

# IELTS BASIC



# sentence structure

## SIMPLE SENTENCE

A **simple sentence** has **one independent clause** and **no subordinate clause**.

a group of words that expresses  
a complete thought

a group of words that's  
dependent to the main clause

one subject + one verb



Mich laughs.

Luke drank his morning coffee.

The cat caught the mouse.

compound subject, compound verb, or both

Compound Verb: She **drove** and **watched** the sunset.

Compound Subject: **Dee** and **Ali** joined the choir.

Compound Subject + Verb: **Rose** and **I** **love** travelling but **hate** walking.



**REMEMBER!**

A simple sentence has  
**NO subordinate clause**

✓ **Victor came home early.**

↓  
one independent clause

**Victor has left when she woke up.**

✗ not a simple sentence  
because of the subordinate clause

A **simple sentence** contains a single independent clause, meaning it has one subject and one verb. It expresses a complete thought and doesn't include any dependent or subordinate clauses.

### **Structure of a Simple Sentence:**

1. **Subject + Verb (SV)**
2. **Subject + Verb + Object (SVO)**
3. **Subject + Verb + Complement (SVC)**
4. **Subject + Verb + Adverb (SVA)**

## Examples of Simple Sentences:

### 1. Subject + Verb:

- She sleeps.
- They swim.

### 2. Subject + Verb + Object:

- He reads a book.
- The teacher explains the lesson.

### 3. Subject + Verb + Complement:

- The sky is blue.
- My brother became a doctor.

### 4. Subject + Verb + Adverb:

- She walks quickly.
- We live here.

## 1. Simple Sentences with Multiple Subjects:

When a simple sentence has multiple subjects, the subjects share the same verb.

Structure:

Subject 1 + Subject 2 + Verb

Examples:

- **John** and **Mary** went to the park.
  - (Two subjects: John, Mary; One verb: went)
- **The cat** and **the dog** are playing in the garden.
  - (Two subjects: The cat, the dog; One verb: are playing)

## 2. Simple Sentences with Multiple Verbs:

When a simple sentence has multiple verbs, the verbs share the same subject.

Structure:

Subject + Verb 1 + Verb 2

Examples:

- **She** sings and dances beautifully.
  - (One subject: She; Two verbs: sings, dances)
- **The dog** barked and ran toward the gate.
  - (One subject: The dog; Two verbs: barked, ran)

### 3. Simple Sentences with Multiple Subjects and Verbs:

It is also possible to have multiple subjects and multiple verbs in one simple sentence, as long as the sentence remains one independent clause.

Structure:

**Subject 1 + Subject 2 + Verb 1 + Verb 2**

Examples:

- **John and Sara** cooked dinner and watched a movie.
  - (Two subjects: John, Sara; Two verbs: cooked, watched)
- **The children and their parents** swam and played on the beach.
  - (Two subjects: The children, their parents; Two verbs: swam, played)



sentence structure

# COMPOUND SENTENCE

has **at least two** independent clauses but **no** subordinate clause

## FANBOYS

These independent clauses are joined by conjunctions **For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, and So**.

## EXAMPLES

His house was huge, **but** it was dirty.

independent clause   conjunction   independent clause

I like photography; he likes painting.

joiner

## NOTE:

colons, semicolons, and dashes also connect independent clauses.

- She was here - I read her note.
- This is his only advice: Do better.
- We saw, we came, **and** we conquered.
- He loves tea; it relaxes him.

A **compound sentence** consists of two or more independent clauses (complete thoughts) connected by coordinating conjunctions, semicolons, or conjunctive adverbs. Each clause in a compound sentence can stand alone as a simple sentence, but they are combined to show a relationship between ideas.

## **Structure of a Compound Sentence**

1. **Clause 1 + , Coordinating Conjunction + Clause 2**
2. **Clause 1 + ; + Clause 2**
3. **Clause 1 + ; Conjunctive Adverb, + Clause 2**

# **1. Compound Sentence with Coordinating Conjunctions:**

Coordinating conjunctions are used to join two independent clauses. The most common coordinating conjunctions can be remembered with the acronym

**FANBOYS:**

- For
- And
- Nor
- But
- Or
- Yet
- So

## Structure:

- Independent Clause 1 + , FANBOYS + Independent Clause 2

## Examples:

- I wanted to go to the park, **but** it started raining.
  - (Two independent clauses: "I wanted to go to the park" and "it started raining"; Joined by "but")
- She likes to read books, **and** he prefers watching movies.
  - (Two independent clauses: "She likes to read books" and "he prefers watching movies"; Joined by "and")

## 2. Compound Sentence with a Semicolon:

A semicolon can be used to join two closely related independent clauses without using a conjunction.

Structure:

- Independent Clause 1 + ; + Independent Clause 2

Examples:

- The sky is clear; the stars are visible.
  - (Two independent clauses: "The sky is clear" and "the stars are visible";  
Joined by a semicolon)

- I finished my homework; I am ready to relax.
  - (Two independent clauses: "I finished my homework" and "I am ready to relax"; Joined by a semicolon)

### **3. Compound Sentence with a Conjunctive Adverb:**

Conjunctive adverbs (e.g., however, therefore, moreover, consequently, meanwhile) can be used to join two independent clauses, often showing a more specific relationship between them, such as cause and effect or contrast.

