



## Semicolons ;

### The rules:

- You use it to connect two independent clauses together into one sentence
- you can also use it as a super-comma.

Independent clauses are series of words that could stand alone as complete sentences. When you have two otherwise complete sentences that you want to connect to form one long sentence, use a semicolon between them. Example: This could be a complete sentence; this could be another one.

### As a super-comma:

- When you have a series of three or more items that normally would be separated by commas except that each individual item already has a comma in it, you use the semicolon between items.
- Example: We visited Pago Pago, Western Samoa; Curitiba, Brazil; and St. George, Utah.
- Example: The trio's birthdays are November 10, 1946; December 7, 1947; and October 31, 1950.

### The easy way to do it:

It was such an exciting time **because** there was so much happening all at once.  
It was such an exciting time; there was so much happening all at once.

I put up my umbrella and ran as fast as I could towards the house **because** I was desperate to keep dry.  
I put up my umbrella and ran as fast as I could towards the house; I was desperate to keep dry.

The house was boarded-up and had a 'no entry' sign outside **because** it was considered too dangerous to go in.  
The house was boarded-up and had a 'no entry' sign outside; it was considered too dangerous to go in.

## Colons :

Use a colon to signal the reader that a series of words, phrases or clauses follows a complete sentence.

- **E.g. The Greasy Spoon restaurant had several house specialties: a hot turkey sandwich, a roast pork dinner, a walleye platter and a barbecued chicken wing basket.**

Use a colon to signal the reader that a second complete sentence explains a closely related preceding sentence.

**E.g. The supervisor's remark was straight to the point: I won't tolerate workers who show up late.**

Use a colon to signal the reader that a name or description follows a complete sentence when you want to put a lot of emphasis on that item.

- **E.g. The preoccupied burglar didn't notice who was standing right behind him: a smiling police officer.**