

**When not to use a colon.**

A Colon is not to be used between a verb and its object or complement.

A colon is not to be placed between a preposition and its object, or after phrases like *such as*, *especially*, and *including*.

**Remember. . .**

A **complete sentence** must come before a **colon**, but a complete sentence does not have to follow a colon. A colon introduces material that relates to the information before it. To test the need for a colon, think of it as meaning “that is.”



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More mini-lesson can be found at  
<http://dept.kent.edu/english/WritingCent/mini.htm>

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# Mini-Lesson # 1



# COLONS

## How to Use a Colon:

### 1. COMPLETE SENTENCE: a list or series.

➤ Students going on the camping trip must have this special equipment: a warm sleeping bag with a waterproof bottom, a flashlight with a flashing capability, and a snakebite kit.

### 2. COMPLETE SENTENCE: a second complete sentence that explains the first.

➤ When camping, it's good to remember Murphy's Law: if anything can go wrong, it will.

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*Note: A complete sentence following a colon may begin with a capital or lowercase letter, but usage should be consistent throughout a paper.*

### 3. COMPLETE SENTENCE + “*the following*” or “*as follows*” before the colon.

➤ Students interested in applying for the position must provide the following: a resume, a reference from a professor, a reference from an employer, and a class schedule.

➤ The best advice students writing papers is as follows: revision, revision, revision.

### 4. COMPLETE SENTENCE as a formal introduction to a final appositive.

➤ Though not perfect, one form of government has proven superior to all others: democracy.

### 5. COMPLETE SENTENCE used to introduce a quote, especially long or formal.

➤ The United States' Declaration of Independence begins with these words: "When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation."

Henry Ford said it best: "If you think you can or think you can't, you're right"

### 6. To separate a title from a subtitle.

"Working Your Way Through School: A Guide to Study Skills"