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Dependent clause independent clause examples

When it comes to sentence structure and grammar, independent clauses play a significant role. It is a crucial component that forms complete and meaningful sentences. In this blog post, we will delve into the concept of the independent clause, provide 30 example sentences to illustrate its usage, and conclude with a quiz and solutions to test your understanding. An independent clause, also known as a main clause, is a grammatical unit that expresses a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence. It contains a subject and a predicate, which consists of a verb and provides information about the subject. Unlike dependent clauses, independent clauses are not reliant on other clauses to convey a complete idea. She is an excellent dancer. I love to read books. The sun shines brightly in the sky. We enjoyed our vacation in Hawaii. He plays the guitar beautifully. They won the championship last year. She baked a delicious cake for the party. My dog loves to chase squirrels. We visited the museum on Sunday. He works as a software engineer. I wrote a heartfelt letter to my best friend. The baby giggled with delight. We celebrated our anniversary at a fancy restaurant. The teacher explained the concept clearly. She runs five miles every morning. They are planning a surprise party for her. He paints beautiful landscapes. The company achieved record sales this year. We watched an exciting movie at the cinema. She sings beautifully in the choir. I cooked a delicious meal for my family. The cat napped lazily in the sun. They climbed to the top of the mountain. My parents are coming to visit next week. He completed the marathon in under three hours. The students studied diligently for the exam. She volunteers at a local charity organization. The car broke down on the highway. We planted flowers in the garden. He enjoys playing chess in his free time. Now that you have familiarized yourself with independent clauses, let's put your knowledge to the test. Identify the independent clauses in the following sentences: They arrived at the airport early. I bought a new laptop for work. She won the singing competition. We went to the beach for a picnic. (Independent Clause: We went to the beach for a picnic.) He fixed the broken window. (Independent Clause: He fixed the broken window.) Examples of Independent Clause 1. What is an independent clause with examples? An independent clause is a group of words that has a subject and a predicate (verb) and can stand alone as a complete sentence. It expresses a complete thought. Examples: 1. She went to the store. 2. The dog barked loudly. 3. I enjoy reading books. 4. He played soccer all afternoon. 5. They are going on vacation next week. Each of these sentences is an independent clause because it can stand alone as a complete thought. Let's get straight to the point. There are two heroes in the world of English grammar that not everyone talks about, but they're everywhere you look. We're talking about independent and dependent clauses. These little guys are the building blocks of sentences, giving them structure and meaning. Understanding how these clauses work might sound like just another day in grammar class. But here's the thing: mastering them can transform your writing from good to great. And who doesn't want that? Now, before we jump into what makes a clause independent or dependent, let me promise you this – by the end of this article, you'll see sentences in a whole new light. An independent clause is a group of words that can stand alone as a sentence. It has both a subject and a verb, and it expresses a complete thought. For example, "The cat slept on the mat." On the other hand, a dependent clause, also known as a subordinate clause, cannot stand alone as a sentence because it does not express a complete thought. It also has a subject and verb but needs an independent clause to make sense. For instance, "Because the cat was tired" is a dependent clause that needs more information to be complete. To combine these clauses correctly, use conjunctions like 'and,' 'but,' or 'because' for smooth transitions. Remember, an independent clause can stand alone while a dependent one cannot. Recognizing the difference helps in writing clear and concise sentences. Understanding Clauses in English Grammar In English grammar, understanding clauses is crucial to form coherent and meaningful sentences. A clause, in its most basic definition, is a group of words that contains at least one subject and one verb. Clauses can be either complete or incomplete based on their structure and punctuation, significantly affecting the overall readability and flow of your writing. When it comes to constructing sentences, independent clauses play a vital role by forming simple sentences. These clauses, also known as main clauses, consist of a subject and verb that expresses a complete thought. On the other hand, we have dependent clauses, which also contain a subject and verb, but cannot function as a standalone sentence due to their incomplete nature. These clauses must be connected to independent clauses to form clear and meaningful statements. The incomplete nature of dependent clauses is often indicated by subordinating conjunctions or relative pronouns. These linguistic tools help in establishing a relationship between the dependent and independent clauses, providing additional information or context to the primary sentence. Example: Although the