HOW TO “DIVORCE” RUN-ON SENTENCES

HOW TO TELL WHEN YOUR SENTENCE IS IN TROUBLE:
A run-on sentence has more than one subject/verb combination. It has two or more answers to who does what?
For example: This is my winning lottery ticket, I bought it at Kroger's.

Sentence 1 - This is my winning lottery ticket.
Sentence 2 - I bought it at Kroger's.

GROUNDS FOR DIVORCE #1 - THE COMMA SPLICE.
A comma alone is not enough to connect two sentences. For example:
Wrong – I was tired from working late, I had to go to class anyway.
Right – I was tired from working late; I had to go to class anyway.
Right – I was tired from working late, but I had to go to class anyway.

GROUNDS FOR DIVORCE #2 - THE FUSED SENTENCE.
Sentences cannot just run together. They must be joined with a coordinating conjunction or a subordinating conjunction. For example:
Wrong – My brother just graduated from high school he will attend Stephen F. Austin State University.
Right – My brother just graduated from high school, so he will attend Stephen F. Austin State University.
Right – My brother will attend Stephen F. Austin State University because he wants to study nursing.

FOR A QUICKIE DIVORCE:
1) Separate each subject and verb with a period into two simple sentences.
Wrong – The singer bowed the crowd grew still.
Right – The singer bowed. The crowd grew still.

2) Join related ideas into a compound sentence with a semi colon or a coordinating conjunction.
Wrong – My brother just graduated from high school he will attend Stephen F. Austin State University.
Right – My brother just graduated from high school, so he will attend Stephen F. Austin State University.
Right – The weather was nice, so we went to the lake.

3) Use complex sentences to show the relationship between ideas with a subordinating conjunction.
Wrong – We had pizza for dinner we couldn’t decide what to cook.
Right – We had pizza for dinner because we couldn’t decide what to cook.
Wrong – It was a holiday, we went to the parade
Right – Since it was a holiday, we went to the parade.

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