A Concise Guide to Colons

Use colons in two ways:

1. **After a complete sentence, to introduce whatever follows, usually information you want to emphasize or that adds further explanation.**

- I love all horses, but one breed is my absolute favorite: the Arabian.

- ~~In the 1990's, Lucy's favorite cartoons were:~~ *~~Doug, Rugrats,~~* ~~and~~ *~~Spongebob Squarepants.~~* (the first part is not a complete sentence, so no colon is needed before the list)

- One word sums up Rachel, Monica, Phoebe, Joey, Chandler, and Ross: friends.

- All it takes to strike fear into Bob's dog Spot is a simple phrase: bath time.

- Guidance counselors often encourage students and sometimes resort to using clichés: "if at first you don't succeed, try, try again."

Often, colons introduce a list:

- In architecture, there are three kinds of classical columns: Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian.

They also frequently introduce quotations:

- I will never be able to forget the bittersweet final paragraph of "The Golden Road" by L.M. Montgomery: "The Story Girl stood up and waved her chrysanthemums at us. We waved wildly back until the buggy had driven around the curve. Then we went slowly and silently back to the house. The Story Girl was gone."

2. **To separate titles from subtitles:**

- The Gospel According to Tolkien: Visions of the Kingdom in Middle-Earth

- Everybody Lies: A Structural Analysis of *House, M. D.,* Season One