

Clauses & Sentence Structures

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Independent Clauses (Simple Sentence)

A simple sentence consists of a subject, verb, and complete expression of thought.

Simple sentences are also referred to as *independent clauses*. So, an independent clause could stand alone as its own sentence.

Subject + verb [complete thought] = simple sentence

Melanie likes to dance.

Compound Sentences

A compound sentence consists of two simple sentences (*independent clauses*).

A comma is *not* enough to separate two independent clauses: use a comma and a conjunction (*FANBOYS*).

Simple sentence, **[FANBOYS]** simple sentence.

I needed milk, **so** I went to the store.

Independent clauses can also be joined with a semicolon.

Simple sentence; **[FANBOYS]** simple sentence.

I needed milk; **so** I went to the store.

For
And
Nor
But
Or
Yet
So

Dependent Clauses

Dependent clauses *can't* stand alone as their own sentences like independent clauses. A dependent clause starts with a dependent word, also called a *complex conjunction*. The complex conjunction makes the clause unable to function as a simple sentence.

Complex Conjunctions:

because	when	before	whenever
if	since	unless	though
after	although	wherever	even though
while	until	as	whereas

Complex Sentences

A complex sentence consists of an independent clause (simple sentence) and a dependent clause. Remember: A dependent clause begins with a dependent word (also called a complex conjunction).

There are two ways to structure a complex sentence.

1. If the dependent clause comes first, the sentence needs a comma in-between the dependent and independent clauses.

Dependent clause + comma + independent clause = complex sentence

Because they like to sing, Jo performed at the talent show.

2. If the independent clause comes first, the sentence does not need a comma.

Independent clause + complex conjunction/dependent clause = complex sentence

Jo performed at the talent show **because** they like to sing.