## CHAPTER 7

**Parts of Speech and Sentence Structures**

### PARTS OF SPEECH

#### 7a What is a noun?

A **noun** names a person, place, thing, or idea: *student, college, textbook, education*. Here is a list of different kinds of nouns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PROPER</td>
<td>Garth Brooks, Paris, Buick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMON</td>
<td>singer, city, automobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCRETE</td>
<td>landscape, pizza, thunder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>freedom, shyness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLECTIVE</td>
<td>family, team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NONCOUNT OR MASS</td>
<td>water, time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUNT</td>
<td>lake, minute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Esl Notes:**

- Nouns often appear with words that tell how much or how many, whose, which one, and similar information. These words include **articles** *(a, an, the)* and other determiners or limiting adjectives; see 7g and Chapter 40.

- Nouns sometimes serve as **adjectives**. For example, in the term *police officer*, the word *police* serves as an adjective to describe *officer*.

- Nouns in many languages other than English are inflected. This means they change form, usually with a special ending, to
PARTS OF SPEECH AND SENTENCE STRUCTURES

communicate gender (male, female, neuter); number (singular, plural); and case (see 9a through 9k).

- Words with these suffixes (word endings) are usually nouns: -ness, -ence, -ance, -ty, and -ment.

7b What is a pronoun?
A pronoun takes the place of a noun. The words or word that a pronoun replaces is called the pronoun’s antecedent.

David is an accountant. [noun] He is an accountant. [pronoun]
The finance committee needs to consult him. [The pronoun him refers to its antecedent David.]

Here are different types of pronouns.

PERSONAL
I, you, its, her, they, ours, and others

RELATIVE
who, which, that

INTERROGATIVE
which, who, whose, and others

DEMONSTRATIVE
this, that, these, those

REFLEXIVE OR INTENSIVE
myself, themselves, and other -self or -selves words

RECIPROCAL
each other, one another

INDEFINITE
all, anyone, each, and others

I saw her take a book to them.
The book that I lost was valuable.
Who called?
Whose books are these?
They claim to support themselves. I myself doubt it.

EXERCISE 7-1 Underline and label all nouns (N) and pronouns (P). Refer to 7a through 7b for help.

N N N N N

EXAMPLE Treadmills help people achieve fitness and rehabilitation.
1. Not only humans use them.
2. Scientists conduct experiments by placing lobsters on treadmills.
3. Scientists can study a lobster when it is fitted with a small mask.
4. The mask allows researchers to monitor the crustacean’s heartbeat.
5. The lobster may reach speeds of a half-mile or more an hour.

7c  What is a verb?

Main verbs express action, occurrence, or state of being. For information on how to use verbs correctly, see Chapter 8.

I dance. [action]
The audience became silent. [occurrence]
Your dancing was excellent. [state of being]

**Alert:** If you’re not sure whether a word is a verb, substitute a different tense for the word. If the sentence still makes sense, the word is a verb.

NO  He is a changed man. He is a will change man. [Changed isn’t a verb because the sentence doesn’t make sense when will change is substituted.]

YES  The man changed his profession. The man will change his profession. [Changed is a verb because the sentence makes sense when the verb will change is substituted.]

**Exercise 7-2** Underline all verbs. Refer to 7c for help.

**Example** The history of eyeglasses reveals a long road to a simple design.

1. People used a magnifying lens as a reading glass about AD 1000.
2. An Italian invented the first eyeglasses in 1284.
3. For centuries, people held eyeglasses to their eyes with their hands or nose.
4. In the 1700s, a French optician added three-inch wires on both sides of the glasses.
5. Finally, in the eighteenth century, an English optician lengthened the wires to the ears.

7d  What is a verbal?

Verbals are verb parts functioning as Nouns, Adjectives, or Adverbs. Here are some verbals and their functions.

**ESL NOTE:** For information about correctly using the verbals called infinitives and gerunds as objects, see Chapter 43.
PARTS OF SPEECH AND SENTENCE STRUCTURES

INFINITIVE
1. noun
To eat now is inconvenient.
2. adjective or adverb
Still, we have far to go.

