

# Sentence Structure

Sentence structure is how all the parts of a sentence fit together. If you want to make more advanced and interesting sentences, you first have to understand how sentence structure works.

## Basic parts of a sentence

Every sentence requires at least a **verb** and a **subject**; a verb is an action, and a subject is the noun that does the action.

*I am waiting.*

In this example, **am waiting** is the verb. The main verb is **wait**, but when we conjugate it in the present continuous, we use the **-ing form** and add the auxiliary verb **am**. The subject is **I**, the person who waits.

Some sentences can add **objects**, which are nouns that also participate in the action. Let us say you forgot your calculator and you ask your friend to borrow theirs.

*My friends lends me their calculator.*

In this example, **lends** is the verb and **my friends** is the subject because they are the one lending. The word **calculator** is what is called a **direct object**, the noun that receives the action. In this case, the direct object is the thing being lent—a calculator.

The **indirect object** is the noun that receives the direct object. In the example above, the indirect object is **me**, because that is who receives the calculator. Indirect objects come between the verb and direct object.

Let us look at another example.

*Gavi passes Pedri the ball.*

Can you identify the verb, subject, direct object, and indirect object?

- The **verb** is *passes* because that is the action in the sentence.
- The **subject** is *Gavi* because Gavi is the person who passes.
- The **direct object** is *the ball* because the ball is the thing being passed.
- The **indirect object** is *Pedri* because Pedri receives the ball.

# Sentence structure grammar rules

Aside from knowing the parts of a sentence, you also have to follow the grammar rules. In case you forget, here is a quick list:

- Capitalize the first letter of the first word in a sentence.
- End a sentence with a period, question mark, exclamation point, or quotation marks.
- Most of the time, the subject of the sentence comes first, the verb comes second, and the objects come last. (Subject -> Verb -> Object)
- If the subject is singular, the verb must also be singular. If the subject is plural, the verb must be plural. This is known as subject-verb agreement.

## Types of clauses

In English grammar, a **clause** is a group of words that contains both a subject and a predicate (verb). A clause can function as a sentence by itself or be a part of a larger sentence. There are two types of clauses: independent and dependent.

**Independent Clauses:** An independent clause is a group of words that expresses a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence. It contains a subject and a verb and expresses a complete idea.

**Example:** I went to the store.

This sentence has an independent clause, "I went to the store," which expresses a complete thought.

**Dependent Clauses:** A dependent clause, also called a **subordinate clause**, is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb but does not express a complete thought. It cannot stand alone as a sentence and depends on an independent clause to complete its meaning.

**Example:** When I went to the store,

This clause is dependent because it does not express a complete thought. It needs to be followed by an independent clause to complete the sentence, such as "I bought some groceries." So the complete sentence becomes "When I went to the store, I bought some groceries."

**Punctuation:** When a dependent clause comes before an independent clause, it is followed by a comma. When an independent clause comes before a dependent clause, no comma is needed.

**Example:**

When I finish my homework, I will watch TV. (Dependent clause first)

I will watch TV when I finish my homework. (Independent clause first)

**Conclusion:** Clauses are an essential part of English grammar and are used to create meaningful and coherent sentences. Understanding the difference between independent and dependent clauses and their functions can help learners of English to construct more complex sentences and improve their communication skills.

## 4 types of sentence structure

Depending on how you combine clauses, you can create four different types of sentence structure:

- **Simple:** 1 independent clause
- **Compound:** 2 or more independent clauses
- **Complex:** 1 independent clause + 1 or more subordinate clauses
- **Compound-Complex:** 2 or more independent clauses + 1 or more subordinate clauses