What Is a Clause?

A clause is a group of words that contains both a subject and a verb. There are two kinds of clauses, independent and dependent.

An independent clause expresses a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence. An independent clause is also called a main clause.

We all want bargains.

A dependent clause may contain a subject and a verb, but it does not express a complete thought. It cannot stand alone as a sentence. Another name for a dependent clause is a subordinate clause. Dependent clauses are often introduced by words such as because, when, if, while, or that.

when we buy things

A dependent clause can be joined to an independent clause to express a complete thought.

We all want bargains when we buy things.

Identifying Independent and Dependent Clauses

Identify each boldfaced group of words by writing IND for independent clause and DEP for dependent clause.

1. Anyone with a checking account keeps track of the checks that he or she writes. ____
2. Your check register is a record of your checks and their amounts. ____
3. Veronica, who is a very organized person, keeps good financial records. ____
4. If you don’t keep track of your funds, you might write a bad check. ____
5. A bad check is called bad because there is no money in your account to pay it. ____
6. An orderly register tells the exact amount of money in your account. ____
7. If you have little or no money left, you cannot write any more checks. ____
8. A bank charges an extra fee whenever your funds won’t cover your checks. ____
9. Each month, the bank sends you a statement that shows what came into or went out of the account. ____
10. Every bank has its own rules about what fees it charges. ____
11. A checking account that has a certain amount of money in it will earn interest. ____
12. Before Andrew opened his checking account, he asked about the bank’s fees. ____
What Is a Clause?

A. Identifying Independent and Dependent Clauses
Identify each boldfaced group of words by writing IND for independent clause or DEP for dependent clause.

1. My favorite store went out of business because it was losing money. _______
2. The store made many sales, but the prices must have been too low. _______
3. Perhaps the problem was the expenses were simply too high. _______
4. When the store paid its own bills, there was no money left. _______
5. Naturally, the people who owned the store weren’t happy. _______
6. The owners announced that they were selling the store. _______
7. Although the store has been closed for six months, I still miss it. _______
8. I had hoped to work at that store when I was old enough for a job. _______
9. Doesn’t the activity in a store appeal to you? _______
10. Maybe the mall where the store was charged a high rent. _______
11. If I ever start a store of my own, I’ll watch costs carefully. _______
12. Before I open the store, I’ll learn more about running a store. _______

B. Identifying and Correcting Fragments
This paragraph includes three dependent clauses that are not attached as they should be to independent clauses. Rewrite the paragraph, connecting the dependent clauses to independent clauses.

Most teenagers get an allowance. They can spend this money. However they choose. Some teens spend the money on clothing and other items that they need. Others spend their allowance carelessly on things. That are soon thrown away. Many teens save some of their allowance. Teens who save will have money. When they really need it.
A. Identifying Independent and Dependent Clauses

If an item is a sentence consisting of only one independent clause, write \textbf{IND} on the line. If it is a fragment consisting of only a dependent clause, write \textbf{DEP}. If the item is a sentence consisting of both an independent and a dependent clause, write either \textbf{IND + DEP} or \textbf{DEP + IND} to show the order of clauses.

\textbf{EXAMPLE} After the snow fell. \textbf{DEP}

1. Banks pay interest on the money that customers loan them. \underline{___}
2. Although savings accounts pay interest, the rate is usually low. \underline{___}
3. When customers take out loans, they pay the bank higher interest. \underline{___}
4. When my brother started college. \underline{___}
5. While opening a checking account has strict requirements, even children can open savings accounts. \underline{___}
6. Loretta has had a savings account since she was six years old. \underline{___}
7. Because 4th Street Savings and Loan pays high interest. \underline{___}
8. Some banks encourage savings accounts for young people. \underline{___}
9. Other banks charge fees on accounts that have only a few hundred dollars in them. \underline{___}
10. If you leave money in a savings account for at least six months. \underline{___}

B. Correcting Fragments

In Exercise A, which items were fragments with the answer \textbf{DEP}? Write the numbers of those items on the lines below. Then complete each item by adding an independent clause to the dependent clause. Write the corrected sentence after the item number.

\textbf{EXAMPLE} After the snow fell. \textbf{DEP}

\textbf{EX.} The roads were slippery after the snow fell.

