

CLAUSES AND COMPLEX SENTENCES

Definitions

Phrase – a group of words that lacks a subject + verb pair

Clause – a group of words containing a subject + verb pair

Independent clause – a clause that can stand alone as a sentence

Dependent clause, a.k.a. subordinate clause – a clause that cannot stand alone. It must be joined to an independent clause.

Joining Two or More Independent Clauses (Compound Sentences)

1. Two **independent** clauses can be joined by just a semi-colon (;).

Ex: Morgan liked to play lacrosse; Sean preferred to work on his graphic novel.

2. Two **independent** clauses can be linked by two types of words: coordinating conjunctions and transitional expressions. **Note:** The two word types require different punctuation.

- a. Coordinating conjunctions, a.k.a. “fanboys”:

,for ,and ,nor ,bt ,or ,yet ,so

Ex: Morgan liked to play lacrosse, but Sean preferred to work on his graphic novel.

Note: When joining independent clauses, fanboys are preceded by a comma!

- b. Transitional expressions, a.k.a. conjunctive adverbs—You may **begin** or **join** independent clauses with these:

; accordingly,	; also,	; anyhow,	; besides,
; consequently,	; furthermore,	; hence,	; henceforth,
; however,	; indeed,	; instead,	; likewise,
; meanwhile,	; moreover,	; nevertheless,	; otherwise,
; then,	; therefore,	; thus,	; still,

...and many more

Ex: Morgan liked to play lacrosse; however, Sean preferred to work on his graphic novel.

Note: When joining independent clauses, these transitional expressions are preceded by a semicolon (;) and followed by a comma!

Joining a Dependent Clause to an Independent Clause (Complex Sentences)

3. A **dependent** or subordinate clause may be joined to an **independent** clause by a subordinating conjunction. Subordinating conjunctions include the following:

after	because	in order that	so that	when
although	before	now that	than	while
as	even	once	that	
as if	even though	rather than	unless	<i>& many more</i>
as though	if	since	until	

When the dependent clause comes **after** the independent clause, no comma is inserted:

Ex: Sean worked on his graphic novel while Morgan played lacrosse.

A dependent clause that comes **before** the independent clause is set off by a comma:

Ex: While Morgan played lacrosse, Sean worked on his graphic novel.

Note: If you delete the subordinating conjunction, the clause is no longer dependent (subordinate) but is instead independent:

Ex: Sean worked on his graphic novel . ~~while~~ Morgan played lacrosse.