**Structure:**

- Independent Clause 1 + ; Conjunctive Adverb, + Independent Clause 2

## Examples:

- I studied hard for the exam; **however**, I didn't pass.
  - (Two independent clauses: "I studied hard for the exam" and "I didn't pass"; Joined by "however")
- She worked late all week; **therefore**, she is taking the weekend off.
  - (Two independent clauses: "She worked late all week" and "she is taking the weekend off"; Joined by "therefore")

## Key Points to Remember:

- Independent clauses are complete sentences that can stand alone.
- Coordinating conjunctions (FANBOYS), semicolons, or conjunctive adverbs are used to link the clauses.
- Each clause in a compound sentence is of equal importance and expresses a complete idea.

sentence structure

# COMPLEX SENTENCE

has **one** independent clause and **at least one** subordinate clause.

a group of words that can stand alone as a sentence

EXAMPLE: *We will not go fishing.*

can't stand alone as a sentence

EXAMPLE: *If it rains*

*Complex Sentence*

*We will not go fishing if it rains.*

**All classes are cancelled** **because of the typhoon.** **When he was young,** **he wanted to be an astronaut.**

independent clause

subordinate clause

subordinate clause

independent clause

**After jogging,** **she went to the cafe** **that she loves.**

subordinate clause

independent clause

subordinate clause

A **complex sentence** contains one independent clause (a complete thought) and at least one dependent (subordinate) clause, which cannot stand alone.

Dependent clauses are introduced by subordinating conjunctions (e.g., because, although, since, if) or relative pronouns (e.g., who, that, which).

## **Structure of a Complex Sentence**

1. Independent Clause + Dependent Clause
2. Dependent Clause + , Independent Clause
3. Independent Clause + Relative Clause

# **1. Complex Sentence with Subordinating Conjunctions:**

A dependent clause is connected to an independent clause using subordinating conjunctions, such as:

- Because
- Although
- Since
- If
- When
- After
- While
- Before

### Structure:

- Independent Clause + Subordinating Conjunction + Dependent Clause
- OR
- Subordinating Conjunction + Dependent Clause, Independent Clause

### Examples:

- He stayed home because it was raining.
  - (Independent clause: "He stayed home"; Dependent clause: "because it was raining")

- **Because she was tired**, she went to bed early.
  - (Dependent clause: "Because she was tired"; Independent clause: "she went to bed early")
- **Although it was late**, we kept working.
  - (Dependent clause: "Although it was late"; Independent clause: "we kept working")

## **2. Complex Sentence with Relative Clauses:**

A relative clause (also known as an adjective clause) modifies a noun or pronoun in the independent clause and is introduced by relative pronouns such as:

- Who
- Which
- That
- Whom
- Whose

## Structure:

- Independent Clause + Relative Pronoun + Relative Clause

## Examples:

- **The man** who helped me yesterday was very kind.
  - (Independent clause: "The man was very kind"; Relative clause: "who helped me yesterday")

- **I saw the movie** that you recommended.
  - (Independent clause: "I saw the movie"; Relative clause: "that you recommended")
- **This is the house** where I grew up.
  - (Independent clause: "This is the house"; Relative clause: "where I grew up")

### **3. Complex Sentence with Dependent Adverb Clauses:**

An adverb clause functions as an adverb, modifying the verb of the independent clause. It answers questions like **when, why, how, or under what condition**.

**Structure:**

- Independent Clause + Dependent Adverb Clause
- OR
- Dependent Adverb Clause, Independent Clause

## Examples:

- **She smiled** when she saw her friend.
  - (Independent clause: "She smiled"; Dependent adverb clause: "when she saw her friend")
- **If you study hard**, you will pass the exam.
  - (Dependent adverb clause: "If you study hard"; Independent clause: "you will pass the exam")
- **He moved to the city** because he got a new job.
  - (Independent clause: "He moved to the city"; Dependent adverb clause: "because he got a new job")

## Common Subordinating Conjunctions:

- **Time:** after, before, when, while, since, as soon as, until
- **Cause/Effect:** because, since, so that
- **Condition:** if, unless, provided that, as long as
- **Contrast:** although, even though, whereas, while

## Key Points to Remember:

- **Independent clause** is a complete thought (can stand alone).
- **Dependent clause** is an incomplete thought (cannot stand alone).
- Subordinating conjunctions or relative pronouns connect the clauses.
- When the dependent clause comes first, use a comma to separate it from the independent clause. No comma is needed when the independent clause comes first.

