

## FINDING AND FIXING SENTENCE FRAGMENTS

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A sentence that doesn't have an independent clause is called a **fragment**.

You will often see fragments in magazines, on billboards, and on your cereal box. For academic or business writing, it is better to write complete sentences.

### Process for Identifying Fragments

Step 1) Change the time and listen for a verb. If you find a verb, double underline it and go on to the next step. If there is no verb, the sentence is a phrase.

Under the table. **Fragment**

After Mark drove all night. (Go to the next step)

Step 2) Next, look for a subject by asking "who?" If you find a subject, underline it and go on to the next step. If there is no subject, the sentence is a phrase.

Drove all night. **Fragment**

After Mark drove all night. (Go to the next step.)

Step 3) If you have a verb and a subject, it is a clause. Now you must determine what kind of clause.

Look for a subordinating conjunction. If you find one, underline it with a wavy line. If the clause has a subordinating conjunction, it is a dependent clause.

After Mark drove all night. **Fragment**

Step 4) If the clause does not have a subordinating conjunction, it is an independent clause.

Mark drove all night. **Good Sentence**

## FIXING FRAGMENTS

There are two ways to fix a fragment, and they both involve erasing something.

**First Method:** You can erase a period and attach the fragment to a sentence that has an independent clause.

In the morning.            **Fragment**

Sherry jogs three miles. **Correct Sentence**

Erase the period to attach the fragment to the correct sentence:

In the morning Sherry jogs three miles. **Correct Sentence**

By joining the fragment to a complete sentence, you created one longer sentence. One independent clause is enough even for a very long sentence.

**Second method:** If the fragment is a dependent clause, you can erase the subordinating conjunction and turn the dependent clause into an independent clause.

When the dog chews the newspaper.    **Fragment**

Erase the subordinating conjunction:

The dog chews the newspaper. **Correct Sentence**

Now the sentence has an independent clause, so it is correct.

### Common Subordinating Conjunctions

<b>after</b>	<b>although</b>	<b>as</b>	<b>because</b>
<b>before</b>	<b>if</b>	<b>since</b>	<b>so that</b>
<b>that</b>	<b>though</b>	<b>till</b>	<b>until</b>
<b>unless</b>	<b>when</b>	<b>where</b>	<b>while</b>