

Comma Splices

If you have two independent clauses (a sentence that can be by itself), then you **do not** need a comma.

Which of these do you think is right or wrong?

Paul loves to travel, he visits Hungary at least once a year. ❌

Flying back from Greece, we saw a beautiful sunset. ✅

I always find homework difficult, I leave it to the last minute. ❌

She makes a smashing apple pie, I love it. ❌

Comma Splices are probably the most common punctuation error after children not including capital letters and full stops in the right place. For adults, it is probably the most common error.

Comma Splices

Paul loves to travel, he visits Hungary at least once a year. ❌

I always find homework difficult, I leave it to the last minute. ❌

She makes a smashing apple pie, I love it. ❌

So, if you do want to separate the clauses, what can you do?

Easy: Add a full stop.

Paul loves to travel. He visits Hungary at least once a year. ✔️

Medium: Use a connective.

I always find homework difficult so I leave it to the last minute. ✔️

Hard: Use a semicolon. (don't overuse, other rules need to be considered).

She makes a smashing apple pie; I love it. ✔️

Comma Splices

Which of these have the comma splice, and which are ok? Splice or Nice!

I love eating fruit, it is one of my favourite things.

There are many reasons to visit Greece, the beaches are lovely and the people are friendly.

The computer in my room is old, but the carpet is ancient.

I can not afford a house in London, so I am moving to Sunderland.

I'll never be able to buy a house, prices these days are just ridiculous.

Comma Splices

Which of these have the comma splice, and which are ok? Splice or Nice!

I love eating fruit, it is one of my favourite things.

 **Splice**

There are many reasons to visit Greece, the beaches are lovely and the people are friendly.

 **Splice**

The computer in my room is old, but the carpet is ancient.

 **Nice**

I can not afford a house in London, so I am moving to Sunderland.

 **Nice**

I'll never be able to buy a house, prices these days are just ridiculous.

 **Splice**

Complex Sentences

This is when you have a main clause (that can be by itself) and a subordinate clause (that does not make sense by itself)

Walking through the town, we met a policeman.

Doesn't make sense on its own. (subordinate)

Comma needed (if it was 2 main clauses we would have to use something else.)

Makes sense on its own. (main)

When a main clause is by itself, we can call it a simple sentence.

For example: We met a policeman.

Complex Sentences

This is when you have a main clause (that can be by itself) and a subordinate clause (that does not make sense by itself)

Walking through the town, we met a policeman.

Doesn't make sense on its own.
(subordinate)

Comma needed
(if it was 2 main clauses we would have to use something else.)

Makes sense on its own. (main)

Which of these are simple or complex sentences?

If they are complex, which is the main and which is the subordinate clause?

- 1) I see the dog in our garden.
- 2) We walked to the hill-top, where we saw a ruined castle.
- 3) Sam likes playing football.
- 4) They were surprised when their Gran gave them a gift.
- 5) Dad made a cup of tea.
- 6) Susie always works hard in school.
- 7) The teacher washed her hands before she baked the bread.
- 8) We arrived late at school because we had missed the bus.

Complex Sentences

This is when you have a main clause (that can be by itself) and a subordinate clause (that does not make sense by itself)

Walking through the town, we met a policeman.

Doesn't make sense on its own. (subordinate)

Comma needed (if it was 2 main clauses we would have to use something else.)

Makes sense on its own. (main)

Task A: Match the sentences in your book using a connective:

- 1) Tom went on a plane.
- 2) Emma fell in the playground.
- 3) The audience clapped loudly.
- 4) Jack went to the doctor.
- 5) I have a drink of cocoa.
- 6) Mrs Smith likes sewing.

- She cut her knees.
He had a sore throat.
I go to bed.
The school band played well.
She makes children's clothes.
He was going on holiday.

- 1) Tom went on a plane as he was going on holiday.

Task B: Write four simple sentences about yourself.
Then re-write them in four complex sentences.