



# IIT Madras

## BSc Degree

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**English – I (Basic English)**  
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**Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Madras**  
**Complex Sentence 4: Adverbial Clause**

Good afternoon. This is our fourth Session on Complex Sentences and today forth and last, and today we are going to talk about clauses, subordinate clauses that work like adverbs in English, okay here we go.

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### **Adverbial Clause**



- We have seen in earlier units of this module that a subordinate clause can function like a noun clause and an adjectival clause.
- A subordinate clause can also function like an adverbial clause.



We have seen in the earlier units that a subordinate clause can function as a noun clause, as an adjectival clause. In a similar manner, a subordinate clause can also function as an adverbial clause, next.

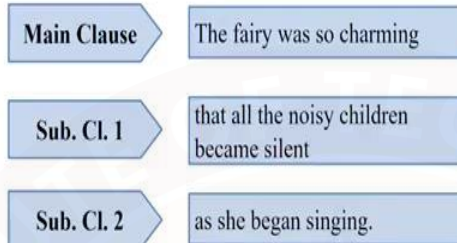
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- See the following, for instance



*The fairy was so charming that all the noisy children became silent as she began singing.*

In this sentence:



See the following, for instance; the sentence goes; the fairy was so charming that all the noisy children became silent as she began singing. What is the main clause here? The fairy was so charming, how many subordinate clauses does it have? It has two subordinate clause one that all the noisy children became silent. Subordinate clause 2; as she began signing. What functions do these subordinate clauses perform? Let us go to the next.

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- Subordinate Clause 1 is actually an adjectival clause modifying the adjective “charming” in the main clause.
- Subordinate Clause 2 is also an adverbial clause modifying the verb “became” in the subordinate clause1.
- So just as adverbs do, adverbial clause also modifies, gives additional information about, adjectives and verbs. That is why it is called adverb. Adverbs can be one word, like “very” in an adjectival phrase like “very good”, can be “so” as in “so charming”, etc. They intensify adjective.



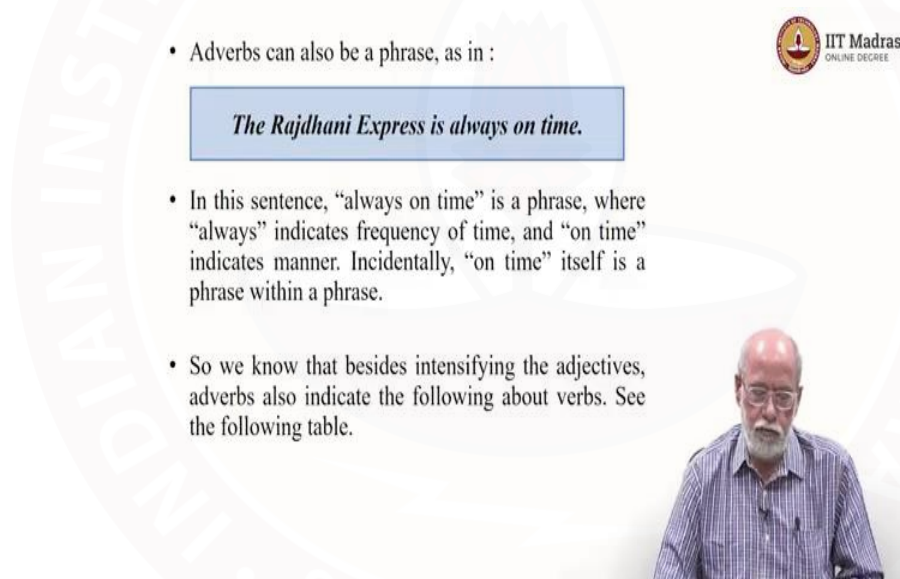
Subordinate clause 1 is actually an adjectival clause modifying the adjective charming. How charming that all children, became silent, fell silent, subordinate clause 2 is also an adverbial clause modifying the verb became. When did the children become silent? When the fairy as the

fairy started signing, so just as adverbs do, the adverbial clause also modifies and gives additional information.

