

4 Uses for Semicolons

Name _____

I. Connecting two independent clauses

Ex. I am going to the store; it seems I have run out of salad dressing.



Usually, a comma followed by a FANBOYS conjunction can replace the semicolon.

II. If the two independent clauses are long and involve commas already, a semicolon may separate the two, even with the presence of a FANBOYS conjunction.

Ex. We waited all day in that wide line, tired travelers pressing in from all sides; and when we needed drinks or sandwiches, I would squeeze my way to the cafeteria and back. [Copied from *Writer's Inc.*]

III. Connecting two independent clauses with the help of a conjunctive adverb

Independent clause ; conjunctive adverb , independent clause.

Common conjunctive adjectives: also, besides, finally, however, indeed, instead, meanwhile, moreover, nevertheless, next, still, then, therefore, thus

Ex. I used to hate peas; however, in chicken fried rice peas are ok.

IV. Separating groups that contain commas

Ex. His basement was a mess, filled with Christmas lights, artificial trees, blow-up reindeer; boxes of shoes, bags of sweaters, totes of umbrellas; bronze statues, towering canvases, and about a dozen different rakes and brooms.

Try it out! Add commas and semicolons in the appropriate places. In a series of three or more, separate with commas; put a comma before the and. Example: They serve soup, sandwiches, and salad.

1. Bertrand was tired and his broken arm was throbbing moreover he was coming down with a cold.

2. Katja I need your help with this I can't figure out how to do the next step.

3. Already late for court Ivetta got to the subway platform just as the train the last one for twenty minutes was pulling away so she decided to call in sick hoping her boss wouldn't hear the Mariachi band performing in the station.

Keep going.



4. As freshmen you probably had Mr. Stubbs Mr. Lewis and Mr. Hardin as teachers as sophomores Mr. Hamen Mrs. Rivero and Mrs. Hellemann and now as juniors you have Mrs. Polzinetti Mr. Frost or Mrs. Rivero and Mrs. Clark.



For items 5-8, check the items correctly following the semicolon rules.

____ 5. Millicent had traveled to Paris; London; and Istanbul in Europe, Bangkok; Hong Kong; and Seoul in Asia, and Nairobi; Cairo; and Cape Town in Africa; but she had never been to Toronto or Montreal, even though she was Canadian.

____ 6. The clock struck 9:00; finally, Herman could lock the door and turn off the “open” sign.

____ 7. After watching the tapes, the coach realized that some of her best players were making silly mistakes, things they had talked about at every practice; yet she knew she had to treat her team gently, since most of them were affected by the stress of exams on top of the recent tragedy.

____ 8. I am heartbroken; because my favorite band is splitting up.

With a partner, write your own sentences demonstrating the 4 semicolon rules. Write four different sentences; keep them school appropriate. Only use peers’ names with permission. Write in ink.