

Three Ways to Correct Sentence Fragments

Once you have identified a sentence fragment, there are three basic ways correct it and turn it into a complete sentence. The one that you will use depends on what is missing in the fragment and what sentences come before and after the fragment.

Remember, a word group is a fragment because it is missing one or more of the essential parts of a sentence: the subject, the verb, and/or the ability to stand alone as a complete thought.

Method One: *Connect the fragment to a nearby sentence.*

Often when a fragment occurs, it is because the writer ended a sentence too soon. Often the fragment will form a complete thought with the sentence that comes before or after it. In this case you can connect the fragment to the nearby sentence to form a single sentence and a complete thought.

Example:

INCORRECT: *Mike was watching the birds. While walking in the park.*
CORRECTED: *Mike was watching the birds while walking in the park.*

Method Two: *Make the fragment complete by adding the necessary subject and revising as needed.*

Sometimes a word group is a fragment because it is missing the subject. If you determine it is missing the subject, add the subject and revise the rest of the sentence as needed.

Example:

INCORRECT: *Watching the birds.*
CORRECTED: *Mike was watching the birds.*

Method Three: *Make the fragment complete by adding the necessary verb and revising as needed.*

Sometimes a word group is a fragment because it is missing the verb. If you determine it is missing the verb, add the verb and revise the rest of the sentence as needed

Example:

INCORRECT: *Mike in the park.*
CORRECTED: *Mike walked in the park.*