
Run-ons – Fused Sentences – Comma Splices

The above are all names given to compound sentences that are not punctuated correctly.

A **run-on** or **fused sentence** is two independent clauses run (or fused) together with no punctuation.

Example: I love watching movies I am a regular customer at Blockbuster.

A **comma splice** occurs when the two independent clauses are combined with only a comma.

Example: I love watching movies, I am a regular customer at Blockbuster.

The best way to avoid such errors is to punctuate compound sentences correctly by using one of the following three rules:

1. Join the two independent clauses with one of the coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet*), **and use a comma** before the connecting word.

_____, and _____.
(I love watching movies, **and** I am a regular customer at Blockbuster.)

2. When you do not have a connecting word (or when you use a connecting word other than *and, but, for, or nor, so, or yet* between the two independent clauses), use a semicolon (;).

_____;
(I love watching movies; I am a regular customer at Blockbuster.)

_____; however, _____.
(I love watching movies; thus, I am a regular customer at Blockbuster.)

3. Separate the two independent clauses into separate sentences with a period.

_____. _____.
(I love watching movies. I am a regular customer at Blockbuster.)

Your choices when you have two independent clauses are

I am an independent clause, **and** I am a complete sentence.

I am an independent clause; I am a complete sentence.

I am an independent clause; **therefore**, I am a complete sentence.

I am an independent clause. **I** am a complete sentence.

NEVER: I am an independent clause I am a complete sentence.

Exercises

Correct these run-on sentences.

1. It was raining hard there was a strong wind.
2. Elena came to the meeting but Pablo stayed home.

Correct the comma splices.

3. John is a good swimmer, Jane is a good runner.
4. Mary opened the door, Jack went for the snacks

Answers

1. It was raining hard, and there was a strong wind.
2. Elena came to the meeting, but Pablo stayed home.

(answers will vary) :

3. John is a good swimmer, but Jane is a good runner.
4. Mary opened the door, and Jack went for the snacks.

For more information refer to the following links:

- ❖ **links offer lessons and information.**
- **links provide practice exercises.**
- ❖ <http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/punct/avcsfsro.html>
Visual lesson about comma splices and run-ons.
- <http://www.quia.com/pop/35933.html>
Interactive practice; no explanations.
- <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/runons.htm>
Excellent handout. Fun and interactive practice and PowerPoint presentations. Addresses comma splices, run-ons, and commas.
- <http://www.chompchomp.com/csfs01/csfs01.htm>
Friendly explanations and interactive practice that help identify run-ons. Interactive.