

CORRECTING COMMA SPLICES

A comma splice results from connecting two or more independent clauses (complete sentences) with a comma. Unfortunately, a comma is too weak to do that! There are four ways to correct comma splices: using a comma and a coordinating conjunction, using a subordinating conjunction, using a semicolon, and using a period to form two separate sentences.

Using a coordinating conjunction – There are six coordinating conjunctions: *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so*. The acronym FANBOYS is a tool you can use to remember them. A coordinating conjunction that connects two independent clauses is always preceded by a comma.

Comma splice: Milan Kundera's novels are very political, his work is often interpreted as anti-Communist.

Corrected: Milan Kundera's novels are very political, *and* his work is often interpreted as anti-Communist.

Using a subordinating conjunction – Subordinating conjunctions are used to show the relationship between two clauses. They include words like *because, although, when, while, if,* and many others.

Comma splice: Josie would not eat the potato salad Alan made, she is allergic to mayonnaise.

Corrected: Josie would not eat the potato salad Alan made because she is allergic to mayonnaise.

Using a semicolon – A semicolon is more muscular than a comma and can connect two independent clauses containing ideas that are closely related or dependent on each other.

Comma splice: Samantha wants to improve her writing, therefore, she has been to the Center for Writing several times.

Corrected: Samantha wants to improve her writing; therefore, she has been to the Center for Writing several times.

Using a period – Finally, a comma splice can be corrected by replacing the comma with a period and creating two sentences.

Comma splice: The price of gasoline continues to rise, many people are considering alternative means of transportation.

Corrected: The price of gasoline continues to rise. Many people are considering alternative means of transportation.