

NCE WITH TWO OR

S

V ; S V .

**PATTERN 2:** COMPOUND SENTENCE WITH  
ELLIPTICAL CONSTRUCTION  
(comma indicates the omitted verb)  
(omitted verb)

S V DO or SC ; S , DO or SC .

or more semicolons to connect

fortunately George got a C.  
rather watch TV; I like to eat  
panice.

not the spectacles of books to  
and her there.”—John Dryden

rm breeze we also enjoyed the

mes in winter the temperature  
80.

each we also like going shop-  
favorite thing to do.

of Southern California they  
miss the diverse neighborhoods

the beauty there it would make

### Explanation

This pattern echoes PATTERN 1, but we leave out the verb in the second clause *because* and *only if* it would needlessly repeat the verb of the first clause. Notice also, you may have a direct object (DO), which receives the action of the verb; or you may have a subject complement (SC), which describes the subject. The comma says to the reader, “Mentally insert the same verb you have already read in the first clause.”

You need parallel wording in both clauses, and the verb must be *exactly* the same.

For example, this is not parallel:

We (S)	like (V)	classical	music (DO)	;
George	,	punk	rock (DO)	.

The reader can't use the verb from the first clause and put it where the comma is, because “George like punk rock” is ungrammatical. You must use the verb (likes) here. The correct form is, “George likes punk rock.” Sometimes the verb is exactly like the one in the first clause, but you may still have an awkward-sounding sentence if you omit too many words or if you forget the importance of rhythm and sound.

To see how this works, read this aloud:

Bill played a musical number by Bach; Joan, Beethoven.

This sentence sounds as if Bill played something written by three people!

Now read this aloud:

Jim played a musical number by Chopin; Joan, one by Mozart.

When you leave out more than the verb, you may need to put in a word, such as *one* here. The sentence above and the one below leave out more than just the verb; you might even leave out the subject *and* the verb:

An artist's instinct is intuitive, not rational; aesthetic, not pragmatic.

**WHEN TO USE THIS PATTERN**

This pattern may look easy but it is actually very sophisticated. Still, when you don't want to repeat the same verb in the second or third clause, this pattern can be helpful. You'll have to develop your ear to test whether it's the right time for PATTERN 2. Does the sentence sound natural and have a rhythmical balance? If it seems awkward or unclear, it is not the right time to use this pattern.

**Examples**

The girls each had a clear goal; Jeanne's, educational; Ann's, recreational. For many of us, the new math teacher was a savior; for others, a pain. Michael preferred to email; John to tweet.

**Professional examples**

"Thought is the blossom; language [,] the bud; action [,] the fruit."  
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

NOTE: The brackets indicate that the commas do not appear in the original sentence.

"Lou Williams was in for adultery; John Jones for gambling."  
—*Wall Street Journal*, 7/16/01

**Checkpoints**

- ✓ Be sure that each sentence really has two independent clauses in it, even though the second one has an unexpressed verb or other words.
- ✓ Be sure that the verb omitted in the second clause matches exactly, in form and tense, the verb in the first clause.
- ✓ After the semicolon, if more than the verb is left out, be sure the structure is still parallel and the thought complete.
- ✓ Use a semicolon if there is no conjunction; if there is a conjunction (one of the FANBOYS mentioned in PATTERN 1), many writers use a comma. A semicolon NEVER goes with a coordinating conjunction.

**PATTERN 2****Exercises**

To practice what you've learned, the first clause is missing, find the verb and whatever else makes sense. (2) If the second clause is missing, write out the verb and whatever else makes sense.

**Examples**

The painting on the wall represents the universal.

1. Going to carnivals makes

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
violent movies, uncomfortable.

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. All the children want to go

As you read, notice sentence structure below.

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## Exercises

To practice what you've learned, complete the following sentences. (1) If the first clause is missing, fill in a complete clause (with a verb) so it makes sense. (2) If the second clause is missing, fill in the blank leaving out the verb and whatever else might be just repetition.

## Examples

The *painting on the wall represents chaos to Fred*; to Alice, a wonderland.

or

The dove is the universal symbol for peace; *the hawk, for war*.

1. Going to carnivals makes me happy;

\_\_\_\_\_ .

2. \_\_\_\_\_ ;

violent movies, uncomfortable.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ ; Ireland and Scotland, much greener.

4. All the children want to go to McDonald's for lunch; \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .

As you read, notice sentences that follow this pattern and add them below.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_