PAST PARTICIPLE
-adjective
Boiled, filtered water is safe.

PRESENT PARTICIPLE
1. noun (called a GERUND)
Eating in diners on the road is an adventure.
2. adjective
Running water may not be safe.

What is an adjective?

Adjectives modify—that is, they describe or limit—NOUNS, PRONOUNS, and word groups that function as nouns. For information on how to use adjectives correctly, see Chapter 11.

I saw a green tree. [Green modifies the noun tree.]
It was leafy. [Leafy modifies the pronoun it.]
The flowering trees were beautiful. [Beautiful modifies the noun phrase the flowering trees.]

ESL NOTE: You can identify some kinds of adjectives by looking at their endings. Usually, words with the suffixes -ful, -ish, -less, and -like are adjectives.

Determiners, frequently called limiting adjectives, tell whether a noun is general (a tree) or specific (the tree). Determiners also tell which one (this tree), how many (twelve trees), whose (our tree), and similar information.

The determiners a, an, and the are almost always called articles. The is a definite article. Before a noun, the conveys that the noun refers to a specific item (the plan). A and an are indefinite articles. They convey that a noun refers to an item in a nonspecific or general way (a plan).

ALERT: Use a when the word following it starts with a consonant: a carrot, a broken egg, a hip. Also, use a when the word following starts with an h that is sounded: a historical event, a home. Use an when the word following starts with a vowel sound: an honor, an old bag, an egg.

ESL NOTE: For information about using articles with COUNT and NONCOUNT NOUNS, and about articles with PROPER NOUNS and GERUNDS, see Chapter 40.

Some words function also as PRONOUNS. To identify a word’s part of speech, always check to see how it functions in each particular sentence.
What is an adverb?

**That** car belongs to Harold. [That is a demonstrative adjective.]

**That** is Harold’s car. [That is a demonstrative pronoun.]

Here are different kinds of determiners (or limiting adjectives).

**ARTICLES**

- *a, an, the*

**DEMONSTRATIVE**

- *this, these, that, those*

**INDEFINITE**

- *any, each, few, other, some, and others*

**INTERROGATIVE**

- *what, which, whose*

**NUMERICAL**

- *one, first, two, second, and others*

**POSSESSIVE**

- *my, your, their, and others*

**RELATIVE**

- *what, which, whose, whatever, and others*

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7f  What is an adverb?

**Adverbs** modify—that is, adverbs describe or limit—**verbs, adjectives, other adverbs, and clauses.** For information on how to use adverbs correctly, see Chapter 11.

Chefs plan meals **carefully.** [Carefully modifies the verb plan.]

Vegetables provide **very** important vitamins. [Very modifies the adjective important.]

Those potato chips are **too** heavily salted. [Too modifies the adverb heavily.]

**Fortunately,** people are learning that overuse of salt is harmful. [Fortunately modifies the rest of the sentence, an independent clause.]

**Descriptive adverbs** show levels of intensity, usually by adding **more** (or **less**) and **most** (or **least**): more **happily,** least clearly (see section 11e). Many descriptive adverbs are formed by adding -ly to adjectives: sadly, loudly, normally. But many adverbs do not end in -ly: very, always, not, yesterday, and well are a few. Some adjectives look like adverbs but are not: brotherly, lonely, lovely.

**Relative adverbs** are words such as **where,** **why,** and **when.** They are used to introduce **adjective clauses.**
Conjunctive adverbs modify—that is, conjunctive adverbs describe or limit—by creating logical connections to give words meaning. Conjunctive adverbs can appear anywhere in a sentence: at the start, in the middle, or at the end. Some examples are however, next, and also.

Here are the kinds of relationships that conjunctive adverbs can show.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>addition</td>
<td>also, furthermore, moreover, besides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contrast</td>
<td>however, still, nevertheless, conversely, nonetheless, instead, otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comparison</td>
<td>similarly, likewise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>result of summary</td>
<td>therefore, thus, consequently, accordingly, hence, then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>next, then, meanwhile, finally, subsequently, indeed, certainly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXERCISE 7-3** Underline and label all adjectives (ADJ) and adverbs (ADV).
For help, consult 7e and 7f.

