

RUN-ON SENTENCES



In a run-on sentence, two or more complete thoughts are written incorrectly as one sentence.

Example of run-on sentence: The waiter was busy, filling orders takes concentration.

Correct sentence: The waiter was busy. Filling orders takes concentration.

CORRECTING RUN-ON SENTENCES THAT CONTAIN COMMA SPLICES

Sometimes a run-on sentence contains incorrect punctuation. A run-on sentence occurs when a comma is incorrectly used to join or splice together two complete thoughts. This incorrect use of a comma is called a comma splice.

Here are two examples of a comma splice error.

Incorrect: Sam didn't order a tostada, he ordered an enchilada.

Incorrect: The waitress apologized to Sam, she knew the order was wrong.

There are three ways to correct a comma splice in a run-on sentence:

1) Remove the Comma and Add a Period

Correct: Sam didn't order a tostada. He ordered an enchilada.

Correct: The waitress apologized. She knew the order was wrong.

2) Remove the Comma and Add a Semicolon

Correct: Sam didn't order a tostada; he ordered an enchilada.

Correct: The waitress apologized; she knew the order was wrong.

3) Keep the comma and add a connector

In a compound sentence connect the two independent clauses with a coordinating conjunction:

for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so - FANBOYS!

Correct: Sam didn't order a tostada, but he ordered an enchilada.

Correct: The waitress apologized, for she knew the order was wrong.

In a complex sentence connect the independent and dependent clauses with a subordinating conjunction. The dependent clause may be placed before or after the main clause. There are dozens of subordinating conjunctions. Some examples:

after, although, as, because, before, if, since, though, until, when

Punctuation Note: When the dependent clause is placed first in a sentence, use a comma between the two clauses. When the dependent clause is second, do not separate the two clauses with a comma.

Examples: Because the computer wasn't working, Ms. Swisher got upset.
Ms. Swisher got upset because the computer wasn't working.

When Ms. Swisher talks too much, I stop listening.
I stop listening when Ms. Swisher talks too much.

Food for thought: "However" is not a conjunction. It is, rather, a conjunctive adverb. Other common conjunction adverbs are:

also	consequently	finally	furthermore
moreover	nevertheless	therefore	thus