

SEMICOLONS AND COLONS

1. **Use a semicolon in a compound sentence where there is no coordinating conjunction joining the sentences.**

EX:

Billy seemed worried; he hadn't heard from his mother all week.

2. **If either of the sentences you wish to join already contains a comma, use a semicolon with a coordinating conjunction.**

EX:

After the classes ended, the students chose **teams**; **but** before the games could start, the teachers had to prepare a permission sheet, have the parents sign it, and turn it in to the administration.

3. **Use a semicolon between items in a series if any of the items already contain a comma.**

EX:

She is planning to visit Vienna, Austria; Hamburg, Germany; Paris, France; and London, England.

4. **Use the colon following the formal greeting of a business letter.**

5. **Use the colon between numerals indicating hours and minutes, chapter and verse, journal and page.**

EX:

3:25 P.M. Mark 3:23 encyclopedia vol. 6, page 321 (6:321)

6. **Use a colon to introduce a list of items.** This list must follow a complete sentence and serves as an explanation to a word in the sentence. Otherwise, the list items simply function as a compound part of the sentence.

EX:

We were asked to supply the following items: drinks, napkins, utensils, and plates.

Compare-

EX:

We were asked to supply the drinks, napkins, utensils, and plates. (In this sentence the list is a compound object of the infinitive *to supply*.)

7. **Use a colon when a word, phrase, or another sentence serves as an explanation of a statement in the previous sentence.**

EX:

All she needed to remember was one thing: how to study.

EXERCISE

Use colons or semicolons where necessary.

1. The store opens every morning at 9 30 A.M.
2. He always arrives late for class however, as of today that will change.
3. Molly Brown could throw a pig, rope a cow, and ride a horse but she had a hard time throwing a civilized party.
4. Please come prepared for class with the following items a notebook, a pen or pencil, a dictionary, and an open mind.
5. The following people were elected as officers to the club Mary Brown, president Bill Smith, vice-president Jan Oscarson, historian and Sam Roberts, secretary.
6. Dear Mr. Brown
I was writing to inquire concerning a recent book your company published.
7. Marcia turned on the television however, almost immediately the electricity flashed off.
8. We had hiked for four hours and were very tired then suddenly we saw the falls straight ahead.
9. The problem in the chemical company started with a leak a short time later a fire broke out.
10. Historically, the company had been very successful but lately they had had financial losses, illnesses within the plant, and now this.
11. Not all child psychologists hold this opinion according to some, parents should make the final decision concerning their offspring.
12. The first grade teacher showed us her survival kit a bottle of aspirin, ear plugs, and running shoes to wear at recess.
13. The interest is extremely low right now therefore, I recommend you refinance your home.
14. We are beginning dinner at 6 30 P.M., but I recommend you arrive by 6 10.
15. Atlanta's airport is now considered the largest airport in the U.S.A. and is probably the largest in the world however, Chicago's airport is probably still the most intimidating.