



Fragments and Run-ons

What is a Sentence?

- A sentence is a complete thought that has **at least one** subject or doer/agent and **one** predicate or verb/action

Examples: *Emily reads.*
The cat purrs.
The refrigerator hums.

- Some simple sentences can have **many** subjects (Melinda, Siobhan and Heather, in the example below) and **one** predicate or **one** subject and **many** predicates

Examples: *Melinda, Siobhan, and Heather play tennis every afternoon.*
The professor teaches classes, grades papers, and does research.

Sentences: Other Types

- **Compound:** **one or more** simple sentences joined by a FANBOYS¹ conjunction plus a comma or separated by a **semi-colon**.

Examples: *Charlene studies and works, so her sister takes care of their parents.*
Alex speaks fluent Spanish; his mother is from Colombia.

- **Complex:** a sentence containing **at least one** simple sentence/independent clause and **at least one** subordinate/dependent clause; the subordinate/dependent clause usually starts with a preposition such as *if, when, before, although* or has the *-ing* verb structure.

Examples: *Although it was raining cats and dogs, the soccer match continued.*
Driving down the dirty road, Elliott saw a dead deer.

¹ For And Nor But Or Yet So

Fragments and Run-ons

1. Fragments:

- A **stand-alone** part preceded by a preposition
After we came home. If they don't call. Provided that the school receives the grant.

- **How to Fix It?** Remove the preposition or add a **simple sentence/independent** clause:
~~After~~ We came home. If they don't call, we will e-mail them.
- Subject or verb missing
Went to the movies yesterday. The man with the pink tie.

- **How to Fix It?** Add the missing part:
*Ron and Vanessa went to the movies yesterday.
The man with the pink tie looks strange.*
- The predicate **solely** in a gerund *-ing* form or a past participle *-ed* form
The children playing in the yard. Ted surprised by the news.

- **How to Fix It?** Add a **linking** verb or transform into a **complex** sentence:
The children were playing in the yard. Ted, surprised by the news, dropped his coffee mug.

2. Run-ons

- **Two or more** simple sentences/independent clauses put together **without any** punctuation or conjunction in-between.
We arrived at the theater very late the show had already started they still let us in.
- **Two or more** simple sentences/independent clauses separated by **a comma, without a** FANBOYS (see above) conjunction; this type of a run-on is also known as **a comma splice**
It rained for nearly twenty-four hours, many basements became flooded.

-**How to Fix It?** Make **one** of the parts dependents by adding an appropriate preposition before, replace the comma with **a semi-colon**, or insert **a conjunction**:
*Even though we arrived at the theater very late and the show had already started, they still let us in.
It rained for nearly twenty-four hours; many basements became flooded.
OR: It rained for nearly twenty-four hours, so many basements became flooded.*

Practice Activity # 1

There are **ten** parts below. **Review each** part, **indicate** whether it is a fragment (F) or a run-on (RO) by circling the appropriate abbreviation, and **fix** it in the space provided. Follow the example underneath:

Example. *The customers sipping coffee at the counter.* **F RO**

The customers WERE sipping coffee at the counter.

1. *Melanie studies very hard she wants to go to law school.* **F RO**

2. *The music was blasting all night long still nobody called the police.* **F RO**

3. *In case we run out of cash.* **F RO**

4. *Has been working as a barista for three years.* **F RO**

5. *The lecture lasted for more than two hours, many of the attendees fell asleep.* **F RO**

6. *The lady sitting on the left side.* **F RO**

7. *When Claire graduated from college.* **F RO**

8. *The students can take a final exam for the class they can complete a research project.* **F RO**

9. *The train was packed, Hugo still found an empty seat.* **F RO**

10. *Startled by the alarm.* **F RO**

Practice Activity #3

Below is a short paragraph containing some fragments and run-ons. **Read** the paragraph carefully, **underline all** the fragments/run-ons, and try to **correct** them:

Even though it may sound great at first sight. Working remotely can wear a person down leading to anxiety, depression, and decreased levels of productivity. There are some not exactly perfect tips they can help create some sense of motivation, routine, and normalcy. First, people being on the computer in their living rooms or kitchen all day long. Need to experience some kind of transitioning. Taking a brisk walk around the block or even taking out the laptop to work in a nearby park can create the illusion of moving, also the clear air will definitely take away the Zoom fatigue. Second, blurring the lines between the professional and the personal. Is a sure way to make a person be indefinitely on-call and thereby overwhelmed. Setting boundaries of when to work on projects or answer business calls and e-mails is a crucial step to preventing burnout, employees should learn to say "I am shutting down my laptop down at 5 o'clock!" Third, working remotely takes away these small moments of connection with fellow colleagues. Leading to sense of detachment. Organizing virtual book clubs/game night or a socially distant get-togethers outdoors can replicate some of those moments. Of course it will not be a replacement for the brick-and-mortar atmosphere it can preserve some levels of mental health and well-being.

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