Correcting Comma Splices

Q: What is an independent clause?

A: An independent clause is a clause that contains a subject, a verb, and a complete thought. Therefore, it could stand on its own as a complete sentence.

Ex: I love my dog.

Q: What is a comma splice?

A: When you use a comma to connect two independent clauses, it is a comma splice:

Ex: I love my dog, she is playful and affectionate.

Q: How do I correct a comma splice?

A: There are several ways to correct a comma splice:

1) **Write as two separate sentences.**
   Caution: Too many short sentences can make a paper seem “choppy.”
   Ex: I love my dog. She is playful and affectionate.

2) **Connect independent clauses with a semicolon.**
   Caution: Semicolons are like salt and pepper; don’t overuse them.
   Ex: I love my dog; she is playful and affectionate.

3) **Connect independent clauses with a comma plus a coordinating conjunction (and, but, for, so, nor, or, yet.)**
   Caution: Chose a conjunction that fits the meaning of your sentence.
   Ex: I love my dog, for she is playful and affectionate.

4) **Restructure the sentence, possibly changing one clause into a subordinate clause.**
   Ex: I love my dog because she is playful and affectionate.
   Ex: I love my playful, affectionate dog.