



RUN-ON SENTENCES

Long sentences are a common problem for writers. A frequent stumbling block is the run-on sentence.

Common Causes

There are many common causes of run-on sentences:

- A coordinating conjunction is missing.
- A necessary punctuation mark is missing.
- A sentence has a comma splice. This occurs when a comma is used to join two independent clauses (two complete sentences).

Examples of Run-On Sentences

Wrong:

Wrong: Tickets are \$30, you have to buy them early.

Wrong: The car is unreliable, however, we still drive it.

Wrong: John went to the dentist then he went to work.

Solutions: Four Ways to Fix Run-On Sentences

Change the independent clauses into separate sentences.

Example:

The car is unreliable. However, we still drive it.

Restructure the sentence, perhaps by subordinating one of the clauses.

Examples:

Since he gets better with time, Damion is like fine wine.

Like fine wine, Damion gets better with time. After John went to the dentist, he went to work. John went to work after he went to the dentist.

Add a coordinating conjunction and use a comma to join independent clauses.

Examples:

Tickets are \$30, but you have to buy them early.

John went to the dentist, and he went to work.

Seven Conjunctions

and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet

Insert necessary punctuation (usually a semicolon) after a transition.

Examples:

That car is unreliable; however, we still drive it.

John went to the dentist; then, he went to work.