

CONNECTING IDEAS

An important aspect of formal writing is the appropriate use of sentence structures to convey your ideas clearly and effectively. It is necessary to have a variety of sentence structures, drawing on the use of coordinate and subordinate conjunctions to form both compound and complex sentences.

Sentences can express both *simple* and *complex* ideas. Connecting ideas in sentences correctly is important because this makes the relationship between ideas clear and meaningful. A **sentence** must have a subject and a verb, and is also referred to as an **independent clause**. A **dependent clause** also contains a subject and verb, but is not regarded as a sentence because its meaning is incomplete.

STUDY TIPS

In both IELTS writing tasks, it is important to use a variety of sentence types, including simple, compound and complex.

This makes your writing formal, more mature and interesting.

COORDINATION AND SUBORDINATION

Ideas can be connected in a number of different ways.

Coordination is used to connect ideas that are of equal importance, joining independent clauses, which express ideas of equal content. An independent clause is, in fact, a simple sentence.

Subordination is used to connect main ideas with supporting ones. Sentences of this type join independent clauses with dependent clauses or phrases.

Conjunctions are used to join ideas together. There are two types of conjunctions – **coordinating** and **subordinating**.

Coordinating conjunctions join independent clauses (simple sentences) to form **compound sentences**.

There are **seven** coordinating conjunctions: **and, but, or, so, for, yet, nor**. Each expresses a different relationship between the clauses.

Coordinating Conjunction	Relationship	Example
and	used to add another or similar idea	Ginger is a popular ingredient in Asian cuisine, and it is used in medicinal preparations.
but	used to add an opposite idea or show contrast	Ginger is widely used in Asian cuisine, but it is becoming more popular in continental cuisine.
or	used to express a choice or an alternative	Ginger can be used for treating a cold, or it can aid in the digestive process.
so	used to give an effect or a result	The herbalist was successful in treating his patient with ginger, so he decided to try this remedy out with other patients.
<p>Note: A comma is inserted before these four conjunctions. In short clauses the comma can be omitted.</p>		
for	used to introduce a reason or a cause	Ginger is healthy, for it carries medicinal properties.
yet	used to express surprise or something unexpected	Ginger is an imported product, yet it is easy to grow in subtropical regions.
nor	used to join two negative sentences;	Ginger cannot cure a cold, nor can it remedy the flu.

Subordinating conjunctions connect a dependent clause to an independent clause to form a complete sentence, which is called a **complex sentence**.

There are a number of different dependent clauses, for example **dependent adjective clauses** and **dependent adverb clauses**. The subordinating conjunctions used in the various clauses express a variety of different relationships with the dependent clauses.

Complex Sentences with dependent adjective clauses

Adjective clauses provide information about a noun or pronoun. They are sometimes referred to as relative clauses because they begin with a relative pronoun, such as *who*, *whom*, *which*, *that* or a relative adverb, such as *when*, *where*.

Relative Pronouns	
used with humans	
who	Students who complete the three-year program successfully will be accepted onto the course.
whom	The student whom the counsellor advised was offered a place on the Diploma program.
used with nonhumans and things	
which	First-year university students enjoyed the classes, which were quite challenging.
that	The course material that the student received was helpful.
Relative Adverbs	
used to refer to a place or time	
where	It was the place where the classes were held.
when	February is the month when the academic year begins.

Complex Sentences with dependent adverb clauses

Adverb clauses provide the following kind of information: *when*, *where*, *why*, *for what purpose*, and so on.

Subordinating Conjunction	Relationship	Example
when, whenever	used to express time (when?)	When students complete the two prerequisites , they will be eligible for the business course.
where, wherever	used to express place (where?)	The students need to go where the training sessions will be held .
because, since, as	used to express reason (why?)	The student deferred her studies because she arrived after the semester began .
although, though, even though	used to express contrast	Although the semester already commenced , the university was accepting late enrolments.
while, whereas	used to express opposition	Second year diploma students focus on marketing and accounting, while first year study business .
so that, in order that	used to express purpose (for what purpose?)	The parents requested student visas so that their children could pursue studies in Australia .

The **punctuation** of a complex sentence with a dependent adverb clause is contingent on the order of the clause in the sentence. A comma separates the clauses only when the dependent clause comes first.