

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 without proper 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

1. Fused Sentence

- 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.

2. Comma Splice

- Two independent clauses are joined only by a comma, without a coordinating conjunction (like and, but, or).
- **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.

3. Long Run-On Sentence

- When a sentence has too many independent clauses without proper punctuation or conjunctions.
- **Incorrect Example:** The professor gave a lecture about climate change it included rising temperatures and sea level rise students took notes.
- **Corrected Example:** The professor gave a lecture about climate change. It included rising temperatures and sea level rise. Students took notes.

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How to Fix Run-On Sentences

Run-on sentences can be avoided by punctuating each independent clause correctly. Here are some strategies:

1. Use a Period

- Separates two independent clauses into separate 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.

2. Use a Comma + 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.

3. 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.

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How to Break Long Sentences into Two

4. Use a Semicolon + 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.

Common Transitional Words

- however, therefore, moreover, nevertheless, consequently

5. 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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