

Sentence Structures

SENTENCE

Jack played in the garden while I was working

CLAUSE

Jack played in the garden

while I was working

PHRASE

Jack played in the garden

while | was working

WORD

Jack played in the garden

while | was working

What is phrase and clause?

Waiting for responses ...



how to identify phrases and clauses, and the differences between them. This guide also includes examples and resources you can use in teaching.

Phrase vs Clause: What's the difference?

Every sentence is constructed of clauses and/or phrases, but sometimes it can be tricky to tell the difference between a phrase and a clause.

Both phrases and clauses contain groups of two or more words and help us to make sentences, but they both have different roles. To help us understand the difference between them, we should define them both individually first.

- A clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb.
- A phrase is a group of words, but it doesn't contain a subject and a verb.

A sentence can exist as a single clause, but a single phrase can't make up a sentence. Phrases add meaning to sentences but they can't create a sentence on their own.

Clauses, on the other hand, are necessary. Removing a clause from a sentence may affect the understanding.

Here is a simple example of a sentence that uses both a phrase and a clause:

- Wherever you go, I will follow.

'Wherever you go' is the phrase, and 'I will follow' is the clause.

'Wherever you go' doesn't make sense on its own - it's not a completed thought. But, 'I will follow' contains both a subject and a verb - 'I' and 'follow', respectively. It's a complete thought and we don't need any more words to understand the meaning of the sentence.

Phrase, Clause, Sentence: Differences Between Them

Along with phrases and clauses, the meaning of a 'sentence' can also be confused. They all work together to create meaning, but identifying the individual components is what's difficult.

An easy way to remember the difference between a phrase and a clause is to remember the building blocks of a sentence. A clause contains phrases and a sentence contains clauses. So, to make a sentence, the building blocks would go in this order:

phrase → clause → sentence.

The big clock → The big clock chimed → The big clock chimed when the hand struck midnight.

A phrase is a group of words that can't stand alone as a sentence. It's a key part of the clause and the overall sentence (it's the subject of it) but it can't make sense as it is.

Things get a little confusing with a main (or independent) clause. In this example, 'The big clock chimed' is both a clause and a sentence in its own right. It contains a subject and a verb.

The final, extended sentence contains phrases and clauses. This is what makes it a sentence.

Phrases

1] Noun Phrases

These are the phrases contains a noun- name, place or things and at least one modifier associated to the noun. The modifier can [prefix or suffix](#) the noun. The entire phrase will act as a noun for that particular sentence. Here are some examples,

- He was wearing a *black linen shirt*.
- They lived in a *small, tidy cottage*
- Alex rode her *old bicycle* to their *shiny new school*
- The *black car* got towed.

2J Verb Phrases

Every sentence will generally contain a verb. But sometimes the action being described requires a more nuanced multi-words verb phrase. The phrase consists of the main verb/verbs and then [auxiliary verbs](#), i.e. helping verbs. Some such verb phrases are as follows,

- The teacher *is writing* the answer
- They *have been playing* since the last two hours
- You *must call* your mom at once
- He *has taken* the dog along

3] Prepositional Phrase

Any phrase that consists of a preposition, and the object of the preposition, which will be a noun or a pronoun is what we call a prepositional phrase. Such a phrase also at times consists of other modifiers describing the **object** of the prepositional phrase.

Let us look at some examples,

- Students are advised to be *on time*
- Please turn *towards the right* at the intersection

4] Infinitive Phrases

A phrase that includes an infinitive along with a simple verb is an infinitive phrase. There may also be modifiers attached to the object in the phrase. It contains a verb, so it plays the role of expressing an action in the sentence. Infinitive phrases can act as a noun, adjective or adverb in a complete sentence.

- Alex likes to read comics (functions as a noun here)
- To attend the morning lecture, I set my alarm for 6 am. (noun form)
- To keep his dogs calm, Alex turned on the radio. (functions as an adverb here)

- To keep his dogs calm, Alex turned on the radio. (functions as an adverb here)

5] Participle Phrases

A participle phrase will begin with a participle, which can be a present participle (ending with -ing) or a past participle (ending with -ed). There may be a few modifiers and associated words included in the phrase. One thing to remember is that a participle phrase always takes the form of an adjective in a sentence. Some examples of the participle phrase are,

- We got a call from my aunt today *telling us the good news*.
- The house was severely *damaged by the flood*.
- Please sit down without *making a sound*

6] Gerund Phrases

Now a gerund is a word that invariably ends with “-ing”, without exception. So a gerund phrase is a phrase that contains an ‘ing’ word, with some modifiers in some cases. But participle phrases also have a similar pattern (-ing words), so how do you tell the difference between the two?

