Dependent Word Fragments

After I bought my car. I was shocked at the price of gas.

After I bought my car.   Does that sound right by itself?   (Hopefully not)

The reason this sounds funny is because it is just a dependent statement—one starting with a dependent word like *after*, if, *where, since, because*.   It cannot stand alone. It "depends" on another statement to complete the thought. It leaves us hanging.

The writer accidentally dropped a period in there, cutting off the fragment from the sentence it was supposed to stay attached t. Just reattach it:

> *After I bought my car, I was shocked at the price of gas.*

BTW: Notice the comma here . That nice "introductory word group" comma makes it easy to read the sentence.   (Introductory word group commas sit right before the main part of the sentence.)

Here are two other examples of <u>dependent-word fragments</u>:

> *My dog refused to heel. <u>Unless I bent down and grabbed his collar</u>.*
> *My advisor showed me a career website. <u>Which I found very helpful</u>.*

Correcting a Dependent-Word Fragment

1. Like most fragments, you can usually just correct a dependent-word fragment by attaching it to the sentence that comes after it or the sentence that comes before it:

   > *After I bought my car, I was shocked at the price of gas.*
   > (The fragment has been attached to the sentence that comes after it.)

   > *My dog refused to heel unless I bent down and grabbed his collar*.
   >   (The fragment has been attached to the sentence that comes before it.)

   > My advisor showed me a career website, which I found very helpful.
   > (The fragment has been attached to the sentence that comes before it.)

2. Another way of connecting a dependent-word fragment is simply to eliminate the dependent word by rewriting the sentence:

   > I bought my car.   I was shocked at the price of gas.
   > My advisor showed me a new website. I found it very helpful.