weather was terrible, we still enjoyed our picnic by the lake. In this example, "Although the weather was terrible" is a dependent clause, while "we still enjoyed our picnic by the lake" is an independent clause. The subordinating conjunction "although" helps in connecting these two clauses, forming a complex sentence that conveys a complete thought. Besides understanding the difference between independent and dependent clauses, it is also essential to recognize and rectify sentence fragments in your writing. Sentence fragments are groups of words that might look like a sentence but lack essential components like a subject or verb, or both. These fragmented sentences can confuse readers and negatively impact the clarity of your text. Sentence fragment: Running out of time. Complete sentence: She was running out of time. Related: Is Summer Capitalized? What about Summer Break? Finally, mastering the use of punctuation is essential in constructing clear and easily understandable sentences. Punctuations like commas, periods, semicolons, and others are used to separate clauses, indicating pauses or connections between various parts of a sentence. Proper punctuation can greatly enhance the readability of your writing, contributing to more effective communication. The Anatomy of an Independent Clause An independent clause, sometimes referred to as a main clause or a simple sentence, serves as the foundation for creating effective sentences by conveying a complete thought. Understanding the structure of an independent clause and mastering its components will improve your writing skills and help you in constructing impactful, polished sentences. Characteristics of a Complete Thought At its core, a complete thought consists of a subject and a verb, where the subject is actively performing the verb action. This pairing forms a complete sentence that provides the reader with clear, concise meaning. Ensuring subject-verb agreement is a pivotal aspect of grammar basics, as the relationship between the subject and verb is crucial for forming complete sentences. For instance, the sentence "Anna reads a book" is a simple sentence containing an independent clause, which clearly conveys a complete thought. Crafting Simple Sentences with Independent Clauses Utilizing independent clause structure to construct simple sentences enables writers to create clear and concise messages that can stand on their own, without the need for additional clauses. Simple sentence examples, such as "The sun rises in the east" or "The rain falls gently", demonstrate the effectiveness of employing an independent clause to communicate a complete idea. Identify the subject of the sentence Determine the verb that the subject will perform Ensure proper subject-verb agreement By following these steps, you can create impactful sentences that accurately convey your intended meaning. Expanding your Writing with Compound Sentences While simple sentences are effective in their own right, combining two or more independent clauses allows writers to create more complex structures and enhance the flow of their work. Employing coordinating conjunctions, such as FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so), and applying proper punctuation rules are key to crafting compound sentences that accurately convey multiple ideas simultaneously. Coordinating Conjunction Example For James wanted to go swimming, for it was hot outside. And Rebecca likes to paint, and Susan enjoys writing poetry. Nor He neither wanted to run, nor did he feel like walking. But She wanted to go shopping, but she had to save money. Or You can either eat at home, or we can try the new restaurant. Yet Ellen was tired, yet she continued studying for her exam. So It began to rain, so they decided to stay indoors. Mastering the coordination of independent clauses using appropriate conjunctions and punctuation will allow you to create rich, varied sentences that engage readers and elevate the overall quality of your writing. The Role of Dependent Clauses in Complex Sentences Mastering the art of writing complex sentences requires an understanding of dependent and independent clauses. As you know, dependent clauses cannot stand alone as complete sentences, unlike their independent counterparts. Instead, they rely on a supporting independent clause to convey a complete thought. By incorporating dependent clauses in your writing, you can add depth, context, and nuance to your sentences, leading to more compelling and engaging content. Related: What is the Subjunctive Mood? (with Examples) Subordinating conjunctions are the key elements connecting dependent clauses to independent ones. These words and phrases introduce conditions or contextual information to the independent clauses, helping you create complex sentence structures with ease. Some common subordinating conjunctions include "although," "since," "unless," "while," and "if." To better understand the relationship between dependent and independent clauses in complex sentence structure, let's take a look at the following example: Even though she was exhausted, Jane finished her work on time. In this example, the dependent clause "Even though she was exhausted" provides context for the independent clause "Jane finished her work on time." The subordinating conjunction "even though" connects the two clauses, creating a complex sentence that conveys a more complete and nuanced message in comparison to simple sentences that only include independent clauses. Incorporating dependent clauses into