

For more information
on commas and
coordinating
conjunctions, see Mini
-Lesson #8,
"Coordinating Two
Sentences"
and *The Everyday
Writer*, 3rd Edition,
Section 22a
(pages 187-188).



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More mini-lesson can be found at
[http://dept.kent.edu/english/WritingCent/writngcenter/
mini.htm](http://dept.kent.edu/english/WritingCent/writngcenter/mini.htm)

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COMMAS between two sentences

*Mini-Lesson
#25*



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Commas alone cannot join two complete sentences. However, a comma with one of the following coordinating conjunctions can combine two complete sentences:

and
but
or
for (meaning “because”)
so
yet (meaning “but”)
nor

These coordinating conjunctions can be used to join ideas of equal weight or importance:

My dog is old. My cat is still a kitten.

My dog is old, but my cat is still a kitten.

Use these examples as a guide for using commas to combine two sentences:

Ann Landers is an advice columnist, **and** her sister writes an advice column too.

Mike looked for the way out of the cave, **but** he couldn’t remember which tunnel led outside.

Are you coming to the movies with us, **or** are you going to the mall with them?

The actors were all more nervous than usual before a play, **for** they had heard that the President and First Lady were in the audience.

Jeanette felt she had very poor public speaking skills, **so** she signed up for a non-credit speech course in order to practice.

I couldn’t get into the class, **yet** I needed it to graduate.

The first taxicab did not stop for us, **nor** did any of the other four that passed us in the next hour.

Useful vocabulary:

Independent Clause is another way to refer to a complete sentence. An independent clause must include a subject, a verb, and a complete thought.

Comma splice refers to two sentences joined only with the comma without the coordinating conjunction that should follow.

Run-on refers to two sentences joined only with a coordinating conjunction without the comma preceding it.

Fused sentence refers to two sentences joined with no comma and no coordinating conjunction.

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