



Comma Splices

A **comma splice** is an error that occurs when you separate two independent clauses (clauses that can stand on their own as complete sentences) with a comma.

An **independent clause** has both a subject and a verb and forms a complete thought.

Examples of comma splices:

A comma splice error usually occurs *before* a noun or preposition.

- I arrived in Vancouver, at the airport I bought a sandwich.
- Natalie had a cat, it chased everyone who walked by her house.
- Donald built a small house, he sold it to make a huge profit.
- Lachlan drove to the store, in his car he texted on his phone.

Three ways to fix a comma splice:

1. Place a period after the first independent clause, and create a second sentence.

Incorrect: *I arrived in Vancouver, at the airport I bought a sandwich.*

Correct: *I arrived in Vancouver. At the airport I bought a sandwich.*

2. Use a semicolon to separate the two independent clauses. A semicolon works best for two short sentences, or independent clauses that are closely related.

Incorrect: *Natalie had a cat, it chased everyone who walked by her house.*

Correct: *Natalie had a cat; it chased everyone who walked by her house.*

3. Use a comma and a coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so).

Incorrect: *Donald built a house, he sold it to make a huge profit.*

Correct: *Donald built a small house, and he sold it to make a huge profit.*