

CLAUSES AND SENTENCES

A clause is a sentence or part of a sentence that conveys a relationship between a subject and a verb. A subject is what or who does an action or is described, and a verb describes the subject's action.

THERE ARE TWO MAIN TYPES OF CLAUSES

independent and dependent clauses. We describe both in this dependent clauses

Dependent clauses contain a subject and verb but cannot stand alone as a complete sentence. They must be linked to an independent clause to create a complete sentence. There are three types of dependent clauses, all of which express different information.

NOMINAL CLAUSE

A nominal clause is a group of words that includes a verb that take the place of a noun (a person, place, or thing). These clauses begin with subordinating conjunctions, such as “that,” “whether,” and “what.” In the below example, “what you are talking about” acts as a noun, the thing that Maria doesn't know.

- Example: Maria doesn't know what you're talking about.

RELATIVE CLAUSE

A relative clause provides information about a noun, such as descriptions or characteristics, and must follow a noun.

- Example: That ball that is red costs \$11.

ADVERBIAL CLAUSE

An adverbial clause provides additional information about a verb. These clauses begin with subordinating conjunctions, such as “since,” “although,” and “after.”

- Example: Joe went running after he finished class.

INDEPENDENT CLAUSES

Independent clauses contain a subject and verb and function as complete sentences. There are three kinds of complete sentences that are made up of clauses: compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences. Each are described on the next page.

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COMPOUND SENTENCES

Compound sentences contain two or more independent clauses typically linked with a semicolon and conjunctive adverb or with a comma and coordinating conjunction (“for,” “and,” “nor,” “but,” “or,” “yet,” and “so”).

- Example: The research is persuasive, and I am convinced by the article.
- Example: I want to go to the party; however, I have a lot of work to do.

COMPLEX SENTENCES

Complex sentences combine one independent clause with one or more dependent clauses. Generally, there are two ways to structure these sentences depending on what information the writer wants to emphasize. When the dependent clause comes before the independent clause, you must use a comma to separate the two. However, if the independent clause comes before the dependent clause, you do not use a comma. See these two examples:

- Example: Because Mary and Samantha arrived at the bus station before noon, I did not see them at the train station.
- Example: I did not see them at the station because Mary and Samantha arrived at the bus station before noon.

COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCES

Compound-complex sentences combine two or more independent clauses with one or more dependent clauses. For example:

- Example: Although I like to go camping, I haven’t had much time to go, and it has been very rainy this summer.