Combining Two Sentences: Semicolon? Colon? Period???

Punctuating 2 Independent Clauses

Not Combined With Coordinating Conjunction
- Second clause is a related idea
- Semi-colon
  - James went to the store to buy groceries; he bought everything on the list.

Combined With Coordinating Conjunction
- Second clause is a new concept
- Period
  - James went to the store to buy groceries. On the way home from the store, he stopped for gas.
- Comma
  - James went to the store to buy groceries, but he forgot to get the milk.

...but when should you use a colon mark?

Use a **semicolon** to join two independent clauses (complete sentences):

- Ex. The art was surprising for its era; many viewers did not know what to think.

Use a **colon** if a complete sentence is introducing something that is not a complete sentence

- Ex. The art was surprising for its era: vivid colors, bold strokes, new techniques.

Independent Clause: a clause that can stand alone as a complete sentence (contains a grammatical subject, verb and completed idea).

Coordinating Conjunction: a part of speech that connects two words, phrases or clauses together.
(Examples: *and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet*).

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Punctuating Listing Sentences

What is the listing part composed of?

Parts of List
Have Internal Punctuation

- Semi-colons

I am traveling to New York, NY; Philadelphia, PA; and Boston, MA during my summer vacation.

Parts of List Do Not Have Internal Punctuation

- Commas

I am traveling to New York City, Philadelphia, and Boston during my summer vacation.

Independent Clause Plus the List (list is at the end of sentence)

- Colon

I am traveling to many cities during my summer vacation: New York City, Philadelphia, and Boston.

For extra practice with semi-colons and colons, please visit:
http://owlet.letu.edu/grammar.html