

Lab #3: Punctuating Independent Clauses, Editing Run-on Sentences, and Editing Comma Splices

Review: What was covered in Lab #2?

* In order for a Sentence to be complete, it must have a Subject, it must have a Verb, and it must be a complete statement.

* If a sentence does not meet all three of the above requirements, then it is a Sentence Fragment.

* **Independent Clause:** a statement that can be a complete sentence by itself.

* **Dependent Statement:** a statement that cannot be a complete sentence by itself.

Here is your first set of punctuation rules: How to Combine Independent Clauses.

Many sentences have more than one part or statement. You can, for example, write a sentence that has two or more Independent Clauses.

❖ **Option 1:** Place a Semicolon (;) between the Independent Clauses.

Independent clause	Independent Clause
Rebecca went to the store	She bought a loaf of bread
Rebecca went to the store; she bought a loaf of bread.	

❖ **Option 2:** Place a Comma (,) and a Coordinating Conjunction (a type of “connecting word”) between the Independent Clauses.

Here are the Coordinating Conjunctions: For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So (FANBOYS).

Independent Clause	Independent Clause
Rebecca went to the store	She bought a loaf of bread
Rebecca went to the store, and she bought a loaf of bread.	

* **Warning:** If you decide to place a comma between Independent Clauses, one of the Coordinating Conjunctions **must** be used. If you do not use one of the Coordinating Conjunctions immediately after the comma, then you will have an error called a **Comma Splice**.

<u>Comma Splice</u> (Incorrect!)	Rebecca went to the store, she bought a loaf of bread.
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*** Exercise One (This part will be graded!) ***

Follow the directions for each problem. Feel free to look back at the lessons on the previous page about combining Independent Clauses.

1.) On the lines provided, write these Independent Clauses as one sentence, and use “Option 1” on page 1 to punctuate them.

Timothy drives to work everyday he never follows the speed limit

2.) On the lines provided, write these Independent Clauses as one sentence, and use “Option 2” on page 1 to punctuate them.

the professor assigns a new paper every week he enjoys torturing his students

3.) On the lines provided, write these three Independent Clauses as one sentence, and use both options on page 1 to punctuate them.

the cat slept on the sofa all afternoon at seven o'clock she woke up
it was time for her dinner

4.) Now, make up your own sentence that has two (2) Independent Clauses, and use “Option 1” on page 1 to punctuate them.

5.) Make up your own sentence that has two (2) Independent Clauses, and use “Option 2” on page 1 to punctuate them.

Run-on Sentences and Comma Splices: Two Major Errors People Make with Independent Clauses

- ❖ A **Run-on Sentence** occurs when Independent Clauses are combined without any punctuation at all.

<u>Run-on Sentence</u> (Incorrect)	Independent Clause	Independent Clause
	Mary wrote a letter	She mailed it yesterday
	Mary wrote a letter she mailed it yesterday.	

Correct	Independent Clause	Independent Clause
	Mary wrote a letter	She mailed it yesterday
	Mary wrote a letter; she mailed it yesterday.	

- ❖ A **Comma Splice** occurs when only a comma (,) is used between Independent Clauses. Remember, if you want to use a comma between Independent Clauses, a **Coordinating Conjunction (FANBOYS)** must be used immediately after it!

<u>Comma Splice</u> (Incorrect)	Independent Clause	Independent Clause
	Mary wrote a letter	She mailed it yesterday
	Mary wrote a letter, she mailed it yesterday.	

Correct	Independent Clause	Independent Clause
	Mary wrote a letter	She mailed it yesterday
	Mary wrote a letter, and she mailed it yesterday.	

* **Warning:** the list of Coordinating Conjunctions (FANBOYS) is very specific and never changes. I know there are many other words that we think of as “connecting” words, but **only Coordinating Conjunctions are allowed to be used after a comma when combining Independent Clauses.**

Here are some trickier examples of Comma Splices:

Comma Splice (Incorrect!)	<u>Theresa was always late for work</u> , therefore, <u>the manager fired her</u> . (A comma and the word “therefore” are used between two Independent Clauses—not correct!)
	<u>The professor is very popular</u> , in fact, <u>his classes always fill up</u> . (A comma and the words “in fact” are used between two Independent Clauses—not correct!)
	<u>Most children hate doctor appointments</u> , however, <u>Sally loved them</u> . (A comma and the word “however” are used between two Independent Clauses—not correct!)

Correct	Theresa was always late for work; therefore, the manager fired her.
	The professor is very popular, so his classes always fill up.
	Most children hate doctor appointments; however, Sally loved them.

* **Exercise Two (This part will be graded!)** *

Read each sentence carefully. **If it is a Run-on Sentence or a Comma Splice, write in your correction (you do not have to rewrite the entire sentence). If the sentence is correct, write “Correct” beneath it.** Feel free to look back at the previous lessons in this lab, and please make your corrections clear!

5. He worked full time at a hotel and attended college at night, thus he had no time for a social life.

6. Leonard was eager to be my friend, but he had no social skills.

7. I lost the address of the warehouse, nevertheless, I managed to find the place.

8. Children need firm guidelines at home; otherwise, they feel lost and uncertain everywhere.

9. A possible solution to your problem is to borrow the money from Dad, another solution is to go into partnership with me.

10. You can't drink away your misery, you can not drink your way to a better life.