

Fixing Comma Splices, Run-ons and Fragments



Exercise 1: See if you can recognize comma splices and run-ons versus correct sentences. Here are some correct sentences and some sentences with comma splices or run-ons. If you think you've spotted one of these errors, rewrite the sentence, correcting the error by adding a conjunction or using a semicolon.

1. My brother never cleans his room, it smells bad.
2. San Francisco is a great place to visit I've been there twice.
3. When Dan goes running, he runs for a long time, and it takes a while before he gets tired.
4. If I won a million dollars, I would give half of it to charity. I would use the other half for college tuition and spending money.
5. After my ballet recitals, my mom takes me out for ice-cream, she has always done this.
6. Mary broke her arm, she had to get a cast, which I signed twice.
7. Carl and Ashley collect stamps, I collect stickers because I think it's more exciting.
8. Different people enjoy different music I enjoy jazz.
9. I am hungry, so I hope that supper is ready soon.

10. Pizza is Maggie's favorite food, she won't eat anything else.

11. Some do homework, some don't.

12. Exercise is good for the heart. Nutrition is also important.

Exercise 2: Can you find the sentences from the paragraph below that have either a run-on or a comma splice? Using proofreading symbols, correct the run-ons and comma splice sentences below.

Separate: food she

Insert: good the heart

Capitalize: i am hungry

One of the hobbies I enjoy is growing fruit trees. While we live in an area that gets some freezing temperatures, our climate still allows a variety of citrus trees to prosper. One such tree is the Ponderosa lemon, it is an interesting tree and quite a conversation piece. The Ponderosa lemon grows fruit the size of a softball, my tree has some now that are as big as my fist. It is said that a cook only needs one lemon from the Ponderosa tree to make a lemon pie I plan to find out soon! A second variety is at the other extreme it is called a kumquat. The kumquat has fruit that grow to about the size of ping-pong balls. The kumquat is an ideal shrub for this area, it is the most cold-hardy citrus variety. It grows into a compact bush, a size that makes an ideal container plant. The kumquat is an unusual citrus fruit for another reason, the rind is eaten along with the pulp. The rind is very thin also it has a sweet rather than a bitter taste. A final type of citrus that grows well in this region is the satsuma, a citrus that also grows into a relatively small shrub. The satsuma, which is really a type of tangerine, is only a little less hardy than the kumquat the fruit of the satsuma are about the size of a tennis ball, they typically ripen in early November. I like the satsuma oranges, because the fruit is very sweet.

Exercise 3: Mark in the blank beside each sentence an R for a run-on sentence, a CS for a comma splice, an F for a fragment, and a C for a correct sentence. Correct any sentences that need help!

- _____ 1. Carlos took the job, he was happy to get it.
- _____ 2. Tom loves Chinese food, he eats it three times a week.
- _____ 3. Laura congratulated Jake and wished him success.
- _____ 4. Paul refuses to eat at the school cafeteria last year he found a roach in his sandwich.
- _____ 5. After the terrifying thunderstorm ended.
- _____ 6. My paper is due in three days, so I cannot go to the movie.
- _____ 7. Since the money is in the budget, you might as well spend it.
- _____ 8. The more I know about you, the better I like you.
- _____ 9. Go to college it is worth the effort.
- _____ 10. Tell me a good joke and I will tell you a better one.
- _____ 11. The team had difficulty winning several players didn't care about the team as a whole.
- _____ 12. Some coaches become so popular that they are more powerful than college presidents.
- _____ 13. The American public loves football, television ratings indicate this preference.
- _____ 14. Once the laundry is folded and placed in a pile.

Exercise 4: Correct any comma splices, fragments, or run-on sentences. Some sentences are correct; others are basically correct but could be punctuated more effectively.

1. The books are on the table near the window I don't know where the papers are.
2. The cat drank her milk noisily, the dog just gulped down his raw meat.
3. When I go to Canada this summer I want to hike in the mountains.
4. The table will have to go near the piano we have to rearrange the whole room.
5. She was the best student in her class, naturally, she got the highest grade.
7. He's going to medical school; his lifelong ambition to be a doctor.
8. The piano is terribly out of tune I can't stand to listen to it any longer.
9. He is always late for parties, no one seems to mind.
10. Because the washing machine blows bubbles all over the room I would prefer that you don't use it.
11. I find history an interesting subject at school, it gives a good idea of what mankind has been doing for the past 3,000 years.
12. You must take the dog out for a walk every night or we will have to get rid of him.