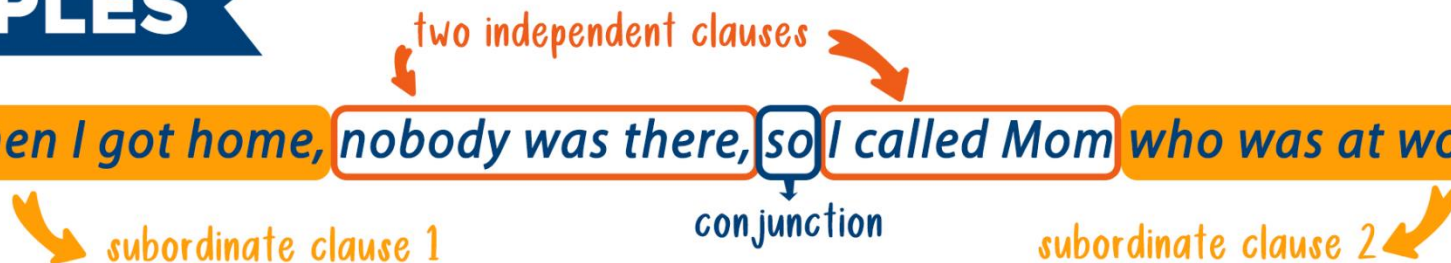
## sentence structure

# COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCE

has **at least two independent clauses** and **at least one subordinate clause**.

  
*I went to the grocery, and I picked up the laundry before dinner.*

## EXAMPLES

  
*When I got home, nobody was there, so I called Mom who was at work.*

three independent clauses and three subordinate clauses:

*Because of the pandemic, she was laid off, but she found a new job after a month, and she's launching a new business that's located near our house.*

A **compound-complex sentence** combines elements of both compound and complex sentences. It has **at least two independent clauses** (from the compound sentence structure) and **at least one dependent clause** (from the complex sentence structure). This type of sentence allows for more sophisticated and layered expression by combining multiple thoughts and relationships.

## Structure of a Compound-Complex Sentence

1. Independent Clause 1 + Coordinating Conjunction + Independent Clause 2 + Dependent Clause
2. Dependent Clause + , Independent Clause 1 + Coordinating Conjunction + Independent Clause 2
3. Independent Clause 1 + Dependent Clause + , Coordinating Conjunction + Independent Clause 2

## Breakdown:

- **Independent clauses** are complete thoughts that can stand alone.
- **Dependent clauses** rely on subordinating conjunctions or relative pronouns (e.g., because, when, that, who) and cannot stand alone.
- **Coordinating conjunctions** (FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) link the independent clauses.

## 1. **Compound-Complex Sentence with Dependent Clause at the End:**

In this case, the two independent clauses are connected with a coordinating conjunction, and the dependent clause comes after the independent clauses.

**Structure:**

- Independent Clause 1 + Coordinating Conjunction + Independent Clause 2 + Dependent Clause

**Example:**

- I wanted to go to the park, but it started raining **because the weather changed suddenly**.
  - (Two independent clauses: "I wanted to go to the park" and "it started raining"; Dependent clause: "because the weather changed suddenly")

## 2. Compound-Complex Sentence with Dependent Clause at the Beginning:

Here, the dependent clause begins the sentence, followed by two independent clauses linked by a coordinating conjunction. A comma separates the dependent clause from the first independent clause.

Structure:

- Dependent Clause, Independent Clause 1 + Coordinating Conjunction + Independent Clause 2

Example:

- **Because I finished my homework**, I went to the party, and I stayed late.
  - (Dependent clause: "Because I finished my homework"; Two independent clauses: "I went to the party" and "I stayed late")

### 3. Compound-Complex Sentence with Dependent Clause in the Middle:

In this structure, a dependent clause comes in between the two independent clauses.

Structure:

- Independent Clause 1 + Dependent Clause + , Coordinating Conjunction + Independent Clause 2

Example:

- I went to bed early **because I was tired**, but I couldn't fall asleep.
  - (Independent clause 1: "I went to bed early"; Dependent clause: "because I was tired"; Independent clause 2: "I couldn't fall asleep")

#### **4. Compound-Complex Sentence with Dependent Clause Modifying One Independent Clause:**

In this structure, the dependent clause is directly related to one of the independent clauses.

Example:

- **She didn't study for the exam, which was very difficult, so she failed.**
  - (Two independent clauses: "She didn't study for the exam" and "she failed"; Dependent clause: "which was very difficult")

## 5. Compound-Complex Sentence with Conjunctive Adverbs:

Sometimes, a compound-complex sentence can use a conjunctive adverb (e.g., however, therefore) to link two independent clauses while also including a dependent clause.

Example:

- **Although I was tired**, I stayed up late; **however**, I regretted it the next day.
  - (Dependent clause: "Although I was tired"; Two independent clauses: "I stayed up late" and "I regretted it the next day"; Linked with "however")

### Common Subordinating Conjunctions (for dependent clauses):

- **Cause/Effect:** because, since, so that
- **Time:** when, after, before, while, as soon as
- **Condition:** if, unless, provided that
- **Contrast:** although, even though, while

## Key Points to Remember:

- A compound-complex sentence has **at least two independent clauses** and **one dependent clause**.
- Coordinating conjunctions (FANBOYS) link independent clauses.
- Subordinating conjunctions or relative pronouns introduce dependent clauses.
- Commas are used when the dependent clause comes before the independent clauses or in certain cases when clauses are linked.