**Kinds of Sentences**

## There are four kinds of basic sentences in English. They are called simple , compound, complex and compound-complex.The terms may be new to you, but if you can recognize subjects and verbs with a little instruction and practice you should be able to identify and write any of the four kinds of sentences. The only new idea to master is the concept of the clause.

## Clause

A clause is a group of words that includes a [subject](https://www.grammar-monster.com/glossary/subject.htm) and a [verb](https://www.grammar-monster.com/lessons/verbs.htm). (A clause functions as an adjective, an adverb, or a noun.)

There are two types of clause:

* An [independent clause](https://www.grammar-monster.com/glossary/independent_clause.htm) (one that can stand alone as a sentence).
* A [dependent clause](https://www.grammar-monster.com/glossary/dependent_clause.htm) (one that is usually a supporting part of a sentence).

e.g **Independent Clause** : Tom read a book. He really enjoyed the book.

**Dependent Clause :** Because I forgot my homework.

* A clause contrasts with a [phrase](https://www.grammar-monster.com/glossary/phrase.htm), which does not contain a subject and a verb. The distinction between a clause and a phrase is clearer when you see them
* side by side:

e.g. Carla sings when she wakes up in the morning.

When she wakes up. ( This is a **clause** with subject (she) and a verb

(wakes up)

In the morning. (This is a **phrase** with no subject and no verb

**Independent Clause**

An independent clause is a group of words that contains a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought. An independent clause is a sentence.

**Dependent Clause**

A dependent clause is a group of words that contains a subject and verb but does not express a complete thought. A dependent clause cannot be a sentence. Often a dependent clause is marked by a **dependent marker word**.

**Relative Clauses**

One type of dependent clause is called a relative clause. A relative clause begins with a relative pronoun, a pronoun such as who, which, that, when, where or whose .

e.g. Who lives next door (no meaning alone)

The woman **who lives next door** works in a bank. ( has meaning)  
In the sentence above, the relative pronoun **who** relates the dependent clause to the subject of the sentence, woman.

e.g. That have been cancelled (no meaning)

These are the flights **that have been cancelled**. (has meaning)

In the setence above, The relative pronoun **that** relates the dependent clause to the subject of the sentence, the flights.

**Types of Sentences**

This section covers types according to this principle : On the basis of the number and kinds of clauses it contains, a sentence may be classified as simple, compound,complex, or compound-complex. In the examples in the following table, the depndent clauses are italicized, and the independent clauses are underlined.

**Type Definition Examples**

Simple One independent clause She did the work well.

Compound Two or more independent She did the work well, and

clauses she was paid well.

Complex One independent clause and Because she did the work

One or more dependent clauses well, she was paid well.

Compound- Two or more independent Because she did the work

Complex clauses and one or more well, she was paid well,

dependent clauses. and she was satisfied.

**Simple Sentences**

A simple sentence consists of one independent clause and no dependent clauses.It may contain phrases and have more than one subject or verb.

e.g. The lake looks beautifull in the moonlight. **( one subject and one verb)**

The Army,Navy,and Marines sent troops to the disaster area.

**(three subjects and one verb)**

We sang the old songs and danced happily at their wedding

**( one subject and two verbs.)**

My father, mother,and my sister came to the school play, applauded the

performers, and attended the party afterwards. **(three subjects and three verbs)**

**Compound Sentences**

A compound sentence consists of two or more independent clauses with no dependent clauses. Take , for example, the following two independent clauses :

e.g. He opened the drawer. He found his missing disk.

Here are two ways to join the independent clauses to form a compound sentence.

\*1 The two independent clauses can be connected by a connecting word called

a coordinating conjunction. The coordinating conjunctions are *for, and, nor,*

*but , or, yet, so.* (An easy way to remember them is to think of the acronym

FANBOYS ? which is made up of the first letterof each conjunction .)

e.g. He opened the drawer, **and** he found his missing disk.

He opened the drawer, **so** he found his missing disk.

Use a comma (**,**) before the coordinating conjunctions (FANBOYS) between two

independent clauses (unless the clauses are extremely short).

\*2 Another way to join independent clauses to form a compound sentence is to put a semicolon ( **;** ) between the clauses.

e.g. He opened the drawer **;** he found his missing disk

**Complex Sentences**

A complex sentence consists of one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. In the following sentences, the dependent clauses are italicized.

e.g. *When lilacs are in bloom*, we love to visit friends in the country.

(one dependent clause and one independent clause.)