**EXAMPLE** Scientific evidence shows that massage therapy can dramatically improve people’s health.

1. Premature babies who are massaged gently gain 47 percent more weight than babies who do not receive touch treatment.
2. Frequently, massaged premature babies go home from the hospital sooner, saving an average of $10,000 per baby.
3. Also, daily massage helps many people with stomach problems digest their food easily because important hormones are released during the rubdown.
4. People with the HIV virus find their weakened immune system significantly improved by targeted massage.
5. In addition, massage treatments have helped people with asthma breathe more freely.

**7g** What is a preposition?

**Prepositions** are words that convey relationships, usually in time or space. Common prepositions include in, under, by, after, to, on, over, and since. A **prepositional phrase** consists of a preposition and the words it modifies. For information about prepositions and commas, see 23k.2.

In the fall, we will hear a concert by our favorite tenor.

After the concert, he will fly to San Francisco.
What is a conjunction?

A **conjunction** connects words, **phrases**, or **clauses**. **Coordinating conjunctions** join two or more grammatically equal words, phrases, or clauses.

- We hike **and** camp every summer. ([And joins two words.]
- We hike along scenic trails **or** in the wilderness. ([Or joins two phrases.]
- I love the outdoors, **but** my family does not. ([But joins two independent clauses.]

Here are coordinating conjunctions and the relationships they express.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>addition</td>
<td><strong>and</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contrast</td>
<td><strong>but</strong> , <strong>yet</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>result of summary</td>
<td><strong>so</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reason or cause</td>
<td><strong>for</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>choice</td>
<td><strong>or</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative choice</td>
<td><strong>nor</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlative conjunctions** are two conjunctions that work as a pair: **both** . . . **and** ; **either** . . . **or** ; **neither** . . . **nor** ; **not only** . . . **but** (also) ; **whether** . . . **or** ; and **not** . . . **so much as**. For example: **Not only students but also businesspeople should study a second language.**

**Subordinating conjunctions** introduce dependent clauses. Subordinating conjunctions express relationships making the dependent clause in a sentence grammatically less important than the independent clause in the sentence. For information about how to use them correctly, see 17e through 17g. For example: **Many people were happy after they heard the news.**

Here are subordinating conjunctions and relationships they express.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td><strong>after</strong> , <strong>before</strong> , <strong>once</strong> , <strong>since</strong> , <strong>until</strong> , <strong>when</strong> , <strong>whenever</strong> , <strong>while</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reason or cause</td>
<td><strong>as</strong> , <strong>because</strong> , <strong>since</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>result or effect</td>
<td><strong>in order that</strong> , <strong>so</strong> , <strong>so that</strong> , <strong>that</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>condition</td>
<td><strong>if</strong> , <strong>even if</strong> , <strong>provided that</strong> , <strong>unless</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contrast</td>
<td><strong>although</strong> , <strong>even though</strong> , <strong>though</strong> , <strong>whereas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location</td>
<td><strong>where</strong> , <strong>wherever</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>choice</td>
<td><strong>than</strong> , <strong>whether</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7i **What is an interjection?**

An *interjection* is a word or expression that conveys surprise or a strong emotion. Alone, an interjection is usually punctuated with an exclamation point (!). As part of a sentence, an interjection is usually set off by one or more commas. Examples: *Hooray! I won the race* and *Oh, my friends missed seeing the finish.*

**EXERCISE 7-4** Identify the part of speech of each numbered and underlined word. Choose from noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, coordinating conjunction, correlative conjunction, and subordinating conjunction. For help, consult 7a through 7h.

