



## The Betty East Tutoring Center at Victoria College

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### Run-On Sentences

A run-on sentence is two complete thoughts (also called independent clauses) that run together without proper punctuation to connect them. The reader cannot tell where one thought ends and another begins.

#### Types of Run-Ons:

##### Balanced Negative and Positive Clauses:

These run-ons occur when stating what something is not while also stating what it is.

Run-on: Amy is not a nurse she is a doctor.

Revision: Amy is not a nurse; she is a doctor.

##### Illustration in the Second Clause:

This happens when an example is given in the second clause.

Run-on: She did well in college her grade point average was 3.6.

Revision: She did well in college. Her grade point average was 3.6.

##### Using “Then” in the Second Clause:

“Then,” and similar words, indicate a passing of time; they can be confusing to read without proper punctuation.

Run-on: Mary worked in Houston then she was transferred to Austin.

Revision: Mary worked in Houston, but then she was transferred to Austin.

##### Using a Conjunctive Adverb for a Transition:

These run-ons most commonly begin with: therefore, however, and moreover.

Run-on: He is very committed to his work therefore he devotes almost all his time to patient care.

Revision: He is very committed to his work; therefore, he devotes almost all his time to patient care.

#### Correcting Run-Ons:

There are four simple ways to correct run-on sentences.

##### Separate Complete Thoughts:

Make two separate sentences out of the two incomplete thoughts.

Run-on: My car broke down I was unable to attend my classes.

Revision: My car broke down. I was unable to attend my classes.

Use a Comma and Coordinating Conjunction:

Separate the two complete thoughts with a comma followed by a coordinating conjunction. Common coordinating conjunctions are for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so (FANBOYS).

Run-on: We went to class no one was there.

Revision: We went to class, but no one was there.

Use a Semicolon:

Connect the two complete thoughts (which could be two separate sentences) with a semicolon. Do not capitalize the first word after the semicolon unless it is a proper noun.

Run-on: When I arrived at school there was no place to park I ended up parking at the bookstore.

Revision: When I arrived at school, there was no place to park; I ended up parking at the bookstore.

Use Subordination:

Make one of the thoughts (independent clauses) dependent. Common dependent words are after, although, as because, before, even, though, if, since, unless, until, when, and while.

Run-on: Writing an essay can be very rewarding my grade is an "A."

Revision: If my grade is an "A," I find writing an essay can be very rewarding.