

Term III

Test Date:

Spotlight on:

Semi-colons and colons

Hyphens and dashes

Capitalization

Commas

Faulty Diction

Common Misuses of Words

Semi-colons ;

A semi-colon is used instead of a comma to indicate a wider degree of separation of thought between two or more equally important ideas in the same sentence. It is not as strong as a period but stronger than a comma.

Various Uses:

a. in a compound sentence to separate the clauses which are closely related in thought but not joined by a conjunction.

Example: Your facts are not facts; they must be discarded.

b. to separate coordinate parts when there are commas within them.

Example: Mr. Jones, the president of the company, will probably reach New York about noon today; but if

he is unavoidably detained in Washington, you will excuse him.

c. to separate the clauses of a compound sentence joined by adverbial conjunctions like *then*, *therefore*, *hence*, *consequently*, *however*, etc..

Example: The book is entirely wrong; therefore, you need pay no attention to its conclusions.

d. When *namely*, *for instance*, *for example*, and *that* is introduced explanations or examples that are statements, they are usually preceded by a semi-colon and followed by a comma.

Example: I shall vote for him for two reasons; *that is*, he is honest and he is wise.

More resources on semi-colons:

<http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/how-to-use-semicolons.aspx>

<http://theoatmeal.com/comics/semicolon>

Colons :

The colon should be preceded by a complete thought and followed by a list, a quotation, or example(s). Or, it should be used in the salutation of a letter.

Various uses:

- a. After the salutation of a business letter.

Example: Dear Sir:, Gentlemen:, Dear Madame:

- b. Before a list, an illustration, or a long formal quotation when the statement proceeding it is independent and requires information.

Examples: Christopher Morley's delightful "What Men Live By" begins as follows: "What a delicate and rare and gracious art is the art of conversation."

Each first aid kit must contain the following articles: bandages, adhesive tape, gauze, antiseptic, and something for burns.

- c. in time expressions:

Example: at 2:30 P.M.

- d. in biblical references:

Example: as *Isaiah 1:16*.

More resources on colons:

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/marks/colon.htm>

<http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/colon-grammar.aspx>

Capitalization

Capitalize the following:

1. First word of every sentence

2. First word of every direct quotation that is a complete sentence (I said, "Who just arrived late?")

3. First word of each division in an outline

4. Important words of titles of books, articles, poems, essays, thesis papers, etc. Do not capitalize a preposition or an article unless it comes first (*Gone with the Wind, The Last of the Mohicans, Of Human Bondage*)

5. A word indicating an important division of a book or series of books (Chapter II, Volume I)

6. Proper nouns and proper adjectives

- a. Course subjects derived from names of countries (England = English, France = French)
- b. Specific course titles (Chemistry I, United States History II)
- c. The Deity, sections of the Bible, religions, gods of mythology (God and His universe, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Baptist, Muslim, Allah, Genesis, Zeus)
- d. Days of the week, months, holidays -- not the seasons (spring, autumn, fall, winter) -- (Monday, January, Thanksgiving, Easter, Hanukkah, Labor Day, National Education Week, Martin Luther King Day)
- e. Nationalities, races (American, British, Italian, Islam, Caucasian, European, Japanese, Apache)
- f. Historical events, periods, documents (Civil War, Revolutionary Period, Declaration of Independence)
- g. Government bodies and political parties (Senate, Supreme Court, United Nations, Republican Party, Democratic Party)
- h. Organizations (American Legion, Swampscott High School Drama Club, Safety First Moving Company, United States Air Force, Boston College, Peace Corps)
- i. Geographical names, sections of a country or continent, places (Atlantic Ocean, Mexico City, Brewster State Park, South America, Nova Scotia, the West Coast, the Far East, the Rocky Mountains, the Sahara Desert, Times Square, Bar Harbor, Lake Superior, Merrimac River, Brazil, East Street, Forest Avenue, the Red Sea)
- j. Official titles (Uncle Jack, Aunt Mary, Coach Knight, Chief of Naval Operations, the Queen of England, the Speaker of the House, the Attorney General, the Mayor of New York, the Governor, the President of the United States, the Senator from West Virginia)
- k. Buildings, planes, ships, spacecrafts (the Fleet Center, the Fox Theater, the Eiffel Tower, Air Force One {plane}, USS Pueblo {ship}, Apollo II {Spaceship})
- l. Heavenly bodies, except the sun and moon (Saturn, the Litter Dipper, Mars, the Milky Way, North Star)
- m. Abbreviations of academic degrees, honors, etc. that follow a person's name (Garth Hert, Ph.D., Martin Luther King, Jr.)
- n. Special events (the Senior Show, the Junior Prom, Pan American Games, the Olympics, Korean War)
- o. Memorials (the Jefferson Memorial, the Washington Monument)
- p. Brandnames (Mercedes-Benz, Coca-Cola, Tide laundry detergent, a Whirlpool dishwasher, Pontiac Sunbird, Oscar Mayer hot dogs)

