

SENTENCE STRUCTURE

A **complete sentence** must express a complete thought and must have a subject and a verb.
→ *Example:* He lost the game.

A **sentence fragment** results from a *missing* subject, verb or complete thought.
→ *Example:* Because he was lost.



THERE ARE FOUR TYPES OF SENTENCES: SIMPLE, COMPOUND, COMPLEX OR COMPOUND-COMPLEX

1

A **simple sentence** consists of one main clause. It expresses one main thought and has one subject and one verb. A simple sentence may contain a compound subject, or a compound verb or both.

→ *Examples:* We enjoyed the concert.

Amy and Scott were married yesterday. (compound subject: Amy and Scott)

Ben is leaving work and going home. (compound verb: leaving and going)

2

A **compound sentence** consists of two or more main clauses (*italics*) preceded by a conjunction, a semicolon or a comma and a coordinating conjunction.

→ *Examples:* *Collecting fossils is fun, but I think identifying fossils is difficult.* (conjunction)

Andy's suit looks new; it just got back from the cleaners. (semicolon)

Erin came home for Easter, and Courtney went to Florida. (comma/conjunction)

3

A **complex sentence** has one main clause (*italics*) and one or more subordinate clauses (underlined).

→ *Examples:* *Dad says* that good grades are the result of diligent studying. (main clause, one independent clause)

Diligent studying is difficult, *because I have to work several hours before I can start studying.* (main clause, two dependent clauses)

4

A **compound-complex sentence** has two or more main clauses (*italics*) and one or more subordinate clauses (underlined).

→ *Examples:* Because the school bus broke down, *the team rode in a van, and the cheerleaders rode in cars.*

Unless my eyes are defective, *Kristen can't read manuals, because she can't see a page number.*

SPELLING RULES

Write *i* before *e* except after *c*, or when sounded like *a* as in weigh and eight.

→ *Exceptions:* seize, weird, either, leisure, neither

When the *ie/ei* combination is not pronounced *ee*, it is usually spelled *ei*.

→ *Examples:* reign, weigh, neighbor

→ *Exceptions:* friend, view, mischief, fiery

When a multi-syllable word ends in a consonant preceded by one vowel, the accent is on the last syllable and the suffix begins with a vowel — the same rule holds true: double the final consonant.

→ *Examples:* prefer = preferred | allot = allotted | control = controlling

If a word ends with a silent *e*, drop the *e* before adding a suffix that begins with a vowel.

→ *Examples:* use = using | like = liking | state = stating | love = loving

When the suffix begins with a consonant, do not drop the *e*.

→ *Examples:* use = useful | state = statement | nine = ninety

→ *Exceptions:* argument, judgment, truly, ninth

When *y* is the last letter in a word and the *y* is preceded by a consonant, change the *y* to *i* before adding any suffix except those beginning with *i*.

→ *Examples:* lady = ladies | try = tries | happy = happiness | ply = pliable

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