

Correcting Run-On Sentences

A *run-on sentence* occurs when two or more independent clauses (also known as complete sentences) are connected improperly. A run-on sentence can be fixed by connecting its parts correctly. There are several ways to connect independent clauses.

1. **Use a period.** The easiest way to fix a run-on is to split the sentence into smaller sentences using a period. This revision works especially well with longer sentences. Check, however, to make sure that this solution does not result in short, choppy sentences.

Revision example: I love to write papers. I would write one every day if I had the time.

2. **Use a semicolon.** Inserting a semicolon between independent clauses creates a grammatically correct sentence. Using a semicolon is a stylistic choice that establishes a close relationship between the two sentences.

Revision example: I love to write papers; I would write one every day if I had the time.

3. **Use a comma and a coordinating conjunction.** A comma, paired with a coordinating conjunction (e.g., "and," "but," or "or"), corrects a run-on sentence. This method emphasizes the relationship between the two clauses.

Revision example: I love to write papers, and I would write one every day if I had the time.

4. **Use a subordinating conjunction.** Turn one of the independent clauses into a dependent clause. A subordinating conjunction (e.g., "because," "unless," and "although") connects two clauses to create a complex sentence. This option works to cement the relationship between the two parts of the sentence and may improve the flow of the clauses.

Example: Because I love to write papers, I would write one every day if I had the time.

However you decide to revise for run-on sentences, remember that maintaining sentence variety helps to keep the writing clear and interesting for your readers.