

# **Sentence Structure**

## **4 Types of Sentences**

Vary your sentence structure

# Let's take a deeper look at each type of sentence structure

- *Life itself is the most wonderful fairy tale.*”—*Hans Christian Anderson*
- *“It may seem difficult at first, but everything is difficult at first.”*—*Miyamoto Musashi*
- *“Until the lion learns to write, every story will glorify the hunter.”*—*African proverb*
- *“Don't aim for success if you want it; just do what you love and believe in, and it will come naturally.”*—*David Frost*

# What is sentence structure?

- Sentence structure is the order of all the parts in a sentence: subject, predicate, objects, phrases, punctuation, etc.
- It deals a lot with independent and dependent clauses and how they combine (explained below), the placement of words and phrases next to what they modify, as well as the use of proper grammar.

# Why sentence structure?

Paying attention to basic sentence construction is a great way to look at the rhythm of your writing more carefully.

Have you written three complex sentences in a row?

Or maybe you've been leaning heavily on simple sentences? Too much of one structure can lead to your writing feeling repetitive or dull.

# Phrases vs. Clauses

Before we can identify the different types of sentence structure, we must know the difference between a PHRASE and a CLAUSE.

**Phrase**: a group of words that operate as one unit; a phrase has a noun or a verb, but NEVER both

Eg: *shiny gold watches*

It is clearly not a complete sentence as it doesn't have a predicate.

**Clause**: a group of words that contains BOTH a subject and a verb

Eg: *Mice eat cheese*

It has both a subject (*mice*) and a predicate (*eat*) and would be grammatically correct as a standalone sentence.

# Highlight the phrases!

- Fish Swims in the water.
- She is sleeping on the floor.
- They will meet at the concert.
- Over the horizon.
- She is sketching on the wall.

# Here the phrases!

- Fish Swims **in the water.**
- She is sleeping **on the floor.**
- They will meet **at the concert.**
- **Over the horizon.**
- She is sketching **on the wall.**

# Highlight the clauses!

- Fish Swims in the water.
- She is sleeping on the floor.
- They will meet at the concert.
- He smiled.
- She is sketching on the Wall.



# Here the clauses!

- **Fish Swims** in the water.
- **She is sleeping** on the floor.
- **They will meet** at the concert.
- **He smiled.**
- **She is sketching** on the Wall.

# Two major types of clauses

- An **independent clause** can stand by itself as a complete sentence while a **dependent clause** cannot.
- I am allergic to peanuts
- Since I am allergic to peanuts

# Examples

- In many cases the only thing that distinguishes an independent clause from a dependent clause is the presence of a subordinating conjunction.
  - The host was surprised
  - When we arrived early to the party
  - Full Sentence: ?

**Independent:** The host was surprised

**Dependent:** when we arrived early to the party

**Full sentence:** The host was surprised when we arrived early to the party.

# Examples

- In many cases the only thing that distinguishes an independent clause from a dependent clause is the presence of a subordinating conjunction.

We have time to get some breakfast first.

**Since** the store doesn't open until 10:00 AM

**Full sentence:** ?

- **Independent:** We have time to get some breakfast first.
- **Dependent:** since the store doesn't open until 10:00 AM
- **Full sentence:** Since the store doesn't open until 10:00 AM, we have time to get some breakfast first.

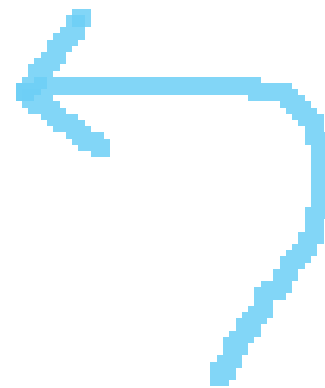
# 4 types of sentence structure

- Depending on how you combine clauses, you can create four different types of sentence structure:
- **Simple:** 1 independent clause
- **Compound:** 2 or more independent clauses
- **Complex:** 1 independent clause + 1 or more subordinate clauses
- **Compound-Complex:** 2 or more independent clauses + 1 or more subordinate clauses

# Simple Sentence

I kicked the ball is an independent clause. It contains a subject, a verb and expresses a complete thought.

## Simple Sentence



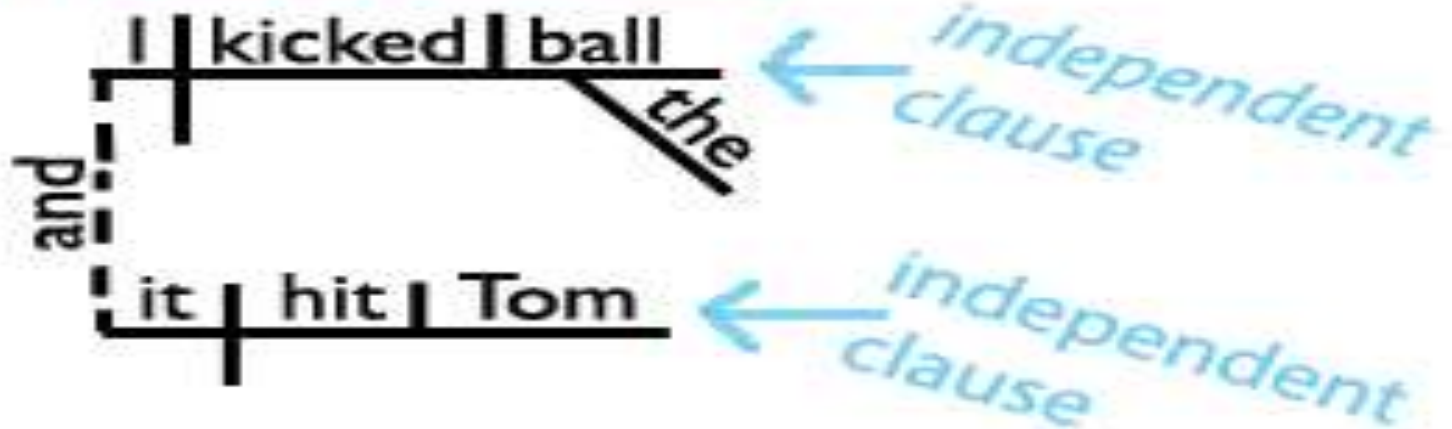
*independent clause*



# Compound Sentence

I kicked the ball is an independent clause. It hit Tom is another independent clause

## Compound Sentence



# Complex Sentence

Tom cried is an independent clause.

