

A SENTENCE CHECKLIST

1. A sentence must contain at least one subject-verb unit:

Willie Stargell whacked a home run.

To find the subject-verb unit, locate the verb. An easy way to do this is by changing the sentence time:

Tomorrow, Willie Stargell will whack a home run.

Because *whacked* had to be changed to *will whack* when the time was changed, the verb is *whacked*.

Then connect the subject to the verb ask: Who whacked?

Willie Stargell whacked.

2. The verb cannot be an –ing word alone. For example, *the crowd screaming* is not a sentence.

You must connect the –ing word to a helping verb, or a verb that helps the main verb by extending it's meaning or by adding details as to how time is portrayed in the sentence.

The crowd **was** screaming. OR The crowd **is** screaming.

Or connect the phrase containing the –ing word to a sentence with another verb.

Screaming, the crowd watched the home run.

3. A subject-verb unit introduced by a subordinator (when, because, if, since, etc.) is not a sentence, but a dependent clause (a clause that cannot stand on its own as a sentence):

When Stargell whacked a home run, the crowd went wild.

This sentence has two clauses, one dependent and one independent.

When Stargell whacked a home run – dependent
the crowd went wild – independent

Because “the crowd went wild” has one correct subject-verb unit, it can stand on it's own as a sentence, which makes it an independent clause.

“When Stargell whacked a home run” is a dependent clause because it starts with a subordinator, making it a dependent clause.

4. Who, which, whose, or whom cannot be the subject of a sentence unless the sentence is a question. A subject-verb unit introduced by these words is not a sentence, but a dependent

clause.

Not a sentence:

which made the crowd go wild

Connect this dependent clause to its related independent clause:

Willie Stargell whacked a home run, which made the crowd go wild.