

More Fixes for Dangling Participles

In the first post about [Dangling Participles](#), I listed twelve erroneous sentences. The next post, [How to Fix a Dangling Participle](#), showed how to fix four of those sentences. Here I suggest how the remaining eight sentences can be fixed:

(1) After running five red lights, the police officer stopped the speeding motorist.

- Modifier: [After running five red lights](#)
- What the writer wanted to modify: [the speeding motorist](#)
- What participle is actually modifying: [the police officer](#)
- Discussion: *Fix the sentence so that the police officer is not the one who has run five red lights.*

Fix 1: The police officer stopped the speeding motorist who had run five red lights.

Fix 2: After running five red lights, the speeding motorist was stopped by a police officer.

(2) After sitting in the freezer for three hours, my mother served the ice cream cake roll.

- Modifier: [After sitting in the freezer for three hours](#)
- What the writer wanted to modify: [the ice cream cake roll](#)
- What is actually being modified: [my mother](#)
- Discussion: *Fix the sentence so that the mother hasn't been sitting in the freezer for three hours.*

Fix 1: After sitting in the freezer for three hours, the ice cream cake roll was ready to be served. (*Okay, but it leaves out the mother*)

Fix 2: My mother served the ice cream cake roll after it had been in the freezer for three hours.

(3) Riding to the soccer field, a pothole nearly wrecked my bike.

- Modifier: [Riding to the soccer field](#)
- What the writer wanted to modify: [the narrator](#) (*I or me – missing*)
- What is actually being modified: [a pothole](#)
- Discussion: *Fix the sentence so the narrator is riding to the field and not the pothole, which cannot ride anything!*

Fix 1: While riding to the soccer field, I nearly wrecked my bike on a pothole.

Fix 2: As I rode to the soccer field, a pothole nearly wrecked my bike.

(4) After being thoroughly beaten, the chef cooked the eggs.

- Modifier: **After being thoroughly beaten**
- What the writer wanted to modify: **the eggs**
- What is actually being modified: **the chef**
- Discussion: *Fix the sentence so that the eggs are being beaten and not the chef.*

Fix 1: While riding to the soccer field, I nearly wrecked my bike on a pothole.

Fix 2: As I rode to the soccer field, a pothole nearly wrecked my bike.

(5) Rushing from the restaurant, the crystal sugar bowl fell out of her pocket.

- Modifier: **Rushing from the restaurant**
- What the writer wanted to modify: **the person with the bowl in her pocket (she is missing)**
- What is actually being modified: **the crystal sugar bowl**
- Discussion: *Fix the sentence so that a female is rushing from the restaurant instead of the crystal sugar bowl (since sugar bowls cannot rush on their own).*

Fix 1: As she rushed from the restaurant, the crystal sugar bowl fell out of her pocket.

Fix 2: The crystal sugar bowl fell from her pocket as she rushed from the restaurant.

(6) Featuring four GB of memory, we can strongly endorse this computer's graphic potential.

- Modifier: **Featuring four GB of memory**
- What the writer wanted to modify: **the computer**
- What is actually being modified: **we**
- Discussion: *Fix the sentence so that the computer has four GB of memory and not the speaker (we).*

Fix 1: Because the computer features four GB of memory, we can strongly endorse its graphic potential.

Fix 2: Featuring four GB of memory, the computer has graphic potential that we can endorse.

(7) Counting his money for the second time, the clock chimed 10 o'clock.

- Modifier: **Counting his money for the second time**
- What the writer wanted to modify: **the man counting the money** (*missing*)
- What is actually being modified: **the clock**
- Discussion: *Fix the sentence so that a man is counting the money and not the clock.*

Fix 1: The clock chimed 10 o'clock while the man counted his money for the second time.

Fix 2: Counting his money for the second time, the man listened as the clock chimed 10 o'clock.

(8) Listening to Chopin, the truck moved gracefully through traffic.

- Modifier: **Listening to Chopin**
- What the writer wanted to modify: **the driver of the truck** (*who is missing*)
- What is actually being modified: **the truck**
- Discussion: *Fix the sentence so that the driver is listening to Chopin and not the truck – which cannot actually listen.*

Fix 1: As the driver listened to Chopin, he drove the truck gracefully through traffic.

Fix 2: The truck moved gracefully through traffic as the driver listened to Chopin.

Remember, participial phrases are strongly attracted to the closest object (usually a noun) in the sentence, whether or not that makes sense, so be sure the intended object of the phrase is closer than any other noun or noun phrase. This will minimize unintended results!

Happy Writing!

Ann

(c) January 30, 2012