Run-on sentences

Run-on sentences are grammatically wrong. Computer grammar checks often miss them, so you'll need to spot them yourself when you proofread.

X *Claire looked sadly into the biscuit tin Tim had eaten all the chocolate ones.* **X**

X *Tim walked in he said he had bought more biscuits.* **X**

X *He had also bought milk there was none of that left either.* **X**

These are run-on sentences. They are quite short, but they each contain two complete ideas or sentences.

A comma doesn't help

X *Claire looked sadly into the biscuit tin, Tim had eaten all the chocolate ones.* **X**

This is still wrong. You can't splice together two complete sentences with a comma.

Use a full stop, a semicolon or a joining word

The easiest way to fix a run-on sentence is to separate the two ideas with a full stop. For example:

Claire looked sadly into the biscuit tin. Tim had eaten all the chocolate ones.

If the two ideas are related, you can use a semicolon to separate them while keeping them together within a single sentence. For example:

Claire looked sadly into the biscuit tin; Tim had eaten all the chocolate ones.

Sometimes you can use a joining word, a conjunction, to connect the two ideas. Joining words include *and, but, so* and *because*. But note that you'll need to put a comma before the conjunction. For example:

Claire looked into the biscuit tin, but Tim had eaten all the chocolate ones.