

AMA Manual of Style

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Colon

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The colon is the strongest of the 3 marks used to indicate a decided pause or break in thought. It separates 2 main clauses in which the second clause amplifies or explains the first. This dictum is often believed to be in the Hippocratic Oath: First, do no harm. Do not use a colon if the sentence is continuous without it. You will need enthusiasm, organization, and a commitment to your beliefs. Not: You will need: enthusiasm, organization, and a commitment to your beliefs. Avoid using a colon to separate a preposition from its object or to separate a verb (including to be in