Semicolons: Notes

Use a semicolon to join two sentences (instead of a comma and a conjunction) that are closely related.
Example:
Melissa just loves Mardi Gras; she goes to every parade.

Use a semicolon before a conjunctive adverb that joins two sentences.
(Conjunctive adverbs: moreover, however, otherwise, consequently, therefore)
Example:
Ashley’s science project is due on Tuesday; therefore, she plans to finish it this weekend.

When commas occur within parts of a series, use semicolons to avoid confusion.
Example:
We visited London, Kentucky; Paris, Texas; and Carthage, Mississippi.

Colons: Notes

Use a colon to introduce a list of items.
Example:
I need you to go to the store and purchase the following items: lettuce, paper towels, milk, and plastic forks.

Use a colon between two sentences when the second sentence explains or summarizes the first.
Example:
Doctors take an oath before they are allowed to practice medicine: they must promise to first do no harm.

Colons are also used in written expressions of time, chapter and verse (John 3:16), to introduce long quotations, and after the greeting in a business letter (Dear Sir: ).