

Run-On Sentences

In order to understand run-ons, you first need to understand a few grammar terms:

- Clause—a group of words including a subject and a predicate
- Predicate—“the part of a sentence or clause that expresses what is said of the subject and that usually consists of a verb with or without objects, complements, or adverbial modifiers.”¹
- Independent clause—a clause that can stand independent of any other words as a complete sentence
- Sentence—An independent clause that ends with terminating punctuation (period, exclamation point, question mark)

What is a Run-on Sentence?

A **run-on sentence** happens when two independent clauses are combined without proper punctuation between the two. A run-on sentence is called a **fused sentence** when no punctuation is present between the clauses.

Examples

It is really hot during the summer in Texas the teachers should make sure the kids have plenty of water to drink.

The essay really resonated with me I went through the same experiences the author describes.

A run-on sentence is called a **comma splice** when there is a comma (but no conjunction) between the clauses. People often use commas between independent clauses because they know that the independent clauses are related and feel that some sort of punctuation needs to be included. The trick is realizing that it is not enough to just include a comma between independent clauses.

Examples

He ate the macaroni and cheese, now we don't have a side dish for the picnic.

There are several ways that we can address and remedy run-on sentences!

The Full-Stop Method

The easiest way to correct a run-on sentence is to put an end mark, such as a period, question mark, or exclamation mark, between the two complete thoughts.

Examples

It is really hot during the summer in Texas. The teachers should make sure the kids have plenty of water to drink.
The essay really resonated with me. I went through the same experiences the author describes.

The Semi-Colon Method

If the two complete thoughts are related, you can place a semicolon between the two sentences.

Examples

It is really hot during the summer in Texas; the teachers should make sure the kids have plenty of water to drink.
The essay really resonated with me; I went through the same experiences the author describes.

The Dependent Clause Method

You can also make either the second or first sentence into a dependent clause (a group of words that has a subject and verb but cannot stand on its own as a sentence, generally because of an additional subordinating conjunction). If you are placing the dependent clause before the independent clause, you should connect it with a comma. If, however, you are adding the dependent clause at the end of the independent clause, no comma is necessary.

Examples

Since it is really hot during the summer in Texas, the teachers should make sure the kids have plenty of water to drink.

The essay really resonated with me because I went through the same experiences the author describes.

The Conjunction Method

Finally, you can combine two sentences with a coordinating conjunction and a comma, which you can remember by the acronym FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so).

Examples

It is really hot during the summer in Texas, so the teachers should make sure the kids have plenty of water to drink.

The essay really resonated with me, for I went through the same experiences the author describes.

