WHAT IS A SEMICOLON?
A semicolon (;) is a stronger mark of punctuation than a comma but not as strong as a period. A semicolon is used between equal grammatical elements such as independent clauses and items in a series.

Note: Semicolons do not link dependent clauses to independent clauses.

[Incorrect] Because it was snowing heavily; we decided to stay home.

[Correct] It was snowing heavily; we decided to stay home.

Semicolon Usage

1. A semicolon may be used in place of a period to connect two independent clauses when the two clauses share a close relationship.

Mary went to the grocery store this afternoon; she purchased food for tonight’s dinner.

Tom didn’t have enough time to finish his exam; his class was only an hour long.

2. A semicolon can also be used to join two independent clauses together with a conjunctive adverb (i.e. however, nevertheless, therefore). The semicolon is placed after the first independent clause and before the conjunctive adverb, and a comma is needed after the conjunctive adverb in front of the second independent clause.

Brad knew of many different roofers to do the job; however, he called Ultimate Roofers to do the job because the owner is his cousin.

Maggie has always been an excellent skier; nevertheless, her parents were always wary of having their little girl on the slopes.
Semicolons can also be used to separate items in a list if the elements in the series already include commas.

The top five most visited cities in the United States are: New York, New York; Las Vegas, Nevada; Los Angeles, California; Orlando, Florida; and Chicago, Illinois.

The members of Bon Jovi include Jon Bon Jovi, vocalist and guitarist; Richie Sambora, guitarist; Tico Torres, drummer; and David Bryan, keyboardist.