

Colons and Semicolons

Kimberly A. Barchard
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
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Colons and Semicolons

- ▶ Colons and semicolons are the most sophisticated punctuation marks, and mark the writer as an expert writer.
 - ▶ They convey information about the relationships between the words.
 - ▶ Nonetheless, they are simple to use.
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Colons and Semicolons

- ▶ She went out the front door. He went out the back.
 - ▶ Does not specify the relationship between the two actions.
- ▶ She went out the front door: He went out the back.
 - ▶ The material after the colon explains the material the precedes the colon. So, this indicates that he went out the back BECAUSE she went out the front door.
- ▶ She went out the front door; he went out the back.
 - The semicolon indicates that these two events are in parallel. Perhaps they left simultaneously to avoid the police.

Colons

- ▶ A colon “delivers the goods that have been invoiced in the preceding words.”

H.W. Fowler

- ▶ Colons “introduce the part of a sentence that exemplifies, restates, elaborates, undermines, explains or balances the preceding part.”

Lynne Truss

Colons Rule 1: Lists

- ▶ A colon introduces a list.
 - An APA–style paper has five sections: introduction, method, results, discussion, and references.
 - The participants completed three measures: the Beck Depression Inventory, and Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding, and the WAIS–III.
- ▶ Notice that the material before the colon is a complete sentence; it does not dangle.
 - INCORRECT: The faces portrayed five emotions including: happiness, sadness, anger, fear, and surprise.

Colons Rule 2: Quotes

- ▶ A colon introduces a quote.
 - Johnson concluded the opposite: “The two-factor solution is most unsatisfactory.”
- ▶ Notice again that the material before the colon is a complete sentence.

Colons Rule 2: Quotes

- ▶ There are several other ways of introducing quotes, in which the preceding part is NOT a complete sentence.
- ▶ These do NOT use colons:
 - Smith stated, “The two-factor solution is best.”
 - Jones claims that the three-factor solution “fit well.”

Colons Rule 3: Explication

- ▶ The material after the colon exemplifies, restates, or elaborates the preceding part.
 - I hypothesize the same: Men will obtain higher scores than women on the first two subscales.
 - The participants were free to leave at any time: This was stated on the consent form and was repeated verbally at the beginning of the experiment.

Colons Rule 3: Explication

- ▶ “If you can place the word ‘namely’ just after the colon and the sentence makes sense, then you are using the colon correctly.”

OWL

- ▶ I hypothesize the same: Namely, men will obtain higher scores than women on the first two subscales.

Colons Rule 4: Explanation

- ▶ The material after the colon explain the preceding part.
 - I hypothesize a two-factor solution: Two factor solutions make sense theoretically and provided superior fit in studies conducted with children (Smith, 1999) and adolescents (Jones, 2011).
 - Dogs are smarter than cats: They are more social and have a larger encephalization quotient (the ratio of brain size to expected brain size for the animal's body size).

Colons Rule 5: Thus

- ▶ "A **colon** can be used to smooth over a rough logical connection. It has a verbal content ranging anywhere from 'namely' to 'thus,' and it can function to let the writer off the hook."

Paul Robinson

Colons Rule 5: Thus

- ▶ Examples:
 - She went out the front door: He went out the back.
 - Mardia's coefficient was 43.1: We used robust statistics.

Colons Rule 5: Thus

- ▶ In academic writing, this use of the colon is extremely rare.
- ▶ Academics prefer to explicate the relationship between the two clauses, using words such as “thus” and “therefore” and switching to a semicolon.
 - ▶ Mardia’s coefficient was 43.1; therefore, we used robust statistics.

Colons Rule 6: Opposition

- ▶ Lynn Truss explains that the colon can be used to balance two antithetical or oppositional statements.
 - Men have greater strength: women have greater endurance.

Colons Rule 6: Opposition

- ▶ In academic writing, this use is extremely rare. Academics prefer to explicate the relationship between the two clauses.
- ▶ You can use “but” and switch to a comma.
 - ▶ Men have greater strength, but women have greater endurance.
- ▶ You can use “however” and switch to a semicolon.
 - ▶ Men have greater strength; however, women have greater endurance.
- ▶ You can “in contrast” or “on the other hand” and switch to a full stop.
 - ▶ Men have greater strength. On the other hand, women have greater endurance.

