

Eliminating the Comma Splice

When you join together (or splice) two **independent clauses** with only a comma, you have committed a Comma Splice. This is an error that can be corrected in one of **five*** ways.

1-3. Separate the clauses with a period, semicolon or comma + conjunction.

The diagram illustrates three methods for separating two independent clauses. On the left, the text "Blues music has a colorful history in Arizona" is labeled as an "Independent clause". On the right, the text "many famous musicians have lived there." is also labeled as an "independent clause.". In the center, three options are shown between brackets: a period (.), a semicolon (;), and a comma (,) followed by a plus sign (+). To the right of the plus sign, a list of conjunctions is provided: "but", "or", "yet", "for", "and", "nor", and "so".

Independent clause
Blues music has a colorful history in Arizona

Independent Clause: A group of words that contains a subject and a verb but no subordinator. Will stand as a complete sentence by itself.

independent clause.
many famous musicians have lived there.

Dependent (Subordinate) Clause: A group of words that contains a subject and a verb AND a subordinator. Can not stand as a sentence alone.

4. Turn one independent clause into a dependent clause.

Add a subordinator and a comma if needed.

Because many famous blues musicians have lived there, Arizona has a colorful musical history.

Subordinator:
A conjunction or relative pronoun (like *if, which, when, as, because* or *although*) that when added to a clause renders it **subordinate**, or unable to stand as a sentence.

5. Combine the two clauses into one independent clause (sentence).

Many famous blues musicians have lived in Arizona and contributed to its colorful musical history.

* **Actually, six:** Separate the clauses with a **semicolon + conjunctive adverb + comma**.

Many famous blues musicians have lived in Arizona; consequently, the state has a colorful musical history.