

# Run-On Sentences



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Run-on sentences happen when you join together two or more **independent clauses** (complete sentences) with incorrect or no punctuation. If you are unsure whether or not your sentence is grammatically correct, spend some time understanding the concepts below.

## The Problem

In order to correct a run-on sentence, it's important to understand what makes a sentence complete. Any complete sentence (independent clause) needs to have a subject, a verb, and express a *single*, complete idea.

Subject - **BOLD**

Verb - UNDERLINE

### Complete Sentence

Ex: **I** went to the store.

ONE subject. ONE verb.  
A single idea? Yes!

### Run-on Sentence

Ex: **I** drove to the theater **it** was far away.

TWO subjects. TWO verbs.  
A single idea? No!

## The Clause

Every complete sentence you write is composed of groups of words, called clauses, that go together. In English, there are two types of clauses: independent clauses and dependent clauses.

- **Independent clauses** are groups of words that can stand on their own as sentences. They always have a subject, predicate (verb), and express a single idea.  
Ex: I went outside. / School was canceled today. / Are you going to the store later?
- **Dependent clauses** are groups of words that *cannot* stand on their own as sentences. Instead, they add extra information to a sentence.  
On Wednesday, my mom is going on vacation. / My car, *which I've had for ten years*, is still reliable.

## The Solution

With this understanding, there are a number of ways to correct a run-on sentence that are open to you. Here's a list of some of the strategies you can use, with a more detailed explanation on the back of this sheet:

- Add a comma and a coordinating conjunction
- Use a semicolon
- Make the clauses into separate sentences



# Run-On Sentences, *Cont'd*

## Sample Run-on:

Exercise is important to maintaining good physical health it is a great way to fight depression, too.

## Methods to Revise a Run-on:

1. Use a **comma** and a context-appropriate **coordinating conjunction**.

*Exercise is important to maintaining good physical health, but it is a great way to fight depression, too.*

### List of Coordinating Conjunctions

For	Yet	And	
So	Nor	For	But

2. Use a **semicolon**.

*Exercise is important to maintaining good physical health; it is a great way to fight depression, too.*

3. Use a **semicolon** and a context-appropriate **transitional expression** followed by a **comma**.

*Exercise is important to maintaining good physical health; however, it is a great way to fight depression, too.*

### Examples of Transitional Expressions

However	Otherwise	Likewise
Moreover	Also	Consequently
Indeed	In fact	Nevertheless
Furthermore	Then	Therefore

4. Make the clauses into **separate sentences**.

*Exercise is important to maintaining good physical health. It is a great way to fight depression, too.*

5. **Restructure** the sentence.

*Although exercise is important to maintaining good physical health, it is a great way to fight depression, too.*

Additional examples for this method:

*Run-on:*

The boy played basketball in the park it became dark.

*Options:*

The boy played in the park **until** it became dark.

**Until** it became dark, the boy played basketball in the park.

### Words to Use When Restructuring Sentences

After	Before	Although
Until	When	While As
If	Since	Because

