

Run-On (Fused) Sentences and Comma-Splices

What is a run-on (fused) sentence?

A run-on (or fused) sentence occurs when two or more complete sentences are joined together without proper punctuation (a period, semi-colon, or colon) or a coordinating conjunction (e.g., *and*, *but*, *or*, *so*, etc.).

- Example: *You've probably heard people say that if you drop a penny from the top of the Empire State Building you might kill someone this myth is entirely untrue, however.*

What is a comma-splice?

A comma-splice occurs when two or more complete sentences are joined only with a comma.

- Example: *You've probably heard people say that if you drop a penny from the top of the Empire State Building you might kill someone, this myth is entirely untrue, however.*

How do you fix run-ons and comma-splices?

1. You can put a period after the first sentence and start a new one.

- Example: *You've probably heard people say that if you drop a penny from the top of the Empire State Building you might kill someone. This myth is entirely untrue, however.*

2. You can put a semicolon after the first sentence.

- Example: *You've probably heard people say that if you drop a penny from the top of the Empire State Building you might kill someone; this myth is entirely untrue, however.*



3. You can put a comma and a coordinating conjunction after the first sentence.

- Example: *You've probably heard people say that if you drop a penny off the top of the Empire State Building you might kill someone, **but** this myth is entirely untrue.*

Hint: There are seven coordinating conjunctions: *for*, *and*, *nor*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, and *so*. Use the acronym **FAN BOYS** to help you remember them.

4. Finally, you can place a subordinating conjunction in front of one sentence, turning it into a dependent clause, and attach it to the other sentence. (Refer to the "Common Subordinating

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Conjunctions” chart included with our **Sentence Fragments** resource for a list of subordinating conjunctions.)

- Example: *You’ve probably heard people say that if you drop a penny off the top of the Empire State Building you might kill someone, **although** this myth is entirely untrue.*

Work Consulted

Aaron, Jane E. *The Little, Brown Essential Handbook*. 7th ed. Boston: Longman, 2011. Print.