

## SENTENCE ERRORS: FRAGMENTS

In Lecture 2, you learned about the sentence errors called run-ons and comma splices. Another kind of sentence error is called a **fragment**. The word *fragment* means a part of something. A sentence fragment is only part of a sentence or half of a sentence. It is not a complete sentence. These are fragments:

FRAGMENT: Before the test began.

FRAGMENT: As soon as you get home.

Why are they fragments? They are fragments because they are dependent clauses. A dependent clause cannot be a sentence by itself. To fix this kind of fragment, add an independent clause to it.

COMPLETE SENTENCE: The teacher passed out pencils and paper before the test began.

COMPLETE SENTENCE: Call me as soon as you get home.

## SUMMARY: THREE TYPES OF SENTENCES

Let's summarize what you have learned about the three types of sentences. Good writers add interest and variety to their writing by using all three types.

A **simple sentence** has one independent clause.

e.g.

It was a sunny day.

Raise your hand to ask a question.

A **compound sentence** has two or more independent clauses joined by a comma and a coordinating conjunction.

e.g.

It was a sunny day, so we went to the beach.

Talk quietly, or don't talk at all.

A **complex sentence** has one independent and one or more dependent clauses. A comma is needed when a dependent clause comes before an independent clause.

e.g.

While the meat is cooking, prepare the sauce.

Prepare the sauce while the meat is cooking.

## CAPITALIZATION AND PUNCTUATION

In Chapter 1, you learned six rules for capitalizing words in English. There are four additional rules.

Rules	Examples
<b>Capitalize:</b>	
7. Names of specific structures such as buildings, roads, and bridges.	the White House Highway 395 the Hilton Hotel State Route 15 the Kremlin the Brooklyn Bridge
8. Names of specific organizations such as businesses, schools, and clubs.	Sears, Roebuck & Co. City College of New York United Nations Irish Students' Club
9. Names of the days, months, holidays, and special time periods.  BUT NOT the names of seasons.	Monday New Year's Day January Ramadan  spring, summer
10. Geographic areas.  BUT NOT compass directions.	the Middle East Southeast Asia the Southwest Eastern Europe  Drive south for two miles and turn west.

## COMMAS: FOUR RULES

There are many rules for using commas. You have already learned three of them:

Rules	Examples
<b>Use a comma:</b>	
1. After listing-order and time- order signals (EXCEPT <i>then</i> ).	First, put four cups of rice into a pan. After that, fold the paper in half again. After the test, go out and celebrate.
2. Before coordinating conjunctions in a compound sentence.  <i>Exception:</i> Sometimes writers omit this comma in very short sentences.	Some people like to travel, and others like to have an adventure. Cook the steak over high heat for six minutes, but don't let it burn.  Dogs bark and cats meow. Turn left and drive one block
3. In a complex sentence when a dependent adverb clause comes before an independent clause.	While you are waiting for the pizza dough to rise, make the sauce. After you take the pizza out of the oven, cut it into eight pieces.

Here is a fourth comma rule.

<b>Use a comma:</b>	
4. To separate items in a series. A series is three or more things. These may be words or phrases (groups of words).	<p>One dog, one cat, two goldfish, a bird, and four humans live at our house.</p> <p>Every morning I get up early, run a miie, take a shower, eat breakfast, and feed my pets.</p> <p>Turn left at the stoplight, go one block, and turn right.</p>

Notice that there is always one less comma than items. If there are four items, there are three commas; if there are five items, there are four commas; and so on.

**NB!**

1. If there are three items in a series, some writers omit the last comma. However, it is a good idea to use all the commas because commas make your meaning clearer.

e.g.

I have visited many countries in Europe, Asia, and America.

Shopping, relaxing, and visiting friends are my favorite weekend activities.

2. With only two items, don't use any commas.

e.g.

I have visited many countries in Europe and Asia.

Sleeping and hanging out with friends are my teenage son's favorite weekend activities.