Additional information about what? About adjectives and about verbs, adjectives qualify only nouns, but adverbs qualify both; adjectives and verbs that is why these words are, or these clauses are called adverbs or adverbial clause. Adverbs can be like one word; you know adverbs can be one word like very, such as when you say very good somebody asks you; did you read the book, how did you like it?

Of course, I read the book; it is very good. You do not say just good you intensify it very good. You look at some pictures, you look at some flower, and you say charming, and then you are not happy. You think it is more than charming. So you want to say it is 'so charming' you further intensify it. So 'charming' is an adjective but 'so charming', 'so' there is an adverb which further qualifies intensifies actually adjective called charming, next.

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• Adverbs can also be a phrase, as in :

*The Rajdhani Express is always on time.*

• In this sentence, “always on time” is a phrase, where “always” indicates frequency of time, and “on time” indicates manner. Incidentally, “on time” itself is a phrase within a phrase.

• So we know that besides intensifying the adjectives, adverbs also indicate the following about verbs. See the following table.

Adverbs can also be a phrase, as in the Rajdhani Express is always on time. So, in this sentence, always on time is a phrase where now this phrase gives two kinds of information for the main clause. Rajdhani Express sorry, for the verb here, the Rajdhani Express is okay what? Number one is frequency, how often is it in time, today, tomorrow, three times a week, four times a month? No, it is always on time.

Then the second question is about the manner, always what? Always late, always regular, always irregular, always noisy, always musical, always happy, always unhappy, what? So here it says on time. Actually on time itself is a phrase within a phrase and as we saw in the word order in the unit called word order in all languages, it is possible to have a phrase within a phrase, have a noun within a noun so that we can say more using few slots.

Using little, we can say lots; nature gives us that facility in all departments. It gives us little, but it says with intelligence you can use that little for lots of purposes that is the same thing here phrase within a phrase, so always on time is a phrase which qualifies the verb is. So, we know that besides intensifying the adjectives adverbs also indicate the following about the verbs. What other things? Look at it.

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### Some Functions of Adverb



	Answers	Example
Manner of Verb	How	Policemen arrived <u>very late</u> .
Reason	why	They wanted to arrest (the thief).
Purpose	what for	They wanted to stop (crime).
Place	where	They came to the right place.
Time	Duration: how long	They took much time.
Time	Frequency	They are always late.
Condition	If..., then...	If it rains, cricket match will be cancelled.



Adverbs indicate the manner of action, manner of a verb, how did the action happen? For example, policemen arrived, but how did they arrive? They arrived late, how can also be transport which I have not given here, we could say policemen arrived by car, by bus in a lorry, in a truck, on foot, on a boat. So, you know that is the manner. Adverbs can give you reason, it can answer why; why did they arrive? They wanted to arrest the thief that is why they arrived.

Not that they were on a morning walk, or purpose why do they arrest? Well obviously, they want to arrest because they want to stop the crime that is their duty, they were performing their duty. Where did they arrive? There can be sentences where which can say policemen arrived on the scene of theft very late, where did they arrive? On the, at the scene of the theft, at the scene of the accident got forbid on the venue where the meeting was to be held.

So, the venue is place further qualified by where the meeting was scheduled to happen, where the meeting was to take place, so adverbial clauses, adverbs also gives you information about the place. Adverbs give you information about time and many shades of time, not just one; adverbs can tell you duration, how long. Mother Teresa lived in this country for over 50 years. Mahatma Gandhi worked for freedom of India for nearly all his life for more than 50 years, sees less struggle; you can find examples.



My friend has waited for 2 minutes; I wait for the bus every day for half an hour, we can go on. So, time can be duration how long, how short. Time can be frequency, how often my friend waits for the bus every day. My friend is picked up by his wife, both he and his wife work in the same office but my friend's wife knows driving, my friend does not.

