

## Use of the comma (,) / the semicolon (;) / the colon (:)

- Use a comma (,)

- 1) between all items in a series:

ex) *He hopped, skipped, and jumped.*

- 2) before a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS) joining independent clauses:

ex) *It is morning, for the birds are singing.*

- 3) to set off nonrestrictive, parenthetical, and appositive elements:

ex) *Bob, an industrious student, will run for class treasurer.*

- 4) to set off introductory clauses or phrases:

ex) *Forcing back his tears, he embraced her warmly.*

- 5) to separate two coordinate adjectives not joined by *and*:

ex) *She is a slow, careful reader.*

- 6) to replace a deleted verb:

ex) *My father is a nurse; my mother, a doctor.*

- 7) to set off contrastive elements:

ex) *It was a reasonable, though not appealing, idea.*

- Use a semicolon (;)

- 1) to separate two complete ideas (independent clauses) in a sentence when the two ideas have a close relationship and they are not connected with a coordinating conjunction:

ex) *My father is a nurse; my mother is a doctor.*

- 2) to combine two independent clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction if either or both of the clauses contain internal punctuation:

ex) *Success in college, some maintain, requires intelligence, industry, and perseverance; but others, fewer in number, assert that only personality is important.*

- 3) to separate items in a series when each item has internal punctuation.

- 4) to separate two independent clauses connected by a conjunctive adverb (accordingly, nevertheless, besides, consequently, nonetheless, furthermore, on the other hand, however, otherwise, indeed, in fact, moreover, therefore, thus, etc.):

ex) *I was tired from working all day; however, I stayed up late to study for the test.*

- Use a colon (:)

- 1) to introduce a list (one item may constitute a list):

ex) *There were two things he loved: an honest man and a beautiful woman.*

- 2) to introduce a list preceded by *as follows* or *the following*:

ex) *To be a good student, you must have the following: intelligence, industry, and perseverance.*

- 3) to introduce a word, a word group, or an independent clause that is a restatement, explanation, or summary of the first sentence:

ex) *Minds are like parachutes: They function only when open.*

- 4) to introduce a formal or long quotation:

ex) *Consider the words of John F. Kennedy: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."*

- Add any necessary punctuation marks to the following sentences.

1. Senators and representatives can be reelected indefinitely presidents can serve only two terms.
2. He took great care with his work however he neglected his friends and family.
3. The National Shakespeare Company will perform the following plays *Athelia Macbeth Hamlet* and *As You Like*.
4. I bought a dilapidated old chair an antique table that was in good condition and a beautiful new blue and white rug.
5. Peter has recently been elected vice president of the company and will take over his duties in a few days.
6. He has forty-three thousand dollars to spend however once that is gone he will be penniless.

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