



## **English Grammar**

### **A Student's Guide to Clause Types in Academic Writing**



# Clause Types



**Clauses can contain 5 different components**

**Subject**

**Verb**

**Object**

**Complement**

**Adverbial**



# Clause Types



## Subject

The person or thing which performs the action of a verb (Cambridge Learner's Dictionary)

Students **[subject]** must write in an academic style.

Academic writing **[subject]** is difficult.

The purpose of this essay **[subject]** is to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the Internet.



# Clause Types



## Verb

A word or phrase that describes an action, condition or experience (Cambridge Learner's Dictionary)

This essay will discuss **[verb describing an action]** the role of the monarchy in the UK today.

The monarch is **[verb describing a state or condition]** the figurative head of state in the United Kingdom.



# Clause Types



## Object

An object can be direct or indirect

**Direct Object:** A person, place, or thing that is affected by the action of a verb, or involved in the result of an action (CLD)

**Indirect Object:** A person , place, or thing that benefits from the action of a verb

(Adapted from Seely, 2009)



# Clause Types



## Complement

Part of a clause that completes information about a subject or object that appears earlier in the clause

Academic writing **[subject]** is difficult **[subject complement]**

Academic writing makes students **[object]** feel stressed **[object complement]**

Adapted from Seely, 2009



# Clause Types



## Adverbial

A word or phrase in a clause that answer questions

**Where?** The course is offered at the University of Glasgow **[adverbial]**

**When?** Many students graduate when they are in their early twenties **[adverbial]**

**Why?** Psychology is important because little is known about the workings of the mind **[adverbial]**



# Clause Types



**There are 5 basic clause types in English**

**Subject + verb**

**Subject + verb + object**

**Subject + verb + complement**

**Subject + verb + object + complement**

**Subject + verb + indirect object + direct object**





# Clause Types



## Examples

### Subject + verb

A book **[subject]** fell **[verb]**.

### Subject + verb + object

A student **[subject]** read **[verb]** the book **[object]**.

### Subject + verb + complement

The book **[subject]** was **[verb]** interesting **[complement]**.



# Clause Types



## Examples

### Subject + verb + object + complement

The student **[subject]** found **[verb]** the book **[object]** interesting **[complement]**.

### Subject + verb + indirect object + direct object

The student **[subject]** gave **[verb]** his professor **[indirect object]** some notes **[some notes]**.



# Adverbial Clauses



**Some clauses contain 'adverbials': words or phrases about 'where, when, how, or why'.**

**Subject + verb + adverbial**

**Subject + verb + object + adverbial**



# Adverbial Clauses



## Examples

**Subject + verb + adverbial:** A book fell on the floor.

The adverbial '**on the floor**' answers the question: **Where** did the book fall?

**Subject + verb + object + adverbial:** A student read the book with interest.

The adverbial '**with interest**' answers the question: **How** did the student read the book?



# Adverbial Clauses



**Adverbial clauses are not usually essential to the meaning of the sentence**

## Example

He found the book **on the shelf**

The adverbial '**on the shelf**' could be removed and the sentence would still make sense.



# Adverbial Clauses



**Some adverbial clauses are essential to the grammar and meaning of the sentence**

I placed the book **on the table**

The meaning of the verb '**placed**' requires an adverbial to be grammatically correct.

**Note: It is possible to check whether a verb requires an adverbial by checking in a good learner's dictionary**



# Glossary



<b><i>Clause</i></b>	Part of a sentence which contains a subject and a verb. A clause may also contain an object, complement or adverbial (Adapted from Seely, 2009)
<b><i>Main clause</i></b>	Part of a sentence which contains 2 or more clause components. Clause components are: subject; verb; object; complement; adverbial (Adapted from Seely, 2009)
<b><i>Subordinate clause</i></b>	Part of a sentence which 'can act as the subject, object, complement, or adverbial of the main clause' (Seely, 2009, p. 29)
<b><i>Dependent clause</i></b>	Same as a 'subordinate' clause



# Glossary



<b><i>Connective</i></b>	A general term which means a 'linking' word. Common connectives are; adverbials, coordinators and subordinators (Adapted from Seely, 2009)
<b><i>Coordinator</i></b>	A word which joins two main clauses (Seely, 2009). Common coordinators are; <b><i>and, but, or.</i></b>
<b><i>Subordinator</i></b>	A word which joins a main clause with a dependent (or subordinate) clause (Seely, 2009). Common subordinators are; <b><i>if, because, so, since, where, when why.</i></b>





# References



**The Oxford Guide to English Usage (Second Edition).** Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Seely, J. (2009). **Oxford A-Z of Grammar and Punctuation.** Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Leonard, B.H. (2002). **Discoveries in Academic Writing.** Boston Heinle & Heinle.

**Cambridge Dictionaries Online.** Cambridge University Press. Retrieved 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2011. Available from <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>



**Thank you for watching!**



**Dr Barbara Howarth**

