Quick Guide to Run-Ons

Sentences that are not correctly punctuated are called:

- Run-ons
- Comma splices
- Fused sentences

Incorrect: They weren't dangerous criminals they were detectives in disguise.
Correct: They weren't dangerous criminals; they were detectives in disguise.

Incorrect: I didn't know which job I wanted I was too confused to decide.
Correct: I didn't know which job I wanted, and I was too confused to decide.

To avoid errors, follow one of these two simple rules:

1. Join the two independent clauses with one of the coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet), and use a comma before the connecting word.

_________________________, and _________________________.

He enjoys walking through the country, and he often goes backpacking on his vacations.

2. When you do not have a connecting word (or when you use a connecting word other than and, but, for, or nor, so, or yet between the two independent clauses) use a semicolon (;).

_________________________; _______________________________.

He often watched TV when there were only reruns; she preferred to read instead.

-Or-

_________________________; however,_________________________.

He often watched TV when there were only reruns; however, she preferred to read instead.