

# Colons and Semicolons

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# Colon and Semicolon

- Both are punctuations that tell the reader where to **pause**, and reflect a pause of thought.

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# The Semicolon

- It is used to indicate a more serious pause than a simple comma.
- Within a sentence, one's voice usually lowers when it gets to a place where a semi-colon would be used, almost the same as with a period.
- *EXAMPLE: Please open the window; it is hot in here.*

# USE A SEMICOLON

- To separate the two parts of a compound sentence if a comma and a conjunction are not used.
- Each sentence on either side of the semicolon must be complete with its own subject and verb.
- Keep in mind that a semicolon functions the same way as a period and a capital letter.
- **EXAMPLE :**
  - The music was over, and the band went home.
  - The music was over; the band went home.

# USE A SEMICOLON

- **Before a conjunctive adverb**
  - accordingly, also, besides, consequently, furthermore, however, indeed, likewise, moreover, nevertheless, otherwise, similarly, so, still, therefore, thus.

**when these words are used to join two independent clauses.**

- **EXAMPLE:** *We are creating study guides to help students prepare for the tests; however, students' scores are reflecting improvement.*

# USE A SEMICOLON

- Between items of a series that have internal commas.
- EXAMPLE: *I bought an old, dilapidated chair; a marble top table, which was in beautiful condition; and a new, ugly white rug.*
- EXAMPLE: *We are thinking about moving to Omaha, Nebraska; Gainesville, Florida; or Memphis, Tennessee.*

# Colon

- Most commonly used to introduce a list, a series, numerical results, a passage extracted from another source, texts, and explanations that mean the same as the introductory words.

# USE A COLON

- Between a complete sentence and a **list** or **explanation**, or preceding a long, formal quotation. Please note that a **complete** sentence must precede a colon.
- **EXAMPLE:** *I hate this one course: English.*  
(Yes, one item can constitute a list.)
- **EXAMPLE:** *Defending free speech, Voltaire made this statement: “I may disagree with what you say, but I shall defend your right to say it.”*



# USE A COLON

- To indicate clock time, unless the time is right on the hour.
- **EXAMPLE: 6 P.M. but 7:30 A.M.**



## MORE EXAMPLES

- EXAMPLE: *Ian was dissatisfied with the photos he had taken: all of them were out of focus.*
- EXAMPLE: *The reasons he cited for his success are as follows: integrity, industry, and a pleasant disposition.*
- EXAMPLE: *Three plays by William Shakespeare will be presented this summer: Hamlet, Macbeth, and Othello.*



# WARNING! DO NOT PLACE A COLON IN THESE INSTANCES:

- **DO NOT** place a colon after namely or for example.
- **DO NOT** place a colon after a verb (are, include, etc.) unless the sentence ends with a verb (*There are two things that make us what we are:*).
- **DO NOT** place a colon after a preposition (such as, with, etc.)

# LET'S PRACTICE!!!

- Your sentence seems to be well phrased, however, there are a few minor errors.
- Your sentence seems to be well phrased; however, there are a few minor errors.
- I am positive that you cannot resist this one appeal money.
- I am positive that you cannot resist this one appeal: money.
- My best friends are: Liz, Terese, and Tasia.
- My best friends are Liz, Terese, and Tasia.
- Mark Twain reflects on writing “The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.”
- Mark Twain reflects on writing: “The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.”

# More Practice!!!

- **Nominations for the presidency included the names of Mrs. C. B. Jones, member of the Garden Club, Mrs. Alton Pesky, local librarian, and Miss Sonia Black, official of the League of Women Voters.**
- **Nominations for the presidency included the names of Mrs. C. B. Jones, member of the Garden Club; Mrs. Alton Pesky, local librarian; and Miss Sonia Black, official of the League of Women Voters.**
- **There were three reasons for his success, integrity, industry, and a good personality.**
- **There were three reasons for his success: integrity, industry, and a good personality.**

# Final Practice!!!

- My favorite television shows come on the History Channel, such as: History's Mysteries and Modern Marvels.
- My favorite television shows come on the History Channel, such as History's Mysteries and Modern Marvels.
- I love several subjects at school, namely: English and statistics.
- I love several subjects at school, namely English and statistics.

# Bibliography

<http://uwf.edu/writelab/reviews/documents/semicolons%20and%20colons.ppt>

<http://www.say-it-in-english.com/Lesson18.html>

<http://en.wikipedia.org>