

THE SEMICOLON

USE THE SEMICOLON TO INDICATE A SEPERATION OF THOUGHT LARGER THAN A COMMA BUT SMALLER THAN A PERIOD

It helps you avoid committing a *comma splice*: a grammatical error where two independent clauses are separated by a comma



It's useful for creating a smooth connection between two related ideas instead of using a period, which creates a full stop

THE BASIC GUIDELINES

Unless producing a literary effect, the better approach in these scenarios is to separate the two sentences



Use semicolons to separate items in a list: Use semicolons to separate lists when the items are long or when segments have material that must also be separated with commas

To link related independent clauses: Use semicolon when a coordinating conjunction like *and*, *but* or *for* is not present

With a conjunctive adverb or transitional phrase: If a coordinating conjunction is present, use a semicolon before it only if extensive punctuation also is required in one or more of the individual clauses

Placement with quotes: Place semicolons outside quotation marks.

Note that the semicolon is used before the final *and* in such a series



Semicolons can precede conjunctive adverbs and transitional expressions so long as they're joining two independent clauses.



Unless the first word of the following clause is a proper noun, you can keep the words following semicolons lowercase