



Five Fixes for Comma Splices and Run-Ons

Two of the most common errors in college writing are the **run-on sentence** and the **comma splice**. Both the comma splice and the run-on sentence contain enough material to create two sentences; however, the writer has unknowingly created only one sentence.

The **run-on sentence** contains two independent clauses without any punctuation within one sentence.

Example: *Days are cooler leaves are falling.*

The **comma splice** sentence also contains two independent clauses; however, a comma is utilized incorrectly between these clauses.

Example: *Days are cooler, leaves are falling.*

The following examples are common solutions to the run-on sentence and the comma splice:

Fix #1: Use end punctuation to make two sentences.

Days are cooler. Leaves are falling.

Fix #2: Use a comma / conjunction to join sentences.

Days are cooler, and leaves are falling.

Fix #3: Use a semicolon to join sentences.

Days are cooler; leaves are falling.

Fix #4: Use a semicolon to join sentences, and use a conjunctive adverb to show relationships.

Days are cooler; therefore, leaves are falling.
(The conjunctive adverb, *therefore*, indicates cause/effect relationship.)

Fix #5: Use a subordinating conjunction to make one of the sentences a dependent clause.

Because days are cooler, leaves are falling.