So, we can say my friend's wife picks up her husband every day, frequency, every day, daily, weekly, monthly, condition. Sometimes we put conditions; if it rains there will be no cricket match, cricket match will be cancelled. If it rains we will have a wonderful football match, imagine rains pouring on us and then boys and girls kicking the football, oh they have a great time.

So, if then, if it rains, we will have a great football match, if it rains a cricket match will be cancelled, conditions, result. All of these things are indicated by the verb; no speaker says now I am going to give you condition and therefore I will use this sentence. Because you and I know the language, because you and I are proficient in it, so you speak I understand, I speak you understand that this action will happen only when this condition is met that is the normal language, that is the authentic language.

Nobody says, okay I am now going to give you frequency my wife cooks for me daily. I am now going to give you frequency I press her shirt every day. You do not have to say I am going to give you it is understood. The moment you say you press the shirt of your wife every day, that means you are giving frequency. You are a loving person, and you look, you want your friends, family to look smart, so that is why you do certain things every day.

So natural languages have this mechanism built-in using which they indicate a lot of things about the verb without speaking about them. What are those lot of things? They are a manner of a verb, the reason of verb, purpose of a verb, place of a verb, time of verb, time again a verb, condition or more I have not listed, it is not, this is not an exhaustive list, we have given you references to books please look at those books as I said at the beginning of this course, this course tells you how you can teach yourself.

It does not pretend to teach you; nobody can teach you language, a language like swimming or walking, like cycling, like many other things are something only you can teach yourself. All we can do is like a coach, we can guide you, we can tell you eat this, do not eat this, run this fast, do not run so fast and then you become an athlete of the world-class.

Same thing here, so this is not an exhaustive list, go through the books that we have listed, do the read them, do the given exercises given activities, and you will find that in no time you are speaking not only better than yourself you are speaking as well as anybody else. Go next.

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- All of these functions of adverbs are also usually done by adverbial phrase and by adverbial clause. See the following for example.

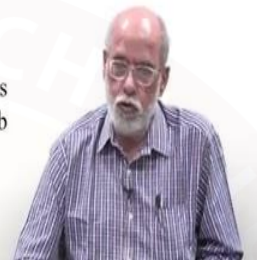


*Strike the iron while it is hot.*

- “Strike the iron” is main clause, but “while it is hot” is the subordinate adverbial clause indicating time of the verb “strike” in the main clause.

*As you sow, so you reap.*

- “so you reap” is the main clause, but “As you sow” is the adverbial clause of manner qualifying the verb “sow”.



So, all of these functions of adverbs are also usually done by adverbial phrases, by adverbial clause, look at the following sentence. Strike the iron while it is hot. What is it indicate? What is the subordinate clause here? What is the principal clause here? Strike the iron is the main clause, the principal clause, but when you should strike the iron? It asks for time; time can be indicated in a variety of ways.

Time can be indicated by clock, strike the iron at 11 o'clock, time can be indicated by reference to the cloud, a reference to the weather. Strike the iron when it is very sunny, strike the iron when it is raining that is also time. Similarly, you say strike the iron while it is hot there is no point striking it after it is cold. It will break, but it would not expand, it would not stretch, but when it is hot by striking the iron, you can stretch it.

It can become longer than it was before you struck it with anything. So, an adverbial clause here while it is hot does the same thing as a word would do, you could as well say strike the iron now, next. You can have the condition; you can have adverbial clause at the head of the centre, you can also say as you sow, so you reap. If you plant a mango tree, you will eat mangoes.

But if plant an apple you will eat an apple, if you plant tamarind, you will eat tamarind. If you plant chilli, you will get chilli. So as you sow so, you reap. What is the principal clause here? So you reap, what is the adverbial clause subordinate clause of adverb here? As you sow, what does it do? It indicates manner, the manner of any it qualifies the verbs so, what will you reap? What you have sown already, next.

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*This is the night mail crossing the border.*

- “crossing the border” is the adverbial phrase indicating the place of verb “is”.

*The mail is bringing the cheques and the postal order*

- the adverbial phrase indicates the purpose of the verb “is”.



