

43. RUN-ONS AND COMMA SPLICES: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

A **run-on** is a sentence error.

A run-on sentence has two subjects and two matching verbs, but no connecting word, such as *and*, *but*, *because*, or *which*.

Example of a run-on sentence

<i>Carbon emissions</i>	<i>are rising</i>	<i>the earth</i>	<i>is warming</i>
1 st Subject	1 st Verb	2 nd Subject	2 nd Verb

A **comma splice** is a type of run-on sentence with a comma in between the two subject/verb pairs.

Example of a comma splice

<i>Carbon emissions</i>	<i>are rising</i>	,	<i>the earth</i>	<i>is warming</i>
Subject	Verb	,	Subject	Verb

To find a run-on or a comma splice:

- Look for a second subject and verb in the middle of the sentence. (It will come right after the comma in a comma splice.)
- If the sentence does not have a connecting word right before the second subject/verb or at the beginning of the sentence, then the sentence is a run-on.

Here are four ways to fix a run-on or comma splice:

WHAT TO DO	EXAMPLES
<p>Use a coordinating conjunction (<i>and</i>, <i>but</i>, <i>or</i>, <i>so</i>, <i>for</i>, <i>yet</i>, <i>nor</i>) to connect the sentences.</p> <p>Remember to put a comma before the conjunction.</p>	<p>Run-on: <i>Scientists have been warning the world about global warming their warnings were ignored.</i></p> <p>Corrected: <i>Scientists have been warning the world about global warming, <u>but</u> their warnings were ignored.</i></p>
<p>Use a subordinating conjunction, such as <i>because</i>, <i>although</i>, <i>before</i>, or <i>while</i>.</p>	<p>Comma Splice: <i>Cars create CO2 emissions, they cause global warming.</i></p> <p>Corrected: <i><u>Because</u> cars create CO2 emissions, they cause global warming.</i></p>
<p>Use a relative pronoun, such as <i>which</i>, <i>who</i>, or <i>that</i>.</p>	<p>Run on: <i>CO2 emissions create a “greenhouse effect” it makes the earth warmer.</i></p> <p>Corrected: <i>CO2 emissions create a “greenhouse effect,” <u>which</u> makes the earth warmer.</i></p>
<p>Use a semicolon or period to separate the two sentences.</p>	<p>Comma Splice: <i>Climate change is no longer a theory it is becoming more evident as the years go by.</i></p> <p>Corrected: <i>Climate change is no longer a <u>theory</u>; it is becoming more evident as the years go by.</i></p> <p>Corrected: <i>Climate change is no longer a <u>theory</u>. It is becoming more evident as the years go by.</i></p>