your writing can significantly enhance your sentence variety and complexity. By using different subordinating conjunctions and combining multiple dependent and independent clauses, your writing can captivate readers and effectively convey your intended messages. Practice identifying dependent and independent clauses: As you engage with various text sources, try to identify the dependent clauses used in sentences. This will help you familiarize yourself with clause structures, leading to improved writing skills. Experiment with subordinating conjunctions: Make an effort to include various subordinating conjunctions in your writing. This will help you create complex sentence structures and elevate your writing style. Be mindful of sentence length: Although complex sentences can be powerful writing tools, be cautious of using overly long sentences that may be difficult to comprehend. Aim for a mix of sentence lengths to ensure your writing remains balanced and readable. By harnessing your understanding of dependent and independent clauses and subordinating conjunctions, you can create rich, engaging content that holds the attention of your readers. Always remember – practice makes perfect! Signal Words: Unveiling Subordinate and Relative Pronouns Comprehending the complexities of subordination and clause modification can vastly improve your writing skills and sentence construction mastery. In this section, we'll explore the transformative abilities of dependent clause signals like subordinate conjunctions and relative pronouns in refining sentence structures. Identifying Subordination in Your Writing Subordination involves the use of dependent clauses that cannot stand alone as complete sentences. These clauses are typically introduced by subordinate conjunctions (e.g., although, because, if) or relative pronouns (e.g., who, which, that). These linguistic devices connect the dependent clause to an independent clause, altering the status of the former from a standalone sentence to one that provides supplementary information to the main clause. Example: I enjoyed the movie because it had an engaging plot and great character development. In the example above, the word because is a subordinate conjunction that introduces a dependent clause, which adds context and reasoning to the independent clause "I enjoyed the movie." The Impact of Relative Pronouns in Clause Modification Relative pronouns, such as that, which, and who, play a crucial role in creating adjectival clauses—dependent clauses that modify nouns. By introducing additional descriptive elements to the sentences, relative pronouns enable the formation of either restrictive or nonrestrictive clauses, allowing writers to fine-tune their sentence meanings. Restrictive clauses are essential to the meaning of a sentence and are not set off by commas. They specify or restrict the noun they are modifying. Nonrestrictive clauses provide supplementary information that could be omitted without changing the overall meaning of the sentence. These clauses are set off by commas, as they are not essential to the core meaning of the sentence. Example: Dogs that have been trained by professionals are easier to manage. Example: My friend's dog, which was adopted from a shelter, is very gentle and well-behaved. In the examples above, the first sentence contains a restrictive clause, as the information about the training of the dogs is essential to understanding the point being made. The second sentence contains a nonrestrictive clause, which provides additional information about the dog's origins that, while interesting, is not critical to the message being conveyed. Mastering the use of subordinate conjunctions and relative pronouns facilitates a deeper understanding of adjectival clauses, allowing you to construct refined sentences and create more dynamic and interesting written content. Punctuating Clauses Correctly: Avoiding Common Mistakes Proper punctuation is essential when working with clauses, as it ensures that your writing is clear and easy to understand. Correct punctuation involves the use of commas, semicolons, and conjunctions to combine independent clauses or to attach dependent clauses to independent ones. By being aware of common mistakes such as run-on sentences, comma splices, and sentence fragments, you can enhance the overall quality and effectiveness of your writing. Run-on sentences occur when two independent clauses are joined without any punctuation or conjunctions, leading to confusion and lack of clarity in your writing. To fix a run-on sentence, you can use a comma and a coordinating conjunction, a semicolon, or divide the clauses into separate sentences. This approach helps to improve the flow of your text while preserving its intended meaning. Comma splices happen when two independent clauses are mistakenly joined by a comma alone, resulting in an incorrect sentence structure. To correct a comma splice, you can choose to use a semicolon, a period, or add an appropriate coordinating conjunction alongside the comma to create a compound sentence. This will provide a suitable connection between the clauses and contribute to a more coherent writing style. Sentence fragments, on the other hand, are incomplete sentences that usually lack either a subject, a verb, or both. These fragments can be confusing for the reader and negatively impact the flow of your writing. To avoid sentence fragments, ensure that each clause can stand on its own as an independent clause or is correctly joined to an independent