

Simple, Complex and Compound Sentences

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 (An independent clause contains a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought).

- **She** read.
- **She** completed *her literature review*. (SVO)
- **He** organized *his sources* by theme. (prepositional phrase)
- **They** studied *APA rules* for many hours.
- **I** like coffee.
- **Mary** likes tea.

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. There are seven coordinating conjunctions: *and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so*.

- I like coffee and Mary likes tea.
- Mary went to work but John went to the party.
- Our car broke down; we came last.
- She completed her literature review; and she created her reference list. (coordinating conjunction)
- 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.

Complex Sentences

A complex sentence contains at least **one** independent clause and at least **one** dependent clause.

(A dependent clause starts with a subordinating conjunction or a relative pronoun, and contains a subject and verb, but does not express a complete thought.)

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.

Some common subordinating conjunctions: *after, although, as, because, before, how, if, once, since, than, that, though, till, until, when, where, whether, while*

Five basic relative pronouns: *that, which, who, whom, whose*

---independent clause(bold), dependent clause(*italics*)

- *Although she completed her literature review, **she still needed to work on her methods section.*** (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.***
- ***They studied APA rules for many hours** as they were so interesting.* (there is no comma in this sentence because it begins with an independent clause.)
- **We missed our plane** because we were late.
- **He left in a hurry** after he got a phone call.
- Do you know the man who is talking to Mary?

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.

-----independent clause (**bold**); comma or semicolon; coordinating conjunction; dependent clause (*italics*)

- **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.*
- **John didn't come because he was ill** so Mary was not happy.
- He left in a hurry after he got a phone call but he came back five minutes later.

Using different type of sentences in writing allows for more sentence variety. Pay close attention to comma usage in sentences so that the reader is easily able to follow the intended meaning.

<https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/writingcenter/grammar/clauses>

1. We have to go to bed when the clock chimes ten o'clock. **Complex**
2. Jennifer liked William's friend, and she also liked his cousin. **Compound**
3. The big brown dog ran after the blue and red ball. **Simple**
4. James and Eve rode their bicycles after they ate lunch. **Complex**
5. The teacher and the principal met in the hall near the library. **Simple**
6. Many brave soldiers fought in the war, and they received medals. **Compound**
7. The drummers played a long time, but the piano players stopped early. **Compound**
8. Before the queen rode in the parade, she gave a speech. **Complex**

9. After midnight the ghosts will come out of the haunted attic. **Simple**

10. She dropped the pan and the plate, but she held on to the spoon. **Compound**

1. I made an airplane out of stone. (simple)
2. While fishing in the blue lagoon, I caught a lovely silverfish. (complex)
3. They say if you step on a crack, you will break your mother's back. (complex)
4. My voice was raspy, rough, and cracked. (simple)
5. I opened my eyes and looked up at the rain, and it dripped in my head and flowed into my brain. (compound)
6. I am writing these poems from inside a lion, and it's rather dark in here. (compound)
7. A piece of sky broke off and fell through the crack in the ceiling right into my soup. (simple)
8. If you were only one inch tall, you'd ride a worm to school. (complex)
9. The traffic light simply would not turn green, so the people stopped to wait as the traffic rolled and the wind blew cold, and the hour grew dark and late. (compound-complex)

Lesson 1: Linking Words or Connectors



At the time of speaking or writing something, we use some words or phrases in order to maintain the cohesion or continuity of the sentences. Those words or phrases are called linking words or sentence connectors or simply connectors. For example – *as a result, furthermore, despite, for example, however, as a consequence, even though, finally, therefore, but, next, in fact, of course, in brief, on the other hand, etc.* So, a connector works as a conjunction to join two or more words, phrases, and clauses together. Study the following sentences to get idea about the use of linking words or connectors.

1. Prices fell by more than 20% last year. **As a result**, sales increased by 15%.
2. Desktop computers are cheaper and more reliable than laptops; **furthermore**, they are more flexible.
3. On the whole, his speech was well received, **despite** some complaints from new members.
4. I have been to many countries. **For example**, I have been to Russia, Canada, Mexico, and Spain.
5. She hates housecleaning. **On the other hand**, she doesn't mind cooking.
6. There are many benefits to exercising. **However**, you must take some precautions to avoid injury.
7. I forgot that the cake was in the oven. **As a consequence**, it burned.
8. **Even though** the book is difficult to read, it is very interesting.
9. **Finally**, I know that she has great potential.
10. He was late to class again. **In other words**, he didn't wake up on time.

