

# Finding and Fixing Comma Splices

This handout will help you recognize comma splices, fix them, and improve the quality of your sentences.

## What is a comma splice?

A comma splice happens when we use a comma in a sentence where a comma should not be used.

In general, commas are used to separate items, details, information, or minor ideas from the main idea of a sentence. If we try to join two sentences (two independent clauses) with a comma, we've created a comma splice.

Example:

**Writing songs requires musicality, a desire to entertain others is also necessary.**

Here, we have two separate sentences that can each stand alone. However, they are meant to be understood as one thought. The comma is not the right punctuation to join them.

## Fix No. 1

We can use a period to separate them.

Writing songs requires musicality. A desire to entertain others is also necessary.

In this case, that may not be the best choice. The two sentences are too closely related. Separating them will make the sentences sound choppy.

## Fix No. 2

We can use the semi-colon [;] to join them.

Writing songs requires musicality; a desire to entertain others is also necessary.

The sentences now flow better, and the connection between them is clear.

## Fix No. 3

Then, there is subordination. Subordination means to indicate one part of the sentence has less importance than another. We do this by using subordinate conjunctions [because, although, even though, since, before/after. . . ]

Although writing songs requires musicality, a desire to entertain others is also necessary.

Writing songs requires musicality even though a desire to entertain others is also necessary.

**Fix No. 4**

If you want to keep the comma, it'll need help from a coordinating conjunction [and, or, but, nor, yet, for, so].

Writing songs requires musicality, and a desire to entertain others is also necessary.

Choose the fix that will make the sentences flow and the idea clear to the reader.

For further review, check out these websites.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fh45mhVsZrU>

<http://www.chompchomp.com/terms/commasplice.pdf>