7. The Pronoun "I"

More resources on capitalization:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/592/1/>

<http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/understanding-capitalization.aspx>

<http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/title-caps.aspx>

<http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/title-caps.aspx>

Hyphens -

Uses of the Hyphen:

- I. For word division
- II. With certain prefixes
- III. For clarity
- IV. With certain compounds
- V. For inclusive dates and pages

I. Word Division

Use a hyphen after the first part of a word divided between the end of one line and the beginning of the next line. These words should be divided only between syllables. Use the dictionary as your guide.

II. Prefixes and Suffixes

Use a hyphen after the prefixes *ex-*, *self-*, *all-*, *quasi-*, *half-*, and *quarter-*.

Examples: *ex-sailor*, *all-encompassing*, *half-drunk*, *self-propelling*

Use a hyphen before the suffixes *-elect*, and *-odd*, and between any prefixes and a proper name.

Examples: *secretary-elect*, *sixty-odd*, *pseudo-French*, *anti-American*, *trans-Siberian*

III. Clarity

Use a hyphen within a word to prevent ambiguity or misreading and to avoid a double "i" or the use of the same consonant three times in a row.

Examples: *two-bit players* (insignificant players)
two bit-players (two players with small roles)

Examples: *re-cover* (meaning "to cover again" not *recover* meaning "to regain")

Examples: *semi-industrial* (not *semiindustrial*)
hull-less (not *hullless*)

IV. Compounds

Accepted usage for the hyphenation of compound words changes fairly rapidly; the trend is toward writing formerly hyphenated compounds as

single words without a hyphen. Choose one dictionary as your guide and use it faithfully and consistently.

a. Letters or numerals

Normally, a hyphen is used between the elements of a compound in which one element is a letter or numeral. But practice varies, and some compounds of this type are often written without a hyphen.

Examples: A-line, U-boat, 4-ply, DC-10; but E sharp, U-turn or U turn

b. Compounds of Equal Weight

Use a hyphen to connect compounds in which the elements are of equal grammatical weight.

Examples: city-state, Yankee-Red Sox game, soldier-statesman, yellow-green, Monday-Wednesday-Friday classes

c. Compound Modifiers

Use a hyphen to connect compound modifiers when these modifiers appear before nouns, but do not hyphenate them when they follow nouns or when they are used adverbially.

Examples:

icy-cold water	but	The water was icy cold.
spur of the moment decision	but	He decided on the spur of the moment.
across-the-board increases	but	Increases were granted across the board.

all-purpose cleaner
evil-smelling water
off-season rates
twice-told tales

Do not hyphenate a compound modifier if the word is an adverb ending in *-ly*, even when the modifier precedes the noun.

Examples: sorely needed improvements
fully annotated improvements
rapidly growing cities
heavily perfumed women

Do not hyphenate compound words that are properly written as single words or as two separate words.

Example:	<i>Incorrect</i>	<i>Correct</i>	<i>Incorrect</i>	<i>Correct</i>
	to-day	today	none-the-less	nonetheless

all-right	all right	in-so-far	insofar
out-side	outside	never-the-less	nevertheless
now-a-days	nowadays	where-as	whereas

Use a hyphen to connect the two parts of a written-out compound number up to ninety-nine, even when the compound is part of a larger number.

Examples: thirty-three but five thousand and six
sixty-eight but two hundred and sixty-eight

Use a hyphen to connect parts of a fraction that is written out unless either the numerator or denominator contains a hyphen.

Examples: one-half but a half
seven-eighths but seven forty-fifths

Use a so-called suspended hyphen when a series of compounds all have the same second element. Put a space after the hyphen and before the following word.

Examples: four- and five-year programs
pro- or anti-British

V. Inclusive Dates and Pages

Use a hyphen to express inclusive dates and pages.

Examples: pp.276-381; A.D. 54-84; 1899-1906

Dashes ---

Uses of the dash:

- I. around parenthetical statements
- II. before summary statements
- III. in dialogue for interrupted speech

I. Parenthetical Statements

Use a dash to mark sharp break in the thought or syntax of a sentence or to insert a parenthetical statement into a sentence. Sometimes the material set off by dashes is an appositive.

a. Break in thought

Examples: We were asked ---well, actually we were told --- to pick up our belongings and leave.

