**COLONS**

A colon usually announces that the writer is about to say something in particular. That “something” is often a list or a quotation, although not all lists and quotations can follow a colon. Except in its special uses (below), a colon can only follow an independent clause.

**Colons with Lists**

Use a colon to introduce a list when the words in front of it could stand alone as a full sentence (an independent clause) that could otherwise end with a period. The number of items in the list doesn’t matter. The end of the list should be the end of the sentence.

* There are three primary colors: red, yellow, and blue.
* In front of the house I saw it parked: a shiny red convertible.
* We had a busy morning: we took the dog to the groomer’s, we washed the car, we shopped for school supplies, and we pruned all the flower bushes.

**Colons with Quotations**

Use a colon to introduce a quotation when the words in front of it could stand alone as a full sentence (an independent clause) that could otherwise end with a period.

* He gave his son boring, familiar advice: “neither a borrower nor a lender be.”

**Colons in Ordinary Sentences**

Use a colon to connect full sentences (independent clauses) that could otherwise end with a period when the second clause explains or summarizes the first.

* I hated the house: its rooms were dark and tiny.
* I’d gone to every class, done all the reading, met with my tutor, and read over my notes every night: I knew I was prepared.

**Special Uses of the Colon**

* Use a colon after the salutation in a formal letter. = Dear Senator Craig:
* Use a colon to indicate hours and minutes. = Class begins at 9:30 a.m.
* Use a colon to show proportions. = The ratio of syrup to water is 1:4.

**Practice**

1. Add or remove colons wherever necessary.

1. There are two kinds of people in the world those who divide the world into two groups and those who don’t. 2. I.S.U.’s motto is: Veritas Vos Liberabit, “the truth will make you free.”

3. Idaho offers many outdoor activities such as fishing, skiing, and hiking.

4. I live by Oscar Wilde’s advice “The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it."

5. The radio was playing her favorite songs “Kentucky Rain” and “Blue Suede Shoes.”

6. When you go to the store don’t forget to get toothpaste, orange juice, and dog food.

7. She plays three instruments the fiddle, the mandolin, and the recorder.

8. Her many attempts had one thing in common: complete failure.

9. We saw daffodils, apple blossoms, and lambs in the fields, spring is here.

10. Thomas Jefferson observed: "The harder I work, the more luck I seem to have."

1. For each sentence, select the punctuation mark from the choices inside the parentheses.

1. The defendant failed to check his rear-view mirror before changing lanes (, / ; /:) therefore ( , / ; /:) he breached a duty owed to the plaintiff.

2. There are two kinds of fruit on the table (no punctuation needed / : / ; ) oranges and apples.

3. I have a lot to do today (no punctuation needed / , / : / ; ) study for my test( : / ; / , ) do my laundry( : / ; / , ) both lights and darks( : / ; / , ) wash the car ( : / ; / , ) and call my mom.

4. Zach came to class breathless and overwhelmed ( : / ; / , ) he had just come from volleyball practice.

5. The Europe trip will include visits to (no punctuation needed/ , / ; /:) London( , / ; ) England ( , / ; ) Rome( , / ; ) Italy ( , / ; ) Paris( , / ; ) France ( , / ; ) Munich( , / ; ) Germany ( , / ; ) and Warsaw( , / ; ) Poland.

6. The book was written by (no punctuation needed / , / : ) Peter Jay Montreville.

7. He was very tired (no punctuation needed / , / ; ) but he decided to go to class rather than take a nap.

8. He was very tired however he decided his class was too important to miss.

9. The tables had wonderful decorations (no punctuation needed / , / ; / : ) flowers( , / ; ) balloons( , / ; ) confetti( , / ; ) ribbons( , / ; ) and marble birds.

10. We discussed the Torah’s Behar (Leviticus 25(:/,)1-26(:/,) The Joy of Opportunity.

11. The colors of the banner are (no punctuation needed / , / : ) blue, red, yellow, and black.

12. The lunchroom was decorated with (no punctuation needed/ , / ; /:) balloons ( , / ; ) red ( , / ; ) yellow ( , / ; ) and black streamers ( , / ; ) and glow-in-the-dark stars.

13. The play was excellent ( , / : / ; ) the actors were lively (no punctuation needed/ , / ; /:) and the set was phenomenal.

14. The first book he cited in his paper was Understanding Comics (no punctuation needed / , / : / ; ) The Invisible Art.

15. Her purse held many items (no punctuation needed / , / : ) including (no punctuation needed / , / : ) chapstick, money, a cell phone, cough drops, chopsticks, and some pens.

16. It was the first of May ( , / ; ) all the spring buds on the trees were starting to open.

17. It rained heavily during the afternoon ( , / ; / : ) however ( , / ; / : ) we managed to have our picnic anyway.

**Semi-Colons**

1) There has been another terrorist attack in Paris six are known dead.

2) Tuition for the music school is not high moreover, many scholarships are available.

3) The pastel drawings are lovely however, they should be sprayed with a fixative.

4) The football team won the game they moved into third place.

5) I love to read books I spend a lot of time in the library.

6) I want to eat some Junior Mints they are my favorite.

7) The soldiers in Afghanistan met heavy fighting many casualties were reported.

8) John enjoys posters I really enjoy sports ones.

9) The shoes are too tight they just don’t fit.

10) The dates are close together they don’t work in my schedule.

**Colons**

1) You will need these supplies glue, scissors, and paste.

2) Senator Gary Hawkins said the following “We must stop cutbacks in education, sanitation, and welfare.”

3) At 8 00 all beds should be made, and at 8 45 everyone should be finished eating.

4) The following announcement came over the loud speaker “All new students, exchange students, and visitors should report to the office.”

5) Please pick up these things bread, milk, and butter.

6) The doctor will be here at 3 30.

7) The bill had the following errors on it the price of the pops, the amount of tax, and the addition as a whole.

8) The company president gave the following people a promotion Bob Crane, Julie Reese, and George Cramden.

9) The following events will be canceled 10,000 meter run, 5,000 meter run, and 3,000 meter steeplechase.

10) Sometimes I need the following medicines cough drops, aspirin tablets, and gauze.