



# Subordination

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Two **clauses** can also be joined with a **subordinating conjunction**. The clause following a subordinating conjunction is called a **subordinate or dependent clause** because it depends on the independent clause to complete its meaning.

## SUBORDINATING ADVERBIAL CONJUNCTIONS

after  
if  
whereas

before  
when (ever)  
because

until  
as (if)  
unless

although  
since  
while

### EXAMPLES:

1. We will cross that bridge **when** we get to it.
2. I can't cross the bridge **because** it collapsed.

Subordinating clauses are dependent also because they can not stand alone as sentences.

The presence of a subordinating conjunction makes the idea incomplete; therefore, the incomplete idea becomes a **sentence fragment** if you add end punctuation to it.

**SIMPLE SENTENCE:** The bridge collapsed.

**DEPENDENT CLAUSE:** When the bridge collapsed

**FRAGMENT:** When the bridge collapsed.

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Be sure to choose the subordinating conjunction that best expresses the relationship between the two clauses in a sentence.

1. We were happy **because** Mr. Jones died.
2. We were happy **although** Mr. Jones died.
3. We were happy **after** Mr. Jones died.

## IMPORTANT

When connecting dependent clauses to independent clauses, pay careful attention to the sequence in which the clauses appear in the sentence. **Sequence will affect your punctuation.**

The normal position for an adverb is after the verb or the direct object. This position requires no comma before the subordinate clause. When the clause is moved to the beginning of the sentence, however, you need a comma after the clause.

1. When I was a child, I was much shorter.

I was much shorter when I was a child.

2. **Although he was tired**, he managed to study all night.

He managed to study all night although he was tired.

**Notice that the sequence affects the use of a comma in each sentence.**

1. If the dependent clause appears first in the sentence, a comma is needed to connect the clauses.
2. No comma is necessary when the independent clause appears first in the sentence.

## PRACTICE ONE

Read these sentences for meaning. Then fill in the subordinating conjunction that best expresses the relationship between the two clauses.

1. We hired Suzie as a babysitter \_\_\_\_\_ she had served time in prison for kidnapping.
2. Suzie talked to her parole office \_\_\_\_\_ Mary played with the dog.
3. I admire Thomas Edison \_\_\_\_\_ he dedicated his life to useful inventions.
4. Jane admired her husband \_\_\_\_\_ he lowered the toilet seat.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ it is cold outside, the joggers are wearing shorts.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ I was a child, I was much shorter.
7. I am tall and lanky \_\_\_\_\_ Kim is short and stout.
8. You should wash your hands \_\_\_\_\_ you handle the food.
9. You should not handle the food \_\_\_\_\_ you wash your hands.
10. I am not eating that food you handled \_\_\_\_\_ you did not wash your hands.

## PRACTICE TWO

Punctuate these sentences by adding a comma where necessary or by taking out an incorrect comma. Put a **C** next to any correct sentences.

1. Joe worked on the engine until it was time to meet Biff.
2. Whenever Joe and Reggie get together they verbally abuse the plants.
3. I do not admire my little brother, because he steals cars.
4. I would admire my little brother if he stole a car for me.
5. Although living in the country was serene and healthful, Omah did occasionally miss the noise, stench, and utter despair of the big city.
6. Because you stayed out late last night you are now tired.
7. If you had not stayed out late last night you would not be tired now.
8. The professor would not return the test until the students called him "your majesty."
9. The professor was fired, after the students complained about his bizarre teaching methods.
10. Because the linebacker was sick, the other players treated him differently.

## KEYS

### PRACTICE ONE

1. although
2. while / as
3. because
4. because
5. although
6. when
7. although
8. because
9. until
10. since

### PRACTICE TWO

1. CORRECT
2. , they
3. because
4. CORRECT
5. CORRECT
6. ,you
7. ,you
8. CORRECT
9. after
10. CORRECT