Because the ball hit him is a  
dependent clause

## Complex Sentence

Tom | cried

*independent  
clause*

*because*

the | ball | hit | him

*dependent  
clause*

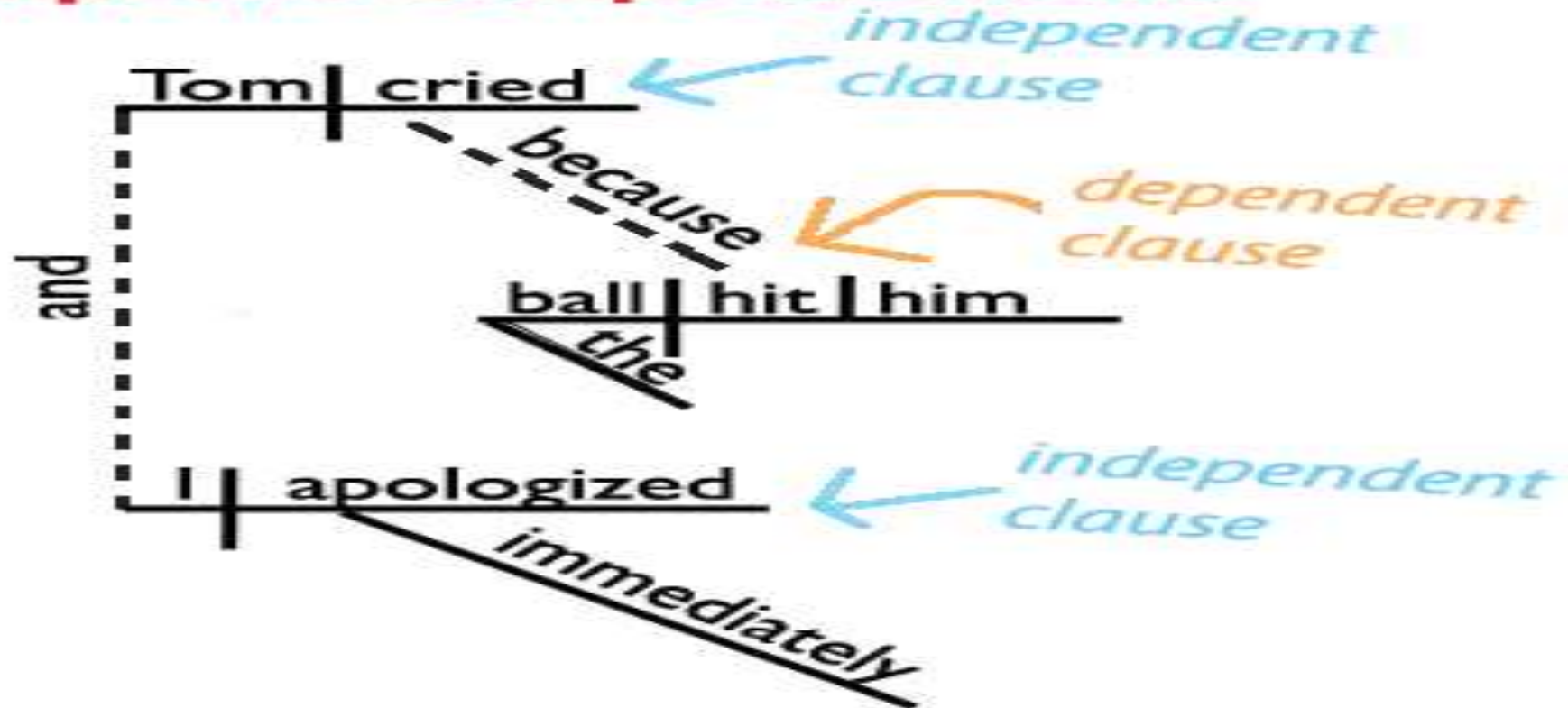
# Compound-Complex Sentence

Tom cried and I apologized Immediately are both independent clauses.

Because the ball hit him is a dependent clause

Full sentence: Tom cried because the ball hit him and I apologized immediately.

## Compound-Complex Sentence



# Sentence Structure Practice:

Identify these sentences as simple (S) or compound (CD).

1. Ella hoped to win the contest and get a prize.
2. Jonathan saw the opportunity, and he drew back the bow.
3. Jack and Dustin scored well on the test in their math classes.
4. Kim decided she did want to go on the trip, yet she still had to raise the money to go.
5. In the pasture behind our house, my horse loves to run and buck in the sunshine.

# Sentence Structure practice:

Identify these sentences as compound (CD) or complex (CX):

1. After we clean up this mess, we will go get something to eat.
2. Shelia bought a new dress for the dance, but she couldn't find new shoes to match.
3. Jose did not win the contest although he practiced for days.
4. When you finish your homework, you may go outside and play.
5. Colby fell down the stairs, so he was limping later.

# 4 Types of Sentence Structure

## Why?

You can greatly improve your writing by using a variety of sentence structures. Your writing will "flow" better, will be much more interesting, and will sound more sophisticated. Try using a combination of all four kinds of sentence structures in your writing; the results are worth the effort.