**Clauses**

**A clause is a group of words containing a subject and verb.**

An **independent (main) clause** is a simple sentence. It can stand on its own.

# Examples:

She is hungry.

I am feeling well today.

A **dependent (subordinate) clause** cannot stand on its own. It needs an independent clause to complete a sentence. Dependent clauses often begin with such words as although, since, if, when, and because.

# Examples:

Although she is hungry … Whoever is hungry …

Because I am feeling well …

# Types of Dependent clauses

**Adjective Clauses**  
  
 An adjective clause is also known as a relative clause. It contains a subject and a verb but it does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone as a complete sentence. This clause provides a description and functions as an adjective. Adjective clauses are placed after the noun it is modifying. Adjective clauses start with a pronoun.

* The kids **who live in this neighborhood** take the bus to school. (Modifies kids)
* Sean **who is my best friend** lives in that house. (Modifies Sean)
* The dog **that ate my garden vegetables** lives next door. (Modifies dog)
* Maria **whose father is a Spanish professor** is my Spanish tutor. (Modifies Maria)
* The bike **that I won at the raffle** got a flat tire. (Modifies bike)

**Adverb Clauses**  
  
 An adverb clause provides a description and functions as an adverb. It contains a subject and a verb but it does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone as a complete sentence. Adverb clauses answer questions of how, when, where, and why. Adverb clauses start with a subordinating conjunction.

* Call me **when you get home**. (Answers when)
* This is the store **where the robbery took place**. (Answers where)
* Bring extra clothes **since we might get wet at the beach**. (Answers why)
* You can have another cookie **if you tell me your secret**. (Answers how)

**Cause**

* Hamlet wanted to kill his uncle *because the uncle had murdered his father*.
* The adverb clause answers the question *why?*

**Effect**

* Hamlet wanted to kill his uncle *so that his father’s murder would be avenged*.
* The adverb clause answers the question *with what goal/result?*

**Time**

* *After Hamlet’s uncle Claudius married his mother*, Hamlet wanted to kill him.
* The adverb clause answers the question *when?* Note the change in word order—an adverb clause can often appear either before or after the main clause of the sentence.

**Place**

* *Where the whole Danish court was assembled*, Hamlet ordered a play in an attempt to prove his uncle’s guilt.
* The adverb clause answers the question *where?*

**Condition**

* *If she arrives on time*, she will see the play.
* The adverb clause answers the question *under what conditions?*

**Noun Clauses**  
  
 A noun clause plays the role of a noun. It contains a subject and a verb but it does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone as a complete sentence. Noun clauses start with a pronoun or subordinating conjunction.

* **Noun**
* I know *Latin*.
* **Noun clause**
* I know *that Latin is no longer spoken as a native language*.
* In the first example, the noun *Latin* acts as the [**direct object**](https://www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/tpv2guides/guides/hyper/index-fra.html?lang=fra&page=objcompl.html#directobject) of the verb *know*. In the second example, the entire clause *that Latin . . .* is the direct object
* That store is **where I bought your favorite shoes**.
* You get to choose **which restaurant we go to tonight**.
* The reason we were late is **because my car ran out of gas**.
* Jane is the only one **who knows my secret**.
* My dog will sleep **wherever he wants**.

Noun Clause as the **subject:**

* What my friend did was unbelievable.
* What Carol said shocked all of us.
* Noun Clause as the **object:**
* DO you know how much this will cost?
* I didn’t know that he could sing so well.
* Noun Clause as the **object of a preposition:**
* We are not responsible for what they did.
* You can give this to whoever you like.
* Noun Clause as the **subject complement:**
* Whichever option you choose is fine with us.
* Your problem is that you don’t have faith in God.

A **non-finite clause** is one that is formed with an **infinitive**, a **participle** or a **verbal noun**: **To go there on your own** would be very foolish. (with an infinitive)

**Being rather shy**, she just stared at the man, saying nothing. (with a present participle)

**In saying that**, I don't mean any harm to him. (with a verbal noun)

A **verbless clause** is one that has no verb in it at all:

**When on holiday**, I like to go for long walks.

# Functions of subordinate clauses:

A subordinate clause can do the job of other clause elements. It can work as subject, object, complement and adverbial, as in **these examples:**

* Subordinate subject clause: **What you say** is stupid.
* Subordinate object clause: I did not know **that you were here** .
* Subordinate complement clause: Your first job is **learning this grammar.**
* Subordinate adverbial clause: Come round **when you're ready** .