SENTENCE FRAGMENTS

WHAT IS A FRAGMENT?

A sentence fragment lacks an essential element that completes a sentence (such as a subject or verb) or does not express a complete thought. On the other hand, a complete sentence contains a subject, verb, and expresses a complete thought.

Types of Sentence Fragments:

Missing Subject

Missing Verb

Dependent Clauses

MISSING SUBJECT

Here is an example of a sentence fragment with a missing subject:

Incorrect: Went to dinner after the graduation ceremony.

(Who went to dinner after the graduation ceremony?)

Correct: Kiley and her family went to dinner after the graduation ceremony.

MISSING VERB

Here is an example of a sentence fragment with no verb:

Incorrect: They lunch after business class.

(What did they do with lunch after business class?)

Correct: They **ate** lunch after business class.

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MISSING SUBJECT

A sentence that contains a subject and verb but does not express a complete thought.
Here is an example of a dependent clause fragment:

Incorrect: Although she wants to go to the movies.
(There is a subject and verb, but this is not a complete thought)

Correct: Although she wants to go to the movies**, she must study for her communications test instead.**

MORE DEPENDENT CLAUSE FRAGMENT EXAMPLES

Incorrect: To go to work. She has to take the bus.
(The dependent clause, "to go to work," is a prepositional phrase)

Correct: To go to work she has to take the bus. She has to take the bus to go to work.

Incorrect: When Brian went to the store.
(There is a subject and verb, but this is not a complete thought)

Correct: When Brian went to the store he bought apples and cranberry juice.

Incorrect: The baby wouldn't stop crying. Because it was hungry.
(The dependent clause here is "because it was hungry")

Correct: The baby wouldn't stop crying because it was hungry.

To check for sentence fragments, read your paper backward. This way the sentences will sound as if they do not relate, and it will be easier to detect fragments.