*Although it rained last night*, we decided to take the path *that led*

*through the woods.(one independent clause and two dependent*

*clauses)*

**Punctuation tip :** Use a comma after a dependent clause that appears before the

main clause.

e.g. *When the bus arrived*, we quickly boarded.

A relative clause can be the dependent clause in the complex

sentence.

e.g. I knew the actress who played that part in the 1980s.

**Compound-Complex Sentences**

A compound- complex setence consists of two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.

**Compound-Complex Sentence :** Albert enlisted in the Army, and Robert, who was

his oldest brother , joined him a day later.

**Independent Clauses :** Albert enlisted in the Army

Robert joined him a day later.

**Dependent Clause :** who was his older brother

**Compound-Complex Sentence :** Because Mr. Yamamoto was a talented teacher ,

He was voted teacher of the year, and his

students prospered.

**Independent Clauses :** he was voted teacher of the year

his students prospered.

**Dependent Clause :**  Because Mr. Yamamoto was a talented teacher

**Combining Sentences**

**Coordination : The Compound Sentence**

If you intend to communicate two equally important and closely related ideas,you certainly will want to place them close together, probably in a **compound sentence**

Suppose we take two simple sentences that we want to combine :

e.g. I am very tired. I worked very hard today.

W e have already looked at coordinating conjunctions as a way of joining independent clauses to create compound sentences . Depending on which coordinting conjunction you use, you can show different kinds of relationships.

*For* shows a reason :

I am very tired, *for* I worked very hard today.

*And* shows equal ideas :

I am very tired, *and* I want to rest for a few minutes.

*Nor* indicates a negative choice or alternative :

I am not tired, *nor* am I hungry right now.

*But* shows contrast :

I am very tired, *but* I have no time to rest now.

*Or* indicates a choice or an altrenative :

I will take a nap, *or* I will go out jogging.

*Yet* indicates contrast :

I am tired, *yet* I am unable to relax.

*So* points to a result :

I am tired, so I will take a nap.

**Punctuation with Coordinating Conjunctions**

When you combine two sentences by using a coordinating conjunction, drop the first period (**.**) change the capital letter that begins the second sentence to a small letter, and insert a comma before the coordinating conjunction.

, for

, and

, nor

Independent clause but independent clause

, or

, yet

, so

**Semicolons and Conjunctive Adverbs**

A semicolon can join independent clauses to make a compound sentence.

Here are two more simple sentences to combine :

e.g. We were late. We missed the first act.

We can make one compound sentence out of them by joining the two clauses with a semicolon :

e.g. We were late **;** we missed the first act.

We can also use words called conjunctive adverbs after semicolons to make the relationship between the two clauses clearer. Look at how the conjunctive adverb

*therefore* adds the idea of ‘ as a result.’

e.g. We were late*; therefore,* we missed the first act.

Conjunctive adverbs include the following words and phrases : *also, consequently, furthermore, hence, however, , in fact, moreover, nevertheless, now, on the other- hand, otherwise, soon, therefore, similarly, then, thus.*

Consider the meaning you want when you use a conjunctive adverb to coordinate ideas.

\* As a result of : *therefore, consequently,hence, thus, then*

\* To the contrary or with reservation : *however,nevertheless, otherwise,*

*on the other hand*

\* In addition to : *moreover, also*

\* To emphasize or specify : *in fact, for example*

\* To compare : *similarly*

**Punctuation with Semicolons and Conjunctive Adverbs**

When you combine two sentences by using a semicolon ( **;**), replace the first period (**.**) with a semicolon and change the capital letter that begins the second sentence to a small letter .If you wish to use a conjunctive adverb, insert it after the semicolon and put a comma (**,**) after it. ( However, no comma follows *then, now,* *thus* and *soon*.) The first letters of ten common conjunctive adverbs make up the acronym HOTSHOTCAT.

; however,

; otherwise,

; therefore,

; similarly,

; hence,

Independent clause ; on the other hand, independent clause

; then

; consequently,

; also,

; thus

**Subordination : The Complex Sentence**

Whereas a compound sentence contains independent clauses that are equally importabt and closely related,a **complex sentence** combines ideas of unequal value. The following two sentences can be combined as either a compound sentence or a complex sentende, depending on whether the writer thinks the ideas are of equal value.

e.g. My neighbors are considerate. They never play loud music.

Combined as a compound sentence, suggesting that the ideas are of equal value.

The new sentence looks like this :

e.g. My neighbors are considerate, and they never play loud music.

**independent clause independent clause**

**(main clause) (main clause)**

Here are the same two ideas combined as a complex sentence, suggesting that the ideas are of unequal value :

e.g. Because my neighbors are considerate, they never play loud music.

