

Run-ons

Identifying and Correcting Run-ons

What is a run-on?

A run-on is two independent clauses that are joined together without the use of a joining word or punctuation. Keep in mind that an independent clause is a complete sentence.

independent clause

independent clause

Run-on: The mayoral election was a close race my candidate didn't win.

independent clause

independent clause

Run-on: This semester is almost over I don't know what I will take next term.

There is no punctuation between these two independent clauses. Therefore, nothing is joining the two clauses together.

Quick Tip!

Another name for a run-on is a fused sentence.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Identifying Run-ons

Identify each sentence as a run-on (RO) or correct (C) sentence.

Example: RO The team played effectively until the last quarter then they lost.

1. ____ The boy went to the mall to buy a new t-shirt.
2. ____ My daughter loves her teacher at the daycare school she is usually very shy with new people.
3. ____ I haven't read any good books lately although I plan to take one on vacation.
4. ____ Saving for college is an important priority for many families.
5. ____ Maya would rather spend her Sunday afternoons relaxing sometimes she has to catch up on work.
6. ____ I'd rather use my laptop than the desktop computer I like to work on the couch.
7. ____ Although the weather is warmer, you still need to wear a jacket.
8. ____ My husband mows the lawn I would rather plant the flowers.
9. ____ Sampson has finished his degree and plans to move to Miami, Florida.
10. ____ I don't like most of the clothes on sale at the mall.

Correcting Run-ons

Run-ons are corrected using the following methods. There are several options.

1. Use a period

The most basic option for correcting a run-on is to simply use a period and separate the two clauses.

Run-on: During the storm, a tree limb fell onto my car it did a lot of damage to my hood.

Correct: During the storm, a tree limb fell onto my car. It did a lot of damage to my hood.

2. Use a comma and a coordinating conjunction

Use a comma with a coordinating conjunction to correctly join the two independent clauses together.

Coordinating Conjunctions

for	and	nor	but
or	yet	so	

Run-on: I need to relax after a long day a glass of wine is a good way to relax.

Correct: I need to relax after a long day, **and** watching a movie is a good way to relax.

Quick Tip!

Although each of the coordinating conjunctions can be used to correct a run-on, they don't all have the same meaning. Choose a coordinating conjunction that fits the relationship between the two independent clauses.

3. Use a semicolon

A semicolon is a punctuation mark that connects two independent clauses. Therefore, a semicolon can be used to correct run-ons.

Run-on: I submitted my final paper yesterday I am anxious to know my grade.

Correct: I submitted my final paper yesterday; I am anxious to know my grade.

Also, another variation of using the semicolon to correct a run-on includes the use of a conjunctive adverb. Place the semicolon after the first independent clause, followed by a conjunctive adverb such as *therefore* or *however*.

I submitted my final paper yesterday; **therefore**, I am anxious to know my grade.

I needed some items from the market; **however**, I was too impatient to wait in line.

4. Use subordination

Change one of the independent clauses into a dependent clause by adding a dependent word (subordinating conjunction). Because you no longer have two independent clauses, there is no sentence error; you've simply created a complex sentence.

Commonly Used Dependent Words

after	if	until	while
although	once	when	as soon as
as	since	whenever	
as if	so that	where	
because	that	whereas	
before	though	whether	
even though	unless	which	

Run-on: The weather is not warm today I brought a jacket.

Correct: **Because** the weather is not warm today, I brought a jacket.

Quick Tip!

Although all methods of correcting run-ons are correct, avoid using the same method every time. Instead, try to use a variety of methods to create more complex sentences and higher-level writing.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Date: Correcting Run-ons

Correct each of the run-ons below using the four methods discussed in this chapter.

Example: The show started on time we were late.

- (a) The show started on time. We were late.
- (b) The show started on time, but we were late.
- (c) The show started on time; we were late.
- (d) Although the show started on time, we were late.

1. Every evening I sit on my front porch I listen to the crickets.

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____

2. Choosing a major is difficult for some others know exactly what they want to do.

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____

3. Board games don't seem to be as popular today there are so many computer and video games.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____

4. The paper is due next week I am not going to procrastinate.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____

5. My first job interview went very well still I hope to improve with practice.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____

6. Filing for financial aid was not difficult I simply followed the directions on the forms.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____

7. My sisters went to the mall I chose to stay at home and take a nap.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____

8. Choosing a candidate to vote for is difficult I need to research into the issues.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____

9. The fair was in town this weekend I didn't get to go because I had to work.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____

10. Anna has a weakness for caffeine she tries not to drink too much soda.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____