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## **II/ Phrases, Clauses and Sentences**

### **1- Phrases**

A phrase is a group of words that works together in a sentence but does not contain a subject or a verb. Often phrases are used for descriptions of people, things, or events.

#### **Types of Phrases:**

Noun phrase

Adjective phrase

Adverb phrase

Verb phrase

Prepositional phrase

Other types of phrases include gerund phrase, appositive phrase, participle phrase and infinitive phrase.

#### **Noun Phrase**

A noun phrase is a group of words that have a noun or pronoun. It is used to modify the noun. In other words, it can be said that a noun phrase can function as a subject, an object or a complement in a sentence.

For example:

**My brother's friend** had come to visit him. (Used as a subject)

**Scented candles** are my favourite. (Used as a subject)

The students were asked to find **the buried treasure**. (Used as an object)

#### **Adjective Phrase**

An adjective phrase or an adjectival phrase is a group of words that consists of an adjective. It can be used to complement it. It provides more information about the noun or pronoun in a sentence. In other words, it can be said that it functions just like an adjective in a sentence.

For example:

Annu has **silky, smooth hair**.

People, **living in large cities**, often find it difficult to reach in time.

### **Adverb Phrase**

An adverb phrase or an adverbial phrase is a group of words that includes an adverb and other modifiers. It performs all the functions of an adverb. It can be placed in any part of the sentence, with respect to the part of speech they modify.

For example:

We are planning to finish our group project **by the end of May**.

**Later this evening**, my cousins and I have planned to go to the park.

### **Verb Phrase**

A verb phrase can be used just like a verb. It consists of a main verb and an auxiliary verb.

For example:

Students **are practising** hard in order to participate in the state tournament.

Aaron **has been writing** multiplication tables for three hours.

The dogs **have been barking** continuously.

### **Prepositional Phrase**

A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition and an object. It works just like an adjective or an adverb. It relates the subject and the verb in a sentence. It is used to modify the nouns and verbs in a particular sentence.

For example:

It was too hard for me to concentrate **with the kids jumping around**.

The jewellery boxes were kept **inside the cupboard**.

## **2- Clauses**

A clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb that have a relationship. This relationship is crucial; a clause conveys information about what that subject is or is doing, rather than simply being a random grouping of words.

A sentence can have just one clause or it can have multiple clauses. The only defining characteristic of a clause is that it must contain a related subject and verb. Clauses play a variety of roles in English and because of this, there are numerous ways to structure and combine them.

Classifying clauses in English

When it comes to expressing a complete thought, a clause falls between a phrase and a sentence. In many cases, a clause can function as its own sentence. A phrase, in contrast, can't. Here's a quick look at the difference between a phrase and a clause:

Phrase: Meows so loudly

Clause: That cat meows so loudly

In this example, the clause can be an independent sentence. It can also be part of a complex sentence. For example:

That cat meows so loudly when she wants to eat.

### **Types of clauses:**

#### **Independent clauses**

An independent clause is a clause that can stand on its own as a distinct sentence. Take a look at these examples:

I love eating cookies.

My dog barks a lot.

The kids ate lunch.

His truck is green.

When you want to write a sentence that's more than one independent clause, you need to combine clauses. Every sentence you write includes at least one independent clause. The other clauses in your sentence determine how you can combine them with your independent clause.

A sentence that includes two or more independent clauses is known as a compound sentence. In a compound sentence, the clauses are joined by a comma paired with a coordinating conjunction, a semicolon, or a colon. This kind of combination is known as coordination. Take a look at these examples of compound sentences:

I love drinking soda, but I know it's bad for my teeth.

Maria loved hosting dinner parties; her friends enjoyed her cooking.

We danced until the band finished playing: they played until midnight.

When all of your clauses are independent clauses, you can combine them using a **coordinating conjunction** or a **conjunctive adverb**.

coordinating conjunctions are:

for

and

nor

but

or

yet

so

Conjunctive Adverbs are:

also

however

otherwise

consequently  
indeed  
similarly  
finally  
likewise  
then  
furthermore  
moreover  
therefore  
hence  
nevertheless  
thus  
nonetheless

How to punctuate conjunctive adverbs

When a conjunctive adverb connects two independent clauses in one sentence, it is preceded by a semicolon and followed by a comma.

Tuition increases, say officials, are driven by the universities' costs; **consequently**, tuition income typically covers less than 50% of college budgets.

### **Dependent clauses**

In contrast, a dependent clause is not a complete sentence. Dependent clauses are sometimes known as subordinate clauses. As their name implies, these clauses depend on independent clauses to clearly express ideas. Here are a few examples of dependent clauses:

When I grow up

Although he sings well

The mouse that was hiding

To turn these dependent clauses into full sentences, you need to combine them with independent clauses:

When I grow up, I want to be a doctor.

Although he sings well, he hates karaoke.

I searched through the basement and found the mouse that was hiding.

In the first two examples, the dependent clause comes before the independent clause and the two clauses are separated by commas. Keep this in mind when you're writing: Whenever the dependent clause comes first in a complex sentence, it's followed by a comma.

If you need to combine a dependent clause with an independent clause, you need a subordinating conjunction. There are a lot more subordinating conjunctions than there are coordinating conjunctions, and they can be divided into categories according to their function.