Place, there is a wonderful poem you should read it, read that poem aloud that will also help you have a still better English, sorry have a still better spoken English. So the poem goes something like this; This is the night mail crossing the border bringing the cheques and the postal order, I have broken it into two sentences to draw your attention.

Where is it now? Where is the night mail now? Where has it reached, no it has not reached the station yet, but it has reached a certain place, it is crossing the border going from England into Scotland there is the border between the two provinces of the United Kingdom, it is now crossing that borderline. An adverbial clause, the adverbial phrase can also do it can give you purpose. Why is it running? Why is the night mail running? What is it going to do? The night mail is bringing the cheques and the postal order. So it indicates purpose, so what a word can do a phrase can do, a clause can do. Go next.



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*Kate Kate you are always late.*

- the adverbial phrase, “always late”, indicates frequency and manner of verb “are” within the same clause.

*If you are not on time, you will miss the bus.*

- a result is indicated for a certain condition.



There is another wonderful poem, Kate-Kate you are always late, I have simplified it for us. So what is the adverbial phrase here, always late. It indicates manner, it indicates frequency, Kate is what is the manner of is; late. What is the frequency of is? Always.

Kate is always late; she gets up late for school; she does not; she leaves her bed late; she does not wash quickly; that is why she gets late. Frequently the bus has to go without her, so that is why the mother is shouting. The mother is shouting Kate-Kate you are always late. It also indicates a certain condition; the mother tells Kate if you are not on time, Kate, you will miss the bus again.

What is it? A condition resulting into another situation, an unpleasant situation. The present situation will be if you are on time you will get the bus, if you are on time, you will travel with your friends, if you are late you will travel with your father. So whatever adverbial phrase can do and adverbial clause can do all that see the following for example.

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- An adverbial clause can do all this. See the following examples.



*I removed the pendant when your father was born.*

- Here “when your father was born” is the subordinate adverbial clause indicating time of the verb “removed” in the main clause “I removed the pendant”.



I removed the pendant when your father was born. A grandmother tells a young boy that she used to have a pendant hanging with her necklace or neck chain. But she removed it, when did she remove it? When the boy's father was born, so here when your father was born; is the subordinate adverbial clause indicating the time of action, what action? Removed; what verb? Removed, where is it? It is the main clause; I removed the pendant. But it is mechanical; you can get a computer to do it.

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## ACTIVITY



1. Find adverbial clauses in the following sentences and describe what verb or adjective they modify/ intensify, etc.
  - a. When Rajam was a small boy, he killed a tiger.
  - b. Granny was half-way through it when Swaminathan's rhythmic snoring punctuated her narration.
  - c. If I fail in the examination, no one will be pleased.
  - d. If Rajam is in the house, we are here to see him.
  - e. Rajam liked to keep his friends waiting, because he had seen his father doing it.
  - f. When he could keep away no longer, he burst in upon his friends.
  - g. He cried when he saw them standing.



So as I have been telling you, you can create activities and exercises for yourself, you can do it with friends if 2 or 3 or a group of you are learning together in a classroom then you know let us

not always teacher-centric that stifles our creativity, what we can do is as a group of students we can get together, I can create a sentence and I can ask you to do the activity there.

I can, for example, give one part of the sentence a condition, if it rains, then I can ask another friend to complete it. Similarly, another friend can create the result; a cricket match will be cancelled. I can be asked to create a condition, I can create the condition, I can write, or I can speak if it rains you can do that sort of exercise.

Close your eyes, and I am going to give a condition. If I fail in the examination now give me the completion part of it. If you cannot look at number c, it says no one will be pleased at my home; my parents will be unhappy they may also be angry. My grandparents will be more unhappy though they would not be angry; it goes on.

So, we can create exercises for ourselves in the group by ourselves or with the books we read, with television we watch, which the films we watch, with the frequent video clips we get on WhatsApp, so once in a while, we can stop and ask ourselves is it an adverbial clause? Does this sentence is this sentence a complex sentence? What kind of clauses are there? Does it have an adverbial clause?

