

# INSTANT GRAMMAR

(subjects, verbs, clauses, phrases)

## SUBJECTS

To find the subject, first find the verb, then ask “who” or “what.” For example:

The coach kicked the quarterback off the team.

Who or what kicked? Coach

John Smith is the president of the senior class.

Who or what is? John Smith

The car was passing on the right.

Who or what was passing? Car

## VERBS

To find the verb of a sentence, ask “what’s happening”? For example:

The coach kicked the quarterback off the team.

Now ask: “What’s happening?” Someone or something kicked.

### **Points to remember**

1. The word **to** + a verb, for example to give, can never be the verb of a sentence.
2. A participle can not be the verb of a sentence.

This includes present participles ending with ing, such as (singing, passing, and flying) and past participles ending in n or en, such as (blown, chosen, lain).

3. Using a helping verb (listed below) with a verb ending in n, en, or ing can function as the verb of the sentence.

For example, *He was walking towards me.*

If these verbs are used alone, they may be used as the verb of a sentence.

am	were
is	have
are	has
was	had

## CLAUSES

1. A clause is two or more words containing both a subject and a verb that does not express a complete thought

A. An *independent clause (IC)*, in addition to having a subject and verb, *expresses a complete thought.*

He ate.

B. A dependent clause (DC) *does NOT express a complete thought.*

After he ate....

2. Dependent clauses usually begin with one of the following words:

after	before	until
although	if	when
as	in order that	whenever
as if	since	where
as though	so that	which
as long as	than	while
as soon as	that	what
because	though	who (whom)
	unless	why
	S	V

For example: while he was going to the store

S V

after you finish your homework

S V

because he feared spiders

## **PHRASES**

A phrase is two or more words lacking a subject or a verb or both.

For example: two birds flying south

against the wall

speeding around the corner

# INSTANT GRAMMAR FOLLOW UP

## (subject, verb, clause, phrase)

I. SENTENCE CLASSIFICATION BY CLASUE:	<b>Independent <u>Clause</u></b>	<b>Dependent <u>Clause</u></b>	<b><u>Phrase</u></b>
A. Simple.....	1 only	none	optional
B. Compound.....	2 minimum	none	optional
C. Complex.....	1 only	1 minimum	optional
D. Compound/Complex.....	2 minimum	1 minimum	optional

### II. Correct punctuation among the four sentence-types: (,) (;) (:) or (none required)

- A. Simple            long [at least five words] phrases (,) independent clause  
                          short phrases + independent clause (none)  
                          independent clause + phrase (none)
- B. Compound        independent clause (, + coordinating conjunction) independent  
                          clause  
                          independent clause (;) independent clause  
                          independent clause (; *conjunctive adverb*, \*) independent clause  
                          independent clause (: ) independent clause \*\*
- C. Complex            dependent clause (,) independent clause  
                          independent clause + dependent clause (none required)
- D. Compound/  
                          Complex            dependent clause (,) independent. clause) independent clause  
    independent clause ( ) dependent clause ( ) independent clause  
                          independent clause (.) independent clause + dependent clause

\* Conjunctive adverb (e.g. She came to dinner; *thankfully*, she wasn't late.)

\*\* **II. B.** The colon may be used when the second independent clause explains, summarizes or amplifies the first. Use sparingly.

### III. Punctuation Chart

### Errors in Punctuation

IC. IC.	IC; IC	IC, IC	=Comma Splice
DC, IC.	IC DC	IC IC.	=Run-on
IC, (and.. or... but) IC.		DC. PHR	=Fragments