

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the left and right sides of the frame, creating a modern, layered effect. The central area is a plain white space where the text is placed.

Sentence structure

and common mistakes made

A well-written sentence, as a minimum, must fulfil the following two criteria:

1. The **language** must be correct - grammatically correct
2. The sentence must have clear **meaning** - semantically correct

You should constantly check for both when you are proofreading and editing your own work.

A sentence must

Start with a **capital letter**

He completed his degree

End with a **full stop** or other **punctuation**

He completed his degree**.**

Contain a **subject**

He completed his degree.

Contain a **verb or verb phrase**

He **completed** his degree.

Follow a **Subject + Verb+ Object** word order

He **(subject)** completed **(verb)** his degree **(object)**.

Have an idea that stands alone
(**an independent clause**)

He completed his degree.

Types of sentence structure

A simple sentence - one independent clause in a subject-verb pattern:

e.g. The Australian government introduced an official carbon tax on 1 July 2012.

A compound sentence is two independent clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction:

e.g. The Australian government introduced an official carbon tax on 1 July 2012, but this was met with opposition from the general public.

A complex sentence consists of an independent clause and a dependent clause:

e.g. As the Australian government recognized the necessity to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it introduced an official carbon tax on 1 July 2012.

A compound-complex sentence consists of more than one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses:

e.g. As the Australian government recognized the necessity to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it introduced an official carbon tax on 1 July 2012, but this was met with opposition from the general public.

A Simple Sentence

A simple sentence contains **a subject** and **a verb**, and it may also have **an object** and modifiers.

However, it contains **only one independent clause**.

- **She** **wrote**.
- **She** **completed** *her literature review*.
- **He** **organized** *his sources* by theme. (prepositional phrase)
- **They** **studied** *IEEE rules* for many hours.

A Compound Sentence

A compound sentence contains at least **two independent clauses**.

These two independent clauses can be combined with a comma and a coordinating conjunction or with a semicolon.

- **She completed her literature review, and she created her reference list.**
- **He organized his sources by theme, then, he updated his reference list.**
- **They studied IEEE rules for many hours, but they realized there was still much to learn.**

A complex sentence

A complex sentence contains at least **one** independent clause and at least **one** dependent clause.

Dependent clauses can refer to the subject (*who, which*) the sequence/time (*since, while*), or the causal elements (*because, if*) of the independent clause.

If a sentence begins with a dependent clause, note the comma after this clause. If, on the other hand, the sentence begins with an independent clause, there is not a comma separating the two clauses.

• **Although she completed her literature review, she still needed to work on her methods section.**

- Note the comma in this sentence because it begins with a dependent clause.

• **Because he organized his sources by theme, it was easier for his readers to follow.**

- Note the comma in this sentence because it begins with a dependent clause.

• **They studied IEEE rules for many hours as they were so interesting.**

- **Note that there is no comma in this sentence because it begins with an independent clause.

Compound-complex sentences

Sentence types can also be combined. A **compound-complex sentence** contains at least **two independent clauses** and at **least one dependent clause**.

She completed her literature review, **but** **she still needs to work on her methods section** **even though she finished her methods course last semester.**

While eating a pizza, **they studied IEEE rules for many hours,** **and** **they decided that referencing in IEEE made sense** **because it was clear, concise and easy to follow.**

Pay close attention to comma usage in complex-compound sentences so that the reader is easily able to follow the intended meaning.

Key: **independent clause,** **comma or semicolon,** **coordinating conjunction** **dependent clause**

You should attempt to use a combination of the above sentence structures in your writing.

The secret to good writing is variation.

Make sure then that you are using a mix of these types of sentences within your paragraphs in your written work.

Common errors

- ▶ sentence fragments
 - * missing subject
 - * missing verb
 - * incomplete thought
- ▶ Incorrect tense used
- ▶ run-on sentences
- ▶ lack of meaning
- ▶ Appropriate sentence length

Source : <https://www.learning-english-online.net/grammar/parts-of-speech-and-sentence-structure/articles/>. [Accessed 3rd March 2020].

Source: <https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/writingcenter/grammar/sentencestructure>
(Accessed 3rd March 2020)