

Sentence Fragments

Defined:

- In English grammar, a sentence **MUST** contain a subject and a verb.
- A sentence fragment is an incomplete sentence which is missing a subject, verb, or is not a complete thought (because of the use of dependent words or subordination).

Eg. Even though my mom told me there was food at home. The fridge was empty!

**There are four types of sentence fragments:
dependent-word, ing and to, added-detail, & missing-subject**

Dependent-Word Fragments:

Dependent clauses/phrases are not complete sentences on their own. They are a phrase which depends on another statement to complete its thought and generally begins with one of the following:

after	even though	so that	whatever	which
although	ever since	than	when	whichever
as	how	that	whenever	while
as if	if	though	where	who
because	in order that	unless	whereas	whom
before	since	until	wherever	whose
even if	so (that)	what	whether	why

How to Correct a Dependent-Word Fragment:

Attach the sentence before or after the dependent-word fragment using a comma.

Fragment:

Even though my mom told me there was food at home. The fridge was completely empty!

Correct:

Even though my mom told me there was food at home, the fridge was completely empty!

-ing & to Fragments:

When an **-ing verb** or **to + verb** appears at the start of a phrase without a noun, a fragment may occur because of a missing subject. The writer has attempted to replace the subject with a verb (action), leaving the reader questioning who is *doing* the action.

How to Correct an -ing Fragment (option one):

Attach the fragment to the phrase before it or after it using a conjunction or a comma.

Fragment:

Bob the builder was building a castle for his wife. Trying to impress her.

Correct:

Bob the builder was building a castle for his wife, trying to impress her.

How to Correct an -ing Fragment (option two):

Add a subject and change the -ing verb to the true form of the verb.

Fragment:

We were eating at the Keg. *Not expecting anything too crazy, but the steak was astounding!*

Correct:

We were eating at the Keg. *We did not expect anything too crazy, but the steak was astounding!*

How to Correct a to Fragment:

When to is at the start of a word group a fragment appears, this can be corrected by adding it to the previous sentence.

Fragment:

At the movie theatre, I arrive one hour early. *To secure my spot in the front row. I really had a fun time.*

Correct:

At the movie theatre, I arrived one hour early *to* secure my spot in the front row. I really had a fun time.

Added-Detail Fragments:

The purpose of added details is to provide elaboration or examples to extend the reader's understanding. These details are not needed to complete the sentence, but cannot stand on their own. Added-detail fragments are typically missing a subject or verb and often begin with:

also	like	for example	except
especially	such as	including	excluding

How to Correct an Added-Detail Fragment:

Attach or insert the fragment to the sentence before using a conjunction, transition word and/or a comma.

Fragment:

Jamal likes working at Rogers Arena. He enjoys the benefits. *Such as meeting the Canucks players.*

Correct:

Jamal likes working at Rogers Arena. He enjoys the benefits, *such as* meeting the Canucks players.

Missing-Subject Fragments:

A missing subject fragment is just a sentence that doesn't have a subject. Therefore, it cannot be an independent sentence (which must contain a subject + verb).

How to Correct a Missing Subject Fragment:

Combine the fragment and the sentence before or after using a conjunction, transition and/or a comma.

Fragment:

Steve loved to eat candy. *But detested eating his vegetables.*

Correct:

Steve loved to eat candy *but* detested eating his vegetables.

How to Correct a Missing Subject Fragment:

Complete the sentence by adding a subject (often a pronoun).

Fragment:

Correct:

First, I woke up and took a shower.
Then ate breakfast with my family.

First, I woke up and took a shower. Then I ate
breakfast with my family.

Sentence Fragments Review

- A. IDENTIFY THE TYPE OF FRAGMENT (**dependent**, **ing**, **to**, **added-detail**, **missing subject**)
B. CORRECT THE SENTENCE FRAGMENT

1. The scene was filled with beauty. Such as the sun sending its brilliant rays to the Earth and the leaves of various shades of red, yellow, and brown moving slowly in the wind.

The scene was filled with beauty, such as the sun sending its brilliant rays to the Earth, and the leaves of various shades of red, yellow, and brown moving slowly in the wind.
added-detail

2. Jeremy has switched programs. Because he has decided to become an electrical engineer.

Jeremy has switched programs because he has decided to become an electrical engineer.
dependent-word

3. I called to cancel my train ride home. Being the day before my psychology midterm. I knew my parents would understand.

I called to cancel my train ride home. Being the day before my psychology midterm, I knew my parents would understand.

I called to cancel my train ride home. It was the day before my psychology midterm. I knew my parents would understand.

-ing fragment (missing subject)

4. Proofreading essays for spelling mistakes is a tedious task. Especially when the writing has a lot of errors in homonyms.

Proofreading essays for spelling mistakes is a tedious task, especially when the writing has a lot of errors in homonyms.
added-detail

5. Werner often procrastinates when he should be studying. To prepare for final exams.

Werner often procrastinates when he should be studying to prepare for final exams.
to fragment (missing subject)

6. I treated myself to dinner. After I cashed my paycheck.

I treated myself to dinner after I cashed my paycheck.
dependent-word

7. Ellen walked all over the neighbourhood yesterday. Trying to find her dog Fido. Several people claimed they had seen him only hours before.
Ellen walked all over the neighbourhood yesterday, trying to find her dog Fido. Several people claimed they had seen him only hours before.
-ing fragment (missing subject)

8. When I graduate. I will get a job. That may not exist today.
When I graduate, I will get a job that may not exist today.
dependent dependent

9. Since Kim was not read to as a child. She has a difficult time keeping up with her course readings. As a result, she has vowed to read every day to her own children.
Since Kim was not read to as a child, she has a difficult time keeping up with her course readings. As a result, she has vowed to read every day to her own children.
dependent-word

10. Many students enjoy group-work activities. Because the time goes by faster. More active learning also takes place.
Many students enjoy group-work activities because the time goes by faster and more active learning also takes place.
dependent; added-detail