
Sentence Structures in English

What is a sentence?

A sentence is the largest unit of language. It begins with a capital letter, ends with a full stop/exclamation/question mark, and expresses a complete thought using at least one subject and one verb.

There are four sentence functions:

1. Declarative (.) - makes a statement, gives a description or opinion; simply declares something.
 - a. I want to be a fluent English speaker.
2. Imperative- makes a request or command.
 - a. Please sit down. (subject is implied)
3. Interrogative (?) - asks a question.
 - a. When will they reopen?
4. Exclamatory (!) - expresses an overflow of emotions.
 - a. I can't believe what happened!

There are four sentence structures:

1. Simple
2. Compound
3. Complex
4. Compound-Complex

What is a clause?

A clause is a group of words that includes a subject and a verb. It is the basic building block of a sentence. A clause can function as a simple sentence or join with other clauses to form compound and complex sentences.



How do we build these structures?

Simple

A simple sentence only has one clause which is independent. It can stand alone and doesn't need another clause to function.

Example: I have always wanted to speak English fluently.

Compound

A compound sentence has at least two independent clauses which are joined together by punctuation and/or coordinating conjunctions, such as *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so*. There are no dependent clauses in a compound sentence.

Example: I have always wanted to speak English fluently and my best friend has always wanted to speak French fluently.

Complex

A complex sentence has at least one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. The clauses are joined together by subordinating conjunctions, such as *although, even though, though, whereas, while, because, since, as, when, as soon as, once, until, after, before, so that, if, unless, who, whose, which, that, whether, and how*.

Example: I know that you have always wanted to speak French fluently.

Compound-complex

A compound-complex sentence is a mixture of the two previous structures in one sentence. It has at least two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause.

Example: I know that you have always wanted to speak French fluently, but I have always wanted to speak English fluently.



Practice

1. she can take me/ I don't feel/ My sister said/ to my yoga class/ but/ well today

Which sentence structure is this? _____.

2. on Thursdays/ plays football/ Joseph

Which sentence structure is this? _____.

3. Paul/ Susan/ and/cuts the onions/ beats the eggs

Which sentence structure is this? _____.

4. If you don't/ it may feel good/ you can stay home/ want to workout/ but

Which sentence structure is this? _____.

5. to take a nap/ I get home from work/ When/ I'm going

What sentence structure is this? _____.

6. that I don't need/ I spend too much money/ Every time/ on things/ I go shopping

Which sentence structure is this? _____.

7. post office/ in a/ George works

Which sentence structure is this? _____.

8. can find books/ The students/ in the library/ they can find articles online/ or/ about Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Which sentence structure is this? _____.



Answers

1. My sister said she can take me to my yoga class, but I don't feel well today.
(compound-complex)
2. Joseph plays football on Thursdays. (simple)
3. Paul cuts the onions, and Susan beats the eggs. (compound)
4. If you don't want to workout, you can stay home, but it may feel good.
(compound-complex)
5. When I get home from work, I'm going to take a nap. (complex)
6. Everytime I go shopping, I spend too much money on things that I don't need.
(complex)
7. George works in a post office. (simple)
8. The students can find books about Ruth Bader Ginsburg in the library, or they can find articles online. (compound)

Good job!



URGENT ENGLISH