

A **clause** is a meaningful group of words containing a subject and a verb. There are two kinds of clauses: dependent and independent.

Independent clauses can stand alone as a sentence, but dependent clauses cannot stand alone because they contain a word that makes them incomplete.

Subordinating conjunctions are words that make a clause dependent. Here are some common subordinating conjunctions: **as, after, although, because, before, even though, if, since, so (meaning so that), when, where, whether, while, unless, and until.**

If we start the sentence with a *dependent clause*, we must place a comma at the end of that clause for clarity. If the dependent clause comes at the end of the sentence, we do not set it off with a comma.

dependent clause
independent clause

Because of the increased prevalence of prediabetes, researchers investigated the causes of insulin resistance (Johnson, 2014).

independent clause
dependent clause

Researchers investigated the causes of insulin resistance because of the increased prevalence of prediabetes (Johnson, 2014).

An **introductory phrase (or word)** doesn't have a subject or verb, but it must also be set off with a comma when it comes at the beginning of a sentence.

phrase
independent clause

Without additional research, it will be impossible to form informed conclusions.

word
independent clause

Similarly, researchers studied the effects on blood sugar.

You can identify introductory words and phrases because you can remove them from the sentence, and the sentence still makes sense.