Read the following paragraph and notice the use of connectors or linking words:

One of my favorite hobbies is traveling. **Therefore**, I decided to get a job that paid me to travel **because** I just couldn't afford my habit. I worked for a company called Tech-Solve where I led bicycle trips. It was a really hard job. I got to spend two months living **and** working in France's wine country. **In addition**, I went to the south **and** stood on the red carpet **where** they hold the Cannes Film Festival. Riding bikes all summer was great, **and** traveling around France was incredible; **however**, the job was too much work **and** not enough pay. **Thus, while** it fed my traveling addiction, I knew that job wasn't for me.

Types of coordinators or linking words:

There are three main types of connectors or linking words:

- A. Coordinators or Coordinating Conjunctions
- B. Subordinators
- C. Transitions

Lesson 02 : Coordinators or Coordinating Conjunctions



Coordinating Conjunctions are the most common form of linking words. They are used to join two independent clauses together, generally in the middle of a sentence. There are seven co-coordinating conjunctions. They are – *and, but, so, or, for, nor, yet*.

Good teachers work hard **and** they organize their lecture effectively.

(Independent clause) (conjunction) (independent clause)

The office is closed for the next two days, but you can still phone to leave a message.

I forgot my computer disc, so I will have to hand in my assignment late.

Look at the following excerpts to notice the use of coordinating conjunctions:

- A. "All the long way to school
And all the way back,
 I've looked *and* I've looked
And I've kept careful track,
But all that I've noticed,
 Except my own feet,
 Was a horse *and* a wagon
 On Mulberry Street."

(Dr. Seuss, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street* , 1937)

- B. "In no other city does life seem such a perpetual balancing of debits *and* credits, of evils *and* virtues, as it does in New York. No other city seems so charming *yet* so crude, so civilized *yet* so uncouth."

(Joseph Epstein, "You Take Manhattan," 1983)



Exercise:

Fill in the gaps with appropriate coordinators:

- You can eat your cake with a spoon _____ fork.
- My dog enjoys being bathed _____ hates getting his nails trimmed.
- Bill refuses to eat peas, _____ will he touch carrots.
- Would you rather have cheese _____ honey on your sandwich?
- His two favorite sports are football _____ tennis.
- I wanted to go to the beach, _____ Mary refused.
- I am allergic to cats, _____ I have three of them.
- I am a vegetarian, _____ I don't eat any meat.
- Hasan will be late to work, _____ he has a dental appointment.
- Jennifer does not like to swim, _____ does she enjoy cycling.
- Jackson wanted to eat another piece of cake, _____ he was on a diet.
- I hate to waste a drop of gas, _____ it is very expensive these days.



Answer Keys:

1. or, 2. but, 3. nor, 4. or, 5. and, 6. but, 7. yet, 8. so, 9. for, 10. nor, 11. but, 12. for

Lesson 03 : Subordinators or Subordinating Conjunctions



Subordinators are linking words that are used to join clauses together. They join a dependent clause with an independent clause. Examples of subordinators are *before, when, if, because, although, etc.* They are used before the dependent clause. They can be used in two positions:

- 1) The subordinator and dependent clause can come before the independent clause with a comma.

When the bell rang, the students ran to the sky-train station.

- 2) The subordinator and dependent clause can come after the independent clause with no comma.

The students ran to the sky-train station when the bell rang.

Subordinating conjunctions are essential parts of complex sentences which include at least two clauses, with one of the clauses being main (independent) and the other being subordinate (dependent). A subordinate conjunction performs two functions within a sentence. First, it illustrates the importance of the independent clause. Second, it provides a transition between two ideas in the same sentence.

Look at some of the most common subordinators. As you can see from the sample sentences below, subordinators can appear either at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence.

Logical relationships	Subordinators	Sample sentences
Comparison & Contrast	although, though, even though, even if, while, whereas	Although he is poor, he is honest.
Cause	because, since	The teacher allowed her to leave the class since she was sick.
Effect/ Result	so that, in that, in order that	He enrolled in a driving school so that he could be a driver.
Condition	if, unless, provided that	I can go to the movies if I finish my homework. I cannot go to the movies unless I finish my homework.
Time	after, before, as soon as,	I'll try to finish my homework

	since, when, while, until, as	before I go to the movie. The workers continued the strike until the company agreed to pay the bonus.
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**Exercises:**

Fill in the gaps with appropriate subordinators :

1. _____ the basement flooded, we spent all day cleaning up.
2. I don't want to go to the movies _____ I hate the smell of popcorn.
3. _____ the train arrives, we have to wait.
4. _____ the alarm goes off, I hit the snooze button.
5. _____ Sherri blew out the candles atop her birthday cake, she caught her hair on fire.
6. Sara begins to sneeze _____ she opens the window to get a breath of fresh air.
7. _____ the doorbell rang, my dog Skeeter barked loudly.
8. We visited Madame Tussaud's museum _____ we were in London.
9. I'll be home at nine _____ I can get a taxi.
10. I got to the exam on time _____ there was traffic jam.



