Comma Splices

How are commas properly used to connect ideas? \*

# Explanation

A **comma splice** occurs when two or more complete sentences are joined with only a comma rather than a connecting word called a conjunction (and, but, or…). This comma prevents the reader from distinguishing the two independent sentences and can make reading them unclear. Commas are simply not strong enough to hold the two groups of words together.

There are three possible ways to fix an improper comma splice: 1) leave the comma and add a conjunction such as “and” or “but” after the comma, 2) divide the sentences into their own separate ideas, or 3) take out the comma and replace it with a semi-colon. This last option should only be used, however, when the two sentences are closely related in idea or action and a conjunction is not used.

# Examples

*Here are what comma splices look like:*

* This morning I woke up feeling refreshed**,** I skipped downstairs to the kitchen.

We can easily fix this sentence by ***adding the word “and” after the comma***…

* This morning I woke up feeling refreshed, and I skipped downstairs to the kitchen.

… or ***removing the comma*** and making it into two separate sentences…

* This morning I woke up feeling refreshed. I skipped downstairs to the kitchen.

… or using a ***semi-colon***…

* This morning I woke up feeling refreshed; I skipped downstairs to the kitchen.

# Exercises

*In the next few sentences, identify which sentences contain comma splices and how they could be fixed.*

1. My dad went to the store to buy more milk, he forgot to take his keys.
2. The little girl ran down the driveway; she later discovered she had left the door wide open.
3. The big, red ball rolled down the hill, it stopped when it hit the man’s foot.
4. I didn’t have to worry about parking, it was early and the parking lot was completely empty.

**\*Information taken from the video, “Run-ons and Comma Splices" uploaded on the website *Khan* *Academy*.** <https://youtu.be/Fh45mhVsZrU>