

# Correcting Sentence Fragments

What is a sentence fragment?

How to fix a sentence fragment

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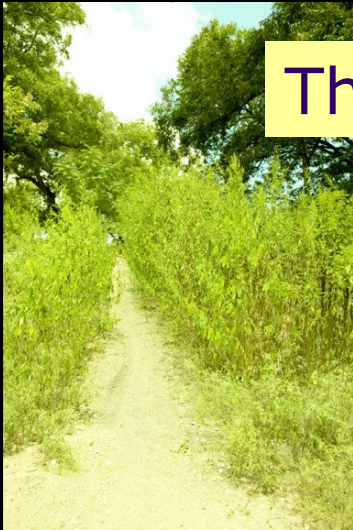
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# What is a sentence fragment?

Not all “sentences” are created equal. Look at the following two groups of words:



## Fragment

The weeds grew. **Because of the rain.** ■

They both begin with a capital letter. ■

They both end with a period. ■

## BUT

The second does not express a complete thought.  
It is a **sentence fragment.**

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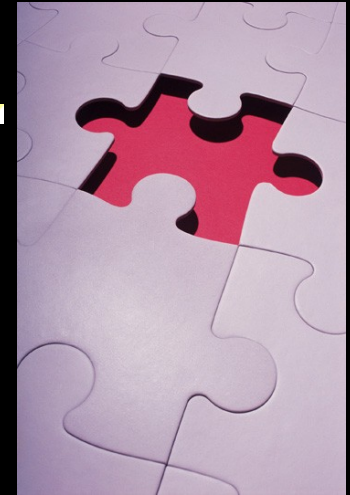
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# What is a sentence fragment?

A **sentence fragment** does not have all the basic parts of a complete sentence. ■

Fragments do not express a complete thought and are missing important information. ■



## Examples

Reached the campsite early. ■

No subject

The ground muddy and wet after the storm. ■

No verb

Because the tent had a leak in it. ■

Not a complete thought

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# What is a sentence fragment?

To identify sentence fragments, use a simple test: ■

1. Does the group of words have a subject? ■



2. Does it have a verb? ■



3. Does it express a complete thought? ■

If the answer to any of these questions is **no**, you have a fragment.

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# What is a sentence fragment?

Apply the test to the following group of words:

The bird sat on a high branch.

**Sentence**

1. Does the group of words have a subject?

**Yes**

2. Does it have a verb?

**Yes**

3. Does it express a complete thought?

**Yes**



**TIP**

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# What is a sentence fragment?

Apply the test to the following group of words:

After the train left the station.

**Fragment**

1. Does the group of words have a subject?

**Yes**

2. Does it have a verb?

**Yes**

3. Does it express a complete thought?

**No**

What happened after the train left the station?



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# What is a sentence fragment?

## On Your Own

Determine whether each group of words is a fragment or a complete sentence. If the item is a complete sentence, write *C*. If the item is a fragment, write *F*. If the item is a fragment, write an *S* if it's missing a subject, a *V* if it's missing a verb, or an *I* if it expresses an incomplete thought.

- \_\_\_ 1. Some Asian flying squirrels three feet long.
- \_\_\_ 2. Flying squirrels can glide through the air.
- \_\_\_ 3. Leap from one tree to another.
- \_\_\_ 4. If they start high up in the tree.

Answer

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# How to fix a sentence fragment

## Add a subject

To fix a sentence fragment, first figure out which piece is missing. ■

If the word group is missing a subject, add a subject to make it into a complete sentence. ■



### Fragment sentence

The zookeeper cared for the sick zebra. ■  
Who cared for the zebra? ■

### Fragment sentence

Every day he fed her a special food. ■  
Who fed her? ■

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# How to fix a sentence fragment

## Add a verb

If a fragment is missing a verb, add a verb to make it into a complete sentence. ■



### ~~Fragment~~ Complete sentence

The leaf **floated** slowly down the stream. ▾

What did the leaf *do* slowly?

### ~~Fragment~~ Complete sentence

More leaves **will fall** from the trees soon. ▾

What will the leaves *do* soon?

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# How to fix a sentence fragment

## On Your Own

Determine whether each group of words is a fragment (F) or a complete sentence (C). If the item is a fragment, make it into a complete sentence by adding the missing subject or verb.

\_\_\_ 1. Wants to send a postcard to her aunt.

\_\_\_ 2. June is visiting the museum today.

\_\_\_ 3. Mr. Leonard the field trip carefully.

\_\_\_ 4. Lucio wants to see the planetarium.

Answer

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# How to fix a sentence fragment

## Attach the fragment to a complete sentence

Sometimes you can fix a sentence fragment by attaching it to a complete sentence. ■

**Fragment**

Until the sun went down.

+

**Complete sentence**

They played football. ■

Not a complete thought.

**Complete sentence**

= They played football until the sun went down.



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# How to fix a sentence fragment

## Attach the fragment to a complete sentence

Sometimes you can fix a sentence fragment by attaching it to a complete sentence. ■

### Fragment

Before the game began.

Not a complete thought ■

### Complete sentence

We bought some snacks. ■

### Complete sentence

= Before the game began, **we** bought some snacks.



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# How to fix a sentence fragment

## On Your Own

Identify the sentence fragments in the following paragraph. Then fix each fragment by attaching it to a complete sentence. Change capitalization and punctuation wherever necessary.

The weather cleared. While we were driving to the campground. We traveled for hours. When we arrived at our campsite. Mom and I set up the tent. My sister hiked to the river with her friend. As the sun set. We cooked bean soup over the fire.

Answer

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# Review A

Identify each word group as a sentence fragment (F) or a complete sentence (C).

- \_\_\_ 1. Jenna the back door open.
- \_\_\_ 2. The geese fly south in winter.
- \_\_\_ 3. Walks the dog after dinner each evening.
- \_\_\_ 4. Someone broke the lock.
- \_\_\_ 5. Because the ground freezes at night.

Answer

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## Review B

Revise each fragment in the following paragraph by (1) adding a subject, (2) adding a verb, or (3) attaching the fragment to a complete sentence. Change capitalization and punctuation wherever necessary.

My friends and I for a hike in the mountains. Put some food, water, and first aid supplies in our packs. Then drove us to the trailhead. Before we had hiked very far. My parents were reminding us to stay nearby. They good hikers themselves. When we arrived at the overlook. Mom spread out a small picnic for us.

Answer

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