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Commas

Let's eat Grandpa!
Let's eat, Grandpa!

COMMAS
They save lives!

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Why do we need commas?

The dog said my dad is scratching at the door and needs to go for a walk.

Are you going to the movie with Mary Jane?

To eliminate confusion!

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Insert commas where needed.

In the beginning Henry Lisette Steve the kid next door the brilliant but conceited Gail from Buffalo New York and Luis all remembered their lines for the play.

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Were you correct?

In the beginning, Henry, Lisette, Steve, the kid next door, the brilliant, but conceited, Gail from Buffalo, New York, and Luis all remembered their lines for the play.

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Background Info for Rule #1

A clause: A group of words with a subject and verb.
 There are two types of clauses-
 Dependent and Independent:

- I feel tired occasionally.
- Since you left my life

• **An independent clause** can stand alone as a sentence. → I feel tired occasionally.

• **A dependent clause** does not stand alone as a sentence. → Since you left my life

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Do NOT confuse **phrases** and **clauses**!

- A phrase is a group of words that is missing either the subject or the predicate.
 - The big hairy man carrying the umbrella (missing the predicate.... "carrying" is not the predicate; it's just describing his looks).
 - Walking slowly away from the door (This is missing a subject. Who is walking away?)

Remember a **CLAUSE** is a group of words that includes BOTH a subject AND a predicate. Some clauses can survive on their own (independent); some rely on other words to make them survive (dependent).

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If you subscribe to this online service, you will need a password.
 dependent clause independent clause

When I read a novel, I look for careful attention to detail.
 dependent clause independent clause

Because supplies were limited, the store ran out of the sale item quickly.
 dependent clause independent clause

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Examples:

While Tom reads novels, Jack reads comics, but Sam reads only magazines.
 dependent clause independent clause independent clause

Tom reads novels, but Jack reads comics because books are too difficult.
 independent clause independent clause dependent clause

Jack, who reads comics, rarely reads novels; however, Tom enjoys novels.
 dependent clause independent clause

People who read comics rarely read novels; they often find books difficult.
 dependent clause independent clause

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Rule #1- Use a comma and a conjunction (and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so) to separate two independent clauses.

The eighth grade class was ready for the field day, but administration did not allow the event to continue because of the rain.

Because of the rain, the eighth grade class was ready for the field day, but administration did not allow the event to continue.

FANBOYS
 (a way to remember all 7 conjunctions).

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NEVER EVER EVER...

Commit the biggest grammar crime....
COMMA SPICING!

A cartoon illustration showing a man in a red shirt and a woman in a green shirt standing in a doorway. The man is speaking to the woman, and a speech bubble contains the text: "What do you mean I did too many commas?".

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Comma Splices:

When two complete sentences are joined by a comma, and there is no conjunction present, we get a **comma splice**.

Incorrect: She decided not to contribute to the project anymore, she had done her share of the work.

Correcting the Problem:
 These are closely related sentences, but each of them completes a thought; therefore, they either need a period, a semicolon, or a comma with a conjunction between them.

Correct: She decided not to contribute to the project anymore. She had done her share of the work.

Correct: She decided not to contribute to the project anymore; she had done her share of the work.

Correct: She decided not to contribute to the project anymore, yet she had done her share of the work.

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Comma splices can be avoided by using a period between two complete sentences.

Incorrect: A Minneapolis bridge collapsed last night, several people were reported missing.

Correct: A Minneapolis bridge collapsed last night. Several people were reported missing.

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More Comma Splices... Bad, Bad, BAD!

This is a comma splice. The two main clauses are separated by a comma.

rule to remember
A comma splice occurs when two complete sentences are joined by a comma, and there is no conjunction present.

LAM TEMPORARILY AWAY FROM MY DESK. PLEASE DIAL 285 ON THE PHONE AND I WILL COME TO YOUR ASSISTANCE IMMEDIATELY. THANK YOU!

Please Help
Get Off the Grass. It Needs Time to Grow.

In the last few years, youth sports teams have come in for lots of criticism. Parents not kids are the problem, they yell at their kids and at the refs and other parents too.

Louis stomped the accelerator into the floor of the car, his pursuer's headlights shone in his rear-view mirror.

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Comma Splices Are BAD!

COMMA SPLICE
↓
Tom read the novel, his friend saw the movie.

becomes
↓
TWO SENTENCES
↓
Tom read the novel. His friend saw the movie.

COMMA SPLICE!

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Rule #2- Use a comma to set off the elements of a series (three or more things), including the last two.

My favorite holidays are Christmas, Halloween, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, and Thanksgiving.

Mrs. Beadel loves reading, writing, and speaking.

Grandma makes spaghetti and meatballs, macaroni and cheese, and pizza.
