



Waiting for the bus, the time went by slowly.

Why do we care?

A **modifier** can help clarify, describe, or give detail about a concept. Modifiers can add interest to sentences and be an important tool for writing engaging content.

A **dangling modifier** is a phrase that modifies a word not clearly stated in the sentence and can end up distorting or confusing the meaning of a sentence.

Information retrieved from:
Berry, Chris and Karl Stolley. "Dangling Modifiers and How to Correct Them." *Purdue Online Writing Lab*, 7 January 2013,
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/597/1/>

Writing Desk Hours

Monday-Thursday

12-5pm, 7-10pm

Friday 12pm-5pm

Sunday 1-5pm, 7-10pm

Rolvaag 302 & 354

The answers to these practice examples are located at the Rolvaag Writing Desk!

Have more questions? Still don't understand dangling modifiers?
Make an appointment with a writing tutor!

- 1.) Visit the Writing Desk homepage, or stolaf.edu/asc/writing-help/
- 2.) Click on the Appointments box
- 3.) Sign in with your St. Olaf email, then click an appointment that works with your schedule!

Or just drop on by!

Pamphlet created by Naomi Chalk '18

Dangling Modifiers

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Writing desk

<http://wp.stolaf.edu/asc/writing-help>



1. Name the appropriate action doer as the subject of the main clause.

Incorrect: Closing at 8pm, I didn't get any food from the Cage.

Who closes at 8pm? How it's written, the sentence states that I close at 8pm. To revise, make sure the main clause names what is actually doing the action (the Cage).

Revised: Closing at 8pm, the Cage didn't serve me food.

The sentence now states the object (the Cage) doing the action in the modified phrase (closing at 8pm).

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3. Combine the phrase and main clause.

Incorrect: To improve her grades, the chemistry test was taken again.

Who wanted to improve her grades? The sentence says the test improved her grades. To revise, try combining the modifier into the main clause:

Revised: Maria took the chemistry test again to improve her grades.

Dangling modifiers can be fixed in three different ways

2. Revise dangling modifiers by changing the modifier into a complete introductory phrase that names the doer of the action.

Incorrect: Without knowing his name, it was difficult to introduce him to the professor in class.

Who didn't know his name? The sentence says that "it" didn't know his name. First, decide who is introducing him.

Revised: Because Amanda didn't know his name, it was difficult to introduce him to the professor in class.

The phrase is now a complete introductory clause, so it is no longer modifying any part of the sentence and is thus not "dangling."

Try correcting these sentences so they use modifiers correctly:

Tired from a shift at the library, my dorm room was a nice place to relax.

With lots of Flex dollars, the Cage is a great place for me to get a snack.

Hosting a fun hall event each month, Food for Finals is Hall Council's biggest event all year.

Now try making your own sentences using these rules!

