

Punctuation: Comma Splices and Conjunctions

When you write in English, you have to be careful with punctuation.

You **cannot** put two sentences together with only a comma (,) – this is called a “comma splice”. (A “comma splice” is like a run-on sentence – you should avoid it in your writing.)

If you want to put two sentences together, you need a **conjunction: and / but / so / because**
****Note: With “and/but/so” you need to use a comma, but you usually don’t need a comma with “because”.**

Examples:

I went home early, I did my homework. **(Wrong!)**

I went home early, **and** I did my homework. **(Right!)**

I didn’t finish my homework, the teacher was angry. **(Wrong!)**

I didn’t finish my homework, **so** the teacher was angry. **(Right!)**

The teacher was angry **because** I didn’t finish my homework. **(Right!)**

You can draw pictures in class, you can’t talk to other students. **(Wrong!)**

You can draw pictures in class, **but** you can’t talk to other students. **(Right!)**

Combine the sentences below, using a conjunction (and/but/so/because) and a comma (if you use and/but/so). (See page 76 for sample answers.)

1. Chris went to Europe, he visited many countries.

2. I fell down the stairs last night, I didn’t get hurt.

3. I wanted to eat sushi, I went to a Japanese restaurant.

4. John and Kate went on a date, they didn’t have a very good time.

5. Willy enjoys playing badminton, he also likes to play soccer.

6. Andy hit another student in class, he got in trouble.
