

COLON and SEMI-COLON

Punctuation

PURPOSE

COLON | indicates something follows such as a quotation, example, or list

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SEMI-COLON | joins two independent clauses

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- (2) Indicate clock time (hours and minutes)
 - *12:00 a.m.*
- (3) Present a ratio of two numbers
 - *3:4*
- (4) Separate chapter and verse in biblical references
 - *John 4:13*
- (5) Divide titles (major: minor OR general: specific OR title: subtitle)
 - *Economic Impacts: Tourism Community*
- (6) Indicate volume and page numbers of a cited work
 - *Journal Title: 3:65-78*
- (7) Bibliographic entries
 - *Number. Last name Initial(s). Title of book. Edition [if other than first]. Place: Publisher; year.*
- (8) Formal Salutations
 - *Dear Mr. Brown:*
- (9) Business correspondence
 - *CC: Ms. Brown*
 - *Attention: Mr. Smith*

COLON & SEMI-COLON

The colon and semi-colon are punctuation marks that provide the audience with a better understanding of the information.

COLON

Meaning = “that is to say” or “here is what I mean”

RULES FOR COLONS

- (1) Extension of the first part of the sentence
Provide emphasis (more persuasive)
 - *She wished to return to one place: Newfoundland.*

Explains the first idea

 - *The three businesses will operate downtown: the candy store will be in the east end, the fish market will be centrally located, and the café will operate on the sidewalk.*

List ideas

 - *I have studies in many countries: England, Australia, and Canada.*

Provide a quotation

 - *The facilitator was amazed with the attendance: “I am thrilled with the support.”*

INCORRECT COLON USAGE

- After a verb
 - × *Vertical farming provides: plant protection and superior conditions.*
- After a preposition
 - × *Vertical farming saves on: water and food wastage.*
- After illustration words (‘for example’, ‘such as’, ‘especially’, ‘for instance’, ‘including’ and other illustration words)
 - × *Vertical farming provides optimal growing conditions such as: water, light, and temperature.*

SEMI-COLON

A semi-colon establishes more separation than a comma, but less than a period. It indicates a longer pause than a comma. It becomes a super comma.

RULES FOR SEMI-COLONS

- (1) Separate items in a list when commas are already present
 - *The conference team traveled to many Canadian cities including Calgary, Alberta; Montreal, Quebec; and Moncton, New Brunswick.*
- (2) Indicate close connection or relationship between two independent clauses
 - *The storm impacted the entire area; the city declared a state of emergency.*
- (3) Support conjunctive adverbs
 - *The weather deteriorated quickly; as a result, the university campus closed.*



SOURCES USED

Henderson, Eric, and K. M. Moran. "Commas and Other Forms of Punctuation." *The Empowered Writer: Writing, Reading & Research*, Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 372–377.

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