

SENTENCE TYPES AND PUNCTUATION PATTERNS

WRITING SERVICES - UNCW - DEPAOLO HALL, 1ST FLOOR - 962-7857

1. A **simple sentence** contains one independent clause:

Independent clause .

Example: Rachel walked to the store.

2. A **compound sentence** contains two independent clauses connected in one of three ways:

a) A comma followed by a **coordinating conjunction**

Independent clause , **and** independent clause .
but
for
or
nor
so
yet

Example: Rachel needed to buy apples, but there were none left.

b) A semicolon followed by a **conjunctive adverb** and a comma

Independent clause ; **therefore,** independent clause .
however,
nevertheless,
consequently,
furthermore,
moreover,
(etc.)

Example: Rachel needed to buy apples; therefore, she went to the produce aisle.

c) A **semicolon** between two related independent clauses

Independent clause ; independent clause .

Example: Rachel walked to the store; Dan walked also.

3. A **complex sentence** contains a dependent clause and an independent clause:

- a) If a sentence begins with a **dependent marker** followed by a dependent clause, include a comma before the independent clause.

If dependent clause , independent clause .
Because
Since
When
While
Although
After
(etc.)

Example: Because the Seahawks excel in baseball, they are number one in the league.

- b) If a sentence begins with independent clause, do not use a comma before the **dependent marker** and dependent clause.

Independent clause **if** dependent clause .
because
since
when
while
although
after
(etc.)

Example: The Seahawks won the last game because they practiced every day.

3. Place a **nonessential clause, phrase or word** between two commas:

Clause, phrase,
or word , Nonessential clause,
phrase or word , Clause, phrase, or
word .

Example: Our baseball team, the Seahawks, celebrated their most current win.

EDITING ADVICE

- 1) Skim through your paper, stopping at each punctuation mark.
- 2) Check to see if you can explain why you used punctuation at this point.
- 3) Read your paper aloud. Are there any unpunctuated places where you pause to figure out the meaning of what you have written?