Revision of # \underline{___} \underline{___}

Revision of # \underline{___} \underline{___}

Revision of # \underline{___} \underline{___}

Revision of # \underline{___} \underline{___}
A simple sentence has one independent clause and no dependent clauses. Even a simple sentence can be elaborate, and it may have compound parts.

The squirrel found and buried the nut. (compound verb)

A compound sentence has two or more independent clauses joined together, but no dependent clauses. The clauses must be close in thought. They may be joined by a coordinating conjunction (with a comma) or by a semicolon.

The squirrel climbed the bird feeder, and the birds flew away.

The coordinating conjunctions are the following:

for and nor or but so yet

Identifying Kinds of Sentences

Identify each sentence below with S for simple or CD for compound.

1. Greg shoveled the snow, and his brother began a snow sculpture.

2. The boat nosed up to the dock; our trip was finally over.

3. Tom and Gail quickly cut and stacked the firewood.

4. Several people listened, but nobody volunteered.

5. Sheila calls it a dragonfly; I call it a darning needle.

6. Did you and Lee walk or ride to your dance class?

7. Gina and Dave picked the wildflowers, and we arranged them.

8. The clown made a face; the child burst into laughter.

9. Her mother went to the trade show, but Doreen stayed home.

10. Wang and his brother looked at the problem and spotted the solution.

11. Mrs. Ballak may be in court, or she may be in her office.

12. Snow fell; winter was now upon us.

13. Kathy phoned this morning, but our phone was out of order.

14. The radio crackled with static and then went out.

15. We could play a video game, or we could go to Jim’s house.

16. Lou has been baking bread, and Connie is making a big salad.
A. Identifying Kinds of Sentences

Identify each sentence below with S for simple or CD for compound.

1. Everyone played pretty well, but Jenny scored the winning basket. ________
2. Jaime and Ana sorted the photos and then framed them. ________
3. Jaime did most of the work, but Ana helped. ________
4. Toshi went to the mall on Saturday; Jody stayed home. ________
5. The motorcycles roared around the curve and raced down the track. ________
6. Will you stay home, or will you come with us to the movies? ________
7. I wrote her several times, but I never received an answer. ________
8. Charlene clutched at the brake; the bike finally stopped. ________
9. Tony washed and dried the dishes and cups. ________
10. Lawyers argue cases, but judges decide them. ________

B. Combining Sentences

Combine the two sentences in each item to make a compound sentence. Use a semicolon alone, or a comma with one of the coordinating conjunctions: and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet.

1. Dennis plays sports a great deal. He studies hard too.
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Combining Sentences

In all but three of the following items, the two simple sentences can be combined into one compound sentence. If the sentences are close in thought, combine them, using a semicolon alone, or a comma with a coordinating conjunction: and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet. If the sentences are not close in thought, write Unconnected Simple Sentences.

1. The temperature rose above freezing. The snow finally began to melt.

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Stanley turned on the bedroom light. His mother was making dinner in the kitchen.

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________

3. Amy can play the guitar. She can play the piano.

__________________________________________________________________________________________

4. The hare slept. The turtle ran.

__________________________________________________________________________________________

5. Carlos bought a tie. He still needed a jacket.

__________________________________________________________________________________________

6. Classes are canceled on Thursday and Friday for Thanksgiving. In Canada, Thanksgiving is celebrated during a different month.

__________________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________


__________________________________________________________________________________________

8. Nita mailed the letter today. The post office was crowded.

__________________________________________________________________________________________

9. Keith completed the test. He forgot to write his name on it.

__________________________________________________________________________________________
A **complex sentence** has one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses.

Fossils, *as you may know*, are the remains of plants and animals *that lived thousands or millions of years ago*. (The two dependent clauses are underlined.)

Each dependent clause starts with words such as *after, although, who, which, when, until, where, so that,* and *since.* These clauses can tell *where, when,* and *why* something happened or can give more information about the people and things involved.

### A. Understanding Complex Sentences

In each complex sentence below, find and underline the independent clauses with these words.

- Scientists believe
- Fossils have been found
- Fossils indicate

Then underline each dependent clause twice.

