

## COMMA SPLICES

A comma splice occurs when two independent clauses (or complete sentences) are joined by a comma.

**Comma Splice (incorrect):** The judge was not smiling, he was scowling.

### Three Ways to Correct a Comma Splice

1. Join the independent clauses with a comma and a coordinating conjunction.

**EXAMPLE:** The boss was not happy, and he seemed grumpy.

There are seven coordinating conjunctions:

1. The word **and** indicates an addition.
2. The word **but** indicates a contrast.
3. The word **yet** indicates a concession or an admittance.
4. The word **so** indicates an effect or a result.
5. The word **for** indicates a cause or a reason.
6. The word **or** indicates an alternative.
7. The word **nor** indicates a negative alternative.

**EXERCISE:** Correct this comma splice by joining the two independent clauses with a comma and a coordinating conjunction.

The blizzard forced us to change our plans for a five-mile hike, we decided to stay home and build a fire.

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2a. Join the two independent clauses with a semicolon (;).

**EXAMPLE:** The boss was not happy; he seemed grumpy.

**EXERCISE:** Correct these comma splices by joining the two independent clauses with semicolons.

a. The householders did not buy a microwave oven, the high cost of electricity to operate it would have been beyond their budget.

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b. Mr. Atlas's workouts at the health club were important to him, they helped him stay strong.

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**2b.** Join the two independent clauses with a semicolon (;) and a conjunctive adverb.

**EXAMPLE:** It was oppressively hot in the tropical rainforest; nevertheless, the hikers continued their journey.

Here are several important conjunctive adverbs:

1. The word **however** indicates a contrast.
2. The word **moreover** indicates an addition.
3. The word **therefore** indicates an effect or a result.
4. The word **nevertheless** indicates a concession or an admittance.

**EXERCISE:** Correct each comma splice by joining the two independent clauses with a semicolon and an appropriate conjunctive adverb.

a. Students need some time to relax, they should not take time to party.

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b. The away team was favored, the home team was cheered.

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**3.** Make the two independent clauses into two separate sentences.

**EXAMPLE:** The professor was not smiling. He was frowning.

**EXERCISE:** Correct these comma splices by making two complete sentences.

a. Jacques is an expert diver, he has explored the deep seas.

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b. George enjoys adventure movies, he particularly likes *Star Wars*.

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