1. The geneticist Barbara McClintock was a nonconformist. She
2. preferred the company of the corn plants that she eagerly studied
3. to the companionship of many of the people she knew. When she won
4. the Nobel Prize in 1983, she learned of it over the radio because
5. she had no telephone.
6. McClintock worked *alone* throughout her fifty-year career at the
7. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in New York. In the 1940s and
8. 1950s, McClintock *discovered* that parts of chromosomes break off
9. and *recombine* with neighboring chromosomes to create *unique*
10. genetic combinations. This process, known *as* crossing over, amazed
11. scientists and demonstrated that chromosomes formed the basis of
12. genetics. Still, scientists resisted McClintock’s findings and did not
13. recognize the importance of her research for many years. Only after
14. geneticists *found* crossing over genes in both plants and animals was
15. the great value of McClintock’s discovery acknowledged. Thirty to
16. forty years later, she *won* the 1983 Nobel Prize for her groundbreaking
17. achievement.
Overall, McClintock’s life was lonely, but her career was very productive. By the time of her death in 1992, her colleagues had finally come to realize that Barbara McClintock was one of the towering giants of genetics.

SENTENCE STRUCTURES

What is a subject and a predicate in a sentence?

The subject and predicate of a sentence are its two essential parts. Without both, a group of words isn’t a sentence. Box 7-1 shows the sentence pattern with both. Terms used in the box are defined after it.

The simple subject is the word or group of words that acts, is described, or is acted upon.

The telephone rang. [Simple subject, telephone, acts.]
The telephone is red. [Simple subject, telephone, is described.]
The telephone was being connected. [Simple subject, telephone, is acted upon.]
7j

PARTS OF SPEECH AND SENTENCE STRUCTURES

The **complete subject** is the simple subject and its modifiers.

The **red telephone** rang.

A **compound subject** consists of two or more NOUNS or PRONOUNS and their modifiers.

The telephone and the doorbell rang.

The **predicate** contains the VERB in the sentence. The predicate tells what the subject is doing or experiencing or what is being done to the subject.

The telephone **rang**. [**Rang** tells what the subject, telephone, did.]

The telephone **is red**. [is tells what the subject, telephone, experiences.]

The telephone **was being connected**. [Was being connected tells what was being done to the subject, telephone.]

A **simple predicate** contains only the verb.

The lawyer **listened**.

A **complete predicate** contains the verb and its modifiers.

The lawyer **listened carefully**.

A **compound predicate** contains two or more verbs.

The lawyer **listened and waited**.

**ESL NOTES:** (1) The subject of a declarative sentence usually comes before the predicate, but there are exceptions (18j). In sentences that ask a question, part of the predicate usually comes before the subject. For more information about word order in English sentences, see Chapter 41. (2) In English, don’t add a PERSONAL PRONOUN to repeat the stated noun.

**NO** My **grandfather he** lived to be eighty-seven. [The personal pronoun, he, repeats the stated noun, grandfather.]

**YES** My **grandfather** lived to be eighty-seven.

**NO** Winter storms **that bring ice, sleet, and snow they** can cause traffic problems. [The personal pronoun, they, repeats the stated noun, winter storms.]

**YES** Winter storms **that bring ice, sleet, and snow can cause traffic problems**.

**EXERCISE 7-5** Use a slash to separate the complete subject from the complete predicate. For help, consult 7j.

**EXAMPLE** The Panama Canal in Central America/provides a water route between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

1. Ships sailed an extra 3,000 to 5,000 miles around South America before the construction of the Panama Canal.

2. Over 800,000 ships have traveled the 50 miles of the Panama Canal.
What are direct and indirect objects?

3. The United States built the canal and then operated it for 86 years at a cost of $3 billion.
4. The United States has collected about $2 billion from Panama Canal operations.
5. Panama was awarded total ownership of the Panama Canal by the United States on December 31, 1999.

What are direct and indirect objects?

A **direct object** is a noun, pronoun, or group of words acting as a noun that receives the action of a **transitive verb**. To check for a direct object, make up a *whom?* or *what?* question about the verb.

An **indirect object** is a noun, pronoun, or group of words acting as a noun that tells *to whom* or *for whom* the action expressed by a transitive verb was done. To check for an indirect object, make up a *to whom?* or *for whom?* question about the verb.