Answer Keys: 1. after, 2. because 3. until, 4. as soon as, 5. as 6. whenever
7. when 8. while 9. if 10. even though

Lesson 04 : Transitions or Sentence Connectors



Sentence connectors are used to link ideas from one sentence to the next and to give paragraphs coherence. Most pieces of formal writing are organized in a similar way: introduction, development of main ideas or arguments; conclusion. Linking words and phrases join clauses, sentences and paragraphs together.

Sentence connectors perform different functions and are placed at the beginning of a sentence. They are used to introduce, order, contrast, sequence ideas, theory, data, etc.

Functions of the Sentence Connectors:

1. Connectors used to mean the **sequence or chronology** of events:

First, firstly, at first, in the first place, at the beginning, in the beginning, to begin with

Second, secondly, third, thirdly, fourth, fourthly, etc.

In between, in the middle of

In the end, at the end, lastly, at last, finally, to sum up, in conclusion, last but not the last

Next, afterwards, after that, then

Example:

In order to open a bank account you have to follow some steps. First you have to collect a form from the bank. Then you have to fill up the form accordingly. After that you need to submit the form to the manager. Finally the manager will give approval to open a bank account for you.

2. Connectors used **to provide additional information**: and, additionally, besides, further, furthermore, especially, not only but also, moreover, both.....and, or, either.....or, neither.....nor, as well as, too, likewise, also, in addition, so on, apart from, similarly, again.

Examples:

Both Hasan and Habib obtained the same grade.

Either she or her brother came here yesterday.

I will neither go nor ask anybody to go there.

He as well as his father will come tomorrow.

He is a meritorious student. In addition, he is good player.

3. Connectors used **to give examples**: such as, namely, for example, for instance, that is, to illustrate, as an illustration, to demonstrate, etc.

Examples:

He is an expert in a number of areas such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, medicine, etc.

There are a lot of benefits of early rising. For instance, one can inhale fresh breath.

4. Connectors used **to indicate contrast**: on the contrary, instead, on the other hand, but, yet, still, while, whereas, though, although, even though, despite, in spite of, however, nevertheless, nonetheless

Examples:

He studied hard but he failed.

The government has increased salary of employees. On the other hand/on the contrary it has increased the rate of tax on income.

In spite of being a regular student, she could not pass in the examination.

Hasan is very hardworking person, whereas his brother is lazy.

5. Connectors used **in comparison**: similarly, likewise, in the same way, than, as as, so as, too, correspondingly, equally

Examples:

He is taller than his elder brother.

She is an expert in computer technology. Likewise, she has expertise in mobile technology too.

She is as beautiful as a doll.

She dressed in the same way her mother liked.

6. Connectors used **to express cause/effect** : since, for, because, as, why, so that

Examples:

I don't know why she is crying.

I could not go to the office because my mother was sick.

I am not attending your party tonight as I will be flying tonight.

7. Connectors used **to express results**: so, therefore, hence, as a result, as a consequence, thus, consequently, eventually, so that, accordingly, now

Examples:

The electricity has gone out. So we have to wait until it comes again.

He did not attend the classes regularly. Therefore, he did not get attendance marks.

I don't have the habit of getting up in the morning. As a consequence, I fall sick often.

8. Connectors used **to express the purposes** of any action: as much as, as many as, so that, in order that, lest, so as to

Examples:

I keep the door open so as to let fresh air enter into the room.

The boy is studying hard so that/in order that he can do well in the examination.

He ate as many ice-cream as he could.

9. Connectors used **to put condition**: if, otherwise, unless, till, until, provided, provided that, in case, as long as

Examples:

If you call me, I will come to help you.

Study hard or/otherwise you have to face difficulty in the examination.

Wait here until/till I come back.

The singer has agreed to perform in the concert provided that a good amount of money will be given.

- 10. Connectors used to indicate time and place:** at that time, there, where, when, while, before, after, since, as soon as, sometimes, at present, presently, of late, now, then, afterward, at first, once, no sooner had ... than

Examples:

She is a writer. At the same time she is a singer.

