

Run – on sentences

AVOID FUSED SENTENCES

A sentence, also called a run – on sentence, joins two (main) clauses without a and/or proper punctuation. A fused sentence combines two complete sentences without indicating where one stops and the other begins.

Fused: Chefs cook waiters serve.

Correct: Chefs cook; waiters serve.

Fused: The jury discussed the case carefully they reviewed each piece of evidence.

Correct: The jury discussed the case carefully. They reviewed each piece of evidence.

CORRECT FUSED SENTENCES IN FIVE WAYS

1. End one independent (main) clause with a period. Capitalize the first word of the next.

Not: The apartment dwellers screamed fire engulfed the building.

But: The apartment dwellers screamed. Fire engulfed the building.

2. Place a comma (,) and a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, for, nor, or, yet, so*) between the independent clauses.

Not: Peter supported his parents and siblings only he had been able to find a job.

But: Peter supported his parents and siblings, for only he had been able to find a job.

3. Place a semicolon (;) between the two independent (main) clauses.

Not: The police car stopped the ambulance sped ahead.

But: The police car stopped; the ambulance sped ahead.

4. Place a semicolon (;) and a transition between the independent clauses. Transitions include words and phrases such as

consequently
furthermore
however
moreover

nevertheless
nonetheless
therefore
thus

after all
as a result
for example
in addition

in fact
in other words
in the meantime
on the other hand

Not: Thomas Hardy is remembered chiefly for his novels he also wrote poetry.

But: Thomas Hardy is remembered chiefly for his novels; however, he also wrote poetry.

5. Turn one of the independent (main) clauses into a dependent (subordinate) clause.

Not: William was the duke of Normandy he became king of England.

But: William was the duke of Normandy who became king of England.

Sample Quiz questions:

1. One of the following items is a run – on (or fused) sentence, another contains a comma splice, and another is correct. Choose the item that is correct.
- We parked in front of a fire hydrant, for it was the only space available.
 - We parked in front of a fire hydrant it was the only space available.
 - We parked in front of a fire hydrant, it was the only space available.

Answer: a. We parked in front of a fire hydrant, for it was the only space available.

2. One of the following items is a run – on (or fused) sentence, another contains a comma splice, and another is correct. Choose the item that is correct.
- Kasia is a wonderful woman, she always goes out of her way to help others.
 - Kasia is a wonderful woman; she always goes out of her way to help others.
 - Kasia is a wonderful woman she always goes out of her way to help others.

Answer: b. Kasia is a wonderful woman; she always goes out of her way to help others.