

## Run-ons

By Dr. Karen Petit

### Definition of a Run-on

A run-on has two or more independent clauses that are incorrectly put together. A clause has both a subject and a verb; most clauses also have other elements, such as objects, modifiers, and phrases.

A run-on may lack correct joining words between the clauses:

Grammar exercises often are fun they can improve one's analytical skills.

A run-on also may be incorrectly punctuated, whether or not any joining words are being used:

We can do interactive grammar exercises, we first need to find a good website.

We can do interactive grammar exercises, however we first need to find a good website.

### Kinds of Run-ons

1. A **fused sentence** contains two independent clauses that are put together with no joining words and with no punctuation:  
Learning grammar by doing online quizzes can be fun interactive quizzes can be found on many websites.
2. A **comma splice** contains two independent clauses that are connected with just a comma:  
Learning grammar by doing online quizzes can be fun, interactive quizzes can be found on many websites.

### How to Revise Run-ons

1. A semi-colon or a period can be used:  
Learning grammar by doing online quizzes can be fun; interactive quizzes can be found on many websites.  
Learning grammar by doing online quizzes can be fun. Interactive quizzes can be found on many websites.
2. A coordinating conjunction with a comma can be used:  
Grammar exercises often are fun, and they can improve one's analytical skills.
3. Many kinds of coordinate and subordinate structures can be used to restructure one or both of a run-on's clauses, such as these examples illustrate:  
Grammar exercises often are fun and can improve one's analytical skills.  
Grammar exercises often are fun; furthermore, they can improve one's analytical skills.  
Grammar exercises often are fun because they can improve one's analytical skills.  
Grammar exercises, which often are fun, can improve one's analytical skills.

### Websites with Practice Quizzes

From Capital Community College: <<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/index2.htm>>

From The Internet TESL Journal: <<http://a4esl.org/>>

From John Langan: <[http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073384100/student\\_view0/index.html](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073384100/student_view0/index.html)>

From the OWL's Online Writing Lab at Purdue University: <<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>>