Direct objects and indirect objects always fall in the **predicate** of a sentence. Box 7-2 shows how direct and indirect objects function in sentences.

**BOX 7-2 PATTERN**

Sentence Pattern II: Direct and indirect objects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete Subject</th>
<th>Complete Predicate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The caller</td>
<td>offered money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VERB DIRECT OBJECT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete Subject</th>
<th>Complete Predicate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The caller</td>
<td>offered the lawyer money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VERB INDIRECT DIRECT OBJECT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete Subject</th>
<th>Complete Predicate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The client</td>
<td>sent the lawyer a retainer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VERB INDIRECT DIRECT OBJECT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXERCISE 7-6** Draw a single line under all direct objects and a double line under all indirect objects. For help, consult 7k.

**EXAMPLE** Toni Morrison’s award-winning novels give readers the gifts of wisdom, inspiration, and pleasure.
1. Literary critics gave high praise to Toni Morrison for her first novel, The Bluest Eye, but the general public showed little interest.

2. Song of Solomon won Morrison the National Book Critics Circle Award in 1977, and Beloved won her the Pulitzer Prize in 1988.

3. A literary panel awarded Toni Morrison the 1993 Nobel Prize in Literature, the highest honor a writer can receive.


5. Twenty-five years after The Bluest Eye was published, Oprah Winfrey selected it for her reader’s list, and it immediately became a bestseller.

**What are complements, modifiers, and appositives?**

A complement renames or describes a subject or an object. It appears in the predicate of a sentence.

A subject complement is a noun, pronoun, or adjective that follows a linking verb. Predicate nominative is another term for a noun used as a subject complement, and predicate adjective is another term for an adjective used as a subject complement.

An object complement follows a direct object and either describes or renames the direct object. Box 7-3 shows how subject and object complements function in a sentence.

**Exercise 7-7** Underline all complements and identify each as a subject complement (SUB) or an object complement (OB).
What are complements, modifiers, and appositives?

EXAMPLE  Many of the most familiar North American wildflowers are actually nonnative plants.

1. The dainty Queen Anne’s lace is a native of Europe.
2. The daisies and cornflowers that decorate our roadsides all summer were originally inhabitants of Europe as well.
3. The common purple loosestrife, originally from Asia, came to the North American continent as a garden plant.
4. Many scientists call these plants “alien invasives.”
5. Many ecologists consider them to be threats to the forests, meadows, and wetlands of North America.

A modifier is a word or group of words that describes or limits other words. Modifiers appear in the subject or the predicate of a sentence.

The large red telephone rang. [The adjectives large and red modify the noun telephone.]

The lawyer answered quickly. [The adverb quickly modifies the verb answered.]

The person on the telephone was extremely upset. [The prepositional phrase on the telephone modifies the noun person; the adverb extremely modifies the adjective upset.]

Therefore, the lawyer spoke gently. [The adverb therefore modifies the independent clause the lawyer spoke gently; the adverb gently modifies the verb spoke.]

Because the lawyer's voice was calm, the caller felt reassured. [The adverb clause because the lawyer's voice was calm modifies the independent clause the caller felt reassured.]

An appositive is a word or group of words that renames the noun or pronoun preceding it.

The student’s story, a tale of broken promises, was complicated. [The appositive a tale of broken promises renames the noun story.]

The lawyer consulted an expert, her law professor. [The appositive her law professor renames the noun expert.]

The student, Joe Jones, asked to speak to his lawyer. [The appositive Joe Jones renames the noun student.]

⚠️ ALERT: When an appositive is not essential for identifying what it renames (that is, when it is nonrestrictive), use a comma or commas to set off the appositive from the rest of the sentence; see section 23g. ⚠️
What is a phrase?

A phrase is a group of words that does not contain both a SUBJECT and a PREDICATE and therefore cannot stand alone as an independent unit.

