

## A Quick Reference from Writing Support Services

<http://www.cuw.edu/Tools/resources/lrc/writingcenter/grammar.html>

### The Comma Splice

**Comma Splice:** two independent clauses are connected by a just a comma.

**Clause:** A group of words that contains a subject and a verb.

**Independent Clause:** A group of words that has a subject and a verb and can stand alone as a sentence.

**Example:** She scrubbed the floor.

**Dependent Clause:** A group of words that has a subject and a verb but cannot stand alone.

**Example:** After she scrubbed the floor?

**Coordinating Conjunction:** a word that links independent clauses together.

**Examples:** and, but, for, nor, or, yet.

**Note:** Transitional words and phrases such as therefore, however, consequently, thus, in fact, and for example are not conjunctions. You must use a semi-colon before them.

**Subordinating Conjunction:** a word that introduces a dependent clause.

**Examples:** because, after, although, when, until, before, while, since.

**Relative Pronoun:** a pronoun that introduces a dependent clause.

**Examples:** who, which, that, whom, whose, whoever, whomever, whatever, whichever.

### WAYS TO FIX A COMMA SPLICE

----Place a comma after the first clause and a coordinating conjunction after the comma.

**COMMA SPLICE:** The lightning flashed, it made the dogs bark.

**CORRECT:** The lightning flashed, and it made the dogs bark.

----Use a semi-colon instead of a comma.

COMMA SPLICE: The snow is falling, my face is turning pink.

**CORRECT:** The snow is falling; my face is turning pink.

**COMMA SPLICE:** We had eight inches of snow with a strong wind, therefore, school has been called off.

**CORRECT:** We had eight inches of snow with a strong wind; therefore, school has been called off.

----Make the sentence into two sentences by putting a period after one independent clause. **COMMA SPLICE:** We are watching a movie now, later we will go to a party.

**CORRECT:** We are watching a movie now. Later, we will go to a party.

----**Change one independent clause in a sentence to a dependent clause by using a subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun.**

**COMMA SPLICE:** He took the scarf, he needed to keep warm on a ski trip.

**CORRECT:** He took the scarf, because he needed to keep warm on a ski trip.

**COMMA SPLICE:** He took the scarf, the scarf does not belong to him.

**CORRECT:** He took the scarf which does not belong to him.