

Grammar Answers : Using colons to introduce lists and semicolons for longer phrases within lists

A. Add in a **colon** to introduce the following lists, and **commas** to separate the items:

1. I love playing many sports: badminton, tennis, football and basketball.
2. My brother always wins at hide-and-seek because he has some great hiding places: behind the couch, in the cupboard, under his bed and even inside the washing basket!
3. My grandparents spoiled me for my birthday: they made me a cake, bought me a new bike and threw me a party.

B. Correct the following passages, adding in colons, commas and semi-colons:

1. I packed my bag and in it I put my toothbrush, the one with the splayed bristles; my sponge, the real one I was given for my birthday; my comb, the black; one my teddy bear, even though I know I shouldn't need him now; clean undies, enough for two nights; pyjamas the new ones and a bar of chocolate, for comfort.
2. There were many places to visit on the trip. Firstly, we went to Norwich, with its fine cathedral; then to Southend, whose wonderful pier entranced us; to Epping Forest, muddy footpaths and all; London, whose delights astounded even the most seasoned tourists; lastly, with the cliffs towering above the blue-grey sea, was Dover.

C. Write your own complex list of items. Try to include at least 5 things. If you want, you can start with: "I packed my schoolbag and in it I put..."

Example answer: I packed my schoolbag and in it I put my pencil case, the new one with bobbles on it; my gel pens, both the glittery and scented ones; my folder, so I can put away all my work; my ruler, which is see-through and my pencils, newly sharpened.