- A **noun phrase** functions as a NOUN in a sentence: *The modern census dates back to the seventeenth century.*
- A **verb phrase** functions as a VERB in a sentence: *Two military censuses are mentioned in the Bible.*
- A **prepositional phrase** always starts with a PREPOSITION and functions as a MODIFIER: *William the Conqueror conducted a census of landowners in newly conquered England in 1086* [three prepositional phrases in a row, beginning with *of, in, in*].
- An **absolute phrase** usually contains a noun or PRONOUN and a PRESENT or PAST PARTICIPLE. An absolute phrase modifies the entire sentence that it’s in: *Censuses being the fashion, Quebec and Nova Scotia took sixteen counts between 1665 and 1754.*

A **verbal phrase** contains a verb part that functions not as a verb, but as a noun or an ADJECTIVE. Such cases are INFINITIVES, present participles, and past participles.

In 1624, Virginia began **to count its citizens** in a census. [*To count its citizens* is an infinitive phrase.]

**Going from door to door**, census takers interview millions of people. [*Going from door to door* is a present participial phrase.]

**Amazed by some people’s answers**, census takers always listen carefully. [*Amazed by some people’s answers* is a past participial phrase.]

A **gerund phrase** functions as a noun. Telling the difference between a gerund phrase and a present participial phrase can be tricky because both use the *-ing* verb form. The key is to determine how the phrase functions in the sentence: A gerund phrase functions only as a noun, and a participial phrase functions only as a modifier.

**Including each person in the census** was important. [*This is a gerund phrase because it functions as a noun, which is the subject of the sentence.*]

**Including each person in the census**, Abby spent many hours on the crowded city block. [*This is a present participial phrase because it functions as a modifier, namely, an adjective describing Abby.*]

**Exercise 7-8** Combine each set of sentences into a single sentence by converting one sentence into a phrase—a noun phrase, verb phrase, prepositional phrase, absolute phrase, verbal phrase, or gerund phrase. You can omit, add, or change words. Identify which type of phrase you created.
You can combine most sets in several correct ways, but make sure the meaning of your finished sentence is clear. For help, consult 7m.

EXAMPLE

Large chain stores often pose threats to local independent retailers. Smaller store owners must find innovative ways to stay in business.

With large chains posing threats to local independent retailers, smaller store owners must find innovative ways to stay in business.

(prepositional phrase)

1. Independent stores develop creative marketing strategies to compete with chain stores. Independent stores figure out ways to offer special features.
2. One independent children’s bookstore attracted new customers. It did that by bringing live animals into the store.
3. This children’s bookstore did not need to lower prices to draw customers. The store could survive by owning animals that appeal to youngsters.
4. For example, independent hardware and housewares stores can be service-oriented and customer friendly. They sometimes can thrive financially doing this.
5. Some independent stores struggle for survival. They cannot always compete with the lower prices at impersonal chain stores.

7n What is a clause?

A clause is a group of words with both a subject and a predicate. Clauses can be either independent clauses, also called main clauses, or dependent clauses, also called subordinate clauses.

An independent clause contains a subject and a predicate and can stand alone as a sentence. Box 7-4 shows the basic pattern.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOX 7-4 PATTERN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Sentence pattern IV: Independent clauses**

- **Independent Clause**
  - Complete Subject + Complete Predicate
  - The telephone rang.

A dependent clause contains a subject and a predicate but cannot stand alone as a sentence. To be part of a complete sentence, a dependent clause must be joined to an independent clause. Dependent clauses are either adverb clauses or adjective clauses.
An adverb clause, also called a subordinate clause, starts with a subordinating conjunction, such as although, because, when, or until. A subordinating conjunction expresses a relationship between a dependent clause and an independent clause; see 7h. Adverb clauses usually answer some question about the independent clause: How? Why? When? Under what circumstances?

If the bond issue passes, the city will install sewers. [The adverb clause modifies the verb install; it explains under what circumstances.]

They are drawing up plans as quickly as they can. [The adverb clause modifies the verb drawing up; it explains how.]

The homeowners feel happier because they know the flooding will soon be better controlled. [The adverb clause modifies the entire independent clause; it explains why.]

**ALERT:** When you write an adverb clause before an independent clause, separate the clauses with a comma; see section 23b.

