

# Understanding **COMMA SPLICES**

In written English, the comma splice is one of the most frequent errors. Make sure that you learn what it is and how to avoid it.

## WHAT IS IT?

A **comma splice** is the use of a **comma** to join two independent clauses.



**EXAMPLE:** *It is late, we will not make the bus on time.*

Either side of this comma, we have independent clauses – sentences in their own right, which can stand alone.

**X WRONG**

In English, this is considered **incorrect**. In order to join together two independent clauses, we need to use a comma and a coordinating **conjunction** (such as *and*, *so* or *but*). Alternatively, we can write them as two separate sentences, or join them with a semicolon.

**EXAMPLES:** *It is late, and we will not make the bus on time.*

*It is late; we will not make the bus on time.*

*It is late. We will not make the bus on time.*

✓ **RIGHT**  
✓ **RIGHT**  
✓ **RIGHT**

## PRACTICE

For each of the following, decide if they are complete sentences, or if there are comma splices present.

	Comma Splice	Complete Sentence
1. Susan was always late for work, nobody seemed to care.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. He didn't like to ski, so he always went to the restaurant instead.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Sitting down, she realised she didn't have her work with her.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. English is a difficult subject, math is easy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. After I passed my exam, I was allowed to drive alone.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. He makes delicious pizzas, I love them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Jen loves cake, Tom likes cookies, but I love them both.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. It is cold outside, put on a jacket.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. As the students understood their grammar, the teacher was pleased.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. He loved her with all his heart, yet she couldn't love him back.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Marking quizzes is bearable, marking essays is painful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Ben loves to read and travel, he often reads while traveling!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Although she was tired, she couldn't sleep.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>