**THE CLAUSE**

**and**

**SENTENCE**

**BASIC GRAMMAR**

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Recognize a clause when you see one.

Clauses come in four types:

main [or independent],

subordinate [or dependent],

relative [or adjective],

and noun.

Every clause has at least a subject and a verb.

Other characteristics will help you distinguish one type of clause from another.

**MAIN CLAUSES**

Every main clause will follow this pattern:

**SUBJECT + VERB = Complete Thought .**

Here are some examples:

Lazy students whine.

Students = subject;

whine = verb.

Cola spilled over the glass and splashed onto the counter.

Cola = subject; spilled,

splashed = verbs.

My dog loves pizza crusts.

Dog = subject;

loves = verb.

The important point to remember is that every sentence must have at least one main clause. Otherwise, you have a fragment, a major error.

**SUBORDINATE CLAUSES**

A subordinate clause will follow this pattern:

**Subordinate Conjunction + Subject + Verb = Incomplete Thought .**

Here are some examples:

Whenever lazy students whine

Whenever = subordinate conjunction;

students = subject;

whine = verb.

As cola spilled over the glass and splashed onto the counter

As = subordinate conjunction;

cola = subject; spilled,

splashed = verbs.

Because my dog loves pizza crusts

Because = subordinate conjunction;

dog = subject;

loves = verb.

The important point to remember about subordinate clauses is that they can never stand alone as complete sentences. To complete the thought, you must attach each subordinate clause to a main clause.

Generally, the punctuation looks like this:

**Main Clause + Ø + Subordinate Clause .**

**Subordinate Clause + , + Main Clause .**

Check out these revisions to the subordinate clauses above:

Whenever lazy students whine, Mrs. Russell throws chalk erasers at their heads.

Anthony ran for the paper towels as cola spilled over the glass and splashed onto the counter.

Because my dog loves pizza crusts, he never barks at the deliveryman.

**RELATIVE CLAUSES**

A relative clause will begin with a relative pronoun

[such as who, whom, whose, which, or that] or a relative adverb [when, where, or why].

The patterns look like these:

**Relative Pronoun or Adverb + Subject + Verb = Incomplete Thought .**

**Relative Pronoun as Subject + Verb = Incomplete Thought .**

Here are some examples:

Whom Mrs. Russell hit in the head with a chalk eraser

Whom = relative pronoun;

Mrs. Russell = subject;

hit = verb.

Where he chews and drools with great enthusiasm

Where = relative adverb;

he = subject; chews,

drools = verbs.

That had spilled over the glass and splashed onto the counter

That = relative pronoun;

had spilled,

splashed = verbs.

Who loves pizza crusts

Who = relative pronoun;

loves = verb.

Like subordinate clauses, relative clauses cannot stand alone as complete sentences. You must connect them to main clauses to finish the thought.

Look at these revisions of the relative clauses above:

The lazy students whom Mrs. Russell hit in the head with a chalk eraser soon learned to keep their complaints to themselves.

My dog Floyd, who loves pizza crusts, eats them under the kitchen table, where he chews and drools with great enthusiasm.

Anthony ran to get paper towels for the cola that had spilled over the glass and splashed onto the counter.

Punctuating relative clauses can be tricky. You must decide if the relative clause

is essential or nonessential and then use commas accordingly.

Essential relative clauses do not require commas. A relative clause is essential when you need the information it provides.

Look at this example:

A dog that eats too much pizza will soon develop pepperoni breath.

Dog is nonspecific.

To know which dog we are talking about, we must have the information in the relative clause. Thus, the relative clause is essential and requires no commas.

If, however, we revise dog and choose more specific words instead, the relative clause becomes nonessential and does require commas to separate it from the rest of the sentence.

Read this revision:

My dog Floyd, who eats too much pizza, has developed pepperoni

breath.

**NOUN CLAUSES**

Any clause that functions as a noun becomes a noun clause. Look at this example:

You really do not want to know the ingredients in Aunt Nancy's stew.

Ingredients = noun.

If we replace the noun ingredients with a clause, we have a noun clause:

You really do not want to know what Aunt Nancy adds to her stew.

What Aunt Nancy adds to her stew = noun clause.

Source: <http://www.chompchomp.com/terms/clause.pdf>

**THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PHRASE, CLAUSE AND SENTENCE**

These three structures are a common part of English, and are all composed of groups of words. Clauses, phrases and sentences are very similar, but they do have different roles. Learning the difference between them will help you make a lot more sense of English grammar, and will be very useful to improve your written English.

What is a phrase?

Words can be grouped together, but without a subject or a verb. This is called a phrase.

Because a phrase has neither subject nor verb, it can’t form a ‘predicate’. This is a structure that must contain a verb, and it tells you something about what the subject is doing.

Phrases can be very short – or quite long. Two examples of phrases are:

“After dinner”

“Waiting for the rain to stop”.

Phrases can’t be used alone, but you can use them as part of a sentence, where they are used as parts of speech.

What is a clause?

Clauses are groups of words that have both subjects and predicates. Unlike phrases, a clause can sometimes act as a sentence – this type of clause is called an independent clause. This isn’t always the case, and some clauses can’t be used on their own – these are called subordinate clauses, and need to be used with an independent clause to complete their meaning.

An example of a subordinate clause is “When the man broke into the house”

An example of an independent clause is “the dog barked at him”

While the independent clause could be used by itself as a complete sentence, the subordinate clause could not. For it to be correct, it would need to be paired with another clause: “When the man broke into the house, the dog barked at him.”

What is a sentence?

A complete sentence has a subject and predicate, and can often be composed of more than one clause. As long as it has a subject and a predicate, a group of words can form a sentence, no matter how short.

E.g. “You ate fish.”

More complex sentences can combine multiple clauses or phrases to add additional information about what is described. Clauses may be combined using conjunctions – such as “and”, “but” and “or”.

E.g. “He went out to dinner but didn’t enjoy the meal.”

This example is composed of two independent clauses, “he went out to dinner” and “he didn’t enjoy the meal”, combined with a conjunction- “but”.

SOURCE: <https://www.eurocentres.com/blog/clause-phrase-sentence-learn-the-difference/>

**SENTENCE TYPES:**

**Simple,**

**Compound,**

**Complex, and**

**Compound-Complex**

**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.

2. Professor Maple’s intelligent students completed and turned in their homework.

^ 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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**PRACTICE:**

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.

**SOURCE:** [**https://www.lamission.edu/learningcenter/docs/asc/worksheets/Grammar/Sentence%20Types.pdf**](https://www.lamission.edu/learningcenter/docs/asc/worksheets/Grammar/Sentence%20Types.pdf)