



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.