The Dark Ages ---though the term is really a misnomer --- lasted from the fall of Rome until the eleventh century.

b. Appositive

Examples: The Cyclops --- a drama first produced about 44 B.C. --- is a burlesque of Homer's story about Odysseus and Polyphemous.

II. Summary Statements

Before a summary statement and after an introductory list, the dash can be used as an informal substitute for a colon.

Example: Biology, chemistry, calculus, --- these courses are familiar to freshman premedical students.

III. Dialogue

In dialogue, use a dash to indicate hesitant or interrupted speech.

Examples: "To tell the truth, I ---we --- aren't interested."

"He is a complete idi --- uh --- he's been acting rather foolishly."

COMMAS



Commas and **periods** are the most frequently used punctuation marks. Commas customarily indicate a brief pause; they're not as final as periods.

Rule 1. Use commas to separate words and word groups in a simple series of three or more items.

Example: *My estate goes to my husband, son, daughter-in-law, and nephew.*

Note: When the last comma in a series comes before *and* or *or* (after *daughter-in-law* in the above example), it is known as the **Oxford comma**. Most newspapers and magazines drop the Oxford comma in a simple series, apparently feeling it's unnecessary. However, omission of the Oxford comma can sometimes lead to misunderstandings.

Example: *We had coffee, cheese and crackers and grapes.*

Adding a comma after *crackers* makes it clear that *cheese and crackers* represents one dish. In cases like this, clarity demands the Oxford comma.

We had coffee, cheese and crackers, and grapes.

Fiction and nonfiction books generally prefer the Oxford comma. Writers must decide Oxford or no Oxford and not switch back and forth, except when omitting the Oxford comma could cause confusion as in the *cheese and crackers* example.

Rule 2. Use a comma to separate two adjectives when the order of the adjectives is interchangeable.

Example: *He is a strong, healthy man.*

We could also say *healthy, strong man*.

Example: *We stayed at an expensive summer resort.*

We would not say *summer expensive resort*, so no comma.

Another way to determine if a comma is needed is to mentally put *and* between the two adjectives. If the result still makes sense, add the comma. In the examples above, a *strongand healthy man* makes sense, but *an expensive and summer resort* does not.

Rule 3a. Many inexperienced writers run two independent clauses together by using a comma instead of a period. This results in the dreaded **run-on sentence** or, more technically, a **comma splice**.

Incorrect: *He walked all the way home, he shut the door.*

There are several simple remedies:

Correct: *He walked all the way home. He shut the door.*

Correct: *After he walked all the way home, he shut the door.*

Correct: *He walked all the way home, and he shut the door.*

Rule 3b. In sentences where two independent clauses are joined by connectors such as *and*, *or*, *but*, etc., put a comma at the end of the first clause.

Incorrect: *He walked all the way home and he shut the door.*

Correct: *He walked all the way home, and he shut the door.*

Some writers omit the comma if the clauses are both quite short:

Example: *I paint and he writes.*

Rule 3c. If the subject does not appear in front of the second verb, a comma is generally unnecessary.

Example: *He thought quickly but still did not answer correctly.*

But sometimes a comma in this situation is necessary to avoid confusion.

Confusing: *I saw that she was busy and prepared to leave.*

Clearer with comma: *I saw that she was busy, and prepared to leave.*

Without a comma, the reader is liable to think that "she" was the one who was prepared to leave.

Rule 4a. When starting a sentence with a dependent [clause](#), use a comma after it.

Example: *If you are not sure about this, let me know now.*

Follow the same policy with introductory [phrases](#).

Example: *Having finally arrived in town, we went shopping.*

However, if the introductory phrase is clear and brief (three or four words), the comma is optional.

Example: *When in town we go shopping.*

But always add a comma if it would avoid confusion.

Example: *Last Sunday, evening classes were canceled.* (The comma prevents a misreading.)

When an introductory phrase begins with a preposition, a comma may not be necessary even if the phrase contains more than three or four words.

Example: *Into the sparkling crystal ball he gazed.*

If such a phrase contains a series of prepositions, a comma may be used **unless** a verb immediately follows the phrase.

Examples:

Between your house on Main Street and my house on Grand Avenue, the mayor's mansion stands proudly.

Between your house on Main Street and my house on Grand Avenue is the mayor's mansion.

