Fixing Sentence Fragments

What is a sentence fragment? – A part of a sentence that is missing a subject or verb, and it does not express a complete thought. While it may look like a complete sentence, a fragment cannot be easily understood on its own. English sentences must include a subject, object, and a verb.

How do I identify a sentence fragment?

1. Look for your subject:
   
   Example: “Drove to the store.”
   
   Who drove to the store? This lacks a subject.
   
   Correction: “Dave drove to the store.”

2. Look for a missing verb or incorrect verb form:
   
   Example: “A fast car.”
   
   What is the fast car doing? This lacks a verb.
   
   Correction: “A fast car sped down the road.”

3. Misuse of clauses like ‘Such as, for example, especially, etc.’ These should not exist as their own, separate, sentences.
   
   Example: “Such as, the flute.”
   
   This might provide an example but it is an incomplete sentence. Try using it as part of another sentence instead.
   
   Correction: “He can play several musical instruments, such as the flute.”

4. Look for abandoned clauses. These are sentences that end partway through.
   
   Example: “When I submitted my research paper.”
   
   What happened after that?
   
   Correction: “When I submitted my research paper, I got an A.”

How do I fix a sentence fragment?

1. Is there another sentence that you can attach the fragment to in order to make a complete sentence?

2. Add whatever is missing to the sentence (subject, object, verb, or complete the thought).

3. Rewrite the fragment or the entire passage.