

A simple sentence contains a subject, a predicate, and it expresses a complete thought.

A simple sentence can be short:

Jack and Jill went up the hill.

A simple sentence can be long:

In the wee hours of the morning, Mom baked and decorated a birthday cake with pink frosting and yellow roses for my sister's 14th birthday.

But a simple sentence will only have one subject and one predicate.

Simple sentences are great! Writers use them all the time. But, sometimes a writer needs to combine two simple sentences together into a compound sentence. In grammar lingo, we call this combining two independent clauses. An independent clause is strong and can stand alone. It lacks nothing that a complete sentence needs. So when we join them together, we must use punctuation to show that each half is equally strong and able to stand alone without the other half.

There are three ways to join two simple sentences together into one compound sentence.

Option 1: Use a comma and a conjunction.

Basic Structure: **Independent clause, conjunction independent clause.**

Examples: I like pizza, and I like brownies.

He completed his homework in only one hour, yet she worked for four hours.

Now, you try!

Combine the following independent clauses together into one sentence using a conjunction. Use a different conjunction from the list below for each sentence.

and but or for nor yet so

1. Dad washed the dishes after the party. Mom swept the floors.

2. My dog, Pepper, has boundless energy. She also loves to curl up and nap under a blanket.

Option 2: Use a conjunctive adverb.

Basic Structure: **Independent clause; adverb, independent clause.**

Examples: Jake and I studied for hours; consequently, we passed the test.

My brother wanted a new car; therefore, he completed 9 employment applications.

Notice how the sentences above are punctuated. The first independent clause is followed by a semi-colon. Then, there is a comma after the conjunctive adverb.

Now, you try!

Combine the following independent clauses together into one sentence using a conjunctive adverb. Use a different conjunctive adverbs from the list below for each sentence.

| | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| accordingly | for example | indeed | on the other | subsequently |
| additionally | furthermore | likewise | hand | therefore |
| also | hence | moreover | otherwise | thus |
| consequently | however | nevertheless | regardless | |

3. The car had a flat tire. We arrived late to the party.

4. Thelma constantly devours cookies and candy. She never develops a single cavity.

5. The president must be elected by the people. He must represent the people's will.

Option 3: Add a semi-colon only. (no conjunction)

Basic Structure: **Independent clause; closely related independent clause.**

Correct: My sister ate her piece of cake; my brother saved his for later.

Correct: Cynthia is a great vocalist; Carol is not.

Incorrect: Jason unwrapped the gift slowly; he arrived last Thursday. (not related ideas)

This method is less common in writing than options 1 or 2; however, it can be useful especially for joining two short, independent clauses. The key is that the two clauses you are joining must be closely related to one another.

Now, you try!

Combine the following independent clauses together into one sentence using just a semicolon if and only if the clauses are closely related ideas. If the clauses are not closely related, write "cannot join with a semicolon" on the line.

6. I rarely eat in restaurants. I always cook my own meals.

7. My grandmother bakes fresh bread every day. She wants to vacation at the beach.

8. I study at the library. I need a quiet place without distractions.