An adjective clause, also called a relative clause, starts with a relative pronoun, such as who, which, or that. Or an adjective clause can start with a relative adverb, such as when or where. An adjective clause modifies the noun or pronoun that it follows. Box 7-5 shows how adverb and adjective clauses function in sentences. See also Box 9-4 in section 9s.

The car that Jack bought is practical. [The adjective clause describes the noun car; that is a relative pronoun referring to car.]

The day when I can buy my own car is getting closer. [The adjective clause modifies the noun day; when is a relative adverb referring to day.]

Use who, whom, whoever, whomever, and whose when an adjective clause refers to a person or to an animal with a name.

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**BOX 7-5 PATTERN**

**Sentence pattern V: Dependent clauses**

- **Dependent (Adverb) Clause** + **Independent Clause**
  - **Although** the hour was quite late, the telephone rang.
  - **First Part of** + **Dependent** + **Second Part of**
    - Independent Clause (Adjective) Clause Independent Clause
    - The red telephone, which belonged to Ms. Smythe, rang loudly.
The Smythes, who collect cars, are wealthy.
Their dog Bowser, who is large and loud, has been spoiled.

Use which or that when an adjective clause refers to a thing or to an animal that isn’t a pet. Sometimes, writers omit that from an adjective clause. For grammatical analysis, however, consider the omitted that to be implied and, therefore, present.

For help in deciding whether to use that or which, see Box 9-4 in section 9s.

**ALERT:** When an adjective clause is NONRESTRICTIVE, use which and set it off from the independent clause with commas. Don’t use commas with that in a RESTRICTIVE CLAUSE.

My car, which I bought used, needs major repairs. [The adjective clause is nonrestrictive, so it begins with which and is set off with commas.]
The car that I want to buy has a CD player. [The adjective clause uses that and is restrictive, so it is not set off with commas.]

**EXERCISE 7-9** Underline the dependent clause in each sentence, and label it an ADJ or an ADV clause. For help, consult 7n.

**ADV**

**EXAMPLE** When umbrellas were invented, people used them for sun protection.

1. Eighteenth-century ladies carried fancy umbrellas as a fashion statement while strolling down the street.
2. Although umbrellas are mostly used today in the rain, they have many other uses.
4. One company makes a “sporting umbrella” that unfolds into a seat.
5. Marketing consultants, who receive requests for moveable advertising, suggest umbrellas can be mini-billboards when they are decorated with a company’s name and logo.

**Noun clauses** function as nouns. Noun clauses can begin with many of the same words that begin adjective clauses: that, who, which, and their derivatives, as well as when, where, whether, why, and how.

**Promises** are not always dependable. [noun]

**What politicians promise** is not always dependable. [noun clause]
The electorate often cannot figure out the truth. [noun]
The electorate often cannot know that the truth is being manipulated. [noun clause]
Because they start with similar words, noun clauses and adjective clauses are sometimes confused with each other. The way to tell them apart is that the word starting an adjective clause has an antecedent, while the word starting a noun clause doesn’t.

Good politicians understand whom they must please. [Noun clause; whom does not have an antecedent.]

Good politicians who make promises know all cannot be kept. [Adjective clause modifies politicians, which is the antecedent of who.]

ESL NOTE: Noun clauses in indirect questions are phrased as statements, not questions: Kara asked why we needed the purple dye. Don’t phrase a noun clause this way: Kara asked why did [or do] we need the purple dye? If you prefer to change to a direct question, usually verb tense, pronoun, and other changes are necessary; see section 15e.

In an elliptical clause, one or more words are deliberately left out for conciseness. For an elliptical clause to be correct, the one or more words you leave out need to be identical to those already appearing in the clause.

