

Avoiding Sentence Fragments

Phrase (P)—a group of words that does not have a subject or a verb.

Ex. To the store going home to play music

Clause—a group of words that has a subject and a verb

There are two types:

Dependent (D)—Has a Subject and a verb, but no complete thought.

Ex: when you leave this class
If you are going to eat lunch

Independent (I)—Has a Subject and a verb, and complete thought.

Ex: I went to the store.
The car hit the tree.

When you have a phrase (P) or a dependent clause (D) by itself, you only have a fragment. A fragment is the most basic of sentence errors.

Comma Rules and Sentence Errors go together. Most sentence errors are broken comma rules:
t = transition phrase f = FANBOYS (coordinating conjunction—for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so)

Basic Comma Rules		Most Sentence Errors just violate the I, f I. Rule	Sentence Errors	
I D = No Comma			P. or D.	= Fragment
D, I			I I.	= Fused Sentence
I I has several ways to fix	I. I. or I. t, I.		I, I.	= Comma Splice
	I;I.		I f I.	= Run On (standard)
	I, f I.			

ID = The car hit the tree because there was a cow in the road.

D, I. = Because there was a cow in the road, the car hit the tree.

I.I. = There was a cow in the road. The car hit the tree.

I. t, I. = There was a cow in the road. As a result, the car hit the tree.

I;I. = The car hit the tree; the damage was extensive.

I, f I. = The car hit the tree, and the crash killed the driver.

The farmer owned the cow, so there will be a lawsuit.

The driver was driving safely, yet he still lost control.

Errors:

Fragment = The car hit the tree. Because there was a cow in the road.

(note grammar check did not catch this)

Fused = The car hit the tree there was a cow in the road.

Comma Splice = The car hit the tree, there was a cow in the road.

Run on = The car hit the tree and the driver was killed.

Note with Comma Rules—in I, f I. you can replace an I with an I D or a D, I and the rule still works:

I D, f D, I = The car hit the tree because there was a cow in the road, and when they found the driver, he was dead.

D, I, f I D = When the cow walked into the road, the driver crashed, and he was killed instantly because he hit the dashboard.

D, I, f I. / I D, f I / I, f D, I / I, f I D /

Also, note the phrases (P) function like D in the architecture.

P, I, f, I. etc.