

# Correcting Dangling Modifiers

Sometimes in a sentence it is difficult to tell what a modifying word or phrase is describing. That modifying word or phrase is called a dangling modifier.

**Example:** Working hard all afternoon in the kitchen, the cake I baked tasted terrible.

*Working hard all afternoon in the kitchen* is a modifying phrase. It is difficult, however, to understand who or what worked hard: *the cake* or *I*. Obviously the cake can't work hard, so the phrase must be modifying *I*. This confusion is the basis of a dangling modifier.

Correcting a dangling modifier often requires more than just moving words around. Usually the correction requires adding a word or phrase or rewording the sentence.

I worked hard all afternoon in the kitchen, and the cake I baked tasted terrible.

OR

Even after working hard all afternoon in the kitchen, I baked a terrible tasting cake.

---

Rewrite each of the following sentences correcting the dangling modifier.

1. After centuries of lying on the ocean floor, the treasure hunters found the Spanish galleon.

---

2. Watching carefully for hours, the flock of butterflies never arrived.

---

3. Thirsty, the glass of water was swallowed in one gulp.

---

4. Driving down the street, the park came into view.

---

5. Resolving to study more, the textbooks seemed more interesting.

---

# Correcting Dangling Modifiers

Sometimes in a sentence it is difficult to tell what a modifying word or phrase is describing. That modifying word or phrase is called a dangling modifier.

**Example:** Working hard all afternoon in the kitchen, the cake I baked tasted terrible.

*Working hard all afternoon in the kitchen* is a modifying phrase. It is difficult, however, to understand who or what worked hard: *the cake* or *I*. Obviously the cake can't work hard, so the phrase must be modifying *I*. This confusion is the basis of a dangling modifier.

Correcting a dangling modifier often requires more than just moving words around. Usually the correction requires adding a word or phrase or rewording the sentence.

I worked hard all afternoon in the kitchen, and the cake I baked tasted terrible.

OR

Even after working hard all afternoon in the kitchen, I baked a terrible tasting cake.

---

Rewrite each of the following sentences correcting the dangling modifier.

**Student's answers may vary. Example of correct answers:**

1. After centuries of lying on the ocean floor, the treasure hunters found the Spanish galleon.

**The treasure hunters found the Spanish galleon after it lay for centuries on the ocean floor.**

2. Watching carefully for hours, the flock of butterflies never arrived.

**While I watched carefully for hours, the flock of butterflies never arrived .**

3. Thirsty, the glass of water was swallowed in one gulp.

**He was so thirsty that he swallowed the glass of water in one gulp.**

4. Driving down the street, the park came into view.

**As we were driving down the street, the park came into view.**

5. Resolving to study more, the textbooks seemed more interesting.

**The textbooks seemed more interesting after I resolved study more.**