1. Fossils have been found wherever scientists have searched hard.
2. Scientists believe that most species of plants and animals died out without leaving any fossils.
3. Fossils indicate that deserts were once sea bottoms.
4. Fossils that closely resemble living animals indicate that successful animals do not change much over time.
5. Because new evidence links birds and dinosaurs, scientists believe that birds may be the descendents of dinosaurs.
6. Although their exact age cannot be determined, fossils have been found in different layers of rock, which indicate relative ages.
7. Because nests of baby dinosaurs have been found, scientists believe that these ancient creatures cared for their young for some time.
8. Even though we cannot guess at the colors of prehistoric flowers, fossils indicate that flowering plants date from about 138 million years ago.

### B. Understanding Complex Sentences

In each of these complex sentences, underline only the independent clause.

1. Since Eldon hates airplanes, he’ll probably take the train even though it is slow.
2. If you see Rita, please tell her to return my lunchbox that she borrowed last week.
3. Someone forgot to water the roses that grow in the side yard.
4. Wherever you go, you’ll find interesting people whom you can write about.
5. Although the farmer is ready, the ground is still too wet to plow.
A. Understanding Complex Sentences

In each of these complex sentences, underline each independent clause once and each dependent clause twice.

1. Until you change those strings, your banjo won’t sound very good.
2. Darryl looked after my dog while I was away.
3. Bring your backpack when you come to school today.
4. When my grandmother was young, she listened to Frank Sinatra records.
5. Unless I am wrong, peaches were first grown in China.
6. Linda will lend Wei the book when she has finished it.
7. The announcer whose voice is so pleasant has switched to the morning drive time.
8. Write about your experience while it is still fresh in your mind.
9. In this plan, you pay as you go.
10. None of the poems that I like best are in this anthology.

B. Identifying Kinds of Sentences

Identify each sentence below with S for simple, CD for compound, or CX for complex.

1. Scientists can determine the relative age of fossils from the layers of rock in which the fossils are found. ________
2. Fossils in lower layers are older; those in higher layers are younger. ________
3. The oldest fossils of any group of living things are simpler than the more recent fossils are. ________
4. To scientists, this is clear evidence that plants and animals change over time. ________
5. The oldest fossils are approximately 3.5 billion years old. ________
6. These ancient fossils are traces of bacteria, which are one-celled organisms. ________
7. Animals without backbones came into being about 700 million years ago, but animals with backbones did not appear until about 500 million years ago. ________
8. If you could travel in time, would you go to the time of the dinosaurs? ________
9. Even the air must have smelled different that long ago! ________
A. Creating Complex Sentences

Combine each numbered sentence with the first sentence that follows to make a complex sentence. Add, drop, or change words as needed. Write the new sentences below.

(1) Evidence from fossils shows something. The continents have changed shape and position. (2) Dinosaurs appeared about 240 million years ago. All the continents were connected. (3) Fossils of mammals are very different from continent to continent. Mammals appeared about 40 million years later. (4) The first mammals lived about 200 million years ago. The continents had begun to split apart by that time.

1. ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

2. ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

3. ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

4. ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

B. Revising Complex Sentences

Underline the independent clause in each of these complex sentences. Then rewrite the sentence, keeping the independent clause but supplying a new dependent clause.

1. We ate the fruit because we were hungry.
   ____________________________________________________________________________

2. After the curtain accidentally fell during her speech, the actress forgot her lines.
   ____________________________________________________________________________

3. A statue that was sculpted by Rodin is on display at the museum.
   ____________________________________________________________________________
An adjective clause is a dependent clause that is used as an adjective. An adjective clause modifies a noun or pronoun. It tells what kind, which one, how much, or how many.

Rosa likes furniture that was made in colonial America. (Which furniture?)

Adjective clauses are usually joined to the main clause by relative pronouns such as who, whom, whose, that, and which. A clause beginning with which is set off by commas.

This antiques dealer, who has similar pieces, has reasonable prices. (describes dealer)
This chair, which Rosa bought recently, was made about 1720. (describes chair)

An adverb clause is a dependent clause that is used as an adverb. It modifies a verb, adjective, or adverb. Adverb clauses tell where, when, how, why, under what conditions, and to what extent.

Because such chairs are rare, they are valuable. (tells why, modifies verb)

Adverb clauses are usually joined to the main clause by subordinating conjunctions such as if, because, although, as, when, where, and while.

