



Comma Splices and Fused Sentences

COMMA SPLICE (CS)

When a comma is used to join two sentences or independent clauses the error is called a *comma splice*.

For example: Parents can help solve the problem, they can set good examples at home. (INCORRECT)

Both parts of the example are complete thoughts, containing a subject and a verb. So joining them with just a comma results in a comma splice. This error can be corrected in several ways.

Parents can help solve the problem; they can set good examples at home. (CORRECT)

- or -

Parents can help solve the problem because they can set good examples at home. (CORRECT)

FUSED SENTENCE (FS)

Joining two or more sentences or independent clauses without punctuation between them results in a fused sentence.

For example: The writing lab was a success all of the students improved their composition skills. (INCORRECT)

Like the comma splice example, this fused sentence contains two independent, complete thoughts, each with a subject and verb. This also may be corrected in several ways.

For example: The writing lab was a success. All of the students improved their composition skills. (CORRECT)

- or -

The writing lab was a success, for all of the students improved their composition skills. (CORRECT)

Caution: Don't trade one mistake for another! It is easy to turn a fused sentence into a comma splice, so check your work carefully.