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How to fix comma splices and run on sentences

If your computer has PowerPoint, click the PowerPoint icon on the right to get a brief PowerPoint presentation in Sentences That Run. Click HERE to view excerpts from the sentence. Click HERE for help with Powerpoint. A RUN-ON SENTENCE (sometimes called a combined sentence) has at least two parts, one of which can stand alone (in other words, two independent clauses), but the two parts have been smooshed together and are not properly joined. Review, also, a section that describes things that can happen between two independent clauses. It is important to realize that the length of a sentence really has nothing to do with whether a sentence is run-on or not; is run-on is a structural defect that can plague even a very short sentence: The sun is high, put on some creams with a filter. On the other hand, a very long sentence can be a run-off-at-the-mouth sentence, but it may otherwise be healthy, structurally. Click here to see the 239-word sentence, which is a perfectly fine sentence (structurally) When two independent clauses are combined with just a comma, they represent a run-on sentence that is called comma-splice. An example just above (with sunscreen) is comma-splice. When you use a comma to combine two independent clauses, it must be accompanied by a little conjunction (and, but, for, yet, or, yes). The sun is high, so put on some sunscreen. Sentences that are triggered typically occur in the following circumstances*: When an independent clause issues an order or directive based on what was said in the previous independent clause: This next chapter contains a lot of difficult information, you should start studying right away. (We could put the period during which this comma is and start a new sentence. Where two independent clauses are combined by a transitional expression (a connecting e-word) such as, moreover, nevertheless. Mr. Nguyen sent his four children to Ivy A-League colleges, but he sacrificed his health working day and night in this dusty bakery. (Again, where this first comma appears, we could use a period —and we started a new sentence—or a semicolon.) When the second of the two independent clauses contains a pronoun that combines it with the first independent clause. This computer does not make sense to me, came without instructions. (Although these two clauses are quite short and the ideas are closely related, this is a sentence. We need a period where this comma now stands.) Most of these computers in the Learning Assistance Center are already broken, this proves my point about American computer manufacturers. Again, two nicely related clauses, improperly linked - run-on. Use a period, to cure this sentence. To detect errors (identifying and correcting fragments) Read the following groups of words. If the word group is a complete complete write S in the intended place. If it's a snippet, write F and add or remove words to turn them into a complete sentence. Example: Repulse Bay, one of the most desirable locations in Hong Kong. F Repulse Bay is one of the most desirable places in Hong Kong orF Repulse Bay, one of the most desirable places in Hong Kong, has seen an increase in property prices. Cable TV earns $60 million a year from football broadcasts. Since the earthquake many aid measures. F (Tip: Add main verb) Suggested answers: Since the earthquake, many aid measures have been put in place. Hide the answer. In response to the criticism, the Director-General ordered a public inquiry. Permanent residents have the right to vote. Belief in something passionately. F (Note: This is a dependent clause.) Suggested answers: Believing in something passionate makes your life valuable. Hide the answer. Bridge completed in 1997, measuring 2.5 km, connecting Tsuen Wan and Lantau. F (Note: These are dependent clauses.) Suggested answers: The bridge, completed in 1997 and measuring 2.5 km, connects Tsuen Wan and Lantau. Hide the answer. Work as soon as possible to meet the deadline. F (Note: This is a dependent clause.) Suggested answers: Working as fast as possible to meet the deadline, the staff stayed up all night. Hide the answer. RUN-ON SENTENCES AND COMMA SPLICES Run-on sentences can be divided into two types. The first occurs when the writer does not place any punctuation mark and does not coordinate the conjunction between independent clauses. The second is called a comma pack, which occurs when two or more independent clauses are linked only by a comma and not coordinating the conjunction. Example of mishaps: Flowers are beautiful, brighten the room. (Incorrect) Example of comma splice: Flowers are beautiful, brighten the room. (Incorrect) Examples of correct alternatives: Flowers are beautiful. They brighten up the room. The flowers are beautiful; brighten up the room. The flowers are beautiful and brighten the room. Flowers are beautiful because they brighten the room. A run-on sentence is not defined by its length! The fact that a sentence is very long does not automatically make it a judgment. As you can see, the structure of the sentence and the use of punctuation determine whether the sentence is run. To better understand sentences and comma, it is important to review the basics of writing a grammatically correct simple sentence: A simple sentence consists of only one independent clause. An independent clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate and creates a complete thought when standing alone. A topic refers to someone or something (a topic contains at least one noun or pronoun). A predicate refers to what an entity does or is (a predicate contains a verb or verbs). Both the subject and the may contain additional descriptive elements, such as adjectives, adjectives, prepositions, or other modifying phrases, but in the most basic form, the subject is part of the sentence containing the noun and the predicate contains the verb. A sentence can be complete and correct with one basic independent clause consisting of one subject plus its corresponding predicate. To demonstrate the basic structure of a simple sentence, find the noun that creates the subject and separate it from the verb. About the