

## Ooligan Press Blog Post (2020):

Edited in Google Docs for Grammar, House Style, Proper HTML Tagging, and SEO

### Front Matter

**Title:** Confessions of a Comma Splicer

**Author:** Melinda Crouchley

**Slug:** confessions-comma-splicer

**Category:** Manager Monday ~~Managing Editor~~

**Tags:** comma splice, editor, writer, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, commas, independent clauses, semicolons, coordinating conjunction, subordinate conjunction, [mistakes](#), [learning](#)

**Hook:** A [serialformer](#) comma splicer confesses to her crimes and helps fellow writers learn to recognize and revise poor sentence structure, ~~as well as provides editing resources.~~

**Focus Keyword:** ~~writing mechanics, self editing tips~~ grammar mistakes

**Excerpt:** ~~"I'm here to confess to my comma splicing ways and help everyone else guilty of comma splicing to learn the error of their ways before it's too late. Just kidding. It's never too late to learn something new or re-learn something old." I'm here to confess to my comma-splicing crimes and help everyone else who's guilty of comma splicing learn the error of their ways before it's too late. Just kidding—it's never too late to learn something new or relearn something old.~~

### Middle of Page

~~<b>FIRST STEP: OWN YOUR MISTAKE</b>~~

~~<p><p>Not every writer or author is forged with the basics of the English language. We all grow up learning the rigors of grammar, but sometimes, our training falls ~~te~~by the wayside. We read books, we write, we talk, we listen to the patterns of normal human speech, we read more books, and we pick up bad habits along the way. I sure did.</p>~~

~~<p>But [as](#) it turns out, at least when it comes to book publishing, mechanics and grammar still matter. Quite a lot. If you want to sell a manuscript or become a [professional](#) copyeditor, the best way to achieve ~~either objective~~your goals is to get back to basics.</p>—~~

~~<p><b>FIRST STEP: OWN YOUR MISTAKE</b><br>~~

~~<p>Sentence structure is one of those key basics. ~~A~~, and [one](#) of my most common sentence-structure errors was the dreaded comma splice. At some point along the way, I picked up [at](#)this nasty habit. In my writing brain, the one rushing to get all the words down on paper, it just sounded ~~sed~~ right. ~~It sounds better and makes sense coming from my fingertips.~~ But what sounds correct in our heads, isn't always what reads well on the page. So I'm here to confess to my comma-splicing ~~ways~~crimes and help everyone else [who's](#) guilty of comma splicing ~~to~~ learn the error of their ways before it's too late. Just kidding. ~~—~~it's never too late to learn something new or re-learn something old.</p>~~

~~<p><b>SECOND STEP: RECOGNIZE AND REPAIR</b><br>~~

~~<p>A comma splice is ~~the result of an writer using~~when a comma [is used](#) to connect two independent clauses. A clause is a group of words that includes a subject and a finite verb, and~~

an independent clause is a clause that can stand as a complete sentence. ~~Which~~This means comma splicing is piecing together two separate sentences using only a comma. It's not the end of the world, but it is bad grammar.

~~Even with all that description a nasty habit can be hard to recognize at first. It needs to be seen for what it is. So~~ Here's an example of a comma-splice:  
This is a comma splice, it can be hard to recognize if you aren't looking for it.

Now, how does something like this get fixed? As with many writing faux pas, there are usually several solutions ~~to revise~~.

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**1.** Add a coordinating conjunction between the two independent clauses.  
Coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, or, nor, yet) join words, phrases, or clauses.  
This is a comma splice, but it can be hard to recognize if you aren't looking for it.

**2.** Add a subordinate conjunction. A subordinate conjunction (although, as, because, if, since, so, that, unless, while) typically joins dependent clauses to independent clauses, but can also be used in this instance.  
This is a comma splice, although it can be hard to recognize if you aren't looking for it.

**3.** Change the comma to a semicolon. A semicolon is a punctuation mark (;) indicating a pause, typically between two ~~main~~independent clauses, ~~and~~that is much more pronounced than ~~the pause indicated by~~ a comma.  
This is a comma splice; it can be hard to recognize if you aren't looking for it.

**4.** Change the comma to a period. A period is a punctuation mark (.) indicating that the ~~main~~sentence-clause has ended.

This is a comma splice. It can be hard to recognize if you aren't looking for it.

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<p><b>THIRD STEP: RESOURCES</b><br>

In the ~~hot~~heat of writing, ~~and~~ especially in the rush to meet a deadline, it can still be challenging to find those pesky comma splices hiding among the shining pearls of ~~those~~ otherwise perfectly formed sentences. And maybe, ~~like with me as in my case~~, those are the grammatical issues you are most blind to: the sort of natural errors that your editorial or revising eye just ~~glazes~~passes right over.

Luckily, there are resources to help ~~hone that editorial~~sharpen that eye. ~~The obvious ones, those employed by editors~~For example, ~~<cite>~~The Copyeditor's Handbook~~</cite>~~ and ~~<cite>~~The Chicago Manual of Style~~</cite>~~ ~~to can help you~~ relearn all those pesky sentence-structure rules ~~and refine them~~.

Once the studying is complete, then it's time to move on to testing. There are several ~~helpful~~ online quizzes ~~that satisfy the requirements~~, but the best of the bunch were created by ~~<a href="https://www.niu.edu/writingtutorial/punctuation/quizzes/CommaSplice.htm">~~Northern Illinois University~~</a>~~, ~~the~~~~<a href="https://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/exercises/grammar/grammar\_tutorial/page\_47.htm">~~the University of Bristol~~</a>~~, and ~~<a href="http://guidetogrammar.org/grammar/quizzes/nova/nova4.htm">~~Villanova

University</a>.</p>

<p>Other options include online and digital grammar checkers like <a href="https://www.grammarly.com"/>Grammarly</a>, <a href="https://virtualwritingtutor.com/">Virtual Writing Tutor</a>, or <a href="https://www.grammarlookup.com/">Grammar Lookup</a>.</p>

<p><b>IN CONCLUSION</b><br>

<p>Being guilty of using comma splices doesn't make you a bad writer. But knowing how to recognize and revise ~~them~~, these sentences before an editor gets ahold of a manuscript, will definitely make you a <em>better</em> writer.</p>

### **Back Matter**

**Sources:** <a href="https://www.amazon.com/Copyeditors-Handbook-Publishing-Corporate-Communications/dp/0520271564">The Copyeditor's Handbook</a>, <a href="https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html">The Chicago Manual of Style</a>, <a href="https://www.merriam-webster.com/">Merriam Webster Online Dictionary</a>

**Facts:** Definition of sentence structure elements and punctuation marks.