Clauses & Sentence Structures

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.

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>because</th>
<th>when</th>
<th>before</th>
<th>whenever</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>if</td>
<td>since</td>
<td>unless</td>
<td>though</td>
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<td>after</td>
<td>although</td>
<td>wherever</td>
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<tr>
<td>while</td>
<td>until</td>
<td>as</td>
<td>whereas</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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.