

# FRAGMENT TIP 3

## Know the punctuation rules for fixing fragments.

---

### PUNCTUATION RULE 1

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

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

Tom ate the slice of pizza Ø 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.

Finally, Violet ripped open the plastic, startled by the eruption of color that burst from the bag of candy.

## PUNCTUATION RULE 4

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

Celebrating the grade of A 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 Ø to bungee jump off the Eiffel Tower.

Soon we hope Ø 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, wouldn't 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* Ø *mice, spiders, and lima beans*.

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

## PUNCTUATION RULE 8\*

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

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

\*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](#).

## PUNCTUATION RULE 9

When you are connecting an **appositive [noun phrase]** to a **main clause**, use a comma [or commas] to separate the appositive from the rest of the sentence.

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

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

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

Yvonne flirted with Joseph, the cutest young man 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.

