



## **Run-on Sentences: Fused Sentences and Comma Splices**

Run-on sentences occur when independent clauses are not joined properly. There are two types of run-on sentence: the fused sentence and the comma splice.

- ▶ Fused sentences occur when there is no punctuation and no coordinating conjunction between two independent clauses.

The snow needs to be shovelled get going on it right away.

- ▶ Comma splices occur when two independent clauses are joined with a comma that is not followed by a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet).

The snow needs to be shovelled, get going on it right away.

Run-on sentences can be revised in one of four ways:

- ▶ Use a comma and a coordinating conjunction to join the dependent clauses.

The snow needs to be shovelled, so get going on it right away.

- ▶ Use a semicolon to join the dependent clauses

The snow needs to be shovelled; get going on it right away.

- ▶ Turn each independent clause into a separate sentence.

The snow needs to be shovelled. Get going on it right away.

- ▶ Turn one of the independent clauses into a dependent clause.

Since the snow needs to be shovelled, get going on it right away.

### **Practice Exercise**

Revise the following sentences to eliminate fused sentences or comma splices.

1. Many North American cars cost less than foreign cars however, foreign cars get better mileage.
2. Traffic jams in major cities have gotten out of hand car pools should be mandatory.
3. Three-dimensional television movies have recently become popular, 3-D glasses can be purchased at most convenience stores.
4. The restaurant looks tacky to me, all the tablecloths are made of plastic.
5. We've spent all our money, therefore; we won't be dining out tonight.
6. The abacus is an ancient computational device, in skilful hands, it can calculate sums as quickly as most modern gadgets.
7. The woman's skills are perfect for the new position we intend to promote her.
8. The team lost seven games in a row, consequently, the coach was fired.
9. Here is the chief administrator, he will solve our problems.
10. He phoned his fiancée repeatedly but she refused to return his calls.
11. I have good ideas I can't put them into a sentence.
12. The elephant quit the circus he was tired of working for peanuts.

### **Answers**

Several possible answers are included here.

1. Many North American cars cost less than foreign cars, but foreign cars get better mileage.  
Many North American cars cost less than foreign cars; however, foreign cars get better mileage.  
Although many North American cars cost less than foreign cars, foreign cars get better mileage.  
Many North American cars cost less than foreign cars. Foreign cars get better mileage.
2. Traffic jams in major cities have gotten out of hand, so car pool should be made mandatory.  
Traffic jams in major cities have gotten out of hand; car pools should be made mandatory.  
Because traffic jams in major cities have gotten out of hand, car pools should be made mandatory.

Traffic jams in major cities have gotten out of hand. Car pools should be made mandatory.

3. Three-dimensional television movies have recently become popular, and 3-D glasses can be purchased at most convenience stores.  
Three-dimensional television movies have recently become popular; 3-D glasses can be purchased at most convenience stores.  
Because three-dimensional television movies have recently become popular, 3-D glasses can be purchased at most convenience stores.  
Three-dimensional television movies have recently become popular. 3-D glasses can be purchased at most convenience stores.
4. The restaurant looks tacky to me, for all the tablecloths are made of plastic.  
The restaurant looks tacky to me; all the tablecloths are made of plastic.  
The restaurant looks tacky to me because all the tablecloths are made of plastic.  
The restaurant looks tacky to me. All the tablecloths are made of plastic.
5. We've spent all our money, so we won't be dining out tonight.  
We've spent all our money; therefore, we won't be dining out tonight. Because we've spent all our money, we won't be dining out tonight. We've spent all our money. We won't be dining out tonight.
6. The abacus is an ancient computation device, but in skilful hands, it can calculate sums as quickly as most modern gadgets.  
The abacus is an ancient computation device; however, in skilful hands, it can calculate sums as quickly as most modern gadgets.  
Although the abacus is an ancient computation device, in skilful hands it can calculate sums as quickly as most modern gadgets.  
The abacus is a modern computation device. In skilful hands it can calculate sums as quickly as most modern gadgets.
7. The woman's skills are perfect for the new position, so we intend to promote her.  
The woman's skills are perfect for the new position; therefore, we intend to promote her.  
Because the woman's skills are perfect for the new position, we intend to promote her.  
The woman's skills are perfect for the new position. We intend to promote her.
8. The team lost seven games in a row, and the coach was fired as a consequence.  
The team lost seven games in a row; consequently, the coach was fired.  
Because the team lost seven games in a row, the coach was fired.  
The team lost seven games in a row. The coach was fired as a consequence.
9. Here is the chief administrator, and he will solve our problems.  
Here is the chief administrator; he will solve our problems.  
Here is the chief administrator who will solve our problems.

Here is the chief administrator. He will solve our problems.

10. He phoned his fiancée repeatedly, but she refused to return his calls.  
He phoned his fiancée repeatedly; she refused to return his calls.  
Although he phoned his fiancée repeatedly, she refused to return his calls.  
He phoned his fiancée repeatedly. She refused to return his calls.
11. I have good ideas, yet I can't put them into a sentence.  
I have good ideas; however, I can't put them into a sentence.  
Although I have good ideas, I can't put them into a sentence.  
I have good ideas. I can't put them into a sentence.
12. The elephant quit the circus, for he was tired of working for peanuts.  
The elephant quit the circus; he was tired of working for peanuts.  
The elephant quit the circus because he was tired of working for peanuts.  
The elephant quit the circus. He was tired of working for peanuts.