

### Grammar Homework 1: Run-on sentences, Comma splices, Fragments

When 2 or more simple sentences are joined together in the wrong way, the result is either a run-on sentence (subject verb subject verb) or a comma splice (subject verb, subject verb). Both are **mistakes**. First, practice identifying run-ons and comma splices.

**Exercise 1.** Proofread the 10 sentences below. Write **ro** under the run-on sentences, and write **cs** under the comma splices.

**“Do you think memorizing is a good way to learn?”**

1. It's useful you might forget some things.
2. I have a good memory, it's a good method for me.
3. It's good for vocabulary, there are so many words.
4. It's not fun it's important.
5. I wasn't a good student, I don't remember ever memorizing anything.
6. In school I had to memorize a lot of poetry, I still remember it I guess it's useful.
7. I memorize speeches, I will forget them.
8. Some things you need to memorize some things you can only learn by doing.
9. In fact, important facts can be memorized ideas should be discussed.
10. I memorize things that don't have many rules, like gerunds.

The first, easy way to fix a run-on sentence or comma splice is to start a new sentence. However, you can get too many short, choppy sentences that way. Let's learn the correct ways to join sentences.

#### Correcting Run-on Sentences

There are 3 ways to connect run-on sentences and comma splices:

**1. Use a connecting word – one of the FANBOYS - and a comma before it.**

WRONG: We'll work together, we'll help each other. (CS)

WRONG: We'll work together we'll help each other. (RO)

RIGHT: We'll work together, and we'll help each other. (and = addition)  
We'll work together, but we may not succeed. (but = contrast)  
We'll work together, yet we may not succeed. (yet = contrast)  
We'll work together, so we can succeed. (so = result)  
We can work together, or we can fail. (or = choice)  
We'll work together, for we want to succeed. (for = reason/ because)

**2. Put a semicolon between the two sentences. A semicolon shows that the two sentences are closely related.**

WRONG: The athletes trained for months they were in excellent condition.

RIGHT: The athletes trained for months; they were in excellent condition.

**3. Make one sentence a dependent clause with words like *because, if, when, before, after*.**

WRONG: He wanted his children to feel special each one got time alone with him.

RIGHT: **Because** he wanted his children to feel special, each one got time alone with him.

RIGHT: Each of his children got time alone with him **because** he wanted them to feel special.

Now, correct the sentences in Ex. 1 using these methods.

**Exercise 2. Correct the following run-ons using the word or punctuation in parentheses.**

**“Did You Know?”**

1. The best time to buy shoes is at the end of the day your feet are bigger then. (since)
2. Shaking a young child is dangerous it can cause brain damage. (;)
3. Wear pants when you fly on a plane they will protect your legs if there is an accident. (;)
4. Seahorses are different from other animals the males have babies. (because)
5. Everyone dreams every night some people don't remember their dreams. (, yet)
6. The cougar, mountain lion, and puma are the same animal they have different names in different places. (, but)

**Exercise 3. Correct the following comma splices by using a comma and connector (FANBOYS) or a semicolon. Careful: Some sentences are OK!**

**The Internet**

1. The Internet began in 1969, it was an experiment by the U.S. government.
2. Originally, the Internet was planned so that academic and military people could communicate, they needed a better system than telephones.
3. At the time, because the government was afraid of nuclear attack, it wanted a system that would work during an attack.
4. The government planned it without a main office that someone could bomb.
5. Since no one was in charge, it grew in many directions without rules or limits, it left government control.
6. Universities began to use it for daily communication, people got used to it.
7. As a result, millions of users are now connected around the world.
8. Everyday life now depends on this system, I don't know if it will still survive a nuclear attack.
9. I use it daily, do you?

## Fragments

A fragment is an incomplete sentence. Some fragments, such as a sentence with no verb, are ESL errors. Other fragments, such as incomplete sentences that begin with the words *because* or *If*, can be used in informal writing, but are not OK in formal writing. Native speakers of English can also have problems with these.

## Subjects

- Every sentence and clause needs a subject (unless it is a command).
- Use *there* to introduce a noun that hasn't been mentioned yet.

## *Especially, Such As, For Example*

Look at these sentences. What is the difference between the correct and incorrect sentences?

- No: She needs to study more. Especially grammar and vocabulary.  
Yes: She needs to study more, especially grammar and vocabulary.  
No: To improve your listening, I recommend practice. Such as listening to tapes.  
Yes: To improve your listening, I recommend activities such as listening to tapes.  
No: There are several causes of heart disease. For example, smoking and cholesterol.  
Yes: There are several causes of heart disease; for example, smoking and cholesterol cause high blood pressure.

• *Especially* and *such as* cannot begin sentences. They mean: a list of examples is coming, and they follow an independent clause. *For example* is a transition word. It can begin a sentence, but it must be followed by a subject and a verb (an independent clause).

### Exercise 4. Correct the mistakes.

*What was the most helpful advice your parents or grandparents gave you?*

1. They taught me to be kind to others. Especially the poor, the sick and the elderly.
2. It is important to treat everyone well. For example, with respect and honesty.
3. My grandparents never allowed me to do dishonest things. Such as lie to them.
4. They gave me a lot of advice. For example, to be patient with others, try to understand their situation, and not judge them.
5. They always encouraged me to work hard. Especially when I didn't think I could be successful.

### Ex. 5. Being Single vs. Being Married. Correct the Fragment mistakes.

*What are some advantages to being single?*

1. You can do what you want. When you want.
2. If you don't feel like cooking, you don't have to.
3. Going out and meeting new people. It's easy.
4. You can have a messy house. Because nobody will criticize it.
5. People who are single more freedom.
6. When you are single. You can spend your money any way you want.

*What are some advantages to being married?*

6. There always someone to do things with.
7. I think that having a partner and not feeling lonely.

8. If you have someone to help you, life is easier.

9. I can think of two advantages. For example, having someone to care about and having someone to take care of you.

10. The other person can cook. When you are tired.

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**Also required: Ex. 5.25 and 5.26. Please attach notebook paper with these exercises.**

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**Learn for Quiz:**

For the quiz, you should be able to tell me:

- What are the parts of a sentence? (Ex. 5.3)
- What are the sentence types? (pages 103 – 105)
- What verbs are:
  - always transitive? (~17)
  - take both direct and indirect objects? (~10)
  - are always intransitive? (2 types)
- What kinds of direct objects are there? (Ex. 5.10)
- What is a sentence fragment? (pages 109 – 110)
- What's the difference between a comma splice and a run-on? (page 111)