Colons in APA Style

- ▶ If the material that comes after a colon is a full sentence, capitalize the first letter.
 - I hypothesize the same: Men will obtain higher scores than women on the first two subscales.
- ▶ If the material is NOT a full sentence, do NOT capitalize.
 - ▶ The participants completed three tests: the BDI, BDI-R-7, and WAIS-IV.

Semicolons Rule 1: Conjunction

- ▶ Semicolons join two independent clauses that are joined with “however,” “therefore,” “as a result,” “in fact”, etc.
 - Each test could last up to 10 minutes; however, the entire study usually lasted less than 40 minutes.
 - Participants enjoyed video simulation; in fact, over half requested copies for their personal use.

Semicolons Rule 2: Lists

- ▶ When the items in a list contain commas, semicolons are used to separate the items.
 - I have been to Las Vegas, Nevada; Seattle, Washington; and Portland, Oregon.

Semicolons Rule 2b: Citations

- ▶ Semicolons are used to separate citations.
- ▶ This is a special case of using semicolons to separate items in a list.
 - Women obtain higher scores on maximum performance tests of emotional intelligence (Black & White, 1999; Jones, Johnston, & Jenson, 2007; Smith et al., 2005)

Semicolons Rule 2c: Abbreviations and Citations

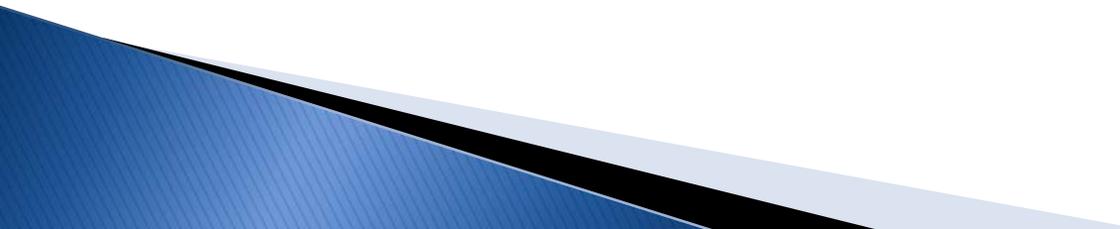
- ▶ Semicolons are used to separate an abbreviation from a citation.
- ▶ Usually, abbreviations would be given in parentheses and citations would be given in parentheses. Rather than having two parentheses next to each other, we use a semicolon.
 - Participants completed the Measure of Emotional Connotations (MEC; Barchard et al., 2011)

Semicolons Rule 2d: Statistics

- ▶ Semicolons are used to separate statistics for multiple groups.
- ▶ This is another special case of using semicolons to separate items in a list.
 - The results of Experiment 1 showed a similarity across groups: Group A, $t(177) = 3.01, p < .001$; Group B, $t(173) = 2.31, p < .001$; and Group C, $t(155) = 3.11, p < .001$.

Timothy McAdoo

Semicolons Rule 3: Related Clauses

- ▶ Semicolons are used to join two related clauses.
 - ▶ If one clause explains or explicates the other, use a colon instead.
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Semicolons Rule 3: Related Clauses

- ▶ To err is human; to forgive, divine.

Alexander Pope

- ▶ We all live with the objective of being happy; our lives are all different, and yet the same.

Anne Frank

- ▶ I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do.

Leonardo da Vinci

- ▶ Do not worry; eat three square meals a day; say your prayers; be courteous to your creditors; keep your digestion good; exercise; go slow and easy. Maybe there are other things your special case requires to make you happy; but, my friend, these I reckon will give you a good lift.

Abraham Lincoln

Semicolons Rule 3: Related Clauses

- ▶ Examples from research papers:
 - The first group completed 10 exercises; the second group, 5.
 - The monitor was 17 inch; the keyboard was a standard QWERTY keyboard; the speakers were Logitech Z130.

Semicolons in APA Style

- ▶ In APA format, do NOT capitalize the second clause.
 - Participants were told that the testing session would take 2 hours; however, it actually took 30 minutes.

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