The Semi-colon

Basic Rules:
1. A semicolon precedes an independent clause that begins with a transitional word such as “however,” “therefore,” “nevertheless,” etc. Notice that a comma follows this type of connecting word. Examples:
   - The store will be open late on Fridays and Saturdays; however, it will be closed all day on Sundays.
   - The student felt mentally fatigued and physically tired; nevertheless, he was determined to finish writing his essay before he went to bed.

2. A semicolon also precedes an independent clause that begins with a transitional phrase such as “for example,” “for instance,” etc. Notice that a comma follows this type of connecting phrase. Examples:
   - Basil is omnipresent in the cuisine of some countries; for example, Italians use basil in salads, soups, and many vegetable dishes.
   - The detective warned the neighbors that there better not be any more disturbances; for instance, entertaining loud parties in the middle of the night.

3. A semicolon joins two independent clauses that are closely related, which generally signals addition or contrast. Examples:
   - One of the owners comes from this area; the other grew up in Costa Rica. (The two clauses show contrast.)
   - For many cooks, basil is a key ingredient; it appears in recipes worldwide. (The second clause shows addition to or support for the first.)

4. A semicolon is used between main clauses or series items that contain commas. Examples:
   - Major League Baseball features teams in Chicago, Illinois; Cleveland, Ohio; St. Louis, Missouri; and Los Angeles, California.