However, if the introductory phrase contains more than one preposition, use a comma.

Example: *With thanks to you, I accept this award.*

Rule 4b. A comma is usually unnecessary when the sentence starts with an independent clause followed by a dependent clause.

Example: *Let me know now if you are not sure about this.*

Rule 5. Use commas to set off nonessential words, clauses, and phrases (see [Who, That, Which](#), Rule 2b).

Incorrect: *Jill who is my sister shut the door.*

Correct: *Jill, who is my sister, shut the door.*

Incorrect: *The man knowing it was late hurried home.*

Correct: *The man, knowing it was late, hurried home.*

In the preceding examples, note the comma after *sister* and *late*. Nonessential words, clauses, and phrases that occur midsentence must be enclosed by commas. The closing comma is called an **appositive comma**. Many writers forget to add this important comma. Following are two instances of the need for an appositive comma with one or more nouns.

Incorrect: *My best friend, Joe arrived.*

Correct: *My best friend, Joe, arrived.*

Incorrect: *The three items, a book, a pen, and paper were on the table.*

Correct: *The three items, a book, a pen, and paper, were on the table.*

Rule 6. If something or someone is sufficiently identified, the description that follows is considered nonessential and should be surrounded by commas.

Examples:

Freddy, who has a limp, was in an auto accident.

If we already know which Freddy is meant, the description is not essential.

The boy who has a limp was in an auto accident.

We do not know which boy is meant without further description; therefore, no commas are used.

This leads to a persistent problem. Look at the following sentence:

Example: *My brother Bill is here.*

Now, see how adding two commas changes that sentence's meaning:

Example: *My brother, Bill, is here.*

Careful writers and readers understand that the first sentence means I have more than one brother. The commas in the second sentence mean that Bill is my only brother.

Why? In the first sentence, *Bill* is essential information: it identifies which of my two (or more) brothers I'm speaking of. This is why no commas enclose *Bill*.

In the second sentence, *Bill* is nonessential information—whom else but Bill could I mean?—hence the commas.

Comma misuse is nothing to take lightly. It can lead to a train wreck like this:

Example: *Mark Twain's book, Tom Sawyer, is a delight.*

Because of the commas, that sentence states that Twain wrote only one book. In fact, he wrote more than two dozen of them.

Rule 7a. Use a comma after certain words that introduce a sentence, such as *well, yes, why, hello, hey*, etc.

Examples:

Why, I can't believe this!

No, you can't have a dollar.

Rule 7b. Use commas to set off expressions that interrupt the sentence flow (*nevertheless, after all, by the way, on the other hand, however*, etc.).

Example: *I am, by the way, very nervous about this.*

Rule 8. Use commas to set off the name, nickname, term of endearment, or title of a person directly addressed.

Examples:

Will you, Aisha, do that assignment for me?

Yes, old friend, I will.

Good day, Captain.

Rule 9. Use a comma to separate the day of the month from the year, and—what most people forget!—always put one after the year, also.

Example: *It was in the Sun's June 5, 2003, edition.*
No comma is necessary for just the month and year.

Example: *It was in a June 2003 article.*

Rule 10. Use a comma to separate a city from its state, and remember to put one after the state, also.

Example: *I'm from the Akron, Ohio, area.*

Rule 11. Traditionally, if a person's name is followed by *Sr.* or *Jr.*, a comma follows the last name: *Martin Luther King, Jr.* This comma is no longer considered mandatory. However, if a comma does precede *Sr.* or *Jr.*, another comma must follow the entire name when it appears midsentence.

Correct: *Al Mooney Sr. is here.*

Correct: *Al Mooney, Sr., is here.*

Incorrect: *Al Mooney, Sr. is here.*

Rule 12. Similarly, use commas to enclose degrees or titles used with names.

Example: *Al Mooney, M.D., is here.*

Rule 13a. Use commas to introduce or interrupt direct quotations.

Examples:

He said, "I don't care."

"Why," I asked, "don't you care?"

This rule is optional with one-word quotations.

Example: *He said "Stop."*

Rule 13b. If the quotation comes before *he said, she wrote, they reported, Dana insisted,* or a similar attribution, end the quoted material with a comma, even if it is only one word.

Examples:

"I don't care," he said.

"Stop," he said.

Rule 13c. If a quotation functions as a subject or object in a sentence, it might not need a comma.

Examples:

Is "I don't care" all you can say to me?

Saying "Stop the car" was a mistake.

Rule 13d. If a quoted question ends in midsentence, the question mark replaces a comma.

