



THE COMPOUND SENTENCE

30a The compound sentence

One way to add variety to your writing is to use coordination to join some of your simple sentences together. When you coordinate or combine together two simple sentences (also known as two independent clauses), you create a compound sentence.

- The signs for American Sign Language were originally based on French, and the signs for Signed English were originally based on English.

You can choose from four options to create compound sentences, and the option you choose determines the punctuation you will use.

Helpful hint

The compound sentence includes the combination of two full sentences, not two subjects, two verbs, or two verb phrases. For instance, the following sentences are not compound sentences, just simple sentences.

Compound subjects → Mary and the new professor left the classroom early.

Compound verbs → Mary laughed and cried at the same time.

Compound verb phrases → Mary laughed at the joke and cried at the picture at the same time.

30b

Use appropriate punctuation for the compound sentence

1. Punctuating a compound sentence—Option 1: Using a comma + conjunction

Notice that the two independent clauses on the previous page are joined together with a comma and a conjunction (*and*). Independent clauses can be joined in a variety of acceptable ways, and using a comma plus a coordinating conjunction is one of the most popular.

The conjunctions that you can use to join together two independent clauses can be remembered by using the mnemonic device **FANBOYS**, in which each letter represents one conjunction.

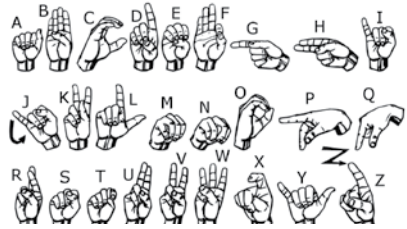
F A N B O Y S

for and nor but or yet so

- F** American Sign Language is difficult for me, **for** I studied Signed English.
- A** Some students learn American Sign Language, **and** they also learn Signed English.
- N** I cannot use American Sign Language, **nor** can I use Signed English.
- B** I learned some signs in school, **but** I want to learn more American Sign Language.
- O** Maybe I will attend an American Sign Language class, **or** I will attend a special summer camp to learn this interesting language.
- Y** Some students know American Sign Language, **yet** it is difficult for them to communicate in countries other than the United States with deaf students from other cultures.
- S** In some colleges, American Sign Language is the only signing method used by the faculty, **so** those students who only use Signed English will be at a disadvantage.

2. Punctuating a compound sentence—Option 2: Using a semi-colon

A semi-colon can be used to connect two independent clauses. When you use a semi-colon in this way, you suggest to the reader that the two connected clauses are related in some way.



American Sign Language

- **Some students learn American Sign Language; they can also**
 Independent Clause
learn Signed English.
 Independent Clause

3. Punctuating a compound sentence—Option 3: Using a semi-colon + adverbial conjunction

Another way to connect two independent clauses is with a semi-colon plus an adverbial conjunction (sometimes called a conjunctive adverb). Note that a comma follows the adverbial conjunction.

- **Some students attend a school that requires American Sign**
 Independent Clause
Language; therefore, knowing Signed English is not enough.
 Independent Clause

You can use the acronym **THIN TIC** to help you remember some common adverbial conjunctions.

- T** therefore
- H** however
- I** in fact
- N** nevertheless

- T** thus
- I** indeed
- C** consequently

Adverbial conjunctions signify relationships such as result, cause, contrast, or condition. Be sure to signal the appropriate relationship with the adverbial conjunction you use.

Result/cause → I learned Signed English in elementary school; **therefore**, I had problems understanding some American Sign Language signs later on.

Contrast → American Sign Language is popular at Gallaudet University; **however**, English is used alongside ASL.

Condition/intensification → American Sign Language and English are popular at Gallaudet University; **indeed**, many students use both.

Other than the common **THIN TIC** adverbial conjunctions, there are other adverbial conjunctions that can be used to connect two independent clauses and signify particular relationships. Here is a list to help you make appropriate choices.

