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. Complete statements are independent clauses; incomplete statements are dependent clauses.

NOTE: Notice the punctuation of these sentence types.

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

Good students work hard.

A COMPOUND SENTENCE consists of two or more independent clauses joined by a connecting word.

Students work hard, and they succeed.

NOTE: A comma followed by a coordinating conjunction joins the two clauses in the sentence above. 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.

When students work hard, they succeed.
(depending clause followed by an independent clause)

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.

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

Practice Exercises: Look at the following sentences and determine the sentence classification. (Answers on back.)

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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<th>Types of Connective Words</th>
<th>Dependent Clauses</th>
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Two independent clauses may be joined by a coordinating conjunction and a comma. Be sure there is a subject and a verb on each side of the connective word.

- **We worked late, and the bus came early.**
- **Mr. Smith likes films, but Mrs. Smith prefers the theater.**
- **We worked late and missed the bus.***

**NOTE:** There is only one subject – "we" – so no comma is used.

Some words often join main clauses but require a semicolon 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

**We worked late; therefore, we missed the bus.**

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

**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 exercises:**

1. complex      2. compound       3. compound-complex
4. simple       5. complex (restrictive clause, no comma needed)