

FOUR TRADITIONAL SENTENCE PATTERNS

1. SIMPLE SENTENCE

A simple sentence has a single **subject-verb** combination.

subject verb
a. My car stalled three times last week.

subject verb
c. The game ended early.

subject verb verb verb
b. The lake has been polluted by several neighboring streams.

subject verb
d. Children play.

A simple sentence may have more than one subject:

subject subject verb
a. Lola and Tony drove home.

subject subject verb
b. The dog and cat raced down the street.

A simple sentence may have more than one verb:

subject verb verb
a. The cat meowed and licked its paws.

subject verb verb
b. The student ran out and answered his phone.

2. COMPOUND SENTENCE

This is made up of two (or more) simple sentences. The two complete statements in a compound sentence are usually connected by a comma plus a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS). A compound sentence is used to give equal weight to two closely related ideas (called **coordination**).

The following compound sentences contain two ideas considered equal in importance.

- a. The rain increased, **so** the officials canceled the game.
- b. Martha wanted to go shopping, **but** Fred refused to go with her.
- c. Tom was watching television in the family room, **and** Marie was upstairs on the phone.
- d. Mike had to give up wood carving, **for** his arthritis had become very painful.

3. COMPLEX SENTENCE

This is made up of a simple sentence (an independent clause) and a dependent clause that begins with a dependent word (also called a subordinator).

Dependent Words:

after	if, even if	when, whenever	even though
although, though	in order that	where, wherever	until
as	since	whether	who
because	that, so that	which, whichever	how
before	unless	while	whose
what, whatever			

A complex sentence is used to emphasize one idea over another in a sentence.

dependent clause + *independent clause* = *complex sentence*
Because I forgot the time, I missed the final exam.

The emphasized idea here---I missed the final exam---is expressed in a complete thought. **The less important idea**---Because I forgot the time---is subordinated to the complete thought. The technique of giving one idea less emphasis than another is called **subordination**.

The part that begins with the dependent word is the less emphasized part of the sentence.

- While** Sue was eating breakfast, she began to feel sick.
- Bobby went to class **although** he was fifteen minutes late.
- When** George lost his temper, he also lost his job.

4. COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCE

This is made up of two (or more) simple sentences (independent clauses) and one (or more) dependent clauses.

In the examples, the dependent clause is in bold and the simple sentences are underlined.

- When the power went out,** Jack was listening to the stereo, and Linda was reading in bed.
- After George missed several days of school,** he was behind in his classes, and he had to get a tutor.
- When I go to bed at night,** I try to read a book, but I always fall asleep.
- Kate could not go to the concert** because she forgot she had a class, so she gave her tickets to Thomas.