**What is a colon?**
A colon introduces material that relates to the information given before. To test the need for a colon, insert “that is” in place of the colon. If the sentence makes sense, then the colon is being used correctly. Remember, a complete sentence must come before a colon, but does not need to follow one.

**Use colons...**

- **Before a list or series**
  “the following” or “as follows” may come before the colon to further prepare the reader for the list or series.

- **Before a complete sentence that explains the previous sentence**
  A sentence following a colon may begin with a capital or lowercase letter, but usage should be consistent.

- **As a formal introduction to a final appositive**
  An appositive is a noun or noun phrase that gives further information about the word or phrase that precedes it.

- **To introduce a quote, especially if it is long or formal**

- **To separate a title from a subtitle**

**Colons look like...**

- **The best advice for students who are writing papers is as follows:**
  *revision, revision, revision.*

- **When camping, it’s good to remember Murphy’s Law: If anything can go wrong, it will.**

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

- **Henry Ford said it best:**
  *“If you think you can or think you can’t, you’re right.”*

Using Colons

Do NOT use colons...

⇒ Between a verb and its object or complement

⇒ Between a preposition and its object
   Or before phrases like such as, especially, or including

Colons look like...

- He likes to play: soccer, baseball, and tennis.

- He likes to play soccer, baseball, and tennis.

- The coordinator is in charge of: registration, cabin assignments, and camp clean-up

- The coordinator is in charge of registration, cabin assignments, and camp clean-up