They had arrived at the station before the rain started.

She wanted to know where I come from.

As soon as the singer came on the stage, the audience applauded.

- 11. Connectors used to indicate conclusion:** to sum up, in brief, in short, in fine, to summarize, on the whole, above all, in all, in conclusion, to conclude

Examples:

He is good at mathematics, English, physics, and other subjects. Above all he is a brilliant student.

We have three English teachers, two Bengali teachers, and four science teachers. In total we have nine teachers at our college.

He has established a school in the village. He helps people at the time of natural disasters. He donates money to poor students. In brief, he is a very kind hearted man.

- 12. Connectors used to indicate events occurring at the same time:** at the same time, at that time, mean while, in the mean time, as

Examples:

She was eating and watching television at the same time.

When you called me yesterday; I was watching cricket at that time.

I entered into the meeting room at 10:45 am. Mean while the issues had been settled.

- 13. Relative pronouns used as connectors:** who, which, whom, whose, what, whatever, whichever, that

Examples:

I know the person who came here last night.

This is the book which I need.

I will give you whatever you want.

- 14. Connectors used in pairs:** whether or, rather than, though yet

Examples:

You should rather wait than go now.

I am not sure whether you are coming or not.

15. Connectors used to indicate how the work has been completed: as if, as though, how, however, like, so as, by and by, as it were, such.....as, such.....that

Examples:

He speaks as if he knew everything.

She can write like her father does.

We need such students as are hard-working.

Write as I asked you.



Exercises:

A. Complete the following letter with suitable linking words/connectors from the box:

Although lastly after all not only... but also finally moreover
yet of course recently and

Dear Hasan,

I hope you are well. We're very busy. Rina has finally managed to find a job. (i) it's not a good job, (ii) it's a job. (iii), we have decided to move to a new flat. You know how difficult it is to shift house, (iv) we have no other alternative. (v), Rumana got a promotion (vi) She has been posted to Dhaka. (vii), the new assignment will be quite challenging for her, but she has the ability to manage, as we all know. On the other hand, she is very committed, and (viii) she has a good managerial skill. She (ix) an engineer an MBA. (x), I'll be looking forward to your reply.

Yours,

Mizan

B. Complete the following sentences with suitable linkers/connectors from the box:

even though because of not only... but also as although but
unless so that secondly in spite of

- i. He is handsome intelligent.
- ii. I think I dropped the letter I was getting out of the car.
- iii. we left late, we still got there in time.
- iv. It was a fantastic evening the terrible food.
- v. I could not study attentively noise outside.
- vi. I took the course it was very difficult.
- vii. He earned a lot of money in life. he was not happy in life.
- viii. Firstly, the police arrested the criminal., they sent him to prison.
- ix. He went to the office he could meet the manager.
- x. You can't get in the Club you are the member.

C. Combine the following pairs of sentences using the given linkers/connectors. You can use one item more than once.

so that	though	but	as/since	because	so	undoubtedly
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- i. He is a good player. He did not perform well that day.
- ii. He is my brother. I do not like him for his habit of smoking.
- iii. He is a great scientist. There is no doubt.
- iv. I didn't phone you. It was very late.
- v. I stayed at home. I was expecting a phone call.
- vi. It is a very large city. You have to use public transport a lot.
- vii. I always write words down in my notebook. I don't forget them.
- viii. I want to improve my English. I will need it in my job very soon.

Key Answer Keys:

Exercise A:

(i) although (ii) after all (iii) finally (iv) yet (v) recently (vi) and (vii) of course (viii) moreover (ix) not only ...but also (x) lastly

Exercise B:

(i) not only ... but also (ii) as (iii) although (iv) in spite of (v) because of (vi) even though (vii) but (viii) secondly (ix) so that (x) unless

Exercise C:

- i. He is a good player but he did not perform well that day.
- ii. Though he is my brother, I do not like him for his habit of smoking.
- iii. Undoubtedly he is a great scientist.
- iv. I didn't phone you because it was very late.
- v. I stayed at home as I was expecting a phone call.
- vi. It is a very large city. So, you have to use public transport a lot.
- vii. I always write words down in my notebook so that I don't forget them.
- viii. I want to improve my English because I will need it in my job very soon.

Subject–Verb Agreement Rules

Subjects and verbs must agree in number.

1. If the subject is singular, the verb must be singular too.

Example: She writes every day.

2. If the subject is plural, the verb must also be plural.

Example: They write every day.

Sometimes, however, it seems a bit more complicated than this.