Well while participle phrases function as adjectives, Gerund Phrases exclusively function as nouns. Let us look at some examples,

- She is currently *writing her memoir*.
- *Washing the dishes* is Alex’s chore
- *Waking up before sunrise* had become his habit.

	Phrase	Clause
<u>Christopher was waiting</u> inside the main entrance.		
Mary likes to write letters <u>to her grandparents</u> .		
<u>I will make you a cup of coffee</u> after the show.		
I jumped up and down excitedly <u>on the river bank</u> .		

- 12 Underline the **phrase** in each sentence below.

One has been done for you.

He was arrested in the bank.

I had tummy ache after the disgusting meal.

There was a loud bang during the night.

Dad spoke softly to the tired boy.

I saw a lot of rubbish beside the road.

Example sentences

- 1) After lunch, we went to play tennis.
- 1) After having breakfast, we went to play tennis.

Identity the phrases.

- Since 1989, we are serving the people of Andhra Pradesh.
- In morning, I like to have coffee.
- We will eat ice cream after lunch.
- After lunch, we will eat ice cream.

Clauses are the building blocks of sentences. A clause is a group of words that contains (at least) a subject and a verb.

Clauses

SUBJECT VERB

ecology is a science

SUBJECT VERB

because pollution causes cancer

Not clauses

to protect the environment

after working all day

There are two kinds of clauses: independent and dependent.

Independent Clauses

An **independent clause** contains a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought. It can stand alone as a sentence by itself. An independent clause is formed with a subject and a verb and often a complement.

Subject	Verb	(Complement)
The sun	rose.	
Water	evaporates	rapidly in warm climate zones.

Dependent Clauses

A **dependent clause** begins with a subordinator such as *when*, *while*, *if*, *that*, or *who*. A dependent clause does not express a complete thought, so it is not a sentence by itself. A dependent clause is also called a *sentence fragment*. By itself, it is an incomplete sentence, and it is an error. A dependent clause is formed with a subordinator, a subject, and a verb.

Subordinator	Subject	Verb	(Complement)
... when	the sun	rose ...	
... because	water	evaporates	rapidly in warm climate zones ...
... whom	the voters	elected ...	
... if	the drought	continues	for another year ...

Subordinators

after	before	that	when	which
although	even though	though	whenever	while
as, just as	how	unless	where	who
as if	if	until	wherever	whom
as soon as	since	what	whether	whose
because	so that			

Remember that an independent clause by itself is a complete sentence, but a dependent clause by itself is an incomplete sentence. Write *Indep.* next to the complete sentences and put a period (.) after them. Write *Dep.* next to the incomplete sentences. The first two have been done for you as examples.

- Indep. 1. Globalization means more travel for businessmen and women.
- Dep. 2. As business executives fly around the globe to sell their companies' products and services

- _____ 3. Jet lag affects most long-distance travelers
- _____ 4. Which is simply the urge to sleep at inappropriate times
- _____ 5. During long journeys through several time zones, the body's inner clock is disrupted
- _____ 6. For some reason, travel from west to east causes greater jet lag than travel from east to west

- _____ 7. Also, changes in work schedules can cause jet lag
- _____ 8. When hospital nurses change from a day shift to a night shift, for example
- _____ 9. Although there is no sure way to prevent jet lag
- _____ 10. There are some ways to minimize it

A sentence is a group of words that you use to communicate your ideas. Every sentence is formed from one or more clauses and expresses a complete thought.

The four basic kinds of sentences in English are simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex. The kind of sentence is determined by the kind of clauses used to form it.

Simple Sentences

A **simple sentence** is one independent clause.

Freshwater   boils at 100 degrees Celsius at sea level.

Freshwater   and freezes  at 0 degrees Celsius.

Freshwater  and salt water    boil and freeze at the same temperatures.

Notice that the second sentence has two verbs, *boils* and *freezes*. This is called a compound verb. The third sentence has both a compound subject and a compound verb. All three examples are simple sentences because they have only one clause.

