

1. Hyphens (-)

Main function: To join words or parts of words together.

Uses:

- To form **compound words**:
well-known, mother-in-law, fifty-five
 - To join prefixes to words:
ex-president, self-esteem
 - To show word breaks at the end of a line (in formal printing).
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2. Dashes (— or –)

Functions:

- To show a **break in thought or emphasis**:
She was determined — nothing could stop her.
 - To **set off extra information** (like parentheses or commas):
My brother — who lives in Canada — is visiting next week.
 - To show a **range**:
Pages 5–10, Monday–Friday
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3. Commas (,)

Main function: To separate words, phrases, or clauses for clarity and flow.

Uses:

- To separate **items in a list**:
I bought apples, bananas, and grapes.
- After **introductory words or phrases**:
After dinner, we went for a walk.
- To separate **independent clauses** joined by conjunctions:
She was tired, but she finished her work.
- To set off **nonessential information**:
My cat, who is very lazy, sleeps all day.

Semicolon (;)

1. To join two closely related independent clauses

Use a semicolon instead of a full stop when the two sentences are closely connected in meaning.

Example:

- *Tom wanted to go fishing; his friend preferred to stay at home.*

- **To separate items in a list when the items themselves contain commas**

Example:

- *][We visited Paris, France; Rome, Italy; and Berlin, Germany.*

- **To link independent clauses with a conjunctive adverb (e.g., however, therefore, moreover, consequently)**

- When joining two sentences using these linking words, place a semicolon **before** the adverb and a **comma** after it.

Example:

- *She was very tired; however, she finished her homework.*

Colon:

1. To introduce a list

Use a colon before a list when the words before the colon form a complete statement.

- I need three things: a pen, a notebook, and a ruler.
- She bought the following fruits: apples, bananas, and oranges.

2. To introduce an explanation or clarification

A colon can introduce information that explains what came before it.

- He had one problem: he had no money.
- There was only one thing to do: leave immediately.

Think of it as meaning “namely,” “this is,” or “as follows.”

3. To introduce an example

A colon can introduce an example or examples.

- Some animals can live in extreme conditions: camels, for example, can survive in deserts.
- You need to improve one skill: time management.

4. To introduce a quotation

A colon can be used before a quotation, especially when the quotation is introduced by a complete sentence.

- The teacher gave us some important advice: “Always check your work.”
- The sign contained a simple message: “Keep Out.”

5. To introduce a conclusion or result

A colon can connect a statement with a conclusion, consequence, or important point.

- He made one decision: he would never give up.
- Remember this: practice makes progress.

6. In titles and subtitles

7. In time

8. In Ratio

1. Rewrite the above sentence with an appropriate connective:

Original:

The shop is closed; I will have to buy milk tomorrow.

With a connective:

The shop is closed, so I will have to buy milk tomorrow.

2. Now rewrite it with a full stop:

With a full stop:

The shop is closed. I will have to buy milk tomorrow.

3. Compare the sentences. What is the effect of using a semi-colon?

Answer:

Using a semi-colon links the two ideas more closely, showing that they are directly related, while a full stop separates them more completely.

4. Add a semi-colon to these sentences in the appropriate place:

- a. In summer I play cricket in winter I do athletics.
 - b. My friend likes history I prefer maths.
 - c. One day I'm going to visit America I want to see the Statue of Liberty.
 - d. She is really good at using semi-colons her sister is less sure.
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5. Punctuate these sentences to make sense (more than one answer may be correct):

- a. Adil is wearing a sky-blue jumper Henry's is sea-green.
- b. When I finish school I'm going to my grandmother's my mum will still be at work.
- c. "Let me see if I can find it," the librarian said. I had asked if they had my favourite book.

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The summer evenings were long; it was not dark yet. Presently, Tom checked his whistle. A stranger was before him — a boy a shade larger than himself. A newcomer of any age or either sex was an impressive curiosity in the poor, little, shabby village of St. Petersburg.

This boy was well dressed — too well dressed for a weekday. This was simply astounding. His cap was a dainty thing; his close-buttoned, blue-cloth roundabout was new and natty, and so

were his pantaloons. He had shoes on — and it was only Friday. He even wore a necktie, a bright bit of ribbon.

He had a citified air about him that ate into Tom's vitals. The more Tom stared at the splendid marvel, the higher he turned up his nose at his finery; and the shabbier and shabbier his own outfit seemed to him to grow.

Neither boy spoke. If one moved, the other moved — but only sidewise, in a circle; they kept face to face and eye to eye all the time.

Answers

a. Adil is wearing a sky-blue jumper; Henry's is sea-green.
(or: Adil is wearing a sky-blue jumper, and Henry's is sea-green.)

b. When I finish school, I'm going to my grandmother's; my mum will still be at work.
(or: When I finish school, I'm going to my grandmother's. My mum will still be at work.)

c. "Let me see if I can find it," the librarian said. I had asked if they had my favourite book.
(or: Let me see if I can find it," the librarian said, "I had asked if they had my favourite book."
— depending on the quote style taught.)

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