

The Structure of the English Sentence

- Difference between Phrase, Clause and Sentence
- Finite/ Non-Finite/Verbless/ Dependent/ Independent Clauses
- A Brief Introduction to Sentence Types (Simple/ Compound/ Complex/ Compound-Complex)
Coordination Vs Subordination

Phrase

A phrase is a group of words that work together to do one job. A phrase is two or more words that do not contain the subject-verb pair necessary to form a clause. Phrases can be very short or quite long. It does not give a complete thought. The Phrase has a function but cannot stand alone in isolation.

Example : The book is sitting on the table

The book , is sitting , on the table are all phrases

- The phrase **has to be more than one word**, and the words in the phrase have to **share an important piece of information**

Clause

- A **clause** is a word group that contains a verb and its subject, and that is used as a sentence or as part of a sentence.
- Every clause has both a subject and a verb, but **not every clause expresses a complete thought.**

Example:

A friend is someone who can be trusted and helpful.

Sentence

A **sentence** is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb, and that **expresses a complete thought and meaning**. Sentences consist of two basic parts: *subjects* and *predicates*. The **subject** is a word or a group of words that tells whom or what the sentence is about. The **predicate** is a word or group of words **that tells something about the subject and modifies** the subject.

Example: Last summer on my vacation, I went to Arizona

the subject is "I" and the predicate is "went to Arizona"

Finite Subordinate Clause

- ❖ The finite subordinate clause requires a **subordinator** . FINITE SUB. CLAUSE Has a **finite** verb , and a **subject** . It Starts with a **subordinator**
 - He booked his ticket early so that he could be sure of a seat.
 - Before he went to bed, he usually had a drink.
 - He told me that I should study harder.

Non-Finite Clause

❖ The non-finite subordinate clause requires a **non-finite verb**, but not a subject or a subordinator (which can appear only under certain conditions). It Has a **non-finite verb**

Has **no subject** (normally)

Has **no subordinator** (normally)

The infinitive: *To wait seemed* foolish when decisive action was required

•The participles: (-ingparticiple, -edparticiple) I caught the boy *smoking a cigar*.

•The gerund :*Travelling* might satisfy your desire for new experiences.

Verbless

Verbless clauses do not have an **overt subject and predicator**. The “missing” constituents are **assumed** to be recovered from **the context of the main clause**. Usually the missing verb is “be” and the subject is identical with the subject of the main clause as in the proverb:

When in Rome, do as the Romans do.

which can be rephrased into:

When you are in Rome, [you] do as the Romans do.

Time, condition and concession clauses are most commonly identifiable as verbless. Verbless clauses are always introduced by a subordinator, most commonly **when / until** for time clauses, **if / unless** for conditionals and **though / however** for clauses of concession.

as in:

a) *When in trouble, ask for help.*

b) *If in a hurry, take a taxi.*

c) *Though old, he managed by himself.*

Dependent clause

Clauses can be further divided into two categories: dependent and independent clauses.

A dependent clause cannot stand on its own as a complete sentence. The presence of a dependent clause will almost always be indicated by a single word at the beginning of the clause: a subordinating **conjunction**, **interrogative**, or **relative pronoun**.

I love my friend **because we always hang out together**

Independent clause

An independent clause, on the other hand, constitutes a complete sentence without any additional words.

I love my friend because we always hang out together

Sentence Types:

Simple, Compound, Complex, and Compound-Complex

1. Simple Sentences

- A simple sentence contains a subject and a verb.
- It expresses a single complete thought that can stand on its own.

Examples:

1. The baby cried for food.

^There is a subject and a verb that expresses a complete thought.

^ A simple sentence does not necessarily have to be short. It can have adjectives. In this case, there are two verbs “completed” and “turned in.” However, the sentence expresses one complete thought and therefore is a simple sentence.

3. Megan and Ron ate too much and felt sick.

^Although there are two subjects and two verbs, it is still a simple sentence because both verbs share the same subjects and express one complete thought.

2. Compound Sentences

- A compound sentence has two independent clauses. An independent clause is a part of a sentence that can stand alone because it contains a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought.
- Basically, a compound contains two simple sentences.
- These independent clauses are joined by a conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so).

Examples:

1. The shoplifter had stolen clothes, **so** he ran once he saw the police.

^Both sides of the conjunction “so” are complete sentences. “The shoplifter had stolen clothes” can stand alone and so can “he ran once he saw the police.” Therefore, this is a compound sentence.

2. They spoke to him in Spanish, **but** he responded in English.

^This is also a compound sentence that uses a conjunction to separate two individual clauses.

3. Complex Sentences

- A complex sentence is an independent clause joined by one or more dependent clauses. A dependent clause

either lacks a subject or a verb or has both a subject and a verb that does not express a complete thought.

- A complex sentence always has a subordinator (as, because, since, after, although, when) or relative pronouns (who, that, which).

Examples:

1. **After** eating lunch at The Cheesecake Factory, Tim went to the gym to exercise.

^ The independent clause is “Tim went to the gym to exercise.” The subordinating clause before it is dependent on the main, independent clause. If one were to say “after eating lunch at The Cheesecake Factory,” it would be an incomplete thought.