Addition → moreover, furthermore, likewise, finally, additionally, also, incidentally, further, similarly, in addition

Contrast → however, nevertheless, in contrast, on the contrary, nonetheless, otherwise, on the other hand, in comparison, conversely, instead

Comparison → similarly, likewise, at the same time, comparatively

Exemplification → for example, for instance, namely, that is

Intensification → indeed, in fact, moreover, still, certainly, notably, undoubtedly

Result → therefore, thus, consequently, as a result, finally, hence, then, accordingly, henceforth, subsequently, undoubtedly, in fact

Time → meanwhile, then, next, finally, still, now, thereafter



This image of a note placed on an information desk shows a compound sentence that is missing the appropriate punctuation. How could you fix the punctuation problem?

4. Punctuating a compound sentence—Option 4: Using a colon

Although not as common as the first three methods of joining two independent clauses together, you can also use a colon if the clause following the colon defines or elaborates the clause before the colon.

- **American Sign Language and Signed English are different in Independent Clause**
one important way: many linguists consider American Sign Independent Clause
Language a full and complete language and Signed English not.

Since both independent clauses are connected in meaning and since the second independent clause elaborates on the first, giving more information about why, a colon can be used.



Image from www.laermer.com/category/the-language-of-life/

The above sign is missing the appropriate punctuation—how ironic! How would you edit this sign to make it grammatically correct?

30c

Common sentence errors with the compound sentence

1. Use a variety of punctuation, conjunctions, and adverbial conjunctions

Be careful when you decide how to join compound sentences. Combining sentences in the same way each time or in a way that creates an obviously consistent pattern will negatively impact your writing. It is best to use a variety of punctuation, conjunctions, and adverbial conjunctions.

2. Check for comma splices

Mistakenly joining two independent clauses together with only a comma creates one of the most frequent sentence errors that writers make. You can fix a comma splice by using one of the four options given above.

Comma splice → Some American students learn Signed English as children, they learn American Sign Language as adults.

OK → Some American students learn Signed English as children, and they learn American Sign Language as adults.

OK → Some American students learn Signed English as children; they then learn American Sign Language as adults.

OK → Some American students learn Signed English as children; then, they learn American Sign Language as adults.

3. Check for run-on or fused sentences

If you fail to join two independent clauses together with the appropriate punctuation, you can create another common sentence problem—the run-on or fused sentence.

Run-on/fused sentence → My third-grade teacher taught us some signs they were Signed English.

OK → My third-grade teacher taught us some signs, yet I don't know many now.

OK → My third-grade teacher taught us some signs; they were Signed English.

EXERCISE 1

Directions: The following paragraph contains five comma splices. Correct the errors by turning the comma splices into compound sentences.

I've never been one for believing in astrological signs, I couldn't really even tell you what my sign, Scorpio, actually means. But every now and then, I'll run across a daily horoscope chart, curiosity gets the better of me. One day in particular, my horoscope said to be careful in business dealings and avoid conflict. I had been having a disagreement with one of my clients, who was threatening to give her business to our biggest competitor, immediately that situation came to mind as I read the horoscope over my morning breakfast. I walked into the office later that morning, my secretary informed me that the client was waiting on me—and not happy. I quickly made up an excuse and left the office, remembering what was in store for Scorpios that day. Come to find out, the client's anger was not directed at me, but because she wasted her time coming to the office that morning, she decided to take her business elsewhere. My decision to avoid the conflict altogether resulted in my losing this client and significant income for my company, needless to say, I try to avoid horoscopes now.

Citation = http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/7292252.stm

EXERCISE 2

Directions: The following paragraph contains five run-on sentences. Correct them by adding the appropriate punctuation.

Who would have guessed that a simple piece of fruit would become synonymous with innovative technology well this is exactly what has happened with the symbol for Apple, Inc. With the increasing international popularity of the iPhone, Apple's logo is becoming one of the most recognizable symbols in business and technology today. The trademark silhouette of an apple missing a bite has been around practically since the company's inception although the company's earliest logo features a sketch of Isaac Newton sitting under the apple tree. Apple co-founder Steve Jobs hired Rob Janoff in 1976 to redesign the company's logo and the iconic rainbow apple design was born this version of Apple's apple remained in use until a redesign of the Macintosh operating system and computer hardware in 1998 warranted a monochrome makeover. Two more versions of the symbol would follow: an aqua theme in 2001 and the current glass theme unveiled in 2003, both of which gave the trademark a three dimensional, textured appearance though it's already an internationally recognized symbol, the Apple logo will only become even more common as the company continues to expand.