A noun clause is a dependent clause used as a noun. Noun clauses may be used anywhere in a sentence that nouns can be used.

Subject Who made the furniture is not known.
Direct Object Rosa buys whatever antiques she can afford.
Predicate Nominative This table is what she found last year.

Usually, a noun clause is joined to the main clause by words such as who, whom, whoever, whomever, that, which, what, when, how, where, why, and whether.

Identifying Adjective, Adverb, and Noun Clauses
Write ADJ (adjective), ADV (adverb), or N (noun) to identify each boldfaced clause.

1. Duncan Phyfe was an American furniture designer who lived from 1768 to 1854. ________
2. Phyfe came to America from Scotland, where he was born. ________
3. When Phyfe came to America, he settled in New York City. ________
4. The style that Phyfe made popular is called the Federal style. ________
5. What made Phyfe famous was his chairs and seats. ________
6. His chairs have backs that are shaped like scrolls. ________
7. Phyfe took ideas from neoclassical style, because that was popular in England. ________
8. Americans still admired whatever the English admired. ________
9. The neoclassical style was introduced in England by Robert Adam, who was also from Scotland. ________
10. A furniture style that began in France was what inspired Adam. ________
A. Identifying Adjective, Adverb, and Noun Clauses

In each sentence, underline the dependent clause. On the line, write \textit{ADJ} (adjective), \textit{ADV} (adverb), or \textit{N} (noun) to identify the clause.

\textbf{EXAMPLE} I simply like furniture \textit{that is comfortable}. \textit{ADJ}

1. The art museum has an exhibit of furniture that came from ancient Egypt. 
2. That throne, which belonged to King Tutankhamen, is one of the loveliest pieces.
3. What the average Egyptian of that time had in his or her home was only a simple stool or two.
4. Because the furniture is so old, the museum controls the humidity in the hall.
5. If you had lived in classical Greece, you probably would have slept on the floor.
6. Whoever was rich enough had an elegant bed.
7. Many Greek tables had three legs that ended in feet shaped like paws.
8. Romans borrowed Greek furniture styles, as they borrowed most Greek things.
9. Although the Romans began with the same styles, they adapted them.
10. Today we still use styles that were developed by the Romans.

B. Identifying Clauses and Their Roles

Underline once the dependent clause in each sentence. If that clause is an adjective or an adverb clause, write on the line the word it modifies. If the clause is a noun clause, write \textit{S}, \textit{O}, or \textit{PN} to tell whether the clause is used as the subject of a verb, direct or indirect object of a verb or object of a preposition, or a predicate nominative.

1. That loud girl on the bus said whatever popped into her head.
2. As I walked past the phone booth on the corner, the phone was ringing.
3. Did the mail carrier bring the letter that you were waiting for?
4. Whoever needs a pencil may take one from the storage cabinet.
5. Close all of the programs before you shut down the computer.
6. The city is reclaiming land around the factory, which was contaminated by the waste products.
7. Until we hear from the contest judges, we will be holding our breath.
Kinds of Dependent Clauses

A. Identifying Adjective, Adverb, and Noun Clauses

Each sentence has at least one dependent clause. Underline each dependent clause, and, next to the underlined words, write ADJ (adjective), ADV (adverb), or N (noun) to identify its type.

1. One of the characteristics that made classic Chinese furniture remarkable was how the craftspeople joined the parts without pegs, nails, or even glue.

2. Because Japan is subject to frequent earthquakes, Japanese furniture has consisted of small, lightweight pieces that can easily be moved to safety.

3. Although a stool is smaller than a throne, in Ghana and other parts of Africa, it had the same role, because the stool was reserved for whoever was chief.

4. Cassones are large chests that were made by craftspeople who worked in Italy in the period between 1300 and 1600, which is called the Renaissance.

B. Using Dependent Clauses

Rewrite each sentence with a clause that fits the description in parentheses.

1. (Noun clause, subject of the verb sang) He sang with the orchestra.

2. (Adjective clause, modifying radio) I turned off the radio.

3. (Adverb clause, modifying strong) The wind was strong.

4. (Noun clause, object of about) The club members talked about it.

5. (Adverb clause, telling when) Did you have a good time?
A compound-complex sentence has two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.

The Great Barrier Reef that lies off the coast of Australia is the largest in the world; the reef off the coast of Belize is the largest in the Western Hemisphere.

