

# AMA Manual of Style

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## Semicolon

Cheryl Iverson

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Semicolons represent a more definite break in thought than commas. Generally, semicolons are used to separate 2 independent clauses. Often a comma will suffice if sentences are short; but when the main clauses are long and joined by coordinating conjunctions or conjunctive adverbs, especially if 1 of the clauses has internal punctuation, use a semicolon. Use a semicolon to separate independent clauses in a compound sentence when no connective word is used. In most instances it is equally correct to use a period and create 2 sentences. The conditions of 52% of the patients improved greatly; 4% of the patients withdrew