

# Recycle: Complete vs Run-On Sentences

A **RUN-ON SENTENCE** (sometimes called a "fused sentence") has at least two parts, either one of which can stand by itself (in other words, two independent clauses), but the two parts have been smooshed together instead of being properly connected. Review also the section which describes things that can happen between two independent clauses.

## Things That Can Happen Between Two Independent Clauses.

It is important to realize that the length of a sentence really has nothing to do with whether a sentence is a run-on or not; being a run-on is a structural flaw that can plague even a very short sentence:

The sun is high, put on some sunblock.

An extremely long sentence, on the other hand, might be a "run-off-at-the-mouth" sentence, but it can be otherwise sound, structurally.

When two independent clauses are connected by *only* a comma, they constitute a run-on sentence that is called a **comma-splice**. The example just above (about the sunscreen) is a comma-splice. When you use a comma to connect two independent clauses, it must be accompanied by a little conjunction (*and, but, for, nor, yet or so*).

The sun is high, so put on some sunscreen.

Run-on sentences happen typically under the following circumstances:

1. **When an independent clause gives an order or directive based on what was said in the prior independent clause:**

This next chapter has a lot of difficult information in it, you should start studying right away.

(We could put a period where that comma is and start a new sentence. A semicolon might also work there).

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2. **When two independent clauses are connected by a transitional expression (conjunctive adverb) such as *however, moreover, nevertheless*.**

Mr. Nguyen has sent his four children to ivy-league colleges, however, he has sacrificed his health working day and night in that dusty bakery.

(Again, where that first comma appears, we could have used either a period — and started a new sentence — or a semicolon).

3. **When the second of two independent clauses contains a pronoun that connects it to the first independent clause.**

This computer doesn't make sense to me, it came without a manual.

(Although these two clauses are quite brief, and the ideas are closely related, this is a run-on sentence. We need a period where that comma now stands).

Most of those computers in the Learning Assistance Center are broken already, this proves my point about American computer manufacturers.

(Again, two nicely related clauses, incorrectly connected — a run-on. Use a period to cure this sentence).

**Reference:**

Capital Community College Foundation,  
Punctuation Between Two Independent Clauses, recuperado de:  
[http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/indep\\_clauses.htm](http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/indep_clauses.htm)