

How to fix Run-On Sentences

..... a practical handout

What is a run on sentence?

A run-on sentence occurs when independent clauses are not joined properly.

Independent clauses are sentences with a subject and a verb that can stand on its own.

Example: *She is hungry.*

There are two ways run-on sentences are created:

1. When punctuation and coordinating conjunction (i.e., but, so, and, yet, etc.) are missing. These sentences can be commonly referred to as **fused sentences**.

Example: *She is hungry she ate a whole box of pizza.*
independent clause independent clause

2. When run-on sentences are created through the usage of only commas. These sentences can be commonly referred to as **comma splices**.

Example: *She is hungry, she ate a whole box of pizza.*

How to fix fused sentences

For fused sentences, you can fix them by separating the independent clauses.

Example: *The sun is out the sky is blue.* → *The sun is out. The sky is blue.*

OR

You can fix it by adding proper punctuation and/or a coordinating conjunction.

Example: *I have a big test tomorrow I can't go out.*

Corrections:

→ *I have a big test tomorrow, so I can't go out.*

→ *I have a big test tomorrow; I can't go out.*

Another Example: *The children were loud they climbed on the sofa the adults weren't happy with them.*

Corrections:

→ *The children were loud, and they climbed on the sofa. The adults weren't happy with them.*

→ *The children were loud, they climbed on the sofa, and the adults weren't happy with them.*

→ *The children were loud; they climbed on the sofa; the adults weren't happy with them.*

→ *The children were loud. They climbed on the sofa. The adults weren't happy with them.*

How to fix comma splices

For comma splices, there are actually a few different ways it may look.

The most common occurrence is when two independent sentences are joined with only a comma.

Example: *They ran together, they played tennis together.*

1. To fix this, the sentence could be split into two sentences.

They ran together. They played tennis together.

2. Another way to fix this sentence is to add a coordinating conjunction (e.g. but, and, or, yet, so, for) after the comma.

They ran together, and they played tennis together.

3. You can also use a semicolon to separate the sentences, although it is not

They ran together; they played tennis together.

4. The last way to fix a comma splice is to rewrite the sentence completely.

They ran and played tennis together.

References

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