

Comma Splices and Run-On Sentences

Writing a complete sentence with proper punctuation is often a challenge for students at any stage of their writing experience. Two common errors that students make are comma splices and run-on sentences, which are errors that incorrectly link two independent clauses.

An independent clause is a phrase that has a subject and a verb and makes complete sense on its own. It is a complete thought. For example: “The student reads.”

Comma Splices

Comma splices occur when two independent clauses are incorrectly linked by a comma.

Family Day is a statutory holiday in many Canadian provinces, the day is called Louis Riel Day in the province of Manitoba.

Run-On Sentences

Run-on sentences occur when more than one independent clause is in a sentence without the correct punctuation or conjunctions.

Family Day is a statutory holiday in many Canadian provinces the day is called Louis Riel Day in the province of Manitoba.

Five Ways to Fix Comma Splices and Run-On Sentences

1. Use a period

Family Day is a statutory holiday in many Canadian provinces. The day is called Louis Riel Day in the province of Manitoba.

2. Use a semicolon

Family Day is a statutory holiday in many Canadian provinces; the day is called Louis Riel Day in the province of Manitoba.

3. Use a comma and coordinating conjunction

Family Day is a statutory holiday in many Canadian provinces, **but** the day is called Louis Riel Day in the province of Manitoba.

Note: One quick and easy way to remember coordinating conjunctions is the acronym **FANBOYS: For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So.**

4. Use a subordinating clause

Whether Canadians call it Family Day or Louis Riel Day, it is a statutory holiday throughout most of the country.

5. Use a period or semicolon and a coordinating adverb

Family Day is a statutory holiday in many Canadian provinces. **However**, the day is called Louis Riel Day in the province of Manitoba.

Family Day is a statutory holiday in many Canadian provinces; **however**, the day is called Louis Riel Day in the province of Manitoba.

For more exercises on comma splices and run-on sentences, please refer to the following website:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl_exercises/sentence_structure/sentence_structure/run_ons_comma_splices_and_fused_sentences.html