

# Semicolons

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## Rule 1

Use a semicolon in place of a period to separate two sentences where the conjunction has been left out.

### Examples:

*Call me tomorrow; I will give you my answer then.*

*I have paid my dues; therefore, I expect all the privileges listed in the contract.*

## Rule 2

It is preferable to use a semicolon before introductory words such as *namely*, *however*, *therefore*, *that is*, *i.e.*, *for example*, *e.g.*, or *for instance* when they introduce a complete sentence. It is also preferable to use a comma after the introductory word.

### Examples:

*You will want to bring many backpacking items; for example, sleeping bags, pans, and warm clothing will make the trip better.*

*As we discussed, you will bring two items; i.e., a sleeping bag and a tent are not optional.*

## Rule 3

Use either a semicolon or a comma before introductory words such as *namely*, *however*, *therefore*, *that is*, *i.e.*, *for example*, *e.g.*, or *for instance* when they introduce a list following a complete sentence. Use a comma after the introductory word.

### Examples:

*You will want to bring many backpacking items; for example, sleeping bags, pans, and warm clothing.*

*You will want to bring many backpacking items, for example, sleeping bags, pans, and warm clothing.*

## Rule 4

Use the semicolon to separate units of a series when one or more of the units contain commas.

### Example:

*This conference has people who have come from Boise, Idaho; Los Angeles, California; and Nashville, Tennessee.*

## Rule 5

Use the semicolon between two sentences joined by a coordinating conjunction when one or more commas appear in the first sentence.

### Examples:

*When I finish here, I will be glad to help you; and that is a promise I will keep.*

*If she can, she will attempt that feat; and if her husband is able, he will be there to see her.*

Source: "Semicolons." *GrammarBook.com*. 2014. Web. 7 May 2014.