

COORDINATION AND SUBORDINATION

A clause has subject and a verb, and all clauses are either **independent** (can stand alone as a sentence) or **dependent** (cannot stand alone as a sentence).

When I go to the beach, I play in the waves.
(dependent clause)

My father likes peanuts.
(Independent clause)

COORDINATION

Coordination, in grammar, means that two clauses in a sentence are of equal importance. In addition, the two clauses are also independent: they can grammatically stand alone. Coordination is the strategic joining of two sentences because they are closely related or the writer wants to emphasize their meanings equally.

Coordinating Conjunctions

The term “fanboys” is a memory aid for the seven coordinating conjunctions, words that, used with a comma, can link two **independent clauses**, i.e., two sentences.

For expresses a causal relationship; -- one element is a cause of the other.

And joins elements in order to stress what they have in common.

Nor is used when the alternative is negative.

But is used to emphasize the difference between elements it joins.

Or is used to indicate an alternate.

Yet like “but,” emphasizes the differences. It also suggest that the second element is something not ordinarily expected.

So suggests a purpose—the second element is needed because of the first.

Notice that these words do not *always* act as coordinating conjunctions. Sometimes these conjunctions are simply used to link two subjects, two verbs, or two objects – rather than two independent clauses.

*My brother loves to eat ham **and** eggs.*

*I can't decide whether to go with Jim **or** to do my homework.*

Coordination Practice Exercises

Try finding and underlining the coordinating conjunctions in the following sentences.

1. Music is supposed to have a calming effect on people, but I'm not sure that is true all the time.
2. Psychology and sociology are very different disciplines, yet they have several similarities.
3. I did not believe the No from her lips, for I saw the Yes in her eyes.

SUBORDINATION

Subordinate means being of a lower rank. The idea in a subordinate clause seems less important than that of the independent clause. Note the first example above. Subordinate and dependent are close in meaning but not precisely the same. A subordinate clause means that it is of lesser importance than the other clauses in the sentence. So, subordinate has to do with the **relative importance** of the idea in the sentence. A dependent clause is one that grammatically cannot stand alone as a sentence. All subordinate clauses are dependent, and all dependent clauses are subordinate to the independent clause in the sentence. Note that the subordinate clause can come before or after the independent clause.

Subordinating Conjunctions

A subordinate clause is introduced by a subordinating conjunction, a connecting word that relates the meaning of the dependent clause to the meaning of the independent clause.

- To show contrast, use a subordinator like “although” or “even though.”
- To show one event as the cause of another, try a subordinator like “because” or “since.”
- Other subordinators specify time, place, condition, and degree:

<u>Contrast</u>	<u>Condition</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Alternative Condition</u>
Although Even Though While Whereas	If When Provided that In case Assuming that	When Whenever While Once Before after since Until As long as	
<u>Cause</u>	<u>Negative Condition</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>Place</u>
Because Since as	Unless	Inasmuch as Insofar as	where wherever

Here are some examples of subordinate or dependent clauses:

Unless you go with me, ...

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, ...

Because she didn't get an "A", ...

As long as that constantly-shedding cat isn't around, ...

Subordination Practice Exercises

Try finding and underlining the dependent clauses in the following sentences. **HINT:** Look for the subordinating conjunctions listed above.

1. After dinner the other evening, I went to the market because we ran out of milk.
2. Computers make learning easier if students are computer literate.
3. Although he stabbed the intruder four times, he was not accused of any crime.
4. He was not accused of any crime even though the police saw him do it.