

## Run-On Sentences

A run-on is a sentence that has two or more independent clauses joined together incorrectly. It can make writing unclear or confusing. These are common mistakes, but the fixes are actually pretty easy.

Let's look at the two most common types of run-on sentences.

1. A **fused sentence** is a type of run-on that happens when two independent clauses (complete sentences) are joined together without any punctuation.

Example: Let's go fishing it's the perfect weather for it.

\**Let's go fishing* and *it's the perfect weather for it* are both independent clauses, but there's no punctuation joining them together.

2. A **comma splice** is a type of run-on that happens when two independent clauses are joined together with a comma only.

Example: Let's go fishing, it's the perfect weather for it.

\**Let's go fishing* and *it's the perfect weather for it* are both independent clauses, so a comma isn't enough to connect them correctly.

There are several ways to correct a run-on sentence. Usually, we can correctly form a **compound sentence** by adding punctuation and a conjunction. A compound sentence is made up of two (or more) independent clauses connected by a comma and a coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so). We can also use a semicolon between the independent clauses if the ideas are closely related. Sometimes it works better to separate the sentences with a period.

Compound Sentences: Let's go fishing, and let's have a picnic lunch.  
Let's go fishing; it's the perfect weather for it.

Two sentences: Let's go fishing. It's the perfect weather for it.

**Polysyndeton** is a less common type of run-on that happens when too many conjunctions are used to keep a sentence going.

Example: Let's go fishing and eat a picnic lunch and go hiking but leave before dark.

The coordinating conjunction *and* is overused and there is really too much going on in this run-on. A correction might involve both separating the ideas and creating a compound sentence.

Revision: Let's go fishing, and let's have a picnic lunch. We should also go hiking, but let's leave before dark.

Not all long sentences are run-ons. As long as punctuation and conjunctions are used correctly and the meaning isn't lost, long sentences are just fine.

Example: Some fishermen like to fish for sport, throwing back the fish they call "trash" or, worse, leaving unwanted species beached to die; others fish for the many meals it provides around a family table or campfire gathering, the immersion into nature it affords an otherwise walled-in life, and the time of quiet reflection and patience it requires of oneself.