

## SEMICOLONS

There are several options for punctuation, so why bother with semicolons? Semicolons aid in connecting two complete ideas while also remaining grammatically correct.

### Using Semicolons in Sentences:

- As with any other form of punctuation, there are correct and incorrect ways to utilize semicolons in sentences. You should use semicolons to:
  - Combine related independent clauses (clauses that can stand on their own) into one sentence.
    - Ex. Studying all hours of the day will exhaust you; take breaks to keep yourself from getting overwhelmed.
  - Combine independent clauses using “however” and “nonetheless.”
    - Ex. She felt like she had been studying for days; nonetheless, she continued to take notes.
    - Ex. He had been practicing for days; however, there weren't enough hours in the day to prepare him for such a judgmental panel.
  - Separate items in a list already utilizing commas
    - Ex. While planning for her trip, she planned to visit several places, including: Tokyo, Japan—where her favorite fictional character once visited; Okinawa, Japan—because she'd once read about *ikigai*; Kyoto, Japan—where her ancestors were from.

### Don't Use Semicolons...

- To join clauses when they're not both independent.
  - Ex. Forgetting to wear a hat; Dave's hair stood up everywhere.
    - In this example, a comma should be used.
- In front of a list:
  - Ex. She read many books over the summer: *Jane Eyre*, *19Q4*, and *Dorian Gray*.
    - In this example, a colon should be used.

For more help, visit a [writing tutor](#). All appointments are available in-person at the Student Success Center, located in the Library, or online. Resource adapted from the University of Louisville Writing Center.