The Comma Splice

What it is When two separate independent clauses, each complete on its own, are incorrectly joined by a comma

For example: The man built a large house with five bedrooms on the edge of town, his wife didn’t like it and refused to move in.

Background definitions

A main (independent) clause is a clause that can stand alone by itself. It does not need any additional information to complete the sentence.

For example: The rain in November often turns into snow.

A subordinate (dependent) clause is a clause that cannot stand on its own: it needs a main clause to complete the thought.

For example: Because the rain in November often turns into snow......
If the rain in November often turns into snow......

Subordinating conjunctions turn a main clause into a subordinate clause.

Examples: After, although, as long as, because, before, even though, if, just as, once, provided that, since, unless, until, when, where, which, while, who, why

How to fix a comma splice

1. Replace comma with a semi colon ;
2. Replace comma with a period .
3. Add a coordinating conjunction For And Nor But Or Yet So (FANBOYS)

For example: The man built a large house with five bedrooms on the edge of town, but his wife didn’t like it and refused to move in.

4. Make one clause a subordinate (dependent) clause

For example: Although the man built a large house with five bedrooms on the edge of town, his wife didn’t like it and refused to move in.

After the man built a large house with five bedrooms on the edge of town, his wife didn’t like it and refused to move in.

For more information on punctuation as well as interactive grammar exercises, please visit: The Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) at: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/