



Colons (:) are a form of punctuation that typically :

1. Introduce a list of items.

I need to get the following items from the grocery store: milk, yoghurt, eggs, bread, apples, and granola.

TIP: The word *following* sometimes **comes before the list**.

2. Are placed before a restatement or explanation of something that was just mentioned.

Success often comes from failure: learning from past mistakes helps promote future achievement.

Semicolons (;) are another form of punctuation that connect two main ideas together. They are often used in two ways:

1. Between main clauses that are joined by conjunctive adverbs such as *however, nevertheless, therefore, consequently, etc.*

- a. ✓ Correct:

Sam likes to eat out at restaurants; **however**, choosing a healthy meal can sometimes be difficult.

- b. ✗ Incorrect:

Sam likes to eat out at restaurants **however**, choosing a healthy meal can sometimes be difficult.

2. Between two independent clauses (whole sentences) that are very similar in meaning.

- a. ✓ Correct:

Apples, pears, and quince are similar to each other; they are all part of the rose family.

- b. ✗ Incorrect:

Apples, pears, and quince are similar; all part of the rose family.



Practice

A. Correct the following sentences using colons or semicolons.

1. You have to do the following three things, get rest, drink fluids, and eat soup.
2. Moderation is essential, you can eat what you want but only a small portion.
3. Regular exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle, however, a balanced diet is just as important.
4. Getting enough sleep helps restore and heal the body, it also helps moderate stress.
5. I have so much to do today visit the bursar's, register for classes, and get a new ID card.
6. Balancing school and work can be really challenging, adding a family to the mix can prove to be very difficult.
7. Heavy snow in the east shut down public transportation; and hundreds of people were without power for several days.
8. Working with inner city youth was a rewarding experience, now I want to start a program in my own community.
9. People were evacuating the building, the emergency team directed the employees.

B. Write 4 sentences of your own using colons or semicolons.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Find out more. Search the web or grammar book for: **colons, semicolons, conjunctive adverbs, or joining independent clauses.**