clause if it is a dependent clause. This will enhance the clarity and cohesion of your writing, making it more engaging for your audience. Independent and dependent clauses are the two main types of clause in English, and every clause is either one or the other. The difference is an independent clause can work alone as a complete sentence, but a dependent clause (also known as a subordinate clause) needs to join with an independent clause to form a complete sentence. That's the basic difference between independent and dependent clauses, but the details can get a little more involved. Below, we explain the grammar rules for how to use both types of clause and give plenty of independent and dependent clause examples. Grammarly helps you communicate confidently What are dependent and independent clauses? Independent and dependent clauses are the two main categories of clause. A clause is a group of words that contains at least one subject and at least one verb, but clauses can be either complete or incomplete sentences, depending on their wording and punctuation. If the clause alone is a complete sentence, it is an independent clause. If the clause alone is not a complete sentence, it is a dependent clause. What are independent clauses? Because an independent clause contains both a subject and a verb, a single independent clause is a simple sentence, the most basic type of sentence. However, you can also combine two or more independent clauses to create a compound sentence. My partner wants to run a marathon together, but I prefer to watch them. What are dependent clauses? Dependent clauses are a little more complicated. Also known as subordinate clauses, dependent clauses alone are not complete sentences, even though they have both a subject and verb. Dependent clauses need to join with an independent clause to be correct, hence the name dependent. Dependent clauses are usually easy to recognize because they include a subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun. Subordinating conjunctions and relative pronouns are words like because, if, or whenever that signal a relationship between the dependent clause and the independent clause it joins. You can find a complete list here of all the subordinating conjunctions, which include relative pronouns. Be careful, though, because not all dependent clauses use subordinating conjunctions. Dependent clauses are more common than you might realize. For starters, they include clauses that show a complete action with a cause-and-effect relationship to another action. Kunal likes to stay up late because no one bothers him at night. They also include all adverbial clauses, which modify verbs and adjectives. Adverbial clauses can add more details about how an action took place, such as when, where, or why. Let's host our anniversary party where we first met. Moreover, dependent clauses include all adjectival clauses, which modify nouns. That means restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses are both dependent clauses. The pen that I had been looking for was in my pocket the whole time. Keep in mind that, with restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses, the relative pronouns that and which can also act as the subject of the clause. Independent and dependent clause examples Independent: Next Tuesday will be my first day at my new job. Dependent: If the interview goes well, next Tuesday will be my first day at my new job. Independent: You have to finish your vegetables, and then you can eat dessert. Dependent: You have to finish your vegetables before you can eat dessert. Independent: My car broke down less than a mile from my home. It didn't pass inspection. Dependent: My car, which didn't pass inspection, broke down less than a mile from my home. How to connect independent and dependent clauses Connecting independent and dependent clauses is easy—after all, dependent clauses are designed to be connected. All you need is either a subordinating conjunction (e.g., if, because, before/after, although, once) or a relative pronoun (e.g., where, when, wherever, whenever). You can also turn an independent clause into a dependent clause just by adding a subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun. Because dependent clauses already have these most of the time, you simply put the two clauses together with the appropriate punctuation. Using punctuation when connecting independent and dependent clauses is also simple. If the dependent clause comes first, use a comma between the two clauses. Wherever you go, I will follow. If the independent clause comes first, no comma is necessary. I will follow wherever you go. How to connect two or more independent clauses You can also connect two independent clauses together, or even more. I am vegan, and my partner is pescatarian, but we live above a BBQ restaurant. Basically, there are two ways to connect independent clauses: Add a coordinating conjunction or use a colon or semicolon. Coordinating conjunction Coordinating conjunctions are the main type of conjunction and the most common ones. You may recognize the seven coordinating conjunctions as the FANBOYS: For And Nor But Or Yet So (Be aware that so can act as either a coordinating conjunction or a subordinating conjunction.) You can use coordinating conjunctions to connect independent clauses. Just place a comma after the first independent clause and add the appropriate coordinating conjunction before the second independent clause. It was a calculated risk. I'm bad at math. It was a