A. Identifying Clauses

In each compound-complex sentence below, the dependent clause is underlined. Identify the sentence parts named in the parentheses. Write the sentence parts on the line.

1. Before the Spanish conquered Peru, the Incas had built a walled city called Machu Picchu; this tour visits the ruins of that city.
   (simple subject and verb of the first independent clause) __________________________
   (simple subject and verb of the second independent clause) __________________________

2. The Grand Canyon is a stunning sight, but Yosemite National Park also has many impressive features that you will never forget.
   (simple subject and verb of the first independent clause) __________________________
   (simple subject and verb of the dependent clause) __________________________

3. New Orleans is known for its lively French Quarter, and visitors who have an interest in history will enjoy a tour of the historic sites.
   (simple subject and verb of the dependent clause) __________________________
   (simple subject and verb of the second independent clause) __________________________

B. Identifying Kinds of Sentences

Identify each sentence below with CD for compound, CX for complex, or CD-CX for compound-complex.

1. Stay a little longer if you like. ________

2. Although my dog can play the piano, he does not do it well, and nobody asks him for encores. ________

3. After the last song, the musicians packed up their instruments and got on the bus. ________

4. No one should ride on a motorcycle unless he or she wears a helmet. ________

5. I’ll go if I can, but several events are scheduled for that day. ________

6. Spring came and went quickly, but I was ready for summer. ________

7. When you called, I was reading a book; now I can’t find my place. ________
A. Identifying Clauses

In each compound-complex sentence below, draw parentheses around each independent clause and underline each dependent clause.

1. A tourist attraction that also has practical importance is the Panama Canal; both cruise ships and freighters pass through it daily.
2. Is the Sears Tower in Chicago still the tallest building in the world, or have any buildings that have gone up recently taken that honor?
3. When the last tsar of Russia was arrested by revolutionaries, he and his family were hiding at a palace near St. Petersburg; now that palace is open to tourists.
4. Mount Fuji in Japan has become so popular with tourists that crowding has become a real problem, but I would still like to travel there.
5. You can take a large cruise ship to see the glaciers of Alaska, or you can ride a smaller boat that can go closer to the coast and its icy covering.
6. I’d like to see the North Pole, but I will never go where it is that cold!

B. Identifying Kinds of Sentences

Identify each sentence below with S for simple, CD for compound, CX for complex, or CD-CX for compound-complex.

1. My aunt has joined an investment club that investigates and buys stocks, and she has made a little profit already.
2. The Great Barrier Reef forms a natural breakwater for the coast of northeast Australia and attracts tourists from all over the world.
3. Just thinking is not enough; you must think of something.
4. We had gone only a little way into the cave before our flashlight went out.
5. Although snow was predicted, the temperature has stayed above freezing, so rain is falling instead.
6. Is the universe expanding, or is it contracting?
7. After the holiday dinner is over, my brother washes dishes and I dry them.
8. The last car of the poky old freight train is just now coming into view.
9. Everyone who saw the movie has liked it, so I’m going tonight.
10. We tried hard, but the job was harder than we expected.
A. Identifying Kinds of Sentences

Identify each sentence below with S for simple, CD for compound, CX for complex, or CD-CX for compound-complex.

1. San Francisco is built on hills, and some of the streets are quite steep. ________

2. Because almost all parts of Hawaii are almost always cooled by winds, visitors rarely complain about the heat. ________

3. In Florida, if you aren’t a fan of amusement parks, you can explore the Everglades, or you can go to the beaches, which are a fine place to relax. ________

4. Visitors to Pennsylvania can explore historic sites of the Revolutionary War at Valley Forge or of the Civil War at Gettysburg. ________

B. Writing Different Kinds of Sentences

Write compound-complex sentences by adding to the sentences in Exercise A according to the directions in parentheses.

1. (Locate the compound-complex sentence in Exercise A. Replace either independent clause.)

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2. (Locate the compound sentence in Exercise A. Add an adjective clause.)

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3. (Locate the complex sentence in Exercise A. Add another independent clause that tells another effect of the dependent clause.)

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4. (Locate the simple sentence in Exercise A. Add an adverb clause that tells when, and another independent clause that tells about another state. Use a semicolon to join the second independent clause to the sentence.)

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