

**APSU Writing Center**

Run-on Sentences

**What is a Run-On Sentence?**

- A **run-on sentence** occurs when two or more independent clauses (complete thoughts) are joined with no punctuation or with incorrect punctuation. This makes the sentence hard to follow and confuses the reader about where one idea ends and another begins.
  - **Incorrect Example:** Researchers have studied climate change for decades its impact continues to grow.
  - **Corrected Example:** Researchers have studied climate change for decades. Its impact continues to grow.

**Types of Run-On Sentences**

- A **fused sentence** occurs when two independent clauses are joined with no punctuation at all.
  - **Incorrect Example:** The study yielded significant results they were not widely published.
  - **Corrected Example:** The study yielded significant results. They were not widely published.
- A **comma splice** happens when two independent clauses are joined by a comma, but no conjunction (like and, but, or) is added.
  - Two independent clauses are joined by only a comma, without a conjunction.
  - **Incorrect Example:** Many students rely on online sources, they should still verify credibility.
  - **Corrected Example:** Many students rely on online sources, but they should still verify credibility.
- A **long run-on sentence** occurs when two or more independent clauses are connected together without punctuation or conjunctions, creating an overly long sentence that is difficult to follow.
  - **Incorrect Example:** The professor gave a detailed lecture about climate change which included statistics on rising temperatures, sea level rise, and shifting weather patterns, students took notes diligently, some were so focused on the lecture that they didn't even notice the time passing, they were all surprised when the class was over and they had learned so much that they couldn't wait to discuss the topic more in their upcoming exams.
  - **Corrected Example:** The professor gave a detailed lecture about climate change, which included statistics on rising temperatures, sea level rise, and shifting weather patterns. Students took notes diligently. Some were so focused on the lecture that they didn't even notice the time passing. They were all surprised when the class was over. They had learned so much that they couldn't wait to discuss the topic more in their upcoming exams.

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How to Break Long Sentences into Two

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- Run-on sentences can be avoided by properly punctuating each independent clause. Here are some strategies to help you revise long or fused sentences:
- **Use a Period**
  - Separates two independent clauses into distinct sentences.
  - **Incorrect Example:** The data suggests a correlation further research is needed to confirm causation.
  - **Corrected Example:** The data suggests a correlation. Further research is needed to confirm causation.
- **Use a Comma and a Coordinating Conjunction**
  - (FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so)
  - **Incorrect Example:** The study was conducted over five years, the sample size remained small.
  - **Corrected Example:** The study was conducted over five years, yet the sample size remained small.
- **Use a Semicolon**
  - Connects two closely related independent clauses.
  - **Incorrect Example:** The literature review was thorough, some sources were outdated.
  - **Corrected Example:** The literature review was thorough; however, some sources were outdated.
- **Use a Semicolon + a Transitional Word**
  - Shows the relationship between the clauses.
  - **Incorrect Example:** The findings support the hypothesis, therefore further experiments should be conducted.
  - **Corrected Example:** The findings support the hypothesis; therefore, further experiments should be conducted.
- **Use Transitional Words**
  - Examples: however, therefore, moreover, nevertheless, consequently
  - **Incorrect Example:** The experiment was successful, it faced challenges in its execution.
  - **Corrected Example:** The experiment was successful; however, it faced challenges in its execution.
- **Use a Subordinating Conjunction**
  - Makes one clause dependent on the other.
  - **Incorrect Example:** The research sample was limited, the results may not be generalizable.
  - **Corrected Example:** Because the research sample was limited, the results may not be generalizable.



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### **References**

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