

Sentence Forms

Sentence Forms

Resources: *The LB Brief Handbook*, 5th edition; Middle Tennessee State University; and *The Complete Writer's Workout Book*.

- There are four types of sentences, and using all four types throughout your paper will add variety and keep your reader's attention. The four types of sentences are **simple**, **compound**, **complex**, and **compound-complex**. All of these sentence types are made up of combinations of independent and dependent clauses.
- An *independent clause* can stand on its own as a complete sentence, but a **dependent clause** must be attached to another sentence.
- Examples:
 - *Independent clause: The whale swam out to the open sea.*
 - (Italics will be used to indicate independent clauses throughout this handout).
 - **Dependent clause: Before I go to work.**
 - (Bold will be used to indicate dependent clauses throughout this handout).
- **Dependent clauses** must be connected to an *independent clause* because they depend on an *independent clause* to complete their meaning.
- **Dependent clauses** normally start with subordinating conjunctions (because, although, after, before, when, etc.) or relative pronouns (which, who, & that).

Types of Sentences

- **Simple Sentence:** A simple sentence consists of one *independent clause* and no **dependent clauses**.
 - **Example:** *My dog had puppies.*
 - **Example:** *The unusually hot summer weather made farming quite difficult.*
- **Compound Sentence:** A compound sentence connects at least two *independent clauses* but contains no **dependent clauses**.
 - There are two ways to connect two independent clauses:
 - a comma and a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) or
 - a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb (THINTIC: therefore, however, indeed, nevertheless, then, in fact, consequently).
 - **Example:** *The boys created a new game, but the girls did not want to play.*
 - (Two independent clauses linked by a comma and the coordinating conjunction 'but')
 - **Example:** *The boys created a new game; however, the girls did not want to play.*
 - (A semicolon and the conjunctive adverb 'however' link the two independent clauses together.)



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- **Complex Sentence:** A complex sentence contains one *independent clause* and at least one **dependent clause**.
 - **Example:** **Because I was late for school,** *I hurried out the door.*
 - **Example:** *We had to leave the school* **when it started storming.**
- **Compound-Complex Sentence:** A compound-complex sentence contains at least two *independent clauses* and at least one **dependent clause**.
 - **Example:** *I really like my boss,* **but he doesn't seem to like me** **even though I try hard at work.**
 - **Example:** **Because I was late to school yesterday,** *I missed my English test,* **but my teacher let me take it today.**