

## Sentence Errors

Some mistakes are common when writing sentences in English. Each of these 10 common sentence mistakes provides correction information as well as links to more detailed information.

### **Incomplete Sentence or Sentence Fragment**

One [common mistake](#) many students make is the use of [incomplete sentences](#). Each sentence in English must contain at least a subject and a verb, and should be an independent clause. Examples of incomplete sentences without a subject or a verb might include an instruction or a [prepositional phrase](#). For example:

- *Through the door.*
- *In the other room.*
- *Over there.*

These are phrases we may use in spoken English. These phrases shouldn't be used in written English as they are incomplete.

Sentence fragments caused by dependent clauses used without an [independent clause](#) are more common. Remember that [subordinating conjunctions](#) introduce [dependent clauses](#). In other words, if you use a subordinating clause beginning with a word such as 'because, though, if, etc.' there must be an independent clause to complete the thought. This mistake is often made on tests asking a question with 'Why'.

For example:

*Because Tom is the boss.*

*Since he left work early without permission.*

These sentences might answer the question: "Why did he lose his job?" However, these are sentence fragments. The correct answer would be:

*He lost his job because Tom is the boss.*

*He lost his job since he left work early without permission.*

Other examples of incomplete sentences introduced by subordinating clauses include:

*Even though he needs help.*

*If they study enough.*

*As they had invested in the company.*

### **Run-on Sentences**

Run-on sentences are sentences that:

1. Are not connected by appropriate linking language such as conjunctions.
2. Use too many clauses rather than using periods and linking language such as conjunctive adverbs.

The first type leaves out a word — usually a conjunction — that is required to connect a dependent and independent clause. For example:

*The students did well on the test they didn't study very much.*