

# Sentence Types

Before you can understand sentence types, you need to understand the difference between an independent and a dependent clause.

## Independent Clause (IC)

An independent clause is a group of words that contains a subject (underlined once) and verb (underlined twice) and expresses a complete thought. An independent clause is a sentence.

Example: Jim studied in the Sweet Shop for his chemistry quiz. (IC)

## Dependent Clause (DC)

A dependent clause is a group of words that contains a subject (underlined once) and verb (underlined twice) but does not express a complete thought. A dependent clause cannot be a sentence. Often a dependent clause is marked by a **dependent marker word**, also known as subordinating conjunctions or relative pronouns.

Example: When Jim studied in the Sweet Shop for his chemistry quiz . . . (DC)

(What happened when he studied? The thought is incomplete.)

## Dependent Marker Word (DM)

A dependent marker word is a word added to the beginning of an independent clause that turns it into a dependent clause.

Example: When Jim studied in the Sweet Shop for his chemistry quiz, it was very noisy.  
(DM)

Some common dependent markers are: *after, although, as, as if, because, before, even if, even though, if, in order to, since, though, unless, until, whatever, when, whenever, whether, while, that, which, what, who, whoever, whom, whomever and whose.*

## Four Sentence Types

All sentences must have an independent clause, but you can mix and match how many dependent or independent clauses you want to make more interesting and complicated sentences. There are **four sentence types** that use independent and dependent clauses differently.

**Simple Sentences (S)** have one main clause (**IC**) with a subject and verb, either of which can be compound.

**IC** I lost my passport.

**Compound Sentences (CP)** consist of at least two main clauses connected with a semicolon or a comma plus a coordinating conjunction.

**IC** I lost my passport, **IC** but I did not worry about it.

**Complex Sentence (CX)** have one main clause and at least one subordinate clause (**DC**)

**DC** Although I lost my passport, **IC** I did not worry about it.

**Compound-Complex Sentences (CP-CX)** have two or more main clauses and at least one dependent clause.

**DC** Although I lost my passport, **IC** I did not worry about it; **IC** I continued to enjoy my vacation.

# Sentence Type Exercise

Directions: Identify the sentence type: S, CP, CX, CP-CX

If you have trouble, follow these steps:

**S = IC**

Find and label the subject/verb pairs

**CP = IC & IC**

Look for dependent marker words

**CX = IC & DC**

Draw a / between the clauses

**CP-CX = IC & IC & DC**

Label the clauses: DC or IC

Identify the sentence type

- \_\_\_ 1. Although it started to rain, we decided to continue our walk.
- \_\_\_ 2. There were books on the floor, under the table, and all about the room.
- \_\_\_ 3. She was going to school full-time and hoped to graduate in June.
- \_\_\_ 4. Transportation came to a halt as the steadily falling snow accumulated faster than the snow plows could clear it away.
- \_\_\_ 5. Marie and Bill and I stayed up until four in the morning.
- \_\_\_ 6. Unless conditions change for her, she will spend the rest of her life working for minimum wage in a dusty mill; there are thousands of women like her.
- \_\_\_ 7. She wanted to go, but her child was sick.
- \_\_\_ 8. Joe is smart; he will go far.
- \_\_\_ 9. As soon as Dick started a coin collection, his brother bought an album of rare stamps.
- \_\_\_ 10. Nature is her passion in life, and colleagues say that she is a skilled naturalist.

**Answers on back.**

# Answer Key

*Italics* = Dependent Marker Words

Single Underline = Subject

Double Underline = Verb

IC ||/DC || = Independent or Dependent Clauses

CX 1. DC [*Although* it started rain], IC [we decided to continue our walk].

S 2. IC [There were books (on the floor)], (under the table), and all (about the room).

S 3. IC [She was going (to school) full-time] and hoped to graduate (in June).

CX 4. IC [Transportation came (to a halt)] DC [*as* the steadily falling snow accumulated faster *than* the snow plows could clear it away].

S 5. IC [Marie and Bill and I stayed up (until four) (in the morning)].

CPCX 6. DC [*Unless* conditions change (for her)], IC [she will spend the rest (of her life) working (for minimum wage) (in a dusty mill)]; IC [there are thousands (of women) (like her)].

CP 7. IC [She wanted to go], IC [but her child was sick].

CP 8. IC [Joe is smart]; IC [he will go far].

CX 9. DC [*As soon as* Dick started a coin collection], IC [his brother bought an album (of rare stamps)].

CPCX 10. IC [Nature is her passion (in life)], and IC [colleagues say] *that* DC [she is a skilled naturalist].