

# Writing Sentences

Sentences are basic units of writing. Every sentence is an idea, or group of ideas, which is complete in itself. At the very heart of a sentence is a verb. Verbs are *living* words. Verbs tell you about the action as it happens – what it is and who’s doing it.

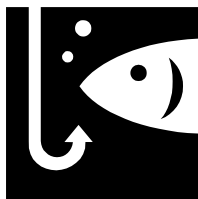


Walk, eat, run, drive, borrow, steal – all these are verbs. But as single words, they don’t tell you a lot. You don’t know who is walking, or eating, or whatever the action is. You have to make verbs work before you can give that information.

A *working* verb tells you who is doing something. He walked; I eat; she runs; they drive – all these tell you what’s going on and who’s doing it. Every sentence must have a verb of this kind – a working verb.

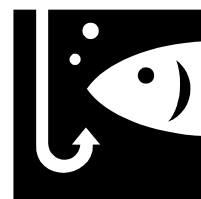
Simple, short sentences don’t have a lot more than a verb in them. For example: Sharon went away. Mrs Jones sneezed. Jack woke up.

These sentences tell you what was done and who did it. But they don’t tell you anything else. If you add information, you get a longer and more useful sentence. For example: Sharon walked into the post office. Mrs Jones shrugged her shoulders nervously. Jack ate his breakfast with chopsticks.



What happens to these sentences if you add a **HOOK**?

- Jack ate his breakfast with chopsticks and...
- Jack ate his breakfast with chopsticks however...
- Jack ate his breakfast with chopsticks because...
- Jack ate his breakfast with chopsticks before...



They begin to get more complex. This is a very simple overview of sentences.

**THERE ARE FOUR KINDS OF SENTENCES:**

1. SIMPLE
3. COMPLEX

2. COMPOUND
4. COMPOUND-COMPLEX

## 1. THE SIMPLE SENTENCE.

A simple sentence has one subject (**BOLD**) and one verb (UNDERLINE).

**He** drove to the airport.

In a simple sentence, two or more words may be the subject:

**John** and **I** drove to the airport.

A simple sentence may have two or more verbs with the same subject:

**He** drove to the airport and parked.

## 2. THE COMPOUND SENTENCE.

The part of a sentence having a subject and a verb is called a clause. A compound sentence has two main clauses.

**He** drove to the airport, but **he** missed his plane.

Each clause in a compound sentence can stand alone and make sense. The clauses in a compound sentence are often joined by *and*, *or*, *but*, or *yet*.

## 3. THE COMPLEX SENTENCE.

A complex sentence also contains two clauses, but one clause cannot stand alone and make sense. It depends on the main clause.

Although **he** was tired, **he** drove to the airport.

In the above sentence, one clause can stand alone and make sense (He drove to the airport). The other clause cannot stand alone and make sense by itself (Although he was tired).

## 4. THE COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCE.



A compound-complex sentence has two or more main clauses and one or more clauses that cannot stand alone.

**He** drove to the airport, but **he** missed his plane because he forgot his ticket.

This sentence contains two main clauses: *he drove to the airport* and *he missed his plane*. The third clause cannot stand alone: *because he forgot his ticket*. This clause does not make sense without: *he missed his plane*. It is the complex part of a compound-complex sentence.



**Tip: Use a HOOK to help a build a sentence!**