

Overview of Clauses

Definition:

A clause is a **group of words with its own subject and verb**. Clauses allow you to **combine ideas** to show their relationship. This adds logic and cohesion to your speech and writing.

There are two types of clauses: *independent clauses* (main clauses) and *dependent clauses* (subordinate clauses and relative clauses).

- **An independent clause** is a complete sentence because it has its own subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.
- **A dependent clause** is part of a sentence, so it cannot stand alone.

Independent clause	Dependent clause
He had no qualification	; however he got the job.

- **Although the dependent clause** shown on the previous chart has a subject and a verb, **it does not express a complete thought**. As a result, it cannot stand alone.
- **A dependent clause** often starts with a **word** that makes the clause unable to stand alone; for example, *however*. These words are **subordinating conjunctions**.
- **Subordinating conjunctions** link an independent clause to a dependent clause. Each subordinating conjunction expresses a relationship between the dependent clause and the independent clause.

The following chart lists the subordinating conjunctions used most often and the relationships they express.

Subordinating conjunctions	Relationship
Unless, provided that, if	Condition
Because, as	Reason
Rather than, than, whether	Choice
Though, although, even though, but	Contrast
Where, wherever	Location
In order that, so	Result
While, once, when, since, as whenever, after, before, until, as soon	Time