predicate Sentence I am. I am. The man studied. The man studied. The frog jumped. The frog jumped. Lola sings. Lola sings. By dividing the noun and verb, we can add modifiers to a simple sentence and still see the two basic parts, the subject and the predicate. Subject Predicate Man studied. A kind-hearted man learned hard. A kind-hearted man in the library studied hard for a test on Friday. When looking at the structure of an independent clause, it is worth thinking about all elements of the subject separately from all elements of the predicate. Together, the subject and the predicate form two basic and separate parts of each clause. Subject Predicate Benevolent man and his wife studied hard for a test and read a book. The man, his wife and their child studied hard, read books and ate dinner. If an independent clause creates a full thought, the period at the end shows that the sentence is complete. Period means STOP. The verdict has been completed and a new sentence will begin. Run-on and comma splices occur when more than one subject/predicate pair exists in a sentence. When one topic/predicate pair is followed by an additional subject/predicate pair in a single sentence (creating separate independent clauses), they must be separated (or combined) according to very specific punctuation and grammatical rules. Look at the following example of sentences: A nice man hard studied his wife to read a book. (Incorrect) If we divide the sentence into subjective/predicate pairs (each of them is an independent clause), we see that there are two independent clauses, one after the other: The first independent clause Second independent clause Subject predicate A polite man hard studied his wife while reading a book. Without proper separation, two independent clauses written together form a run-on sentence. Once a run-on sentence has been identified by its incorrect structure, it is not difficult to find a way to correct it. When two independent clauses appear in one sentence, they must be combined (or separated) in one of four ways: 1. Two clauses can be converted into two separate sentences by adding a period. 2. These two clauses may be accompanied by a comma and a coordination conjunction (comma plus: i, but, or, or, neither, on, yes, yet). 3. These two clauses may be accompanied by a semicolon. 4. These two clauses may be rewrite by adding, by amending, or deleting words. Words. the easiest way to achieve this is to add a subordinating conjunction between clauses. Note that combining independent clauses by the comma itself is not a choice. When two independent clauses are linked to only a comma, this error is called comma splice. The following table shows the four correct options. When two independent clauses appear in a sentence, try to imagine a middle column in which there are only four options to join two clauses: The first independent clause Second independent clause Subject Predicate 4 CORRECTIONS Subject Predicate Nice man studied hard . (period) His wife read the book. The benevolent man studied hard, and, but, or, for, nor, yes, yet (comma plus coordinating consistency) his wife read the book. A kind man studied hard; (semicolon) his wife read the book. A kind-hearted man studied hard after... (examples of subordination of conjunctions - no comma required) his wife read the book. Note again that in the examples above, the comma itself is not one of the correct options. A kind-hearted man learned hard, his wife read the book. (Incorrect) The comma itself between two independent clauses creates incorrect comma splices. Summary (including related grammar rules) 1. The independent clause contains one subject/predicate pair and expresses a complete thought. Music makes my life worth living. The theme of The Music Predicate makes my life worth living. 2. A simple sentence consists of only one independent clause: Music makes my life worth living. 3. An eject sentence shall consist of two or more independent clauses which are not properly combined or which should be executed in separate sentences. A run-on sentence is defined by its grammatical structure, not its length. Incorrect: My favorite band is in the city they are performing now. Correct: My favorite band is in town. They are performing now. Correct: My favorite band is in town, and they're performing now. 4. Comma splice is an incorrect use of a comma to join two independent clauses. Incorrect: I love classical music, it makes me feel joyful. Correct: I love classical music because it makes me feel joyful. Correct: I love classical music; it makes me feel joyful. 5. A compound sentence contains two or more independent clauses that are correctly connected by a comma plus coordinating conjunctions or semicolon: Music means a lot to me, and some songs bring to mind great memories. The first independent clause the second independent clause Subject Predicate Comma and the coordination of the conjunction Subject Predicate Music means a lot to me, and some songs bring to mind great memories. Music a lot for me some songs bring to mind great memories. 6. Comma plus coordinating coordinator you can correctly combine independent clauses. There are seven coordinating conjunctions (sometimes memorized by the acronym fanboys): for, and, neither, but, or, yet, yes 7. A complex sentence contains one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. The dependent clause begins with subordination: I always think about the summer when they play this song. The first independent clause of the second independent clause subject predicate subordination conjunction Subject Predicate always think about the summer when they play this song. 8. Subordiat consistency combines a subsidiary clause with an independent clause. A dependent clause cannot be autonomous; requires an independent clause to express the full meaning of the sentence. The following are examples of some of the most common subordination conjunctions: after, though, as if, before, even if, in order to do that, and not, so that, so that, though, though, to when, when, where, where, where, if, and while for more information, see the following tip sheets: Independent and dependent clauses: Coordination and SubordinationSentence Type and Purpose