

Grammar Worksheets: Fused Sentences (Also called Run-on Sentences)

<http://www.grammar-worksheets.com>

Some writers, in fast and furious drafting, may write sentences that contain two complete ideas, punctuated only with a comma or containing no punctuation at all. Both are wrong in standard American English.

Fused Sentence: A fused sentence occurs when two independent clauses are joined (fused) without any punctuation.

Some people use the term “run-on sentence” to refer both to fused sentences and comma splices. Some students think that a run-on sentence is a particularly long sentence, in other words, one that “runs on” for a while. It’s not.

A **comma splice** (<http://www.grammar-worksheets.com/Lesson.Comma.Splices.pdf>), on the other hand, occurs when two independent clauses are joined only with a comma. It is better to avoid the term **run-on sentence** altogether and use only the terms **comma splice** and **fused sentence**. They are more specific and more descriptive.

Example of a fused sentence: My father designs and installs wind turbines he travels all over the Saudi Arabia as an energy consultant.

Notice that we have two ideas in two independent clauses:

- My father installs and designs wind turbines
- He travels all over Saudi Arabia as an energy consultant.

Sometimes, a writer has three or four ideas, all competing for attention.

Example of a fused sentence (along with a comma splice): Fashion shows in the clothes we wear, it is constantly changing and repeating itself although fashion in the form of haute couture is everywhere, it isn’t for everyone.

This sentence has four clauses:

- Fashion shows in the clothes we wear (independent – can stand alone as a sentence)
- it is constantly changing and repeating itself (independent – can stand alone as a sentence)
- although fashion in the form of haute couture is everywhere (dependent – cannot stand alone)
- it isn’t for everyone (independent)

Fixing a Fused Sentence

To fix a fused sentence, determine where one MAIN IDEA ends and another one begins. In the sentence above, for example, there seems to be a logical division between the words itself and although. Although there are other ways to correct a fused sentence, the two most obvious are

1. Placing a period between the two main ideas.

Revision: Fashion shows in the clothes we wear, and it is constantly changing and repeating itself. Although fashion in the form of haute couture is everywhere, it isn’t for everyone.

2. Placing a semicolon between the two main ideas.

Revision: Fashion shows in the clothes we wear, and it is constantly changing and repeating itself; although fashion in the form of haute couture is everywhere, it isn’t for everyone.

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Exercises: Please rewrite the following to eliminate any fused sentences.

1. Janine's uncle never graduated from high school he started his own landscaping company at sixteen.

2. I have had a Mac computer for a year already I have no regrets about buying it.

3. People make their way across the desert they arrive in trucks with little ventilation, and they are often beaten by the men who smuggle them.

4. These political victories add up It's not just money, but dignity at home and on the job.

5. Immigrants can be sentenced to prison most are sent back to their native homelands.

6. Jammal's supervisor installed a new fingerprint reader when employees arrive they must enter an employee number and place their index finger on a small sensor.

7. The teacher distributed several worksheets some of them were taken directly from the textbook.

8. Amar Chang has a goal in fourteen consecutive matches he is three shy of the record.

9. The dog jumped and barked near the lake he noticed an alligator swimming toward shore.

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1. Trees lay on the side of the road they looked as if they had been pulled out of the ground by huge machines.

2. Every wall was smashed to rubble the only thing left of those houses was the land and the rocks from the rubble.

3. My heart broke the owners had no insurance.

4. The town looked deserted the streets were so dark and empty that the only thing we could hear was the wind blowing.

5. We worked from dusk to dawn never had so many contracts been written in such a short time.

6. Money continued to flow in we started to live the life of the rich on weekends we ate at expensive restaurants.

7. The river extended beyond the mountains we saw the clouds merge with the water in the horizon.

8. Men and women drink coffee because it adds to their sense of well-being it not only smells good and tastes good to all mankind, heathen or civilized all respond to its wonderful stimulating properties.

9. Caffeine supplies the principal stimulant it increases the capacity for muscular and mental work without harmful reaction.

10. Like all good things in life, the drinking of coffee may be abused those having an idiosyncratic susceptibility to alkaloids should be temperate in the use of tea, coffee, or cocoa.

11. In every high-tensioned country there is likely to be a small number of people who, because of certain individual characteristics, cannot drink coffee at all these belong to the abnormal minority of the human family.