3. When the subject of the sentence is composed of two or more nouns or pronouns connected by and, use a plural verb.

Example: The doctoral student and the committee members **write** every day.

Example: The percentage of employees who called in sick *and* the number of employees who left their jobs within 2 years **are** reflective of the level of job satisfaction.

If the two nouns joined by *and* represent a *singular idea*, then the verb is singular.

Example: Bread and butter is available on request.

Example: Curry and rice is my favorite meal.

4. When there is one subject and more than one verb, the verbs throughout the sentence must agree with the subject.

Example: Interviews **are** one way to collect data and allow researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of participants.

Example: I watch TV and eat breakfast.

Example: He plays football, wins every time and brings trophy home.

Example: An **assumption** is something that is generally accepted as true *and* is an important consideration when conducting a doctoral study.

5. When a phrase comes between the subject and the verb, remember that the verb still agrees with the subject, not the noun or pronoun in the phrase following the subject of the sentence.

Example: The student as well as the committee members is excited.

Example: The student with all the Master's degrees is very motivated.

Example: **Strategies** that the teacher uses to encourage classroom participation **include** using small groups and clarifying expectations.

Example: The **focus** of the interviews **was** nine purposively selected participants.

Example: **Krishna** as well as his friend **has** won the match.

Example: The **king** with all his ministers **was** injured.

6. When two or more singular nouns or pronouns are connected by or or nor, use a singular verb.

Example: The chairperson or the CEO approves the proposal before proceeding.

Example: He or she goes to market.

Plural subjects separated by either...or or neither ... nor, both ...and, and all but take a plural verb.

Example: Either the boys or the girls are to blame.

Example: Neither the contestants nor the audience were aware of the fire.

Example: All but Sam are going to the cinema.

Example: Both the twins are attending their graduation ceremony.

7. When a compound subject contains both a singular and a plural noun or pronoun joined by or or nor, the verb should agree with the part of the subject that is closest to the verb. This is also called the rule of proximity.

Example: The student or the *committee members* **write** every day.

Example: The committee members or *the student* **writes** every day.

8. The singular indefinite pronouns are each, each one, either, neither, every, everyone, everybody, anyone, anybody, nobody, somebody, someone, and no one, they are singular and require a *singular verb*.

Example: Each of the participants **was** willing to be recorded.

Example: Neither alternative hypothesis **was** accepted.

Example: I will offer a \$5 gift card to everybody who **participates** in the study.

Example: No one **was** available to meet with me at the preferred times.

Example: Either he or I **was** mistaken.

Example: **Neither** my sister nor I **am** happy.

Example: **Neither** I nor my sister **is** happy.

Example: **Neither** gold or coal **is** to be found in that state.

Example: Every son and every daughter of the country **was** a volunteer.

9. Non-countable nouns take a singular verb.

Example: Education is the key to success.

Example: Diabetes **affects** many people around the world.

Example: The information obtained from the business owners **was** relevant to include in the study.

Example: The research I found on the topic **was** limited.

10. Some countable nouns in English such as earnings, goods, odds, surroundings, proceeds, contents, and valuables only have a plural form and take a plural verb.

Example: The earnings for this quarter exceed expectations.

Example: The proceeds from the sale go to support the homeless population in the city.

Example: Locally produced goods have the advantage of shorter supply chains.

11. In sentences beginning with there is or there are, the subject follows the verb. Since there is not the subject, the verb agrees with what follows the verb.

Example: There **is** little administrative support.

Example: There **are** many factors affecting teacher retention.

12. Collective nouns are words that imply more than one person but are considered singular and take a singular verb. Some examples are group, team, committee, family, and class.

Example: The group meets every week.

Example: The committee agrees on the quality of the writing.

However, the plural verb is used if the focus is on the individuals in the group. This is much less common.

Example: The committee participate in various volunteer activities in *their private lives*.

13. Nouns which have two parts such as spectacles, scissors or pants require plural verbs.

Example: My spectacles are missing.

Example: These scissors need sharpening.

However, when regarded as a pair, a singular verb is used.

Example: My *pair* of spectacles is missing.

Example: This *pair* of scissors needs sharpening.

14. Amounts, even if plural, have a singular verb. Use a singular verb with distances, periods of time, sums of money, etc., when considered as a unit.

Example: Three miles *is* too far to walk.

Example: Five years *is* the maximum sentence for that offense.

Example: Ten dollars *is* a high price to pay.

Example: Sixty dollars is too much to pay for that dress.

Example: Ten kilometres is too long a distance for me to walk.

