

GRAMMAR

Clauses

A clause is a group of words which have their own subject, predicate, finite verb and may or may not be independently meaningful. Further, clauses are of two types- principal or independent clause and subordinate or dependent clause.

Classification of Clauses

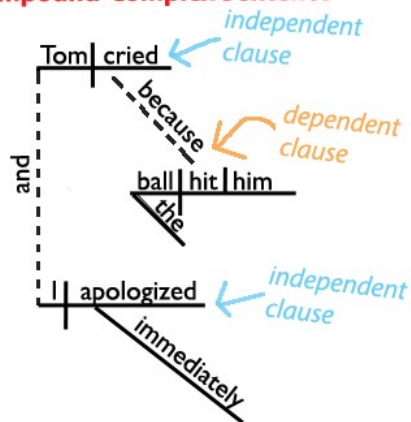
Independent or Principal Clause

Interestingly, an independent clause is a group of words that consists of subject, predicate, finite verb and can make complete sense by themselves. So how does it differ from a sentence? Exactly, it doesn't. An independent clause is as good as a sentence. Note that, independent clauses cannot be used as nouns, adverbs or adjectives simply because they are complete sentences by themselves. Let's explore some examples.

- **It is dark.**
- **You should go.**
- **He is intelligent** but he is selfish.
- **I want to come** but I have some work to do.

The group of words in bold make complete sense independently and hence are examples of independent clauses.

Compound-Complex Sentence



Dependent or Subordinate Clause

As the name suggests, dependent clauses need an independent clause to complete its meaning. Again, a dependent clause also consists of a subject, predicate and a finite verb but it is not meaningful all by itself. A key point to remember is that dependent clauses, just like phrases, can be used as a noun, adverb or adjective. Let's discuss these individually.

Noun Clause

A dependent clause that functions like a noun in the sentence and generally acts as the subject or verb of the object is known as a noun clause. For example:

- I think **that you will like it**. Here the noun clause- that you will like it, acts as an object of the verb think.
- **Where she went** is not known to anyone. Here the noun clause- where she went, acts as a subject of the verb- is not known.

Adjective Clause

An adjective clause is a dependent clause that acts as an adjective and hence qualifies a noun or pronoun in a sentence. For example:

- I used the notebook **that had a red coloured cover**. Here the adjective clause- that had a red coloured cover tells about the noun i.e. the notebook.
- The hat **which was made of jute** was my favourite. Here the adjective clause- which was made of jute, speaks about the noun i.e. the hat.

Adverb Clause

An adverb clause is a dependent clause that does the job of an adverb i.e. modifies a verb, an adjective or another adverb in a sentence. Of course, adverbial clauses can be further classified according to the various kinds of adverbs. For example:

- Wait here **till I come back**. Here – till I come back, is an adverbial clause of time.
- I shall be late **as I have a meeting**. Here – as I have a meeting, is an adverbial clause of reason.

Note: Keep in mind as a rule of thumb that a lot of times dependent clauses start with a conjunction. This is not always true but can be of great help for identification of dependent clauses in a sentence.

A Solved Example for You

Q: Identify the adverb clauses and state their functions.

1. Wait here till I come back.
2. Put the key where you can find it easily.
3. I am happy that you have liked it.
4. We shall stay with you if it rains.

Ans:

1. Till I come back – is the adverbial clause of time.
2. Where you can find it easily – is the adverbial clause of place.
3. That you have liked it – is the adverbial clause of reason.
4. If it rains – is the adverbial clause of a condition.

