

— A Guide to Avoiding —

COMMA SPLICES

Comma splices are a punctuation error that can lead to grammatically incorrect sentences and usually result in a run-on sentence. Comma splices occur when two independent clauses are linked together incorrectly with a comma. Usually, comma splices can be fixed by replacing the comma with a colon or semicolon, adding a conjunction, or separating the two independent clauses into two separate sentences.

Let's look at some examples of **incorrect** sentences with comma splices:

The woman went to the diner, her daughter went to the mall.

It's almost midnight, the restaurant is closed.

My stories are not all horror, some of them are romance!

You can have my blanket, I'm not cold.

These sentences are incorrect because they have two independent clauses that are improperly connected. A comma by itself is not enough; however, by introducing other punctuation and conjunctions or by separating the sentences, this can be easily fixed.

Here are some examples of ways these comma splices can be **corrected**:

The woman went to the diner, **and** her daughter went to the mall.

It's almost midnight, **so** the restaurant is closed.

My stories are not all horror; **some** of them are romance!

You can have my blanket. **I'm** not cold.

Tips to Help Correct Comma Splices

Try reading your work aloud.

Listen closely for sentences that seem to run on too long. If you feel that there should naturally be a longer pause where there is only a comma, it may be a comma splice.

Think of how parts of the sentence relate to each other.

Using a conjunction in the sentence (and, but, so, or, etc.) or writing a long sentence as multiple sentences may make more logical sense than trying to connect ideas with commas.