A sentence that includes an independent clause and one or more dependent clauses is known as a complex sentence, and a sentence that includes two or more independent

clauses and at least one dependent clause is known as a compound-complex sentence. In either of these kinds of sentences, the subordinating conjunction signifies the beginning of the dependent clause. Here are a few examples:

The fun can begin now that the clown is here.

While we slept, the plane reached its destination.

Before you leave, remember to take a goodie bag!

The pool is open daily until the temperature drops.

As you can see in these examples, when the dependent clause comes first, it needs to be followed by a comma.

Subordinating conjunctions aren't the only way to add a dependent clause to a sentence. Dependent clauses can also start with relative pronouns or relative adverbs.

Relative pronouns include that, whose, whom, who, and which. Take a look at how these dependent clauses that begin with relative pronouns work in sentences:

The guy who shouted all night made it impossible to fall asleep.

Pac's, that restaurant with the arcade, is the best restaurant in town.

Relative adverbs include where, when, how, and why. Here are a few relative adverb-led dependent clauses at work:

The traffic jam is the reason why we were late.

I have no idea when my hose stopped working.

### **3- Sentences**

A new sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with punctuation (a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point).

**He** obtained his degree.

A sentence must have a complete idea that stands alone. This is also called an **independent clause**.

#### **1- Simple Sentences**

A simple sentence contains a subject and a verb, and it may also have an object and modifiers. However, it contains only one independent clause.

Here are a few examples:

She wrote.

He completed her literature review.

#### **2- Compound Sentences**

A compound sentence contains at least two **independent clauses**. These two independent clauses can be combined with a comma and a **coordinating conjunction** or with a semicolon.

Compound sentences are easy to identify because they usually use a coordinating conjunction, which you may remember as FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so.

However, compound sentences can also use a semicolon to connect two clauses, in which case no conjunction is necessary.

Let's look at some compound sentence examples to see how they work.

I have a pet iguana. His name is Fluffy.

To combine them into a compound sentence, we simply add a comma plus the coordinating conjunction and:

I have a pet iguana, **and** his name is Fluffy.

Alternatively, we can make a compound sentence by adding only **a semicolon**, and the sentence will still be correct:

I have a pet iguana; his name is Fluffy.

Although they're talking about the same topic, the subject of each independent clause is different: The first clause's subject is I, and the second one's subject is name. That's part of what makes them independent, and a sentence is considered compound only when it consists of independent clauses. For example, the sentence below is not a compound sentence:

I have a pet iguana whose name is Fluffy.

To be a compound sentence, it needs at least two subjects and two verbs. If both independent clauses use the same subject, it must be stated twice, as in the quote below, for the sentence to be compound:

"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the water to create many ripples." —Mother Teresa

Be careful of sentences with only two subjects or only two verbs—these are not the same as compound sentences. The following sentence is not a compound sentence, because there is only one subject (I) even though there are two verbs (chew and study), and because what comes after the conjunction and is not an independent clause:

I came here to chew bubblegum and study grammar.

However, you can turn this sentence into a compound sentence by adding another independent clause with a second subject:

I came here to chew bubble gum and study grammar, but I'm all out of gum.

Keep in mind that imperative sentences don't always show their subjects, because they're implied. That leads to compound sentences like this example, the first independent clause of which has the implied subject you:

Get me some water, or the fire will spread!

Let's look at some more compound sentence examples from some of history's greatest writers:

"Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished." —Lao Tzu

"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken." —Oscar Wilde

"You will face many defeats in life, but never let yourself be defeated." —Maya Angelou

Commas and other punctuation in compound sentences

When creating compound sentences, there are two punctuation rules to keep in mind:

1 Place a comma before the coordinating conjunction.

2 If you're not using a coordinating conjunction, place a semicolon between the clauses.

As always, you use a lowercase letter to start the second independent clause. Since compound sentences are a single sentence, only the first letter of the first clause is capitalized.

Here are a few examples:

She completed her literature review, and she created her reference list.

He organized his sources by theme; then, he updated his reference list.

They studied APA rules for many hours, but they realized there was still much to learn.

### **3- Complex Sentences**

A complex sentence contains at least one independent clause and at least one dependent clause. Dependent clauses can refer to the subject (who, which) the sequence/time (since, while), or the causal elements (because, if) of the independent clause.

If a sentence begins with a dependent clause, note the comma after this clause. If, on the other hand, the sentence begins with an independent clause, there is not a comma separating the two clauses.

Here are a few examples:

Although she completed her literature review, she still needed to work on her methods section.

Note the comma in this sentence because it begins with a dependent clause.

Because he organized his sources by theme, it was easier for his readers to follow.

Note the comma in this sentence because it begins with a dependent clause.

They studied APA rules for many hours as they were so interesting.

Note that there is no comma in this sentence because it begins with an independent clause.

### **4- Compound-Complex Sentences**

Sentence types can also be combined. A compound-complex sentence contains at least two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause.

She completed her literature review, but she still needs to work on her methods section even though she finished her methods course last semester.

Although he organized his sources by theme, he decided to arrange them chronologically, and he carefully followed the MEAL plan for organization.

With pizza and soda at hand, they studied APA rules for many hours, and they decided that writing in APA made sense because it was clear, concise, and objective.

Using some complex-compound sentences in writing allows for more sentence variety.

Pay close attention to comma usage in complex-compound sentences so that the reader is easily able to follow the intended meaning.