SENTENCE TYPES
SIMPLE...COMPOUND...COMPLEX...COMPOUND-COMPLEX

***Notice the punctuation of these sentence types.***

Sentences are classified, according to form, as simple, compound, complex and compound-complex. The two main elements of a sentence are the subject and verb. A group of words with a subject and verb is called a clause. Some clauses are complete statements, and therefore independent clauses; others are dependent upon some word, or words, in another clause for their meaning.

A SIMPLE SENTENCE has only one subject and one verb. An independent clause is the same as a simple sentence.

Ex: Good students work hard.

A COMPOUND SENTENCE consists of two or more independent clauses.

Ex: Students work hard, and they succeed.
(Note that these two clauses are joined by a comma followed by a coordinating conjunction. The only coordinating conjunctions are: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so.)

A COMPLEX SENTENCE consists of one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses.

Ex: When students work hard, they succeed.
  dependent clause followed by an independent clause

Ex: Students succeed when they work hard.
  independent clause followed by a dependent clause

A COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCE consists of two independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.

Ex: If he is motivated, a student will work hard, and he will succeed.

Look at the following sentences and determine the sentence classification. (Answers on last page.)

1. When Mother turned to tell the boys her answer, they were asleep.
2. Her smile was bright, and it brought an answering smile from Andrew.
3. When I lost my passport, I ordered a new one, but I did not worry about it.
4. It beat against the windshield with a light, prickling sound.
5. The driving snow that had whirled furiously now turned into tiny flakes.
TYPES OF CONNECTIVE WORDS IN SENTENCES
The following words introduce dependent clauses. A clause beginning with one of these words, even though it contains a subject and verb, is not a complete sentence.

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Two independent clauses may be joined by using a coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) and a comma. Be sure there is a subject and a verb on each side of the connective word.

Ex:  
We worked late, and the bus came early.

independent clause independent clause

Ex:  
Mr. Smith likes films, but Mrs. Smith prefers the theater.

independent clause independent clause

BUT:  
We worked late and missed the bus.

independent clause dependent clause

(Only one subject - "we" - so no comma.)

Some words often join main clauses but require a semi-colon because they are not coordinating conjunctions. The words below are adverbs, not conjunctions.

- consequently
- however
- indeed
- on the other hand
- then
- for example
- in addition
- moreover
- otherwise
- therefore
- furthermore
- in fact
- nevertheless
- still
- thus

Ex:  
We worked late; therefore, we missed the bus.

Mr. Smith likes films; however, his wife prefers the theater.

BUT:  
Mr. Smith likes films. His wife, however, prefers the theater.
(Only one subject and verb in the sentence with "however," so no semicolon is used.)

Answers to exercise:

1. Complex
2. Compound
3. Compound-Complex
4. Simple
5. Complex (restrictive clause, no comma needed)