

The Full Stop is used at the end of a complete and independent sentence, but not at the end of a sentence which is followed by another *collateral* sentence.

The Colon and Semicolon are only placed between sentences which are grammatically complete, not between the various portions of either simple or complex sentences. The colon is placed between sentences which are grammatically independent, but sufficiently connected in sense to make it undesirable that there should be a complete break between them. Thus: "The Chief must be Colonel: his uncle or his brother must be Major: the tacksmen must be the Captains" (*Macaulay*). "Nothing else could have united her people: nothing else could have endangered or interrupted our commerce" (*Landor*). But in similar cases many writers only use the semicolon; no exact rule can be given.

A colon (with or without a dash after it) is often put before a quotation, which is not immediately dependent on a verb, as: "On his tombstone was this inscription:—'Here lies an honest man.'"

The semicolon is commonly placed between the co-ordinate members of a compound sentence, when they are connected by *and*, *but*, or *nor*, as: "Time would thus be gained; and the royalists might be able to execute their old project" (*Macaulay*). It is also inserted when three or more co-ordinate sentences are united *collaterally*, with a conjunction before the last, as: "A battering-ram was invented, of light construction and powerful effect; it was transported and worked by the hands of forty soldiers; and as the stones were loosened by its repeated strokes, they were torn with long iron hooks from the walls" (*Gibbon*). When the co-ordinate sentences are short and closely connected in meaning, commas are placed between them, or such parts of them as remain after contraction, as: "I ran after him, but could not catch him." Sometimes even commas are unnecessary, as: "He reads and writes incessantly." "He learns neither Latin nor Greek." "He struck and killed his brother." "Either you or I must leave the room."

In a simple or complex sentence commas should be inserted whenever, in reading or speaking, short pauses would be made to show more clearly the way in which the words are grouped together. It is impossible to lay down hard and fast rules.