

## SUBORDINATION

Unlike **coordination** in which you join independent clauses together, through **subordination** you make one clause less important than the other clause and *dependent* upon the other clause.

Whereas an *independent clause* can stand alone and make sense as a sentence, a *dependent clause* must be connected to an *independent clause* to be part of a complete sentence. This combination is called a **complex sentence**.

If a *dependent clause* appears by itself, the result is a **sentence fragment**, a type of sentence error.

The three types of **dependent clauses** are used as three different parts of speech. The part of speech lends its name to the type of clause. You can learn to identify these clauses according to their function and position in a sentence and the signal words which accompany them. Remember that each **dependent clause** contains a subject and a verb but cannot stand alone as a complete sentence.

Each type of **dependent clause** is explained separately below and on the following pages.

### ADVERB CLAUSE

**Adverb clauses** modify verbs and answer such questions as when, where, how, why, and under what conditions.

When	<u>when</u> he lowered the price
Where	<u>where</u> the road turns
How	<u>as if</u> he meant business
Why	<u>because</u> our house was too small
Condition	<u>if</u> you push the car

Recognizing the signal words which introduce adverb clauses will help you identify them and prevent you from leaving them to stand alone as **fragments**.

When	while, when, whenever, as, as soon as, before, after, since, until
Where	where, wherever
How	as if, as though
Why	because, since, as, so that
Condition	if, unless, though, although, provided that

These signal words are called **subordinating conjunctions**, implying that the connection they make causes the clause introduced by the subordinate conjunction to be dependent upon the other clause. A clause which must depend upon another clause and cannot stand alone as a complete sentence is also called a **subordinate clause**.

The **adverb clause** is movable, which means it does not have to appear in a fixed position in a sentence. It can open the sentence, appear in the middle of the sentence, or close the sentence.

EXAMPLES: When he came home, we ate supper.

We ate supper when he came home.

Notice that in the first example, a comma follows the adverb clause which introduces the sentence. In the second example, a comma is not necessary *before* the adverb clause which completes the sentence.

Practice using the **adverb clause** to join two simple sentences into a single, smoother sentence through **subordination**.

SENTENCES: Broccoli is not my favorite vegetable.  
Sometimes I eat it.

SUBORDINATION: Although broccoli is not my favorite vegetable, sometimes I eat it.

### ADJECTIVE CLAUSE

An **adjective clause**, another dependent clause which cannot stand alone as a sentence, modifies a noun or pronoun. It has a fixed position in a sentence; it *follows* the noun or pronoun it modifies.

EXAMPLE: The tree surgeon removed the branches that were dead.

That were dead modifies branches by telling us which branches the tree surgeon removed.

EXAMPLE: He brought me flowers which were picked from my own garden.

Again, the adjective clause follows the noun it modifies (flowers) and designates which flowers were given.

Signal words which introduce adjective clauses are called **relative pronouns** because they relate the adjective clauses to the sentences.

**who, whose, whom**

EXAMPLE: The man whose house you rent is ready to sell.

**which, that**

EXAMPLE: The book which I read most recently was very dull.

**when, where**

These relative pronouns can introduce either adverb *or* adjective clauses.

ADVERB CLAUSE EXAMPLES:

He went where the fishing was good.

Be careful when you enter the house.

ADJECTIVE CLAUSE EXAMPLES:

This is the place where I work.

That's the only day when I am free.

When a preposition is used before a relative pronoun (**with which, for which, for whom**), the preposition is part of the adjective clause.

EXAMPLES: The pen with which he wrote was scratchy.

The bottle in which the lotion comes is expensive.

Occasionally, the relative pronoun is omitted, resulting in a subject/verb combination right after the noun that the clause modifies.

EXAMPLES: Most of the things we fear never happen. (Relative pronoun *that* is omitted.)  
A person is known by the company he keeps. (Relative pronoun *that* is omitted.)

Use who, whose, and whom to refer to people. Which refers to things. That refers to people, things, or animals.

EXAMPLES: The actor whom you enjoy has a new leading lady.  
The scene which disturbed me most was the first one in the play.  
I couldn't understand the presence of the monkey that appeared in the final minutes.

Who is used as the subject of the verb in the clause. Whom is the object of a verb or preposition.

EXAMPLES: The convicts who escaped were dangerous. (subject of the verb *escaped*)  
Any player whom Ross can beat must be poor. (object of the verb *can beat*)  
The man with whom we went is kind. (object of the preposition *with*)

## NOUN CLAUSE

**Noun clauses** are used exactly the same way as individual nouns, so they will be positioned in the sentence accordingly. When **noun clauses** are used as subjects, direct objects, subject complements, or objects of a preposition, they may *not* be omitted from the sentence.

SUBJECT: What he said puzzled us.  
DIRECT OBJECT: We raise whatever we need.  
SUBJECT COMPLEMENT: This is how I make fudge.  
OBJECT OF PREPOSITION: We were still ten miles from where we were going.

Without the **noun clause**, none of these sentences express a complete thought.

When **noun clauses** are used as indirect objects or appositives, they may be omitted from the sentence without changing the thought expressed in the sentence.

INDIRECT OBJECT: She will pay whoever finds the dog a reward.  
She will pay a reward. (noun clause omitted)  
APPOSITIVE: His last hope, that the Marines would rescue him, was soon to be realized.  
His last hope was soon to be realized. (noun clause omitted)

Some of the same clause signal words that start adverb and adjective clauses also start noun clauses: **if**, **when**, **where**, **who**, **which**. In **noun clauses**, of course, the word **that** *does not* relate back to a noun it modifies; it's just an empty word.

EXAMPLES: I knew that we would win.  
I hope that you can go.