2. Opinionated women are given disadvantages in societies **that** privilege male accomplishments.

^ The subject is “opinionated women” and the verb is “are given.” The first part of the sentence “opinionated women are given disadvantages in societies” is an independent clause that expresses a complete thought. The following “that privilege male accomplishments” is a relative clause that describes which types of societies.

3. The woman **who** taught Art History 210 was fired for stealing school supplies.

^ The dependent clause in this sentence is “who taught Art History 210” because if removed, the rest of the sentence would stand as an independent clause. “Who taught Art History 210” is an adjective clause that provides necessary details about the subject, woman.

4. Compound-Complex Sentences

- A compound-complex sentence has two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause.

Examples:

1. **After** the two soccer players lost their game, they joined their other teammates for lunch, and they went to the movies.

^ If we remove the dependent clause “after the two soccer players lost their game,” we have a compound sentence. The dependent clause makes this sentence compound-complex.

2. The man believed in the system, and he knew that justice would prevail **after** the murderer was sent to jail.

Coordination & Subordination

Coordination

uses conjunctions (and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so) to connect two sentences with roughly equal ideas. Both ideas in a coordinate sentence (also called a **COMPOUND** sentence) carry approximately equal weight. A trick to remembering the conjunctions is to think of the acronym, **FANBOYS**, which stands for :

For, **A**nd, **N**or, **B**ut, **O**r, **Y**et, and **S**o.

Subordination

uses conjunctions (for example: although, because, since, when, which, who, if, whereas) to connect one dependent clause to an independent clause, creating a **COMPLEX** sentence. By using a complex sentence, you indicate to your reader that one idea carries more weight than the other.

Subordination is better than coordination in showing relationships between ideas because it more closely reflects complex life situations. In the subordination of two related ideas, the more important idea is put into an independent clause which could stand alone. The less important idea is put into a subordinate clause which could never stand alone because it is dependent on the independent clause.

How to Employ Subordination

Example: Because he got home late, he missed his dinner. (Using coordination would show a weaker relationship: He got home late, and he missed his dinner.)

Pattern: Because-----, independent clause.

Use any of the following to subordinate one idea to another:

after ,how ,though ,although, if, unless, as, once, until ,as if ,in order ,that ,when ,as long as, since whenever , as though, so that , where , because, provided ,wherever, before , than ,while

More Examples:

Although he was poor, he was a happy man.

Where there is smoke, there is fire.

Unless she finishes her degree, she will not get the job.

A Few Smaller Points:

Whenever the subordinate (dependent) section comes first, a comma is usually put between the subordinate section and the independent clause. While it is better to put the subordinate section before the independent sentence, the opposite is possible. When this is done, no comma is put between the independent clause and the subordinate section. On occasion, the subordinate section should follow the independent clause for the sake of logic or dramatic effect.

Example: She toasted the bread while he scrambled the eggs.

Pattern: Independent sentence while -----.

Once you have learned the pattern of subordination, use it!

Coordination: Paul was hurrying, and he cut his finger.

Subordination: Because Paul was hurrying, he cut his finger.

(The above is condensed from Steps in Composition)

Practice

Exercise 01

Which of the following groups of words are independent clauses? Which are dependent clauses? Which are phrases? Label each word group independent clause *IC*, *dependent clause DC*, or phrase *P*.

Example: Coming through the rye. (P)

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Beauty is truth. | 6. Whenever you're near. |
| 2. When knights were bold. | 7. The clock struck ten. |
| 3. In a galaxy far away. | 8. The red planet. |
| 4. He saw stars. | 9. Slowly I turned. |
| 5. I hear a symphony. | 10. For the longest time. |

Exercise 02

Identify whether the sentences are simple, complex, compound or compound-complex. Please underline dependent clauses where it applies.

1. Vampires Dairies is my favorite television show, but I also love True Blood.
2. The student wiped the white board that was filthy with last week's notes.
3. The trendy fashion designer released her new line on Wednesday.
4. Trina and Hareem went to a bar in Hollywood to celebrate their anniversary.
5. Wicked Regina cast a spell on the entire city, so the citizens decided to rebel.
6. While waiting for the paint to dry, Angela went to Home Depot, and Martin organized the kitchen appliances.
7. After listening to the Kanye West CD, I have new respect for his music.
8. After the teacher chose groups, John and Sara were selected as partners for a project, yet Sarah did most of the work.

Excecise 03

Underline the dependent clauses in the following sentences. Then tell which one is verbless, finite, and non- finite dependent clasue.

If so, let's go and help them.

Having spoken her mind, she felt more at ease.

Although our team lost, we enjoyed the game.

While in a hospital near the school, her teachers visited her regularly

On the farm there was an old henhouse, which Leopold converted into a cabin.

Having looked over the papers, she looked out of the window

Excecise 04

Join the following pair of sentences using coordination or subordination properly to create logical connections

No one shops at Dillard's after 9 p.m. The staff decided to close early.

.....

I stood on the mountaintop. Snowcapped mountain peaks surrounded me.

.....

You will not pass this test. You will fail.

.....