Engineering is one of the majors [that] she considered. [that, functioning as a relative pronoun, omitted from adjective clause]

She decided [that] she would rather major in management. [that, functioning as a conjunction, omitted between clauses]

After [he takes] a refresher course, he will be eligible for a raise. [subject and verb omitted from adverb clause]

Broiled fish tastes better than boiled fish [tastes]. [second half of the comparison omitted]

EXERCISE 7-10 Use subordinate conjunctions and relative pronouns from the list below to combine each pair of sentences. You may use words more than once, but try to use as many different ones as possible. Some sentence pairs may be combined in several ways. Create at least one elliptical construction.

because which when that although

EXAMPLE Reports of flying snakes have been around for hundreds of years. Scientists have never believed them.

Even though reports of flying snakes have been around for hundreds of years, scientists have never believed them.

1. The idea that snakes can fly or even glide from treetops seems impossible. They lack wings, feathers, or any kind of flying or gliding apparatus.

2. Yet, what seems impossible is not so for the paradise tree snake. This snake possesses many adaptations to allow it to soar long distances through the air.
3. The snake changes to an S-shape. Its fall becomes much less steep. The snake then soars outward from its launch point.

4. A special characteristic permits the snake to change its shape and begin to glide. This characteristic permits the snake to flatten its body.

5. Most snakes cannot glide through the air. The paradise tree snake most certainly can.

**What are the four sentence types?**

English uses four sentence types: simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex. A **simple sentence** is composed of a single independent clause and no dependent clauses.

Charlie Chaplin was born in London on April 16, 1889.

A **compound sentence** is composed of two or more independent clauses. These clauses may be connected by a coordinating conjunction (and, but, for, or, nor, yet, so), a semicolon alone, or a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb.

His father died early, and his mother, with whom he was very close, spent time in mental hospitals. Many people enjoy Chaplin films; others do not. Many people enjoy Chaplin films; however, others do not.

A **complex sentence** is composed of one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses.

When times were bad, Chaplin lived in the streets. [dependent clause starting when; independent clause starting Chaplin]

When Chaplin was performing with a troupe that was touring the United States, he was hired by Mack Sennett, who owned the Keystone Company. [dependent clause starting when; dependent clause starting that; independent clause starting he; dependent clause starting who]

A **compound-complex sentence** integrates a compound sentence and a complex sentence. It contains two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.

Chaplin’s comedies were immediately successful, and he became rich because he was enormously popular for playing the Little Tramp, who was loved for his tiny mustache, baggy trousers, big shoes, and trick derby. [independent clause starting Chaplin’s; independent clause starting he; dependent clause starting because; dependent clause starting who]

When studios could no longer afford him, Chaplin cofounded United Artists, and then he produced and distributed his own films. [dependent clause starting when; independent clause starting Chaplin; independent clause starting then]
VERBS

ALERTS: (1) Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction connecting two independent clauses; see 23b. (2) When independent clauses are long or contain commas, use a subordinating conjunction—or use a semicolon to connect the sentences; see 24d.

EXERCISE 7-11 Decide whether each of the following sentences is simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex. For help, consult 7o.

EXAMPLE Many people would love to eat a healthy meal at a fast-food restaurant or a food concession at the movies. (simple)

1. A fried-chicken sandwich packs an enormous number of calories and fat, and a fried-fish sandwich is no better.
2. You can purchase other relatively healthy meals at a fast-food restaurant, if you first get to know the chart of nutritional values provided for customers.
3. Even though US government regulations require that nutritional charts be posted on the wall in the public areas of every fast-food restaurant, consumers often ignore the information, and they choose main meals and side dishes with the most flavor, calories, and fat.
4. A healthy meal available at many fast-food restaurants is a salad with low-fat dressing, along with bottled water.
5. In truth, many people need to stay away from fast-food restaurants and food concessions at the movies and thereby avoid the tasty temptations of high-calorie foods.

CHAPTER 8

Verbs

8a What do verbs do?

A verb expresses an action, an occurrence, or a state of being. Verbs also reveal when something occurs—in the present, the past, or the future.

Many people overeat on Thanksgiving. [action]
Mother’s Day fell early this year. [occurrence]
Memorial Day is tomorrow. [state of being]

Verbs convey other information as well; see Box 8-1. For types of Verbs, see Box 8-2.