If it has an adverbial clause, what function does it do? If you ask yourself these questions, you will find that you are not only learning fast, you are learning also becomes perfect, error-free. You can be a source of comfort; you can be a source of correction; you can be a source of perfection and inspiration also to others both in your group outside. Once again let us not cheat ourselves because that is the worst kind of deception, worst kind of thing you can do to yourself.

We should not do that to anyone; we should not do that to ourselves either. So, do this exercise and after you have done it check your work with answers given at the end. Look at the given answers.

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## ANSWERS



All adverbial clauses are underlined.

a.	<u>When Rajam was a small boy,</u> he killed a tiger.	indicates times of killing
b.	Granny was half-way through it <u>when Swaminathan's rhythmic snoring punctuated her narration.</u>	indicates time for "was half-way..."
c.	<u>If I fail in the examination,</u> no one will be pleased.	indicates condition
d.	<u>If Rajam is in the house,</u> we are here to see him.	indicates condition



All adverbial clauses are underlined here to make your life easy; we have not given the main clause here because we assumed that you know. So, for example, when you say when Rajam was a small boy he killed a tiger sometimes, it is also given there, the main clause is but try and do sometimes without the main clause and bring the main clause in. So when Rajam was a small boy, what does he do? It indicates times of killing, where is that verb killing? It is there in the main clause.

B; granny was half-way through it, okay, that is the main clause. But she was half through it, when? When Swaminathan rhythmic snoring punctuated her narration. So that is another clause indicating time. If I fail in the examination, that is the condition, what is the result? No one will be pleased, so if I fail in the examination is an adverbial clause indicating condition.

When no one will be happy with me at my home? When or if I fail in the examination. Another condition. We have come to see Rajam, when? Or if Rajam is in the house, if he is in the library, if he is travelling, if he is in the garden, if he is outside we cannot see Rajam, so here is the condition, here is the result. Next.

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e.	Rajam liked to keep his friends waiting, <u>because he had seen his father doing it.</u>	indicates reason
f.	When he could keep away no <u>longer</u> , he burst in upon his friends.	Indicates time
g.	He cried <u>when he saw them standing.</u>	indicates time



The same thing Rajam like to keep his friends waiting for that is the main clause, why did he do that? Why did he keep his friends waiting? The reason is given in the subordinate clause; the subordinate clause is because he has seen his father doing it. What is it, what kind of subordinate clause is it? It is a subordinate clause indicating the reason for the verb keep, f, next sentence.

When he could keep away no longer, he burst in upon his friends, so the main clause is he burst in upon his friends. When did he burst in? Time is given, you could as well have said at 10.30, 10.10 does not do that his speaker says when or the writer says when he could keep away no longer. He cried when he saw them standing. Principle clause; he cried. Subordinate clause; when did he cry? When he saw them standing, the adverbial clause of time.



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**Thank You!**



Finally, to conclude learning can be a joy, learning can be a pleasure like a good game of cricket or football or any sports or yoga or worship or a concert it can be a very fulfilling satisfying exercise provided I am giving you the condition. Two things; number one, we do it wholeheartedly, sincerely like we play football. No matter what happens to us, we want to have a; we want to score a goal.

So similarly, sincerely I will see through this. I will do it with the best of my mind with the best of my body, and you do it enthusiastically. Not like someone is forcing you, enthusiastic work is when you yourself feel from within inside that wow it will be such a great pleasure doing it now when you are eager to do it when you enjoy doing it when you are whistling at your work that is what we call enthusiasm.

See if you do it sincerely that is the adverb of manner. When do you do it enthusiastically that is the adverb of manner. When do you do it daily that is the adverb of frequency, then the condition is learning, and perfect learning, perfect is the adjective qualifying learning. Perfect learning will result, and you, as I have said you will not only feel happy with yourself or else, will also be happy with you, you will become a source of comfort to everyone. Thank you very much for your attention. I am sure you are enjoying the course, have a great day. Thank you.