

1 Independent Clauses

To separate independent clauses in a compound sentence when they are not joined by a coordinating conjunction:
Carlos is a great soccer player; he scores at least one goal per game.
Sue won the lottery; she bought a brand new cherry red Jaguar XJS.

2 Closely Related Ideas

When the idea expressed in each clause has a clear and obvious connection: *The fans in the stadium went crazy; it was the winning goal of the World Cup.*
My brother's announcement took everyone by surprise; he had been accepted to Harvard Law School.

3 Compound Sentences

Used between independent clauses of a compound sentence when they are joined by an adverb: *The fans found him charismatic and his teammates were very fond of him; however, his coach did not like his flashy, high-risk style of play.*

4 Items in a Series

To separate items in a series if any of the items already contain commas: *The team featured three superstars: Sara, the veteran goalkeeper; Fatima, the league's top striker; and Jill, the seventeen year old defensive midfielder.*

5 Helpful Hints

1) Don't overuse semicolons, as this will give your writing a choppy, quality
2) Don't capitalize the word that comes after the semicolon unless it is a proper noun
3) make sure the clauses on each side of the semicolon can stand alone.

6 Final Thoughts

"I must say I have a great respect for the semicolon; it's a very useful little chap."

-Abraham Lincoln

