we left the beach. See?* That's not a whole sentence.  
**A:** Right. So what do we do?  
**B:** We use a comma to separate a beginning phrase or clause. That one is a clause.  
**A:** What's a clause?  
**B:** It's anything with a subject and verb that doesn't stand alone as a sentence.  
**A:** Great job.

