

Compound and Complex Sentences

Compound and complex sentences are sentence structures which require at least one independent clause and use different forms of conjunction.

Independent Clause Vs. Dependent Clause

An independent clause is a complete sentence/thought that makes sense by itself. A dependent clause, on the other hand, is not a complete sentence/thought and doesn't make sense by itself.

Examples:

Independent Clause:

- Kyle enjoys reading every Friday.
- Samantha loves coffee and toast.

Dependent Clause:

- Because it's snowing.
- As she kicks.

Conjunctions

These are words that connect sentences, phrases, and/or clauses. They are either coordinating conjunctions or subordinating conjunctions.

Examples:

- Coordinating Conjunctions (FANBOYS): For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So
- Subordinating Conjunctions: After, Although, Until, How, Since, When, What, If, Just as, etc.

Compound Sentences

A sentence that contains two independent clauses that are connected by coordinating conjunctions. Any of the FANBOYS words will most likely be used when forming a compound sentence.

Examples:

- I kicked the ball inside the net, so we won the game. (Both sentences before and after "so" are complete ideas and can stand alone. "So" connects both complete thoughts.)
- She threw the bottle outside, and it shattered on the floor. (Both sentences before and after "and" are complete ideas and can stand alone. "And" connects both complete thoughts.)

Punctuation

When you have two independent clauses between a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS), then you must add a comma before said conjunction. On the other hand, if a FANBOY does not connect two independent clauses, then a comma would not be needed.

Examples:

When a comma is needed:

- She finished studying, and then she went to a restaurant.
- He went out for a run, but he hasn't returned yet.

When a comma is not needed:

- I like reading books and sleeping in.
- He was tired but awake.

Complex Sentences

A sentence that contains one independent clause and one dependent clause are connected by subordinating conjunctions. If an independent clause is first, then you won't need a comma when connecting the dependent clause. If a dependent clause is first, then you do need a comma.

Examples:

- I love reading inside the house when it's snowing. (The first part of this sentence is an independent clause, so a comma is not needed.)
- Because I was tired, I collapsed on my bed. (The first part of this sentence is a dependent clause, so a comma is needed.)