calculated risk, but I'm bad at math. Colon or semicolon The colon (:) and semicolon (;) are both punctuation marks that can connect independent clauses. The colon is used to introduce something described in the first part of the sentence. Usually a colon introduces a list of nouns, but it can also introduce a new independent clause. Think of the colon as punctuation that means as follows, which is/are, or thus. When you're using a colon to connect independent clauses, no other words or punctuation are necessary. In American English, we capitalize the first letter of an independent clause if it comes after a colon. (However, not all style guides agree with this rule. The Chicago Manual of Style recommends lowering the first letter after a colon, unless it's the first in a series of sentences that comes after the colon.) We have the perfect replacement right here: Our new goalie will be Andre. Likewise, you can also connect independent clauses with a semicolon. However, if you are using a semicolon, the two clauses must already be closely related—so closely related that the reader can easily understand why they're connected by a semicolon. Ingrid hated the summer heat, she grew up near the Arctic. Just like with the colon, no extra words or punctuation are needed with the semicolon if the two clauses are obviously related. However, if the relationship between the two clauses is not obvious, you may need to use a conjunctive adverb, a type of transitional expression. Conjunctive adverbs are words like however, although, or consequently, as well as phrases like in the meantime, on the other hand, or as a result. They are very common in writing as a way to improve the flow of reading, but they're not used as much in speech. The purpose of conjunctive adverbs is to smooth the transition from one clause to another so the pairing does not seem abrupt. This is especially useful if the two clauses are contradictory or if the second clause goes in an unexpected direction. We spent the whole plane ride planning our activities; however, after landing the first thing we did was nap. To connect two independent clauses, place the conjunctive adverb after the semicolon and add a comma after it, before the second clause. ; however. You can also use conjunctive adverbs with a single independent clause or stand-alone sentence as a way to transition from one sentence or paragraph to another. Common mistakes with independent and dependent clauses 1 Sentence fragments Without an independent clause, a dependent clause is a sentence fragment, or a piece of a sentence that's missing the necessary parts to make it complete. Because the traffic was bad. You can always reword the dependent clause to turn it into an independent clause (such as by removing the subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun). However, it's easiest to simply connect it to an independent clause. Because the traffic was bad. I was late to my meeting. 2 Run-on sentences A run-on sentence, also known as a fused sentence, is when two or more independent clauses are joined without a proper connection. There is no alien life on the moon we would have seen it by now. To correct a run-on sentence, you can connect the clauses using one of the methods explained above: coordinating conjunctions, a colon, or a semicolon. There is no alien life on the moon, or we would have seen it by now. There is no alien life on the moon; we would have seen it by now. Alternatively, you can simply split up the run-on sentence and turn it into multiple sentences. There is no alien life on the moon. We would have seen it by now. 3 Comma splices A comma splice is when clauses are joined by only a comma and nothing else. It will be winter soon, we should go for a walk while the weather is nice. In this case, you can simply convert the comma into a semicolon. It will be winter soon; we should go for a walk while the weather is nice. Depending on the context, you can sometimes add a coordinating conjunction to connect two independent clauses or add a subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun to turn one clause into a dependent clause. It will be winter soon, so we should go for a walk while the weather is nice. Because it will be winter soon, we should go for a walk while the weather is nice. You can also turn the comma into a period to create two separate sentences. It will be winter soon. We should go for a walk while the weather is nice. If you're ever unsure about whether you're using a comma correctly, paste the sentence into our free online grammar checker. It will tell you how to fix the sentence if there's an error. Independent and dependent clauses FAQs What is an independent clause? An independent clause is a clause that can stand alone as a sentence. An independent clause alone makes up a simple sentence. What is a dependent clause? A dependent clause is a clause that cannot stand alone as a sentence. A dependent clause needs to join an independent clause to form a complete sentence. You can usually identify dependent clauses because they begin with a subordinating conjunction like because or if or with a relative pronoun like when or whenever. How do I connect independent and dependent clauses? As long as there's already a subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun, you can place independent and dependent clauses right next to each other in a sentence. If the dependent clause comes first, add a comma between the two clauses. If the independent clause comes first, no comma is necessary.