Colons and Semicolons in Sentences

What does a colon do?

Example

What does a semi-colon do?

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What does a colon do?

A colon can introduce a list or an idea.

To do well you need three things: hard work, talent and skill.

What does a semi-colon do?

They can separate two main clauses that are related.
They can replace connetives.

They will call back tomorrow; we will give them our answer.

Colons and Semicolons in Sentences

Colons can be used to introduce a list or an idea:

A list:
There are many types of trees: oak, cyprus, fir and birch for example.

An idea:
This was what he required: the best of effort from everyone.

Colons and Semicolons in Sentences

Insert a **colon** in the appropriate place in the sentence below.

I have three pets a hamster (called Frankie), a goldfish and a cat.

Colons and Semicolons in Sentences

If two <u>main clauses</u> are closely related, then you can use a semi colon instead of a connective.

<u>Two related independent clauses:</u>
Some people prefer football. Some people prefer basketball.

<u>Two related independent clauses with a connective:</u>
Some people prefer football whereas some people prefer basketball.

<u>Two related independent clauses with a semi-colon:</u>
Some people prefer football; some people prefer basketball.

Speaking and Listening

If two <u>main clauses</u> are closely related, then you can use a semi colon instead of a connective.

<u>Which is the connective here?</u>

No one was seriously hurt although one man hurt a finger.

<u>The sentence with a semi-colon:</u>

No one was seriously hurt; one man hurt a finger.

Colons and Semicolons in Sentences

Semi-colons can also be used for lists, where each item has a lot of detail:

Weeds may reach the grass in many ways: seeds are blown by the wind; carried by birds; moved by muddy shoes, machinery or tools; or concealed in compost and fertiliser.

Colons and Semicolons in Sentences

A semi-colon can be used to separate two main clauses that are related.

Insert a **semi-colon** in the correct place in the sentence below.

On the one hand, it would be exciting to go on the roller coaster on the other, I might not like the height!