Example: "Will you still be my friend?" she asked.

Rule 14. Use a comma to separate a statement from a question.

Example: I can go, can't I?

Rule 15. Use a comma to separate contrasting parts of a sentence.

Example: That is my money, not yours.

Rule 16a. Use a comma before and after certain introductory words or terms, such as namely, *that is*, *i.e.*, *e.g.*, and *for instance*, when they are followed by a series of items.

Example: You may be required to bring many items, *e.g.*, sleeping bags, pans, and warm clothing.

Rule 16b. A comma should precede the term *etc.* Many authorities also recommend a comma after *etc.* when it is placed midsentence.

Example: Sleeping bags, pans, warm clothing, *etc.*, are in the tent.

Rules courtesy of <http://www.grammarbook.com/punctuation/commas.asp>

Faulty Diction -Term III

LOT, LOTS OF are slang for much or a great deal.

Examples: There was *much* (not *a lot of*) action in town.

Many (not *lots of*) students find English very hard to master.

MISS OUT ON is slang for the simple word miss. Lose out on is also for lose.

Examples: Debbie *missed* (not *missed out on*) the play.

George did not *lose* (not *lose out on*) his opportunity to play for the Red Sox.

OFF OF is repetitive. The *of* is unnecessary.

Example: The suitcase fell *off* (not *off of*) the chair.

OK is a colloquial term to be avoided in formal English.

OUT LOUD is colloquial for aloud, loudly, and audibly.

Example: The teacher called each name *aloud* (not *out loud*).

OUTSIDE OF is repetitive. You do not need the *of*. Do not use this expression when meaning *except, aside from, or besides*.

Examples: *Outside* (not *outside of*) the class were two monsters.
Aside from (not *outside of*) a few critics, there were no opinions.

OVER should not be used to mean *more than*. The expression **OVER WITH** is repetitive.

Examples: More than (not over) a hundred players scored 1000 points.
I am delighted that the examinations are over (not over with).

PREVENTATIVE is not a real word.

Example: I am taking *preventative* measures to ensure we do not crash the plane.

PUT IN used in the sense of “*to spend, make, or devote*” is slang.

Example: To earn a good grade in college, a student must *spend* hours studying.

Common Misuse of Words- Term III

emigrate - immigrate (v.)

emigrate- to leave a country to settle somewhere else. You emigrate from a place.

Ex. The potato famine caused thousands to **emigrate** from Ireland to New York.

immigrate- to enter a country. You immigrate to a place.

Ex. My grandparents **immigrated** to America.

farther - further (adj. /adv)

farther- refers to physical distance

Ex. I moved my bed **farther** away from the window.

further- refers to degree or extent; additional

Ex. Nothing could be **further** from the truth

Ex. I woke up because of the heat; I was **further** annoyed by the sound of my neighbor's lawnmower.

fewer – less (adj.)

fewer- refers to number and is used before a plural noun that can be counted

Ex. We have **fewer** students in our classrooms the day before vacation.

less- refers to degree or quantities that can be measured but not counted.

Ex. I have **less** time to spend with my friends this summer because of my new job.

hanged -- hung (v.)

hanged- executed (refers to people)

Ex. The prisoner **hanged** himself in his cell.

hung- suspended (refers to objects)

Ex. Our family **hung** the outside lights for the holiday season.

imply -- infer (v.)

imply- to suggest or hint indirectly (speaker or writer)

Ex. The author **implies** (makes implications) in the first chapter about the hero's death.

infer- to interpret; to deduce a conclusion from facts. (listener or reader)

Ex. A writer cannot help what a reader might **infer**.

lay – lie (v.)

lay- to put down or place (an object)

I **lay** down my book.

I am **laying** down my book at this moment.

Yesterday I **laid** down my book.

I have **laid** down my book many times.

verb tense:

present

present participle

past

perfect

Lie- to rest or recline

Do you **lie** in the grass?

present

I am **lying** in the grass at this moment.

present participle

Yesterday I **lay** in the grass.

past

I have **lain** in the grass many times.

perfect

mad – angry (adv.)

mad- implies abnormality or an extreme such as “insane” or “out of control”

Ex. We all thought he was **mad** when he started screaming obscenities.

Ex. Billy Bob paced his room in a **mad** frenzy trying to memorize his speech.

angry- irate or inflamed at a thing, with a person or about a situation or event

Ex. Mr. Jones was **angry** at his slow computer, **angry** with his dull co-worker, and

angry about the outcome of the department meeting.