The semicolon and when to use it:

A semicolon is stronger than a comma, but not quite a period. It is usually used to separate sentences where the second sentence provides additional information about the first. It can be used in three ways:

1 – Use it wherever you would use a coordinating conjunction between two independent clauses.

EX: The students were loud in class; the sub did not write them up.

EX: Ali was the best player on the varsity team; he won the MVP award three years in a row.

2 – Use it to separate independent clauses and include a transitional phrase.

EX – Mr. Palise was very angry; however, he did not take his anger out on his students.

EX – The students knew the teacher was angry; as a result, they worked very quietly.

3 – Use it to separate items in a series containing internal punctuation.

EX – John went to the store to find apples, bananas, and oranges; milk and butter; mushrooms, onions, and tomatoes; and garbage bags.