

Semicolons link two main clauses which could be separated by a full stop or a conjunction (and, but etc.). A semicolon is not as final as a full stop, and shows that the clauses are related or linked.

With a semicolon: The sea is blue in summer; in winter it is green.

With a conjunction: The sea is blue in summer **but** in winter it is green.

With a full stop: The sea is blue in summer. In winter it is green.

The meaning is pretty much the same but the semicolon shows you are directly comparing the two sentences.

You can also use semicolons to separate items in a list which would be difficult to understand without them:

E.g. Karen had tried a number of unusual foods: Stilton, broccoli and crab soup; garlic, onion and octopus pasta; deep fried frogs' legs with chips and chocolate covered ants.

Add a semicolon where appropriate:

1. She is a really funny person he isn't at all.
2. She doesn't really like English she likes history best.
3. Home and Away has been around since my grandmother was a baby *Eastenders* is even older.
4. In the winter I watch loads of TV in the summer I watch hardly any.

Now try these sentences. What type of punctuation do you need (full stops, commas, colons, semicolons, capitals etc.)? There may be more than one correct answer:

5. richard likes cake susan likes salad
6. i didn't see the step i've now got a bandage on my head
7. bill was going bald his hair was falling out
8. It is important to follow health and safety guidelines always wash your hands before handling food keep raw meat cooked meat and dairy separate check use by dates and never re-heat food more than once.