

## Semicolons (;)

Semicolons establish a pause longer than a comma, but shorter than a period. Use a semicolon to

**1) connect two independent clauses that have a strong connection.** Independent clauses include a subject and a verb, and can function as complete sentences.

- Example: Some people enjoy watching hockey; others prefer to watch basketball.

**2) link two independent clauses when using a conjunctive adverb (words like *however*, *therefore*, or *nevertheless*) or a transitional phrase (like *on the other hand*, or *in contrast*)**

- Example: Chen's friends all owned cars; in contrast, she preferred public transportation.  
(Note how the transitional phrase is typically followed by a comma.)

**3) separate items in a long series or list**, especially when including details about the items on the list. Often, this type of list will be initiated by a *colon* (':').

- Example: He ran into many familiar people at the concert: Pablo, a Psychology student he had befriended in his first year at university; Maria, his former girlfriend; and Khai, his father's best friend.

**More on Semicolons:**

*The Little Seagull Handbook (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)*, pp. 392-93

University of Wisconsin: <https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/grammarpunct/semicolons/>

A resource created by Tristin Barker for



<https://kings.uwo.ca/writeplace>

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