



## Clauses

Recognizing clauses is important because clauses help determine the basic meaning of a sentence. Clauses are to sentences as atoms are to molecules. Understanding the composition of a clause helps a writer shape the structure of the sentence to communicate a desired meaning.

**Clause** - a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate

**Independent Clause** - a clause that can stand alone as a sentence

Independent clauses can be combined to make compound sentences by using a comma followed by a coordinating conjunction or by using a semicolon.

Ex: *The phone rang, **and** the dog barked.*  
[Comma + Coordinating Conjunction]

*The hurricane intensified; it turned toward land.*  
[Semicolon]

**Conjunctive Adverb** - a word that creates logical connections in meaning

Conjunctive adverbs can be used to combine independent clauses.

Ex: *The phone rang, **therefore**, the dog barked.*

**Dependent Clause** - a clause that cannot stand alone as a sentence

Dependent clauses can be added to the beginning of a sentence or to the end.

Ex: ***Although the hour was late**, the telephone rang.*

*The telephone rang **although the hour was late**.*

**Non-Restrictive Element** - a group of words that provides "extra" information to the reader

(A non-restrictive element does not "restrict" a sentence's grammatical integrity; a sentence containing a non-restrictive element will remain intact if that element is deleted).

Ex: *Farming, **which is a major source of food production**, may not always be dependent on the weather.*

**Restrictive Element** - a group of words that provides information that is essential to the meaning of a sentence (If this element were removed from the sentence, the meaning of the sentence would change).

Ex: *Farmers **retaining complete control over their land** are very hard to find these days.*