Fragments

The Center

Every sentence must have a subject and a verb and must express a complete thought. A word group punctuated as a sentence but without a subject, a verb, or a complete thought is a fragment.

What are the most common types of sentence fragments?

- A fragment without a subject or a verb
- A fragment containing “who,” “which,” or “that”: The man who sang.
- A dependent-marker fragment: because, until, when, while
- An –ing or “to” fragment: driving, to drive
- An added-detail fragment: for example, such as, like
- A prepositional-phrase fragment: in, about, over, of

How do you correct a fragment missing a subject or verb?

Fragments can be corrected either by adding the missing subject or verb or by connecting the fragment to the sentence before or after it.

No subject: And went to the grocery store after school.
Correct: She went to the grocery store after school.
No verb: The author about the significance of our decisions.
Correct: The author speaks about the significance of our decisions.
Compound Verb Fragment: She planned to go to the dance. But missed it because she was sick.
Correct: She planned to go to the dance but missed it because she was sick. [She is the subject shared by planned and missed].

How do you correct a “who,” “which,” or “that” fragment?

Fragment: The man who is a teacher. He is Mr. Landin.
Correct: The man who is a teacher is Mr. Landin.
Fragment: This is the book. Which we are using for class.
Correct: This is the book which we are using for class.
Fragment: He told me that he was going to class. And that he was then going home.
Correct: He told me that he was going to class and that he was then going home.
**How do you correct a fragment containing a dependent marker?**

Using a dependent marker at the beginning or ending of a sentence may cause a fragment. Some common dependent markers are: *as, although, meanwhile, and since.*

Dependent marker fragments at the beginning can be corrected following this pattern: Dependent marker + subordinate clause + comma + complete sentence.

Fragment: As Mr. Landin was saying, I must use MLA style.
Correct: As Mr. Landin was saying, I must use MLA style.

Dependent marker fragments at the end can be corrected following this pattern: Complete sentence + dependent marker + dependent clause.

Fragment: I must use MLA style. As Mr. Landin was saying.
Correct: I must use MLA style, as Mr. Landin was saying.

**How do you correct “-ing” or “to” fragments?**

Using an “-ing” word or “to” phrase at the beginning of a sentence may result in a fragment. Such fragments often lack a subject and/or verb and can be corrected by removing the period.

Fragment: Jared was trying to get all his work done. To avoid having to work on Friday.
Correct: Jared was trying to get all his work done to avoid having to work on Friday.

**How do you correct added-detail fragments?**

Added-detail words (*for example, also, including, such as*), must be connected to a related full sentence.

Fragment: Gabby loves to travel to beautiful places. Including Ireland and Jamaica.
Correct: Gabby loves to travel to beautiful places including Ireland and Jamaica.

**How do you correct prepositional phrase fragments?**

Find the preposition with its object (at the beach, to the store, in the Writing Center). Then remove the period and attach the prepositional phrase to its related sentence.

Fragment: Jeff decided he had to go. To the Writing Center.
Correct: Jeff decided he had to go to the Writing Center.