

5. *Colon Warnings*

1. Do not use a colon after a *verb*.

Wrong—The topic of the pamphlet is: the colon.

Right—The topic of the pamphlet is the colon.

2. Do not use a colon after *consists of* or *such as*.

Wrong—Pack useful items such as: an MLA guide, . . .

Right—Pack useful items such as an MLA guide, . . .

3. Do not capitalize the first item in a list included in a *sentence*.

Right—Learn how to use the following machines:
computer, printer, . . .

Do capitalize the first item in a list in a *column*.

Right—Learn how to use the following machines:

- Computer
- Printer

4. You do not have to capitalize the first word in a complete thought after a colon, but you may.

Right—I was disappointed: misspelling spoiled my essay.

Right—I was disappointed: Misspelling spoiled my essay.

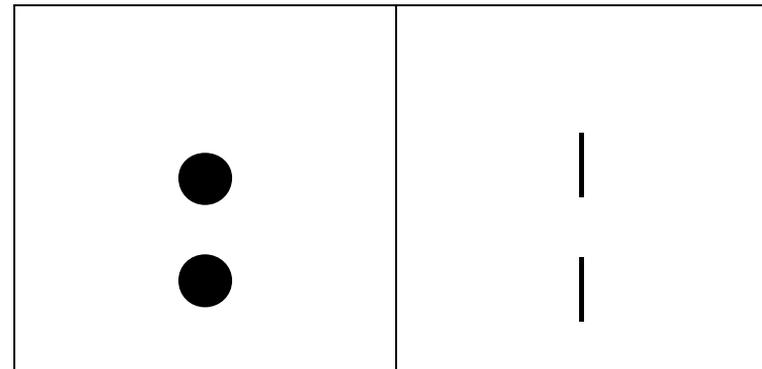
6. *An Exit Exam on the Colon*

Place a colon in each of the following:

1. Dear Professor
2. On Mondays through Thursdays The Writing Center opens at 9 00 a.m., but on Fridays it opens at 1 00 p.m.
3. Who can forget the Center's slogan "We'll help you write."
4. After weeks of research, she wanted just one thing MLA guidelines.
5. He knew it was important to revise his paper a good revision would mean a higher grade.
6. IU Southeast offers degrees at all levels associate, undergraduate, and graduate.

Everything You Need to Know about the Colon

WANTED



Front View

Side View

Description of suspect:

1. Fearful Colon Facts: Of Greek origin
2. The Top Six Excuses Used by a Colon
3. Sometimes Mistaken for a Semicolon
4. Sometimes Incorrectly Used as a Dash
5. Colon Warnings: Dangerous after a Verb
6. An Exit Exam on the Colon: Proceed with Care

See inside for more details...

1. *Fun Colon Facts*

—A recent survey conducted by *Cosmopolitan* magazine determined that the colon is the most misunderstood punctuation mark, at least for *Cosmo's* readers.

—The human colon, a branch of the intestines, and the much misunderstood punctuation colon, which points to a branch of the sentence, both are derived from the Greek word *kolon* that has only one meaning: branch.

—Think of a colon as two small eyes gazing at a spot: the spot where the writer wants to direct the reader's attention.

—Think of a colon as the equivalent of the phrase *that is*.

2. *The Top Six Excuses to Use a Colon*

6. Use a colon in the salutation of a formal letter.

Dear Chancellor:

5. Use a colon for separations in references, time, and titles.

New York: Harper Collins Publishers

It is 9:33 a.m.

Storytelling and Mythmaking: Images from Film

4. Use a colon to introduce a long quotation.

Who can forget Hamlet's soliloquy: "To be or . . .

3. Use a colon to add emphasis.

After weeks of study, she wanted one thing: a vacation.

2. Use a colon to divide two complete thoughts *that are the same*.

He was very tall: his head scraped the ceiling.

And the number one excuse to use a colon:

1. Use a colon after a complete thought to introduce a series.

IU Southeast has six divisions: arts and letters, education, nursing, natural sciences, social sciences, continuing studies, and business.

3. *A Semicolon Is Not a Colon*

• SEMICOLONS are used to separate two complete thoughts that are related to each other but that do *not* mean the same thing.

Yesterday it rained; today's forecast is for sunshine.

Because the two complete thoughts do *not* mean the same thing, they are frequently connected with both a semicolon and words like *however, on the other hand, and nevertheless*.

Yesterday it rained; however, today's forecast is for sunshine.

• COLONS, however, are used to join two complete thoughts that *do* mean the same thing. The second thought restates or elaborates on the first.

Yesterday it rained: all day the clouds pelted us with precipitation.

4. *A Dash Is Not a Colon*

• DASHES are used usually in informal writing *to indicate an abrupt interruption* of ideas. Dashes are used at the beginning, middle, and end of a sentence. Used to excess, dashes can weaken your writing—so watch it!

A vacation—that was the only thing she wanted.

One thing—a vacation—was all she wanted.

She wanted only one thing—a vacation.

• COLONS, on the other hand, are used *to focus readers' attention at only the end of a sentence*. Colons are used in formal writing.

After weeks of study, she wanted one thing: a vacation.