

comma splices

Comma splices are one of the most common punctuation errors. This handout will help you identify comma splices and teach you how to fix them.

Recognizing Comma Splices

Independent Clauses

To recognize comma splices, you must first recognize independent clauses. An independent clause contains a subject and a predicate and can stand on its own.

Example: Francis drives a car.

Note: For more information on independent clauses, please see our “Clauses” [handout](#).

Comma Splices

A comma splice occurs when only a comma is used to join two independent clauses.

Example: My dog is very lazy, he spends all day lying on the couch.

Correcting Comma Splices

Use a Period

You can break your sentence into two using a period. Capitalize the first word of the new sentence.

Example: My dog is very lazy. He spends all day lying on the couch.

Use a Semicolon

You can also use a semicolon to split and join the two clauses.

Example: My dog is very lazy; he spends all day lying on the couch.

Add a Coordinating Conjunction

If you want to keep the comma, add a coordinating conjunction. You can memorize the seven coordinating conjunctions with the mnemonic **FANBOYS**: **F**or, **A**nd, **N**or, **B**ut, **O**r, **Y**et, and **S**o.

Example: My dog is very lazy, so he spends all day lying on the couch.