



Overview: Fragments

[View Glossary](#)

A fragment is a piece of a sentence that is punctuated as a complete sentence. But it does not express a complete thought. Once you learn how to identify fragments, you can avoid them in your writing.

A complete sentence must have both a subject and a verb. If one or both are missing or if the subject and verb are introduced by a dependent word, you have only part of a sentence, a **fragment**. Even if it begins with a capital letter and ends with a period, it cannot stand alone and must be corrected in your writing.

Type 1: *-ing* Fragments

Breaking the sidewalk. The oak tree is large and strong.

Correction 1: *Connect the fragment to the sentence before or after it.*

Example: **Breaking the sidewalk,** the oak tree is large and strong.

Correction 2: *Make the fragment into an independent clause.*

Example: **The oak tree is breaking the sidewalk.** The oak tree is large and strong.

Type 2: *to* Fragments

Some people have moved. **To live in the heart of town.**

Correction 1: *Connect the fragment to the sentence before or after it.*

Example: Some people have moved **to live in the heart of town.**

Correction 2: *Make the fragment into an independent clause.*

Example: Some people have moved. **They live in the heart of town.**

Hint: A *to* fragment can also occur at the beginning of a sentence. In this case, insert a comma between the two sentence parts when correcting the fragment.

To live in the heart of town, some people have moved.

Type 3: Dependent-Clause Fragments

Because there are no malls here. We go to another city to shop.

Correction 1: *Connect the fragment to the sentence before or after it.*

Example: Because there are no malls here, we go to another city to shop.

Correction 2: *Make the fragment into an independent clause.*

Example: There are no malls here. We go to another city to shop.

Hint: If the dependent clause comes first, put a comma between the two parts of the sentence. If the dependent clause comes second, the comma is not necessary.

Because there are no malls here, we go to another city to shop.

We go to another city to shop **because there are no malls here.**

Type 4: Afterthought Fragments

He works at the garage. **And the bank.**

Correction 1: *Connect the fragment to the sentence before or after it.*

Example: He works at the garage **and** the bank.

Correction 2: *Make the fragment into an independent clause.*

Example: He works at the garage. **He also works** at the bank.

The first correction connects the fragment to the sentence before it. The second correction makes the fragment an independent clause with its own subject and verb.

Type 5: Relative-Clause Fragments

The hardware store is on the corner. **Which is a good location.**

Correction 1: *Connect the fragment to the sentence before or after it.*

Example: The hardware store is on the corner, **which** is a good location.

Correction 2: *Make the fragment into an independent clause.*

Example: The hardware store is on the corner. **It** is a good location.

Overview and Help Me Answer This adapted from *Mosaics: Focusing on Sentences in Context* by Kim Flachmann.