12. Some people cannot eat strawberries that would not be a valid reason for a general condemnation of strawberries.

13. Some writers claim for Persia the discovery of the coffee drink there is no evidence to support the claim.

14. The Persians appear to have used considerable intelligence in handling the political phase of the coffee-house question it never became necessary to order them suppressed in Persia.

Run-on Sentences:

A Skill Sheet

A **run-on sentence** occurs when two separate sentences are joined without any form of punctuation, or any sort of word connecting them. It is without question the simplest of all sentence errors in that its cause is not the result of any particular misunderstanding or misconception.

Below are several examples of run-on sentences.

Examples of Run-on Sentences:

1. The computer is a useful tool it can be used for writing papers.
2. My mother says I can go first I have to empty the garbage, though.
3. Once a time there was a man his name was Josh.
4. Bees don't eat flowers they gather nectar from them then they go back to the hive.
5. I heard the tires squeal then the car came around the corner I got out of the way fast.

Explanation of the Problem:

Run-on sentences usually occur because students either write very quickly, or aren't paying particular attention to their work. Such a reason should come as good news to most students because it means that fixing the problem is often as simple as re-reading one's work and then putting in an appropriate punctuation mark.

How to Fix It:

Fixing a run-on sentence is a matter of **1)** detecting the sentence in the first place, and then **2)** adding in a punctuation mark.

To detect the presence of a run-on sentence, a student should re-read his or her work. Reading aloud tends to be more effective than reading to oneself because **voice intonation reveals where individual sentences start and stop**. A sentence which should end in a period is typically accompanied by a ***drop*** in the voice. A sentence which should end with a question mark will be characterized by a ***rise*** in one's voice. Likewise, a sentence that should end with an exclamation point will usually end with the voice taking on a more forceful tone, or a ***punch***.

Reading the following sentences aloud will demonstrate the **three types of sounds** that might accompany the end of a sentence.

The <i>drop</i> created by a period :	<i>I have to go.</i>
The <i>rise</i> created by a question mark :	<i>I have to go?</i>
The <i>punch</i> created by an exclamation point :	<i>I have to go!</i>

When reading a piece of writing aloud, a **run-on sentence can easily be identified by listening to the tone of one's own voice**. Consider, for example, these next three run-on sentences:

I have to go my dad says it's time to eat.
 I have to go I'm not ready.
 I have to go if I don't I'll be late.

The **run-ons** are thus easily detected, and can be corrected in the following manner:

I have to go. My dad says it's time to eat.
 I have to go? I'm not ready.
 I have to go! If I don't I'll be late.

Fixing a run-on sentence, then, can be as simple as **reading one's work out loud and listening for places in which the voice signals a new sentence**. At that point a student must decide which punctuation mark (a period, an exclamation point, or a question mark) will be most appropriate for the sentence.

Run-on Sentences: Exercises

Part One

Directions: Eliminate the following run-on sentences by inserting an appropriate punctuation mark (a period, question mark, or exclamation point).

1. The man took out the garbage he was cleaning the house.

2. The woman ate a pear she smiled because it was delicious.

3. After the parade we went for a walk we needed to stretch our legs.

4. What should I do I think I am lost.

5. I've had enough I can't take it anymore!

6. Watch my favorite movie you bet I'd like to see it again.

7. There were gardens everywhere there were some in the back there were even some around the side of the house.

8. Can you go I'd really like to see you there if you can't I'll understand, of course.

9. Notecards are good for recipes scrap pads are good for keeping lists.

10. We won the lottery that's wonderful!

* * *

Part Two

Directions: In the following paragraphs eliminate all the run-on sentences.

11. They walked through the forest, twigs snapping beneath their feet an owl hooted a frog croaked the sounds of the woods were all around them.

12. While sledding down the hill, Billy lost his hat his friends helped him look for it, but they couldn't find it they looked at the top of the hill, and they looked at the bottom of the hill it was nowhere to be found.

13. In the cabinet Janet found an old book its cover was dusty, but she could see that it was made of leather she blew off the dust, and when the air cleared she could barely make out the title it was a diary she began to wonder how it got there her family had just moved into the old house, and they had almost finished cleaning it out how the cabinet down in the cellar had been overlooked was a mystery to her.

14. It was a cozy house with thick wooden beams supporting the ceiling and stout wooden logs for walls the fireplace was made of stones it had a mantle with carvings of deer and bear on it, and pegs for hanging wet mittens and scarves could the pegs be used for stockings at Christmas of course they could!

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.