

When not to use a colon

Never put a colon between

- A verb and its object or complement
- A preposition and its object
- After such expressions as “such as,” “especially,” or “including” UNLESS you are starting a bulleted list. For some reason, “the following” can use a colon.

WRONG: Max has: a snowmobile, an ATV, and a canoe. (verb and its object)

REVISED: Max has plenty of toys: a snowmobile, an ATV, and a canoe.

WRONG: Dad watches a TV show about: cooking and wild game. (preposition and its object)

REVISED: Dad watches a TV show about a new subject: cooking and wild game.

WRONG: In poetry, additional power may come from devices such as: simile, metaphor, and alliteration. (such as)

REVISED: In poetry additional power comes from several devices: simile, metaphor, and alliteration.

RE-REVISED: In poetry, additional power may come from devices such as simile, metaphor, and alliteration.

WRONG: Please pack the your bag including: shoes, socks, pants, and shirts

REVISED

Please pack the following:

- Shoes
- Socks
- Pants
- Shirts

Correct or rewrite the sentences to put a colon in the proper place.

1. Alexander the Great is going to: Persia, India, and Africa.
2. Tomalina’s favorite activities include: diagramming sentences, studying the effects of slug slim, and handing out with the undead.
3. Sal is driving: a Hummer, a Jeep, and a tank.
4. Genevieve decided to bathe in: the Tigris River, the Nile River, and Spring Creek.
5. During the party, Eloise enjoyed talking about: moose hunting and Bigfoot.
6. I have many favorite movies such as: *Godzilla vs. Bambi* and *Rise of the Killer Roller Coaster*.
7. I am: intelligent, beautiful, and modest.