Example: Five kilogrammes of flour is all that I need for my baking.

Singular

The girl dances.

The dog drinks.

The boy runs.

She plays.

She plays.

Plural

The girls dance. (No “s” on end of a plural verb!)

The dogs drink.

The boys run.

Mary and Laura play.

They play.

Subject-Verb Agreement Worksheet

Q-1. Fill in the blank for correct Subject-Verb agreement.

1. The writer, who publishes many books, __revises__ each chapter at least 10 times. (revise, revises)
2. The manager *or* the direct supervisor __approves__ vacation time. (approve, approves)
3. The professor *or* the peers __provide__ feedback. (provide, provides)
4. Everyone __watches__ the time carefully on late Friday afternoons at the office. (watch, watches)
5. Current research is __important to cite in the literature review. (is, are)
6. The left-handed scissors are __hard to use. (is, are)
7. There __are__ many *theories* I could choose from. (is, are)
8. My committee __reads__ each draft of my document. (read, reads)
9. Nobody (know, knows) the trouble I've seen.
10. (Is, Are) the *news* on at five or six?
11. Mathematics (is, are) John's favorite subject, while Civics (is, are) Andrea's favorite subject.
12. Eight dollars (is, are) the price of a movie these days.
13. (Is, Are) the tweezers in this drawer?
14. Your pants (is, are) at the cleaner's.
15. There (was, were) *fifteen candies* in that bag. Now there (is, are) *only one* left!
16. The committee (debates, debate) these questions carefully.
17. The committee members (leads, lead) very different lives in private.

18. The Prime Minister, together with his wife, (greets, greet) the press cordially.
19. All of the CDs, even the scratched one, (is, are) in this case.
20. *Every one* of those books (is, are) fiction.

Q-2. Choose the correct form of verb from the brackets.

- a) It was John who ____alerted____ the police. (alert/alerted)
- b) I ____have known____ her for a long time. (know/ have known)
- c) Two thirds of the city ____are____ in ruins. (is/ am/ are)
- d) It ____was____ not a good match. (was/were)
- e) Curry and rice ____is____ the specialty of this restaurant. (is/are)
- f) Age and experience ____bring____ wisdom to man. (bring/brings)
- g) I wish it ____was____Saturday. (was/were)
- h) *Neither* his brother *nor* his sister ____was____ present for the function. (was/were)
- i) Jim, who owns six houses, ____is____ a good man. (is/ are)
- j) All the visitors with the guard ____were____ saved from the fire. (was/were)

Subject-Verb Agreement Practice Exercises

1. Everyone (has/have) done his or her homework.
2. Each of the students (is/are) responsible for doing his or her work.
3. Either my father or my brothers (is/are) going to sell the car.
4. Neither my sisters nor my mother (is/are) going to sell the house.
5. The samples on the tray in the lab (need/needs) testing.
6. Mary and John usually (plays/play) together.
7. Both of the dogs (has/have) collars.
8. Neither the dogs nor the cat (is/are) very hungry.
9. Either the girls or the boy (walk/walks) in the evening.
10. Either the boy or the girls (walk/walks) in the evening.
11. At the end of the fall (comes/come) the hard tests.
12. The slaughter of animals for their fur (has/have) caused controversy.
13. The student, as well as his teacher, (was/were) going on the field trip.
14. The hard tests (comes/come) at the end of the fall.
15. Both of my roommates (has/have) decided to live in the dorms.

Subject-Verb Agreement Answers

1. Everyone has done his or her homework.
2. Each of the students is responsible for doing his or her work.
3. Either my father or my brothers are going to sell the car.
4. Neither my sisters nor my mother is going to sell the house.
5. The samples on the tray in the lab need testing.
6. Mary and John usually play together.
7. Both of the dogs have collars.
8. Neither the dogs nor the cat is very hungry.
9. Either the girls or the boy walks in the evening.
10. Either the boy or the girls walk in the evening.
11. At the end of the fall come the hard tests.
12. The slaughter of animals for their fur has caused controversy.
13. The student, as well as his teacher, was going on the field trip.
14. The hard tests come at the end of the fall.
15. Both of my roommates have decided to live in the dorms.

