

What is it?

A comma splice occurs when two independent clauses are joined by a comma. An *independent clause* is another term for a sentence, which is to say it can stand on its own. i.e. it is 'independent'. When two sentences, however, have been separated by a comma only, we have a grammatical problem. In other words, they have been incorrectly connected or "spliced".

What does it look like?

Here is an example:

X *Al is studying engineering , one day he hopes to design his own car.*

How do I fix it?

✓ *Al is studying engineering. One day he hopes to design his own car.*

✓ *Al is studying engineering, and one day he hopes to design his own car.*

✓ *Al is studying engineering; one day he hopes to design his own car.*

What else do I need to know?

- Comma splices are the most frequently occurring errors in student writing, but the easiest to correct—once you know what to look for.
- If two ideas are closely related, a semicolon is your best option.
- You will sometimes find comma splices in works of fiction. Professional writers, however, have earned the write to violate this rule!

