

Joining Simple Sentences Together

In order to form more graceful and elegant sentences, it is sometimes desirable to combine simple sentences together into compound sentences. In this process, a simple sentence can be considered to be an independent clause. An independent clause has a subject and predicate, and can stand alone without being attached to other words. Below are four options the writer may choose when combining sentences (or independent clauses) into compound sentences.

1. Use a semicolon by itself to join independent clauses.

Below are shown examples of simple independent sentences, and how they look once they are joined. In order for this process to work, there are two requirements: the original simple sentences must be closely related, and they must be independent clauses.

Original sentences:

Some painters influenced Cezanne. Other painters were influenced by him.

Compound sentence with semicolon:

Some painters influenced Cezanne; other painters were influenced by him.

Original sentences:

This is the end of my story. I have nothing more to say

Compound sentence with semicolon:

This is the end of my story; I have nothing more to say.

2. Use a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb, followed by a comma, to join independent clauses.

Some of the common conjunctive adverbs can be remembered with the acronym HOTSHOT CAT, which stands for *however, otherwise, therefore, similarly, hence, on the other hand, then, consequently, also, thus*. Some other conjunctive adverbs are: *again, besides, further, furthermore, indeed, now, nonetheless, soon, then, moreover, nevertheless, likewise, consequently, accordingly*. Each conjunctive adverb describes a particular relationship that exists between the joined clauses.

Original sentences:

This gadget won't work. There is no point in using it.

Compound sentence with semicolon, conjunctive adverb, and comma:

This gadget won't work; therefore, there is no point in using it.

Original sentences:

Many people enjoy Brando's films. Some critics dislike his work.

Compound sentence with semicolon, conjunctive adverb, and comma:

Many people enjoy Brando's films; however, some critics dislike his work.

3. Use a comma and a coordinating conjunction to join independent clauses.

There are seven conjunctions, known as coordinating conjunctions, which can be remembered by the acronym FAN BOYS: *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*. Like conjunctive adverbs, each of the coordinating conjunctions describes a particular relationship between the joined clauses.

Original sentences:

His diction is excellent. Every word is clear.

Compound sentence with comma and coordinating conjunction:

His diction is excellent, so every word is clear.

Original sentences:

Mr. Thompson wrote a great article. The newspaper published it.

Compound sentence with comma and coordinating conjunction:

Mr. Thompson wrote a great article, and the newspaper published it.

4. Leave the sentences unjoined

There are times when a writer should simply leave the original sentences unjoined. For example, in a composition with many complicated or long sentences, the writer should strive for some variety in the sentence patterns. Therefore, one or two short sentences might be very effective for contrast. Another reason for not joining sentences could be that the original sentences may not be very closely related. And short sentences can sometimes be used for dramatic or special effects.