

Kinds of Sentences

A **sentence** is a group of words containing at least one independent clause with a subject and a verb and expressing a complete idea.

Simple Sentences consist of **one main (or independent) clause**. To be complete, a simple sentence must have at least one **subject** and one **verb**. A simple sentence may also have a compound subject and/or a compound verb.

*Example: Many international **students experience** cultural shock.*

*Many international **students and postdoctoral fellows experience** cultural shock and **leave** back to their native country.*

Compound Sentences have at least **two main (or independent) clauses**, connected by

- a coordinator (*and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet*);
- a conjunctive adverb (moreover, in addition, however, therefore);
- a semicolon (;).

*Example: Men may exercise harder, **but** they may not exercise as regularly as women do.*

*Nuclear accidents can happen; **therefore**, nuclear power plants should have strict safety controls.*

Motherhood causes some women to quit their jobs; others continue working despite having young children to care for.

Complex Sentences have **one main (or independent) clause** and **one or more dependent (or subordinate) clauses**.

Example: When an atom is split, it releases neutrons.

Dependent clauses can function in the sentence as nouns, adjectives or adverbs:

Noun clauses function as nouns in the sentence and can be used as subjects, objects, predicate nominatives, and objects of prepositions. e.g.,

- Example:*
- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| What is most important to him is his family. | (subject) |
| That critic writes <i>that Al Purdy is the best poet in Canada</i> . | (object) |
| You are <i>what you eat</i> . | (predicate nominative) |
| She is very suspicious about <i>what he said</i> . | (object of preposition) |

Adjective clauses start with a relative pronoun such as *who*, *which*, or *that* and function as adjectives. The pronoun refers to a noun that usually precedes it directly.

Example: The woman *who bought the red dress* is my aunt.

That dress, *which is my favorite*, was expensive.

The problem *that he solved* was a difficult one.

Commas around the descriptive adjective clause indicate that the information there is not **essential** to the sentence. Absence of commas around a restrictive adjective clause, on the other hand, indicates that the information is essential to the sentence.

Example: The bull *that is in the pasture* belongs to Joe.

The bull, *which is in the pasture*, belongs to Joe.

Adverb clauses function as adverbs in the sentence, modifying verbs, adjectives, or adverbs. They may tell how, why, when, where, etc. Conjunctions used include *although*, *after*, *if*, *because*, *while*, *since*, *whether*, etc.

Example: *When I arrived at the University*, classes had already started.

Stan is happy *because he received a good grade on his history midterm*.

Although Bob is intelligent, he doesn't work very hard.