

# Sentence Fragments

Sentences that do not express a complete thought or do not have a subject and a verb are incomplete. These are referred to as sentence fragments. There are four main ways sentence fragments occur: sentences without a subject, sentences with added detail, sentences beginning with a dependent clause, and sentences starting with a verb. These fragments can be avoided by checking to make sure that each sentence has a clear subject and predicate.

## 1. Sentences without a subject

Every sentence must have its own subject and verb. However, sometimes writers assume that the subject in a previous sentence will carry over into the next sentence. To correct sentence fragments that have no subject, connect it to the previous sentence or add a subject.

*Example:*

Incorrect: I walked to campus to hand in my essay. And put it in the drop box.

Correct: I walked to campus to hand in my essay and put it in the drop box.

Correct: I walked to campus to hand in my essay. I put it in the drop box.

## 2. Sentences with added detail

Detail cannot stand on its own as a sentence since it lacks a subject and a verb. To correct sentence fragments that consist of added detail, connect it to the previous sentence that is being elaborated on or add a subject and a verb.

*Example:*

Incorrect: I have been to five countries in Europe. Including England, France, and Switzerland.

Correct: I have been to five countries in Europe including England, France, and Switzerland.

Correct: I have been to five countries in Europe. These countries include England, France, and Switzerland.

## 3. Sentences beginning with a dependent clause

Dependent clauses do not form complete thoughts, and therefore, they are sentence fragments. Connect the dependent clause to an independent clause to create a complete sentence.

*Example:*

Incorrect: Until class starts. I am going to sip on my coffee.

Correct: I am going to sip on my coffee until class starts.

## 4. Sentences starting with a verb

Sentences which start with a verb and are not commands are fragments. A subject or an implied subject must be present within the sentence to correct these fragments.

*Example:*

Incorrect: I was at the grocery store yesterday. Trying to find fresh carrots in the produce section.

Correct: I was at the grocery store yesterday trying to find fresh carrots in the produce section.

## Sentence Fragments

### Practice: Sentence Fragments

Our beach day turned out to be a huge success. Although it did not seem that way at first. We planned to leave early in the morning. So that we could get the best spot on the beach. We forgot to set an alarm and nobody woke up until 10 A.M.. We all rushed to get ready. In order for us to still get to the beach before lunch. We were just out of the city when we had to turn around, as John forgot his bathing suit. As we were driving to the beach it started to rain. Since we had been planning this trip for months. The rain could not deter us from going to the beach.

Thankfully, it stopped raining just as we arrived at the beach. By this time it was 1 P.M. and I was really hungry. I went to get the cooler in the trunk where I had packed everybody's lunch. Except that I realized that I left the cooler on the kitchen counter. I went to the ice cream stand and they were all sold out of my favourite ice cream. To make matters even worse, I dropped my ice cream cone in the sand.

After finally eating. We started to enjoy our day at the beach. The beach was almost empty. Because it rained earlier. We made sand castles. We played lots of games in the water. Including Ultimate Frisbee and Marco Polo. I even went surfing. While John went to go tubing. After all the problems this morning. I am really happy with how today turned out. I cannot wait to have another beach day.

### Answers:

Our beach day turned out to be a huge success, although it did not seem that way at first. We planned to leave early in the morning so that we could get the best spot on the beach. We forgot to set an alarm and nobody woke up until 10 A.M.. We all rushed to get ready, in order for us to still get to the beach before lunch. We were just out of the city when we had to turn around, as John forgot his bathing suit. As we were driving to the beach it started to rain. Since we had been planning this trip for months, the rain could not deter us from going to the beach.

Thankfully, it stopped raining just as we arrived at the beach. By this time it was 1 P.M. and I was really hungry. I went to get the cooler in the trunk where I had packed everybody's lunch, except that I realized that I left the cooler on the kitchen counter. I went to the ice cream stand and they were all sold out of my favourite ice cream. To make matters even worse, I dropped my ice cream cone in the sand.

After finally eating, we started to enjoy our day at the beach. The beach was almost empty because it rained earlier. We made sand castles. We played lots of games in the water, including Ultimate Frisbee and Marco Polo. I even went surfing while John went to go tubing. After all the problems this morning, I am really happy with how today turned out. I cannot wait to have another beach day.