**dependent clause independent clause**

**(less important idea) (main clause)**

Although both the compound and complex forms are correct, the complex form conveys the ideas more precisely in this sentence because one idea does seem to be more important --- one idea depends on the other.

Thus if you have two sentences with closely related ideas and one is clearly more important than the other, consider combining them in a complex sentence.

Compare these two paragraphs :

1\* Version 1 contains six simple sentences, implying that the ideas are of equal

value :

(1) I was very upset. (2) The Fourth of July fireworks were especially loud.

(3) My dog ran away. (4) The animal control officer made his morning rounds.

(5) He found my dog in another part of town. (6) I was relieved.

2 \* Version 2 consists of two simple sentences and two complex sentences, showing

that some ideas are more important than others :

(1) I was very upset. (2) Because the Fourth of July fireworks were especially

loud, my dog ran away. (3) When the animal control officer made his

morning rounds,he found my dog in another part of town. (4) I was relieved.

You will probably consider version 2 superior to version 1. Sentences 2 and 3 are closely related, but 3 is more important. Sentences 4 and 5 are closely related, but 5 is more important. In version 2 the revision made each pair into a complex sentence.

Although you could combine sentences 1 and 2, the result wouid be illogical because the wrong idea would be conveyed.

**Illogical Combination :** I was very upset because the Fourth of Juiy fireworks

were especially loud.

The person was very upset because the dog ran away, not because the fireworks were espcially loud.

**Subordinating Conjunctions**

A complex sentence is composed of one indepentent clause and one or more dependent clauses. In combining two indepentent clauses to write a complex sentence , your first step is to decide on a word that will best show the relationship between the clauses. Words that show the relationship of a dependent clause to an independent one are called subordinating conjunctions. The italicized words in the following sentences are subordinating conjunctions.

Consider the meaning as well as the placement of each one.

*Because* the strom hit, the game was canceled.

*After* the strom passed, the dogs began to bark.

*When* colette told her joke, the class was moved to fits of hysterics.

Vernon did not volunteer to work on the holiday, *although* the pay was

good.

No one has visited patty *since* she moved into town.

They decided to wait *until* the cows came home.

They refused to work unless they were allowed to wear chef’s hats.

*Before* the session ended, all the ''hep cats’’ blew some sweet sounds.

Other subordinating conjunctions include the following:

as provided that whereas

as if rather than wherever

even if so that whether

even though than while

if whenever

in order that where

**Punctuation with Subordinatong Conjunctions**

If the dependent clause comes before the main clause, set it off with a comma.

Before mike wrote his final draft, he looked over his outline.

If the dependent clause comes *after* or *within* the main clause, set it off only if the clause is not necessary to the meaning of the main clause or if the dependent clause begins with the word although, though, or even though.

We went home *after* the concert had ended.

Vincent continued painting, *although* he had repainted the cabinet twice.

**Punctuation with Relative Pronouns**

A relative clause begins with a relative pronoun, a pronoun such as that, which,or who.

The decision that i made is final.

**relative clause**

A student who uses a computer can save time in revising.

**relative clause**

**Coordination and Subordination:**

**The Compound-Complex Sentence**

At times you may want to show the relationship of three or more ideas within one sentence. If that reletionship involves two or more main ideas and one or more supporting ideas, the combination can be stated in a compound-complex sentence (two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses).

Before kafka learned how to operate a word processor.

**dependent clause**

He had trouble with his typewritten assignments.

**independent clause**

But now he produces clean, attractive pages.

**independent clause**

In our previous discussion of the complex sentence, we presented this group of six sentences:

I was very upset. The Fourth of July fireworks were especially loud.

My dog ran away. The animal control officer made his morning

rounds. He found my dog in another part of town. I was relieved.

We then converted the group of six sentences to four.

I was very upset. Because the Fourth of July fireworks were

especially loud, my dog ran away.When the animal control officer

made his morning rounds, he found my dog in another part of town.

I was relieved.

But what if we wanted to show an even closer relationship of ideas ? One solution would be to combine the two complex sentences in this way (the italicized sentence is compound-complex):

I was very upset. *Because the Fourth of july fireworks were*

*especially loud,* my dog ran away, *but when the animal control*

*officer made his morning rounds* *; he found my dog in another part*

*of town*. I was relieved.

**Punctuation of Complicated Compound or Compound-Complex Sentences**

If a compound or compound-complex sentence has one or more commas in the first clause, you may want to use a semicolon before the coordinating conjunction between the two clauses. Its purpose is to show the reader very clearly the division between the two independent clauses. The preceding example illustrates this use of the semicolon.