Compound Sentences

A **compound sentence** is two or more independent clauses joined together. There are three ways to join the clauses:

1. With a coordinator

Salt water boils at a higher temperature than freshwater, **so** food cooks faster in salt water.

2. With a conjunctive adverb

Salt water boils at a higher temperature than freshwater; **therefore**, food cooks faster in salt water.

3. With a semicolon

Salt water boils at a higher temperature than freshwater; food cooks faster in salt water.



Compound Sentences with Coordinators

A compound sentence can be formed as follows:

Independent clause, + coordinator + independent clause

Salt water boils at a lower temperature than freshwater, **so** food cooks faster in salt water.

There are seven coordinators, which are also called coordinating conjunctions. You can remember them by the phrase FAN BOYS (For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So). The following sentences illustrate the meanings of the seven FAN BOYS coordinators.
(Punctuation note: There is a comma after the first independent clause.)



To add a reason	
for	Japanese people live longer than most other nationalities, for they eat healthful diets.
To add a similar, equal idea	
and	They eat a lot of fish and vegetables, and they eat lightly.
To add a negative equal idea	
nor	They do not eat a lot of red meat, nor do they eat many dairy products. <i>Note: Nor means “and not.” It joins two negative independent clauses. Notice that question word order is used after nor.</i>



To add a negative equal idea**nor**

They do not eat a lot of red meat, **nor** do they eat many dairy products.

Note: Nor means “and not.” It joins two negative independent clauses. Notice that question word order is used after nor.

To add an opposite idea**but**

Diet is one factor in how long people live, **but** it is not the only factor.

To add an alternative possibility**or**

However, people should limit the amount of animal fat in their diets, **or** they risk getting heart disease.

To add an unexpected or surprising continuation**yet**

Cigarette smoking is a factor in longevity, **yet** Japanese and other long-lived Asians have a very high rate of tobacco use.

To add an expected result**so**

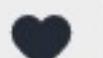
Doctors say that stress is another longevity factor, **so** try to avoid stress if you wish to live a longer life.



But and *yet* have similar meanings: They both signal that an opposite idea is coming. *But* is preferred when the two clauses are direct opposites. When the second clause is an unexpected or surprising continuation because of information given in the first clause, *yet* is preferred. (*But* is acceptable for both meanings; *yet* for only one meaning.) Compare:

I want to study art, **but** my parents want me to study engineering. (direct opposite)

I am very bad at math, **yet** my parents want me to study engineering. (surprising continuation after “I am very bad at math”)



Which coordinator would you use to connect the two clauses in these sentences?
Write either *but* or *yet* in the blank space.



- 1a. Too much sun damages the skin, _____ many people still do not use sunscreen.
- b. Too much sun damages the skin, _____ too little sun also causes health problems.



- 2a. The company's sales increased last year, _____ its profits declined.
- b. The company moved its marketing division to Phoenix, _____ the operations division stayed in Boston.



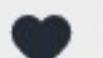
- 3a. Population growth has slowed in most developing countries, _____ it has not slowed enough to avoid serious problems.
- b. The fertility rate in India has decreased from 6 to 3 births per female, _____ India's population is expanding at the rate of 18 million per year.



- A. Form compound sentences by adding another independent clause to the following independent clauses. Be sure to write a complete clause containing a subject and a verb. Circle the coordinator and add punctuation. The first one has been done for you as an example.
1. The college campus is located in the center of the city, so it is very easy to get there by public transportation.



2. According to the Big Bang Theory, the universe began expanding about 13.7 billion years ago and _____.



3. Does the universe have an outer edge or _____
_____?



4. Scientists predict that intelligent life exists somewhere in the universe but
-



6. We may not be able to communicate with other life forms for _____



B. For each pair of the following sentences form a compound sentence by joining the two independent clauses with a coordinator that best fits the meaning. Use each FAN BOYS coordinator once. Write your new sentences on a separate sheet of paper, and punctuate them correctly. The first one has been done for you as an example.

1. Nuclear accidents can happen. Nuclear power plants must have strict safety controls.

Nuclear accidents can happen, so nuclear power plants must have strict safety controls.



2. The accident at the nuclear power plant at Three Mile Island in the United States created fears about the safety of this energy source. The disaster at Chernobyl in the former Soviet Union confirmed them.



3. Solar heating systems are economical to operate. The cost of installation is very high.



5. Burning fossil fuels causes serious damage to our planet. We need to develop other sources of energy.