

Colon and Semicolon Handout

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Common and proper uses of the colon:

- Use a colon when introducing a quotation after an independent clause. An *independent clause* contains both a subject and a verb, and can stand alone as a complete sentence.
 - This leads to more competition within and between industries: “Product markets are more competitive if all would-be entrepreneurs can use their talents” (Ward et al. ix).
- Use a colon when introducing a list.
 - Thus, education creates a positive feedback loop: people become educated, refine their talents, compete with one another, attract investors, increase domestic prosperity, create more wealth at the individual level, become educated potential investors themselves, and in turn incentivize education and the development of talent to perpetuate the virtuous cycle.

Common and proper uses of the semicolon:

- Use a semicolon to connect two *independent clauses* that are related to one another.
 - Education is not a luxury; it is the sustaining force of a developed economy and functioning government.

Further reference: The Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL): <http://owl.english.purdue.edu> (search terms: *semicolons*, *colons*)