

Run-ons and Comma Splices

SUU Writing Center

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Run-Ons

<p>Definition: A run-on sentence occurs when two independent clauses (sentences with subjects and verbs) are joined either without any punctuation or a conjunction between them (also known as fused sentences) or with a conjunction with missing punctuation.</p>	<p>Examples: Those are nice boots I like your belt too. [Two independent clauses without any punctuation or conjunction] Those are nice boots moreover I like your belt too. [Two independent clauses with a conjunction but no proper punctuation.]</p>	<p>Corrected Examples: Those are nice boots. I like your belt, too. Those are nice boots; moreover I like your belt too.</p>
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Comma Splices

<p>Definition: A comma splice occurs when two independent clauses are joined by only a comma or by a comma and a conjunctive adverb.</p>	<p>Examples: It was October, the trees were losing their leaves. It was October, consequently the trees were losing their leaves.</p>	<p>Corrected Examples: It was October, so/and the trees were losing their leaves. It was October; consequently the trees were losing their leaves.</p>
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Run-ons and comma splices are considered mistakes in writing. The following chart illustrates how to correct them. These examples use this sentence: **I ate my breakfast I ran out the door.**¹

Suggestions:	Examples:
Separate the clause into two sentences.	I ate my breakfast. I ran out the door.
Link the clauses with a semicolon OR a comma and a coordinating conjunction. ²	I ate my breakfast; I ran out the door OR I ate my breakfast, and I ran out the door.
Rewrite the two independent clauses as one independent clause.	I ate my breakfast and ran out the door.
Rewrite one of the independent clauses as a dependent clause.	After I ate my breakfast, I ran out the door.
Use a semicolon before a conjunctive adverb (<i>also, anyway, besides, furthermore, incidentally, moreover, otherwise, however, and thus</i>) or a transitional expression (<i>after all, by the way, for example, in other words, and on the other hand</i>) placed between independent clauses.	I ate my breakfast; also, I ran out the door.

¹ The corrections for this group of words could also apply to fix a comma splice (I ate my breakfast, I ran out the door) or a run-on with a conjunction but no proper punctuation (I ate my breakfast then I ran out the door.)

² Use the acronym FANBOYS to remember coordinating conjunctions: **F**or, **A**nd, **N**or, **B**ut, **O**r, **Y**et, **S**o.