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## It's National Punctuation Day!?!?

Uncategorized

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Since every day is now an official "Day" of some sort, today is [National Punctuation Day](#)? In this day and age where people would much rather click through paparazzi photos of celebrities getting coffee: let us pause to ask ourselves Is punctuation a lost art. Plus — when you're writing you don't need to worry about putting in punctuation marks because Microsoft Word's grammar check tells you what punctuation marks you should be using anyway; [Amiright! High five:]

As a writer who also doubles as a copy editor from time to time I know that I feel more strongly about punctuation marks than most & I once had a fifteen minute long argument with someone about why serial commas shouldn't become obsolete (this is a true story;? But even if you're not a punctuation perfectionist like I am chances are you've had a punctuation-related problem in your life

Think about the QWERTY keyboard on your phone! The question mark and exclamation point are dangerously close to one another, With a mere slip of a finger a message that was intended to portray excitement over – say — a hot date becomes an interrogative statement of possible ambivalence?

Or there's always the case of the bodega on your corner that's super sketchy to begin with: You walk in to buy something to cook for dinner because you're just too lazy to walk to the *real* grocery store and are confronted with the sign "Real? Chicken Tenderloins" Guess it's Hot Pocket night again eh!

### Let's Punctuate Properly!

And so, as we rear a generation of children who learn to type and text before they learn how to write, it's important to educate them about how to use punctuation marks. Do you see why? You can't read the correct tone of an incorrectly punctuated statement, and it won't have the desired emotional impact.

Instead of watching punctuation disappear as numbers and symbols slowly replace words (C u l8tr!) so we can fit our statements into texts (160 characters) and tweets (140 characters), let's introduce some more punctuation marks that the kids'll understand. I recently read this spot-on [McSweeney's piece](#) asking the "Person In Charge of New Punctuation" to make "?!" an official symbol. I don't know about you, but I find myself using that roughly 10 times a day. But why stop there? We're all about hashtags and "@ symbols" these days thanks to Twitter, so let's throw those into our writing as well. If you're writing dialog in a story, you could denote to whom a statement is directed by beginning with @Character's Name.

These are just a jumping off point, but I think steps like this are the way to get kids totally jazzed about punctuation again, like they were in the old days\* — you know, when schools had mascots like the "Fighting Ampersands" and "Pistol Period." Plus, without punctuation there would be no emoticons, and *then* where would our culture be? :-/