



Semicolons and Colons

Semicolon

1. **Semicolons join independent clauses in compound sentences that do not have coordinating conjunctions (*and, or, but, nor, for, so, yet*) and commas as connectors (*however, moreover, thus, and therefore*).**
 - Comparisons are often used to emphasize a basic idea; **however**, they are more often used to explain something complex by showing how something we don't understand relates to something we do.
 - There was no running or shouting; all the children behaved very well; **therefore**, they will all get a treat.
2. **Semicolons separate long or complicated items in a series which already includes commas.**
 - The speakers were Dr. Judith Cornwell, English; Dr. Peter Mortrude, biology; Dr. Shirley Enders, history; **and** Dr. Charles Viceroy, mathematics.
 - She communicates well with others; completes her assignments; **and** demonstrates time manageability.
3. **Semicolons separate two long or complex independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction if confusion would result from using a comma.**
 - Ishmael, the narrator in *Moby-Dick*, says, "whenever it is a damp, drizzly November" in his heart and soul; **but** Ahab, the captain, goes to sea because he's obsessed with hunting the whale, Moby Dick.
 - The class teaches the participants how to handle a lot of paperwork, work under pressure, and juggle deadlines; **and**, if they complete the requirements, they will have a valuable addition to their resumes.

Colon

1. **In a sentence, a colon precedes a list.**
 - The use of these punctuation marks often confuses students: comma, semicolon, colon, hyphen, and dash.
 - The Stearns County Theatrical Company announces the opening of the following plays: *Lear*, May 10th; *Death of a Salesman*, June 15th; *and Camelot*, August 20th.
2. **In a sentence, a colon separates an explanation, rule, or example from a preceding independent clause.**
 - After a sleepless night, the senator made her decision: she would not seek re-election.
 - Music is more than a mechanical arrangement of sounds: it is an expression of deep feelings.
3. **In a business letter, a colon follows the salutation.**
 - Dear Mr. Peterson:
4. **In a business memo, a colon follows the heading.**
 - TO:
5. **In time, a colon separates the hour and the minutes.**
 - 5:30 p.m.
6. **In literary works, a colon separates the chapter and verse, citations, and the volume and number.**
 - Genesis 1:18-20
 - Part 3:121
 - Vol. 2:34
7. **In a title, a colon separates the main title from the sub title.**
 - *Grey Power: A Practical Survival Handbook for Senior Citizens*.
8. **In a bibliography, a colon separates the place of publication and the name of the publisher.**
 - Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1966.