More Questions

1. Annie and her brothers **are** at school.
2. Either my mother or my father **is** coming to the meeting.
3. The dog or the cats **are** outside.
4. Either my shoes or your coat **is** always on the floor.
5. George and Tamara **don't** want to see that movie.
6. Benito **doesn't** know the answer.
7. One of my sisters **is** going on a trip to France.
8. The man with all the birds **lives** on my street.
9. The movie, including all the previews, **takes** about two hours to watch.
10. The players, as well as the captain, **want** to win.
11. Either answer **is** acceptable.
12. Every one of those books **is** fiction.
13. Nobody **knows** the trouble I've seen.
14. **Is** the news on at five or six?
15. Mathematics **is** John's favorite subject, while Civics **is** Andrea's favorite subject.
16. Eight dollars **is** the price of a movie these days.
17. **Are** the tweezers in this drawer?
18. Your pants **are** at the cleaner's.
19. There **were** fifteen candies in that bag. Now there **is** only one left!
20. The committee **debates** these questions carefully.
21. The committee members **lead** very different lives in private.
22. The Prime Minister, together with his wife, **greet**s the press cordially.
23. All of the CDs, even the scratched one, **are** in this case.\

Redundancy and Wordiness

Some ACT English Test questions may ask you to identify or eliminate redundancy or unnecessary wordiness within sentences. Redundancy is the unnecessary repetition of ideas. Wordiness is the use of several words when a few can express the same idea more clearly and concisely.

On the sentence level, in general, less is more. The fewer words you use to get your point across, the better. Unnecessary words often waste time and cloud meaning. Sentences that don't have any words to waste are clear and have impact.

Wordiness and redundancy typically result from three different causes:

The use of unnecessary words or phrases.

Redundant: Turn left at the green colored house.

Correct: Turn left at the green house.

Unnecessary repetition of nouns or pronouns.

Redundant: Riva she couldn't believe her ears.

Correct: Riva couldn't believe her ears.

The use of wordy phrases instead of adverbs.

Wordy: She spoke in a very convincing manner.

Concise: She spoke very convincingly.

Wordy: He had a car that was old and rusty.

Concise: He had an old, rusty car.

ACT ENGLISH TEST PRACTICE

Practice!!!

Rewrite the following sentences to correct any ambiguity, wordiness, or redundancy.

1. I returned back to my room after the meeting was over.

2. I heard they are going to put a movie theater on campus.

3. Please repeat again what you said.

4. While barbecuing our steaks, a hungry dog came into our backyard.

5. The servers they really take care of you at this restaurant.

6. The circumstances are very delicate in nature.

7. It was a story that was difficult to tell.

8. Fried in butter, Sylvan likes eggs.

(POSSIBLE) ANSWERS

*Insertions are indicated in italics.

1. I returned ~~back~~ to my room after the meeting was over.
2. I heard ~~they~~ *trustees* are going to put a movie theater on campus.
3. Please repeat ~~again~~ what you said.
4. While ~~we were~~ barbecuing our steaks, a hungry dog came into our backyard.
5. The servers ~~they~~ really take care of you at this restaurant.
6. The circumstances are very delicate ~~in nature~~.
7. It was a *difficult* story that was difficult to tell.
8. Fried in butter, Sylvan likes eggs *fried in butter*.

Redundancies

Actual fact

Added bonus: A bonus is by definition something added.

Adequate enough: One or the other will work.

After having

Arm's reach: *reach* or *arm's length*.

Blatantly obvious: Things that are blatant are obvious.

Blend together

[Adjective]-born: e.g., Brazilian-born, Texan-born. Make it Brazil-born or Texas-born (or Brazilian or Texan).

Browse through: To browse is to look through something, so *through* is already contained in its meaning.

But yet: As conjunctions (but not as adverbs), *but* and *yet* are synonyms.

Central protagonist

Chase after

Close proximity: To be in proximity to something is to be close to it. Try *close to* or *in proximity to* instead.

Collaborate together

Comingle, co-mingle: The verb *mingle* means *to mix or bring together in combination*.

Combine together: To combine is to bring multiple things together.

Continue on: If you two words, try *go on*.

Critical juncture: A juncture is a moment made critical by a concurrence of circumstances.

Critically important

Current status quo: The status quo is the current state of affairs.

Each and every: *Each* and *every* are synonyms.

Early beginnings

End result

Enter into: Try *go into*, or just *enter*.

Equally as: Try one or the other.

False pretense and false pretenses: Pretenses are by definition false.

Far distance: Exception: when contrasting a far distance with a near distance.

Favorably disposed: To be disposed is to have a favorable inclination to something.

Fellow classmates: Try *fellow students*.

Few in number: *Few* always pertains to number.

Final destination: Exception: in reference to journeys, especially airline flights, that have multiple destinations.

Final outcome

Final result

First and foremost

First dibs: When you have dibs on something, you have the primary claim to it.

