

# FRAGMENT TIP 3

**Know the punctuation rules for fixing fragments.**

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## PUNCTUATION RULE 1

**MAIN CLAUSE** + Ø + **SUBORDINATE CLAUSE** .

Maria has no patience for the spilled soda or explosion of potato chips **when Frank leaps off the sofa to scream at the umpire on the television.**

Tom ate the slice of pizza **even though everyone had seen Bernard sneeze all over it.**

## PUNCTUATION RULE 2

**SUBORDINATE CLAUSE** + , + **MAIN CLAUSE** .

**Whenever Francisco applies styling products,** his hair acquires a crunchy shell.

**Since everyone was socializing in the living room,** our dog Barney stole the roasted chicken off the kitchen counter.

## PUNCTUATION RULE 3

**MAIN CLAUSE** + , + **PARTICIPLE PHRASE** .

William collapsed on the sofa, **dreading the moment when he would have to open his credit card statement.**

Violet dropped her phone, startled by the news that her nemesis was returning to town.

#### PUNCTUATION RULE 4

**PARTICIPLE PHRASE** + , + **MAIN CLAUSE** .

Celebrating the perfect score on her essay, Cristina skipped down the hall.

Knocked to the ground by the puppy's exuberant leaping, Jason greeted Goliath, his Great Dane.

#### PUNCTUATION RULE 5

**MAIN CLAUSE** + Ø + **INFINITIVE PHRASE** .

Nick wants to visit Paris to bungee jump off the Eiffel Tower.

Soon we are desperate to find Squeeze, our seven-foot python who escaped his cage.

#### PUNCTUATION RULE 6

**INFINITIVE PHRASE** + , + **MAIN CLAUSE** .

To eat his bacon cheeseburger in peace, Leonard locked himself in the laundry room where Penelope, his poodle, could not wet him with drool.

To see if her writing had improved, Leslie peeked at the grade on the last page of her essay.

## PUNCTUATION RULE 7

**MAIN CLAUSE** + , + **AFTERTHOUGHT TRANSITION** + Ø + **DETAILS** .

Emily screams at the sight of many things, **such as mice, spiders, and lima beans**.

Sam loves all flavors of ice cream, **especially chocolate-broccoli**.

## PUNCTUATION RULE 8\*

**MAIN CLAUSE** + Ø + **LONELY VERB PHRASE** .

Grandmother Essie took a deep breath **and blew out all ninety-seven candles on her birthday cake**.

Christopher vowed to eat more vegetables **but could not stomach the thought of a chocolate-broccoli muffin**.

\*If the coordinating conjunction (**and, but, or**, etc.) beginning the lonely verb phrase connects *more than* two verbs, you will need to use a comma. See **Comma Tip 4** for details.

## PUNCTUATION RULE 9

When you connect an **appositive** (a **noun phrase**) to a **main clause**, use a comma (or commas for an **interrupter**) to separate the appositive from the rest of the sentence.

**MAIN CLAUSE** + , + **APPOSITIVE** .

**APPOSITIVE** + , + **MAIN CLAUSE** .

**START OF THE MAIN CLAUSE** + , + **APPOSITIVE** + , + **END OF THE MAIN**  
**CLAUSE** .

Yvonne flirted with Joseph, **the cutest server at the food court.**

**A powerful swimmer,** Stephen jumped into the pool to save  
Cassandra's calculus book before it sank.

Freddie pounded her computer, **a bargain bought at a garage**  
**sale,** and lamented the loss of another document.