Follow after

Forewarn

Free gift: If it's not free, it's not a gift.

Future plans: All plans pertain to the future.

General consensus (of opinion): A consensus is an opinion generally held by a group.

General vicinity

Generally always

Historic milestone: A milestone is by definition historic.

In the negative: no.

In the process of: The meaning of this phrase is usually conveyed by the surrounding verbs. For example, *we are in the process of moving* could be just *we are moving*.

Innocent civilians

Interact with each other

Intermarry, intermarriage

Intermingle

Join together: Things that join can only do so together.

Joint cooperation: If it's not done jointly, it's not cooperation.

Just exactly: *Exactly* means *precisely* or *in all respects*, and one definition of *just* is *precisely*.

Main protagonist

Manually by hand: *Manually* means *by hand*.

Meld together

Mental attitude: Can an attitude be anything but mental?

Merge together

Mix together

Moment in time: A moment is a short, indefinite period of time.

Most quintessential: *Quintessential* contains *most* in its definition—i.e., *the most typical of a quality or state*.

Most unique

Old adage: The definition of *adage* is *a traditional (i.e., old) saying that is accepted as true*.

Opening gambit: but only when *gambit* is used in its traditional sense.

Orbit around: *Orbit* means *to go around (something)*.

Outward appearances: Appearances are by definition outward.

Overexaggerate: Excess is contained in the meaning of *exaggerate*, but *overexaggerate* works where exaggeration is expected, such as in some types of acting.

Past experience: All experience is in the past.

Past history

Pervade throughout: The verb *pervade* means *to be present throughout*.

Plan ahead

Plan in advance

Pre-plan: Exception: where *pre-plan* means *prior to planning*.

Prior experience: All experience is prior (though people seem to love using this phrase in job listings).

Proceed forward: To proceed is to move forward.

Proceed further

Proof positive: *Proof* is usually sufficient.

Rate of speed: *Rate* or *speed* is usually sufficient.

Reason is because: *Reason* is contained in the definition of *because*, and while the phrase *reason is because* is common, sticklers for this sort of thing say either *the reason is that* or *it is because*.

Repay back: Go with either *pay back* or *repay*.

Repeat again: This is redundant when something is repeated for the first time.

Reserve ahead of time

Return back: Try *go back* or just *return*.

Revert back: either *go back* or just *revert*.

Self-confessed

Sequential order: *in order* or *in sequence*.

Shared commonalities

Slight edge: One definition of *edge* is *a slight advantage or superiority*, so the modifier is unnecessary.

Slight hint

Software programs: All computer programs are software.

Steady stream: Streams are by definition steady.

Sum total: These words are synonyms.

Sworn affidavit: An affidavit is a formal statement of fact made under oath before a notary public or other authorized officer.

Unexpected surprise

Up until: Go with *up to* or just *until*.

Uphill climb: When *climb* isn't emphatic enough, try *uphill battle*.

Usually always

Various different: These words are synonyms.

Vitally important

Well respected: If you want to use the word *well*, try *well regarded* or *well thought of*.

Whether or not: *Or not* is often contained in the meaning of *whether*, but *whether or not* is not redundant when *or not* is a necessary alternative to the positive option (e.g., "I'm going whether you go or not.")

While at the same time

Whole entire: These words are synonyms.

COMMON REDUNDANCIES: Before the word

absolutely certain, absolutely essential, absolutely guaranteed, absolutely necessary, absolutely sure

advance

advance planning, advance preview, advance reservation, advance warning

completely

completely annihilated, completely destroyed, completely eliminated, completely filled,

completely finished, completely surrounded

past

past experience, past history, past memories, past records
still
still continues, still persists, still remains

COMMON REDUNDANCIES: After the word

around

circle around, circulate around

back

answer back, repeat back, reply back, return back, retreat back, revert back

together

assemble together, attach together, cooperate together, collaborate together, connect together,

gather together, integrate together, join together, meet together, merge together

possibly

could possibly, may possibly, might possibly

Be concise!

Instead of...	Try saying...
12 midnight	Midnight
12 noon	Noon
a total of 14 birds	14 birds
Biography of her life	Biography
Circle around	Circle
Close proximity	Proximity
Each and every	Each
End result	Result
Exactly the same	The same
Free gift	Gift
In spite of the fact that	Although
In the event that	If
New innovations	Innovations
One and the same	The same
Period of four days	Four days
Repeat again	Repeat
Revert back	Revert
Shorter/longer in length	Shorter/Longer
Summarise briefly	Summarise